

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL  
OF SOUTH AFRICA

No. 3 / 2929

61

OFFICE OR INDIVIDUAL.

SUBJECT.

From

Secretary of State

Transmits copy of a despatch with regard to the

1920

future control of the Antarctic regions.

6th. February.

PREVIOUS PAPERS.

MINUTES.

9. To Bureau for information.

9/3/20 G.H. 9/3

10.3.20 to ministers

Y.E.

This is interesting.

? As proposed.

G.K. 12/3/20.

SUBSEQUENT PAPERS.

S.3/3578

No.

3 / 2929

FALKLAND ISLANDS  
(DEPENDENCIES.)

LETTERS PATENT, passed under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, providing for the further Definition and Administration of certain Islands and Territories as Dependencies of the Colony of the Falkland Islands.

*Dated 28th March 1917:*

George the Fifth by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India: To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

WHEREAS doubts have arisen as to the limits of the groups of islands known as South Georgia, the South Orkneys, the South Shetlands, and the Sandwich Islands, and the territory of Graham Land otherwise known as Graham's Land; and whereas it is expedient that provision should be made for the government, not only of these islands and territory but also of certain other Our islands and territories adjacent thereto as Dependencies of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands:

I. Now We do hereby declare that from and after the publication of these Our Letters Patent in the Government Gazette of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands, the Dependencies of Our said Colony shall be deemed to include and to have included all islands and territories whatsoever between the 20th degree of West longitude and the 50th degree of West longitude which are situated south of the 50th parallel of South latitude; and all islands and territories whatsoever between the 50th degree of West longitude and

of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands in regard to matters arising in connexion with Our said Colony.

Legislation.

V. It shall be, and shall be deemed always to have been, competent for the Governor, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands, to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of the Dependencies.

Governor empowered to make grants of Lands.

VI. The Governor is and shall be deemed always to have been, authorised and empowered to make and execute, in Our name and on Our behalf, grants and dispositions of any Lands which may lawfully be granted or disposed of by Us within the Dependencies, either in conformity with Instructions under Our Sign Manual and Signet, or through one of Our Principal Secretaries of State, or in conformity with such laws as may from time to time be in force in the Dependencies.

Power reserved to His Majesty to revoke, alter, or amend present Letters Patent.

VII. We do hereby reserve to Us, Our Heirs and Successors, full power and authority from time to time to revoke, alter, or amend these Our Letters Patent as to Us or Them shall seem meet.

Publication in Gazette.

VIII. The Governor shall cause these Our Letters Patent to be published in the Government Gazette of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands, and the same shall thereupon come into force.

In Witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourselves at Westminster, this Twenty-first day of July, in the Eighth year of Our Reign.

By Warrant under the King's Sign Manual.

MUIR MACKENZIE.

Shetlands, and the Sandwich Islands, and the said territory of Graham's Land shall become Dependencies of Our said Colony of the Falkland Islands.

II. And We do hereby further declare that from and after such publication as aforesaid the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands for the time being (herein-after called the Governor) shall be the Governor of South Georgia, the South Orkneys, the South Shetlands, and the Sandwich Islands, and the territory of Graham's Land (all of which are herein-after called the Dependencies); and We do hereby vest in him all such powers of government and legislation in and over the Dependencies as are from time to time vested in Our said Governor in and over Our Colony of the Falkland Islands, subject, nevertheless, to any instructions which may from time to time be hereafter given him under Our Sign Manual and Signet, or through one of Our Principal Secretaries of State, and to such laws as are now or shall hereafter be in force in the said Dependencies.

III. In the event of the death or incapacity of the Governor, or in the event of his absence from Our Colony of the Falkland Islands otherwise than for the purpose of visiting the Dependencies, the Officer for the time being Administering the Government of Our said Colony shall be Governor for the time being of the Dependencies.

IV. There shall be an Executive Council for the Dependencies, and the said Council shall consist of such persons as shall from time to time constitute the Executive Council of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands; and the said Council shall exercise the same functions in regard to all matters arising in connexion with the Dependencies as are exercised by the Executive Council

Appointment of Governor of the Falkland Islands to be Governor of the Dependencies.

Powers and Legislation.

Temporary administration during Governor's absence.

Executive Council.

FALKLAND ISLANDS.  
(DEPENDENCIES.)

LETTERS PATENT passed under the Great Seal of the United Kingdom, appointing the Governor of the Colony of the Falkland Islands to be Governor of South Georgia, the South Orkneys, the South Shetlands, the Sandwich Islands, and Graham's Land, and providing for the Government thereof as Dependencies of the Colony.

*Dated 21st July 1908.*

Edward the Seventh, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India: To all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.

WHEREAS the groups of islands known as South Georgia, the South Orkneys, the South Shetlands, and the Sandwich Islands, and the territory known as Graham's Land, situated in the South Atlantic Ocean to the south of the fiftieth parallel of south latitude, and lying between the twentieth and the eightieth degrees of west longitude, are part of Our Dominions, and it is expedient that provision should be made for their government as Dependencies of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands.

South Georgia, South Orkneys, etc.  
to be Dependencies of the Falkland Islands.

I. Now We do hereby declare that from and after the publication of these Our Letters Patent in the Government Gazette of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands the said groups of islands known as South Georgia, the South Orkneys, the South

appears at first sight best situated for this purpose but the matter is one which should in my opinion in the first place be discussed between the Governments of the Commonwealth of Australia and Dominion of New Zealand.

11. I am writing similarly to the Governor General of (1) New Zealand and would invite the two Governments (2) Australia to exchange views with regard to the policy, which I have outlined and in particular with regard to the control of the Ross Sea area. You will no doubt communicate to me in due course the result of these deliberations.

12. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the other self-governing Dominions.

I have etc.,

(for the Secretary of State)

(Sgt L. S. AMERY.)

of the extreme limit of the pack ice, the area is approximately 15,750,000 square miles, of which only 10,000,000 miles have been definitely ascertained to be sea, while the 5,750,000 miles are more or less definitely sea or ice land.

During the war certain of these areas were explored and it was found that the need for pigments, in which these are rich. Two-thirds of the world's supply of these pigments are obtained from the Antarctic region. It is estimated that the Antarctic area, as explored by the Department of Fisheries, which has been ascertained by research undertaken in these dependencies, has great possibilities for the production of these pigments and other minerals with the

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
GOVERNOR GENERAL  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE

letters patent of 21st July 1908 and 28th March 1917, of which copies are enclosed, established full British sovereignty for the former and over all the neighbouring sub Antarctic islands, and the establishment of magistracies in South Georgia and the South Shetlands constitutes an effective control which will be reinforced by the operations of the research vessels to be provided, if the report of the Committee referred to in the 3rd paragraph is adopted. In the case of the Ross Sea there has been no similar assertion of sovereignty, but the work of Ross, Scott, Shackleton, Mawson and their colleagues furnishes indisputable claims to the greater part of the lands in this area, which has always been associated with ~~the~~ British and Australian enterprise. I suggest, therefore, that it is highly desirable that immediate steps should be taken to assert British sovereignty over the Ross Sea coasts and their hinterland, which might be defined as including all territories and islands south of New Zealand between the meridians of 150° east and west, and some limit to be fixed to the north. It is not considered that ~~it~~ would be necessary to set up any resident administration, at all events until projects for whaling, sealing or mining have matured, as the British character of the ports from which expeditions to the Ross Sea would ordinarily obtain supplies would enable necessary regulations, such as, for example, limitations on the destruction of certain animals, to be communicated and in most cases enforced.

10. The question, however, which of the partners in the Empire should be entrusted with control of the new territory requires settlement. New Zealand as being the nearest and possessing the most convenient ports  
appears

regions is already British. An enormous predominance of the vessels which enter the neighbouring seas is British.

7. His Majesty's Government have, therefore, come to the conclusions that it is desirable that the whole of the Antarctic should ultimately be included within the British Empire, and that, while the time has not yet arrived that a claim to all the continental territories should be put forward publicly, a definite and consistent policy should be followed of extending and asserting British control with the object of ultimately making it complete.

8. With this end in view a careful examination has been made of the extent of possible foreign claims, the result of which is to show that British claims on the continental territories of the Antarctic, whether by discovery, formal landing or otherwise, greatly outweigh those of other countries, and that since the abandonment of all German claims under Article 118 of the Treaty of Peace, France is the only Power in a position to put forward any reasonable ground for a share in these lands. The Islands of Kerguelen and the Crozets have been effectively occupied by France and claims might be advanced based on the discoveries of D'Urville and Charcot. The former made a formal landing at Anvers Island near Adélie Land, in 1840, at which he took possession of the Island and adjacent coast in the name of France.

9. The only two parts of the continent which are readily accessible - and, it may be added, of any proved value - are Grahamland and the Ross Sea coast. The

letters



very abundant animal life of Antarctic regions and with the minerals known to be existing in places. I hope soon to be able to furnish your Ministers with copies of the Committee's report, which lays stress on the importance of preventing the partial destruction or extinction of valuable animals which has unfortunately characterised the exploitation of Arctic and Sub-Arctic regions. It is obvious that a single person having control of the Antarctic generally would be in a position to take more effective measures than are now possible to conserve animal life.

4. From the point of view of your Government, however, it is likely that more importance should be attached to the possibility that the progress of knowledge may in time make safe the waters now avoided by commerce owing to danger of ice. In such circumstances Antarctic seas might be expected to be traversed by trade routes of increasing importance between South America, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, so that the control of the islands in and land adjacent to these seas might become important to British interests in the southern hemisphere, and the establishment of harbours and stations might become economical.

5. The increasing radius of action of submarines and aircraft will tend to interest your Government in any territories where preparations might secretly be made for raiding operations.

6. It is hardly necessary to point out that the interest of the British Empire in these questions is, as compared with that of other nations, overwhelming. With the exception of portions of Chile and Argentina and a few barren islands belonging to France, every inhabited land in the direction of the Antarctic regions.

Downing Street.

6 February, 1920.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA Secret.  
NEW ZEALAND Secret.

Sir,  
My Lord,

I have the honour to request Your Excellency to inform your Ministers that His Majesty's Government have had under their consideration the future policy of the Empire in the Antarctic regions, and in particular the question of the control of the main land and of the neighbouring waters.

2. This area is of great size though as yet of little economic importance except in the case of the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands. I am informed by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty that if the theoretical boundary of the Antarctic regions is to be taken as the extreme limit of the packice, the area is approximately 18,700,000 square miles, of which 12,200,000 miles have been definitely ascertained to be sea, while some 500,000 miles are more or less definitely known to be land.

3. During the war certain of these waters assumed importance owing to the need for glycerine, in which whale oil is rich. Two-thirds of the world's supply of whale oil and the whole supply of elephant oil is obtained in the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands in Antarctic or Sub Antarctic seas. The evidence taken by the Departmental Committee, which has been investigating research and development in these Dependencies, has drawn attention to the possibility that other industries may arise connected with the

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GOVERNOR GENERAL  
HIS EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

SIR R. MUNRO FERGUSON, G.C.M.G.

&c., &c., &c.

GOVERNOR GENERAL  
HIS EXCELLENCY

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL, P.C., G.C.M.G., G.B.E., M.V.O.

&c., &c., &c.

5. 3/2928.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Downing Street,

SECRET

6 February 1920.

My Lord,

6 February, 1920

I have the honour to transmit for the secret information of your Ministers copy of a despatch which I have addressed to the Governors General of the Commonwealth of Australia and of New Zealand with regard to the future control of the Antarctic regions.

I have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient,  
humble Servant,  
(for the Secretary of State)

JS Amery

Copy sent to Minister  
For Information  
Ministry No. 3/2928 Secret  
Date 16 March 1920

GOVERNOR GENERAL  
HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE  
VISCOUNT BUXTON, G.C.M.G.  
etc. etc. etc.

the 80th degree of West longitude which are situated south of the 58th parallel of South latitude.

II. And We do hereby vest in the Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands all such powers and authorities in and over the lands hereby included in the Dependencies of Our said Colony as are exercised by him over the Dependencies in virtue of certain Letters Patent bearing date at Westminster the Twenty-first day of July 1908.

III. We do hereby reserve to Ourselves, Our heirs and successors, full power and authority from time to time to revoke, alter or amend these Our Letters Patent as to Us or them shall seem meet.

IV. The Governor shall cause these Our Letters Patent to be published in the Government Gazette of Our Colony of the Falkland Islands and the same shall thereupon come into force.

In witness whereof We have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent. Witness Ourself at Westminster the Twenty-eighth day of March in the Seventh Year of Our Reign.

By Warrant under the King's Sign Manual.

SCHUSTER.