OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL
OF SOUTH AFRICA

No. 37 / 1170

| OFFICE OR INDIVIDUAL | SUBJECT |
| --- | --- |
| | ANTARCTIC. BOUVET ISLAND : JAN MAYEN ISLAND. Territorial Interests in : Norwegian Expedition to : Bouvet Island : Withdrawal of British claim to : claims annexation of Jan Mayen Island by Norway. |
| PREVIOUS PAPERS | MINUTES |
| 5.3/pt 1-6: Geographical & Antarctic Expeditions & exploration & Sub Antarctic islands & Dependencies | |
| SUBSEQUENT PAPERS | |

that indicated in the last paragraph of your note. The existence of the plateau on which the South Pole is situated had already been determined by the late Sir Ernest Shackleton, who, in January 1909, reached a point on it less than one hundred miles from the Pole itself, and on that occasion took formal possession of the plateau for Great Britain.

I have, etc.,

(For the Secretary of State)

(Sgd) S. H. WILLIAMS.

(C.127/1541/50).

CONFIDENTIAL
Not to be published without previous authority of H. M's Government

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.
3rd November, 1925.

Sir,

His Majesty's Government have given most careful consideration to your note of February 24th last on the subject of the Ross Dependency, and I have the honour to reply as follows, to the points specifically raised therein by the Norwegian Government.

2. With regard to point (1) in your note, His Majesty's Government desire to observe that there is no coast or island known to exist within the Dependency which is not, indisputably, a British discovery, and that, except possibly in the region immediately northward of King Edward the Seventh Land, there seems to be no likelihood of any fresh discoveries of islands within the limits of the Dependency.

3. With regard to (2) no southern boundary of the Ross Dependency was specified in the Order in Council because the western and eastern boundaries mentioned in the Order, viz: the 160th degree of east longitude and the 150th degree of west longitude, meet at a point at the South Pole.

4. His Majesty's Government take note that it is not the intention of the Norwegian Government at the present time to claim sovereignty over the territories referred to under (2) of your note, but while they most gladly bear their testimony to the value from the geographical and scientific points of view of the work performed by Captain Roald Amundsen, they cannot admit that the facts referred to constitute a valid basis for a claim of the nature of that

Monsieur Benjamin Vogt,
&c. &c. &c.

situated within territorial waters of Victoria Land and Edward VII's Land, the annexation is meant to comprise such islands only, the existence of which is at present known and which have been discovered by British citizens or by expeditions under the British flag.

(2) That the southern boundaries of the dependency - of which nothing is said in the Order in Council referred to - and its eastern boundaries south of Edward VII's Land, are meant to be drawn in such a way as not to make the annexation comprise any part of the territory immediately circumjacent to the South Pole, which, as will be known, was taken possession of in the name of the King of Norway by Captain Roald Amundsen in December 1911, under the name of Haakon VII's Plateau, nor to comprise the territories on both sides of Captain Amundsen's route to the South Pole south of the said Edward VII's Land and including i.a. Queen Maud's Range.

My Government have instructed me to add that while it is not their intention at the present time to claim Sovereignty to the territories referred to under (2) above, they consider that the said discovery and annexation constitute a valid basis for a claim of priority to acquire such territories whenever the requirements of international law as to effective occupation of a new territory shall have been fulfilled.

I have etc.,

(Sgd) B. Vogt.

1541/1541/30)

CONFIDENTIAL
Not to be published without previous authority of H.M's Government

No.30/1925.

Norwegian Legation,
London,
February 24th,1925.

Sir,

It has come to the notice of the Norwegian Government that the British Government by "Order in Council" of July 30th,1923, has declared all islands and territories between the 160th degree of East Longitude and the 150th degree of West Longitude which are situated South of the 60th degree of South Latitude to be a British settlement under the name of the Ross Dependency and that the administrative authority as regards the said settlement has been vested in the Governor of New Zealand who is to be also the Governor of the new Dependency.

In view of the said Order in Council I have the honour, acting under instructions from my Government, to call Your attention to the fact that although, as regards certain provisions, it does not at the present moment appear quite clear to my Government what the Order implies, my Government cannot overlook the fact that the annexation in question may have the effect of jeopardizing present of future Norwegian interests and rights.

In this connection my Government have requested me to point out to You that they take it for granted:

(1) That, apart from such islands which may be situated

The Right Honourable,
Austen Chamberlain, P.C., M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.,

6. In the circumstances His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and New Zealand regret that they cannot accept the contention of the Norwegian Government set out in your note.

I have etc.

(for the Secretary of State)

(sgd) G.H.VILLIERS.

than a fortnight's camping in tents, followed by an immediate return to Captain Amundsen's base at the Bay of Whales which can hardly be regarded as occupation in any sense of the word, of any part of King Edward VII land. It cannot possibly be relied upon as an occupation having the effect of over-riding the claim of His Majesty's Governments based on prior discovery. Nor is there any indication in the English translation of Commander Prestrud's narrative that he claimed to have taken formal possession of the land or that he had authority from Captain Amundsen to do so.

4. His Majesty's Governments presume that paragraph 3 of your note is not intended to convey the impression that Sir Ernest Shackleton did not reach the South Polar Plateau, in view of the fact that he discovered it, traversed the greater part of its extent between the point where he first reached it and the South Pole, and took formal possession of the Plateau in the name of His Majesty The King.

5. In connection with the contention put forward in the last sentence of your note His Majesty's Governments must observe that Captain Amundsen's discoveries, of the value of which they are fully sensible, cannot (with the exception of his "appearance of land" in or about latitude 81° - 82° south) be regarded as other than an extension of those made by Sir Ernest Shackleton with which, from a geographical standpoint they are indissolubly connected. In view of the fact that Sir Ernest Shackleton has the prior claim, both by discovery and by formal taking of possession His Majesty's Governments are unable to see on what grounds a Norwegian claim could be substantiated.

paragraph of your note, while His Majesty's Governments recognise that prior to Commander Prestrud's visit no one, so far as is known, had set foot on King Edward VII land, there can be no doubt of the reality of Captain Scott's discovery of that territory nearly ten years earlier and of the accuracy of his charting (covering the whole of the coast line as at present known) which is fully confirmed by Commander Prestrud's own account of his journey (see Captain Amundsen's "South Pole" - English translation, London 1912, volume 2, pages 204 Seq). Commander Prestrud not only refers to Captain Scott as "our respected precursor" but confirms the latter's topography, uses his names (such as "Cape Colbeck", "Alexandra Mountains" and "Biscoe Bay") and gives to the only actual land which he himself saw (the remainder being glaciated) the name of "Scott's Nunataks". In the latter part of paragraph 2 of your note it is suggested that "considerable weight must be attached to the exploration, mapping and occupation of King Edward VII land by Norwegian subjects". His Majesty's Governments have no wish to minimise the value of the gallant work performed by Captain Amundsen and by the members of his expedition and they recognise the great sacrifices which this work entailed, but they desire to point out that the "exploration" in question was confined to a short and hurried journey by a party of three men for a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles from their base and the traversing of about twenty five miles of the glaciated surface of the land in question; that they are unaware of the publication by Commander Prestrud of any detailed map of his journey; and that the "occupation" referred to was in fact no more

than

CONFIDENTIAL

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FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

No.W.8114/130/50. 9th December, 1927.

Sir,

I have the honour to state that His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and New Zealand have given careful consideration to your note of the 13th May on the subject of the Ross Dependency and that their view on the points raised therein by the Norwegian Government are as follows.

2. As regards the statement of the Norwegian Government that the Ross Barrier "according to all reports does not rest on land but on water", the information available to His Majesty's Governments would appear to leave little doubt that at certain points even at the seaward edge the Barrier rests on land which possibly rises above sea-level, and it seems not improbable that the same may be true as regards other parts of the Barrier; moreover any suggestion that the Barrier is afloat must depend largely upon inference owing to the impossibility of taking soundings through the ice. The question whether, in general, ice barriers can properly be regarded as land for the purpose of measuring the limit of territorial jurisdiction is one of some difficulty, but His Majesty's Governments in Great Britain and New Zealand are of opinion that, in the case of an ice barrier such as the Ross Barrier which is to all intents and purposes, a permanent extension of the land proper, there is good reason for treating the Barrier as though it were terra firma.

3. With regard to the point raised in the second paragraph

Monsieur Benjamin Vogt,

etc. etc. etc.

sovereignty to this land it is the opinion of the Norwegian Government that considerable weight must be attached to the exploration, mapping and occupation of King Edward the Seventh Land by Norwegian subjects.

With regard to paragraph 4 of your said note, I am instructed to say that my Government fully recognise that the discovery, exploration and mapping of part of the Ross Sector is due to the magnificent efforts and sacrifice of a number of gallant British explorers and scientists. My Government, are, however, unable to agree that the fact of the late Sir Ernest Shackleton having in 1909 reached a point as far south as 88 degrees 23 minutes and from there determined the plateau on which the South Pole is situated, comtitutes a basis for claiming British sovereignty to this Plateau, which in 1911 was actually reached by Captain Roald Amundsen and formally taken possession of by him on behalf of the King of Norway. My Government are of opinion that these facts give Norway a priority to claim sovereignty over the South Pole Plateau, within the 89th degree of southern latitude. My Government in the same way deem Norway to have a priority to any claim to the territories on both sides of Captain Amundsen's route to the South Pole, as referred to in point (2) of my note to you dated February 24th, 1925, and would define these territories as embracing a sector from longitude 120 degrees west to 175 degrees west, south of the 85th degree.

I have etc.,

(Sgd) B.VOGT.

.4425/130/50)

No.67/1927.

NORWEGIAN LEGATION,

LONDON,

May 13th,1927.

Sir,

With reference to your note of November 3rd, 1925, on the subject of the Ross Dependency, I have the honour, acting upon instructions from my Government, to say that the Norwegian Government take it for granted that the Ross Ice Barrier, which according to all reports does not rest on land but on water, is not meant to be included in that area which under the British Order in Council dated July 30th 1923, is designated as a British settlement with the name of the Ross Dependency.

I am further instructed to point out that the inclusion of King Edward the Seventh Land in the area which according to the said Order in Council comes under British sovereignty, does not appear to my Government to be well founded. The fact that the late Captain Robert F.Scott in 1902 from the sea sighted part of the coasts of King Edward the Seventh Land can hardly in international practice be regarded as a satisfactory basis for claiming British sovereignty over this land. It does not appear that King Edward the Seventh Land has actually been visited by anyone until the then Lieutenant K.Prestrud, with companions, made a sledge journey thereto from the Bay of Whales, on the Ross Barrier, and formally took possession of it in the name of the King of Norway on December 6th,1911. In connection, therefore, with the question of the

sovereignty

(Sgd) H.FOUT.

The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain,K.G.,P.C.,
etc., etc., etc.,

Pm. 103/3

DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
13 FEB 1928

DUPLICATE

15/2

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 39

CONFIDENTIAL.

DOWNING STREET,

24 January, 1928.

RECD. C.G.O.
15 FEB 1928
37/1170

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of correspondence with the Norwegian Minister regarding territorial interests in the Antarctic.

2. A copy of earlier correspondence with M. Vogt on the subject is also enclosed.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

(for the Secretary of State)
(Signed) LOVAT.

Fr. N. Minister 13th May.

To do. 9th December

Fr. N. Minister 24th February '25

To do. 3rd Nov. '25.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

3. Professor Kjerr added that he had himself been in London a month ago and that Mr. Christensen had explained the objects of the expedition at a luncheon party, which was attended by Dr. Kemp of the "Discovery" Expedition, who is now employed at the Colonial Office.

4. It will be noted from the above that the expedition is an entirely private venture on the part of Mr. Christensen, though Professor Kjerr has helped him by his advice in supplying the scientific instruments.

I have &c.,

(Sgd.) F.O. LINDLEY.

URGENT.

No. 336.



British Legation,
C S I C.
7th December, 1927.

Sir,

On receipt of your telegram No. 25 of yesterday's date I arranged to have an interview with Professor Hjort who, I found, was fully acquainted with the objects of the expedition of the "Norwegia" to the Antarctic.

2. The Professor informed me that the whole expedition had been financed by Mr. Lars Christensen of Sandefjord. He had bought an old Norwegian wooden sealer, which he had re-named "Norwegia"; and this vessel had been instructed to proceed to Cape Town (which it had already left), thence to Bouvet Island, and from there to follow the ice until she reached South Georgia. From the latter island she was to proceed to the South Shetlands and to try to reach Peter Island and so back to South Georgia, where the trip was to be finished. The objects of the expedition were twofold. It was intended to investigate the whaling and sealing possibilities along the ice with a view to future operations; and at the same time the vessel had been equipped with first-class scientific instruments for hydrographic and plankton investigations. Two students were on board whose duty it would be to carry out the scientific work of the expedition. The vessel also carried apparatus and special projectiles for marking whales.

The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
etc., etc., etc.

Professor

COPY

(W.11211/130/50)



NO DISTRIBUTION.

Code telegram to Mr.Leigh Smith (Oslo)

Foreign Office 6th December 1927,6.45 p.m.

No.25 (R).

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Please send urgently by despatch all available information concerning expedition shortly leaving Cape Town for South Antarctic continent in steamer "Norwegia".

As it is disclosed in the message from Oslo, the voyage of the "Norwegia" is an ambitious enterprise. It involves an attempt to navigate the fringe of the Antarctic round practically half its extent, following the tracks of the Russian explorer Bellingshausen as far back as 1821 (1820?). Enderby Land, where they hope to make their first contact with the coast, lies south-east of Capetown and was discovered by John Biscoe, the English whaling captain, in the early thirties of last century. No subsequent navigator has succeeded in penetrating the ice barrier that guards its shores.

Unveiled Mysteries.

The other limit of "Norwegia's" voyage - 120 degrees West - is well to the south-west of Cape Horn. Within this vast semi-circle there is much still to be discovered of the mysteries of Antarctica, for with the exception of patches of land in the Waddell Sea and the rocky island-studded peninsula of Graham Land - due South of the Horn - the coastline of the continent, if continent there be, remains still to be unveiled.

It was to the west of Graham Land that Bellingshausen, in a voyage comparable in importance with that of Captain Cook, nearly half a century earlier, discovered the first land within the Antarctic Circle, naming it Peter Island and Alexander Land. It will be interesting to see whether the Norwegian expedition can improve upon the efforts of the numerous explorers who have endeavoured to master the pack ice and map in the elusive coasts that have never yet been seen by man.

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EXTRACT FROM THE "LIVERPOOL POST & MERCURY" DATED

WEDNESDAY, No.9th, 1927.

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CONFIDENTIAL
Not to be published without previous authority of H.M's Government

SECRETS OF THE ANTARCTIC.

New Expedition.

Norwegian Enterprise.

OSLO, Tuesday.

A party of Norwegian scientists and explorers left Norway to-day for Cape Town, whence they will start on board the Antarctic steamer Norwegia to explore the South Antarctic continent.

They will explore from Enderby Land round the continent to the 120th degree west, following the route of the Bellingshausen Expedition of 1821. Afterwards they will go to the South Shetland Islands to study the flora and fauna. The scientific leader of the expedition will by Professor Nattedahl, and the Captain of the "Norwegia" will be Captain Hornvedt. Several naturalists will be included in the company.

British United Press.

Ambitious Plans.

From our London Correspondent.

It is interesting to find the Norwegians taking a hand again in Antarctic exploration, for they have done nothing in this field since Amundsen snatched the prize of the South Pole from the British expedition under Captain Scott.

As

Pm. 103/3

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
Dominions No. 40
Secret



Downing Street,
24 January, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my Confidential despatch Dominions No. 39 of the 24 January, 1928, regarding territorial interests in the Antarctic, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa the accompanying copies of a press report and of correspondence with His Majesty's Representative at Oslo regarding a Norwegian expedition which is at present visiting the Antarctic.

Press Extract
Tel. 6th Feb.
No. 336, 7th Feb.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble servant,

(for the Secretary of State)
(Signed) LOVAT.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Government. I must await their reply. I certainly did not wish to allow the incident to become a serious obstacle to our friendly relations and if in reply the Norwegian Government made proposals for a friendly accommodation, I would certainly examine them in the most friendly spirit.

I am, &c.

AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN.

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WESTERN EUROPE. February 28, 1928.

CONFIDENTIAL. SECTION 1.

[W 1898/532/50] No. 1.

*Sir Austen Chamberlain to Sir F. Lindley (Oslo).*

(No. 97.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February* 28, 1928.

THE Norwegian Minister called upon me to-day by appointment.

He said that he was shortly returning to Norway and would be glad to know what he might say upon the subject of Bouvet Island.

I told M. Vogt that we claimed it in right of the formal possession which was taken of the island by Captain Norris in 1825 when he hoisted the British flag and took possession in the name of King George IV. Extracts from his log giving an account of the incident had been published by Sir James Ross in 1847 and the island had been given as British in recent editions of the "Africa Pilot," published by the Admiralty. Further, for several months past negotiations had been proceeding between the Colonial Office and a Norwegian sealing company named Rasmussen for the grant to the company by His Majesty's Government of an exclusive licence to occupy Bouvet and Thompson Islands for whaling purposes. This licence had been signed some time ago by Rasmussen and had only been awaiting the signature of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who was at the time absent on his tour. The licence had since been issued. I must be permitted to say that, in view of the notoriety of our claim, I had learned with surprise and regret that the Norwegian Government had authorised the occupation of the island and the hoisting of the Norwegian flag without prior communication with His Majesty's Government. If I assumed, as I must assume, that the Norwegian Government thought they had good grounds for disputing our claim, I should have supposed that, in the friendly relations existing between us, they would at least have communicated with us before taking action. Evidently they had had the matter under consideration for some time, since we were told that they had carefully examined it and that the occupation had been sanctioned by the Foreign Affairs Committee and Parliament of Norway. This public action could not but make a friendly settlement of our difference much more difficult. I must, however, await the explanation which the Norwegian Government would doubtless offer of the grounds on which they held our claim to be invalid before I said anything more.

M. Vogt called my attention to the fact that the Norwegian Government had authorised the master of the "Norvegia" to take possession for Norway of any new land that might be found, and had then received a telegram from him that he had occupied Bouvet Island. I replied that it would have seemed natural on receipt of this telegram that the Norwegian Government should have telegraphed saying that this was not new land but a British possession, advising the master not to show too much zeal and directing him to clear out of Bouvet Island as quickly as possible.

M. Vogt could not give me officially any information as to the grounds of the Norwegian Government's claim, but he said that they had been looking into the matter in the Legation and that they had come to the conclusion that the island of which Captain Norris took possession was not Bouvet Island at all but Thompson Island. He further remarked that he did not know whether this was the ground taken by his Government or whether they disputed our possession on the ground that it had not been made effective. He said that a claim to such an island as the Isle of Wight could obviously not be sustained after 100 years if nothing had been done to make it effective. It might be argued that the same rule could not apply to an Antarctic island of the character of Bouvet Island, but a good deal might be said from the point of view of international law on this subject.

I told M. Vogt that I at least could say nothing more in response to a mere personal hypothesis by himself as to the possible motives of the Norwegian

TRANSLATION.

THE ROYAL NORWEGIAN MINISTRY
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

OSLO,

15th February, 1928.

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your Note of the 13th instant (No.45), with enclosures, regarding the "Norvegia" expedition to the Antarctic. I note that His Britannic Majesty's Government, in connection with the authority which the Norwegian Government have given to the Captain of the "Norvegia" expedition to take in possession in the name of the King of Norway any land not hitherto occupied, have deemed it desirable to remind the Norwegian Government of the discussions in regard to those regions which took place at the Imperial Conference in London in 1926, and to send the Norwegian Government a copy of the "Summary of Proceedings" of that Conference, which publication contains on pages 33 to 34 a list of the regions in the Antarctic which the British Government consider as coming under British sovereignty. I further remark that the British Government's motive in this connection is to avoid the risk of complications arising as a result of any acts which the expedition might perform, in ignorance of the existence of a British title to regions which are dealt with in the above mentioned report of the Imperial Conference in London, and I shall not fail to have the expedition made acquainted therewith.

I avail myself, etc.

For the Minister for Foreign Affairs

(Sd) AUG.ESMARCH.

The Honourable
Sir Francis Lindley,
H.B.M.Minister,
etc., etc., etc.

question. The motive of this communication is merely the desire to avoid the risk of complications arising as a result of any acts which may be performed by the expedition in ignorance of the existence of a British title to the areas referred to in the Imperial Conference report.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you, Monsieur le Ministre, the assurance of my highest consideration.

(Signed) F.O.LINDLEY.

Son Excellence

Monsieur le Professeur Edv.Bull,

Ministre des Affaires Etrangères,

Oslo.

Enclosure to Sir F. Lindley's despatch No. 99

14/2/1928.

British Legation,

Oslo,

February 13th,1928.

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour to inform Your Excellency in accordance with instructions received from His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that His Majesty's Government, having learnt from the Norwegian Minister in London that the Captain of the "Norvegia" has been authorised, in the course of the present expedition to the Antarctic, to hoist the Norwegian flag on any lands which he considers to belong to no other power, deem it desirable to remind the Norwegian Government of the discussions in regard to those regions which took place at the Imperial Conference held in London in 1926. An account of these discussions is contained in the published Summary of Proceedings, pages 33 and 34, a copy of which I have the honour to transmit to Your Excellency herewith.

2. Sir Austen Chamberlain desires me to inform Your Excellency that nothing is further from the mind of His Majesty's Government than to belittle the objects of the Norwegian Expedition or to restrict their scope; on the contrary, they regard the undertaking as fresh evidence of Norwegian enterprise in the field of exploration and research, and look forward to its results which will be of great value in adding to the stock of scientific knowledge relating to the regions in

question

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION AND ANSWER.

THOMPSON AND BOUVET ISLANDS.

61. Viscount SANDON asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what information he has as to the existence denied by Norwegian whalers, of the whereabouts of Thompson Island, claimed by this country; and what is the position as to the rival claims of His Majesty's Government and the Norwegian Government to Bouvet Island?

Sir A.CHAMBERLAIN: Thompson Island was first discovered by Captain Norris in December, 1825, and has only once been sighted since by Captain Fuller, an American seaman, in 1893. The island was unsuccessfully searched for in 1898 and in 1926, but in view of Captain Norris's definite statement and the confirmation afforded by Captain Fuller there does not appear to be any ground for questioning its existence, although there is some degree of uncertainty regarding its position. His Majesty's Government have informed the Norwegian Government that they consider the title acquired by virtue of the occupation of Bouvet Island by Captain Norris in 1825 to be valid, and that in the circumstances they must formally reserve all their rights in connection with the island.

Mr.R.HUDSON: May we take it that the information which has been published to the effect that we have surrendered our claim to Bouvet Island is incorrect?

Sir A.CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir. I have given the House the exact statement.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION AND ANSWER.

THOMPSON ISLAND.

Viscount SANDON asked the First Lord of the Admiralty the position in which Thompson Island is marked on the Admiralty charts; and whether he will send a warship to locate its position?

Mr. BRIDGEMAN: The position of Thompson Island, as marked on British Admiralty Chart No.2333, is Latitude 63° 36' S., Longitude 4° 20' E. It is not considered that the expenditure involved in the withdrawal of a ship from her normal duties to locate Thompson Island would be justified.

Climatic conditions render landing on Bouvet Island extremely difficult, and so far as I am aware no such landing has taken place since that effected by Captain Norris until the recent visit of the "Norvegia"; the "Discovery" was instructed to visit the island in the course of her expedition of 1926/1927 but was unable to effect a landing.

3. His Majesty's Government in Great Britain consider the title thus acquired by them by virtue of occupation in 1825 to be valid, and its existence must be generally known, since it is referred to in the Supplement, dated 1905, of the 1901 edition of the "Africa Pilot, Part II" and in the next complete edition of that work published in 1910.

4. I may add that for several months past negotiations have been proceeding between the Colonial Office and Messrs. Johan Rasmussen and Company of Sandefjord, Norway, for the grant to the latter by His Majesty's Government of an exclusive licence to occupy Bouvet and Thompson Islands for the purposes of taking whales in the territorial waters of the two islands and of flensing, rendering, boiling down or treating carcases by means of a floating factory, and of removing guano from the islands. These negotiations have recently resulted in agreement on the terms of the licence; it has been signed on behalf of Messrs. Rasmussen and Company and has only been awaiting the return to this country of the Secretary of State for the Colonies to be completed by his signature.

5. In these circumstances His Majesty's Government must formally reserve all their rights in connexion with the island in question.

I have etc.,

(Sd) G.H.VILLIERS.

No.W 961/532/50.

FOREIGN OFFICE,

15th February, 1928.

Sir:-

I have the honour to refer to your note No.11/1928 of January 19th last, in which you were good enough to inform me that the Norwegian Government had authorised Consul Lars Christensen to take possession on behalf of Norway of any new land that might be found in the course of the expedition of the "Norvegia" to the Southern Atlantic, and that the master of this vessel had occupied Bouvet Island on December 1st, 1927, placed a depot there and hoisted the Norwegian flag.

2. You state that the authorisation given to Consul Christensen "obviously referred to land which had not previously in due form been occupied by any other government". Now Bouvet Island is not in this category, since on December 16th, 1825, Captain George Norris of the Enderby sealer "Sprightly" (with the "Lively" in company) visited Bouvet Island, hoisted the British flag on it and took possession of the island in the name of His Majesty King George IV. A contemporary copy of the relevant extracts from the log of the "Sprightly" is in the possession of His Majesty's Government, and reference to the incident is made and extracts from the log of the "Sprightly" quoted in Sir James Ross's "A Voyage of Discovery and Research in the Southern and Antarctic Region", London, 1847, volume II pages 371 to 373.

Monsieur R.Vogt,

etc., etc., etc.

Climatic

Norwegian Legation

No.11/1928.

London, January 19th, 1928.

Sir,

Acting under instructions from my Government I have the honour to state, for your temporary information, that at the request of Consul Lars Christensen, Sandefjord, Norway, the Norwegian Government in a letter to him of August 31st, 1927, have authorised him to let the expedition the "Norvegia" to the Southern Atlantic, which has been planned by him, take possession for Norway of any new land that might be found. It was added in the said note that the authorisation obviously referred to land which had not previously in due form been occupied by any other Government.

Afterwards the Ministry for Foreign Affairs at Oslo have been informed by Consul Christensen that according to a telegram received from the Master of the "Norvegia" the Bouvet Island has been occupied on December 1st, 1927, a depot has been placed there and the Norwegian flag has been hoisted on the island

I have etc.,

(Sd) B.Vogt.

The Right Honourable,

Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G.,P.C.,

etc., etc., etc.

a licence were practically concluded when the Norwegian Minister's note was received.

3. In the circumstances, a reply has been sent to the Norwegian Minister in which it is stated that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain must formally reserve all their rights in connection with the island. I enclose a copy of this reply, together with copies of Parliamentary Questions and Answers regarding this island and Thompson Island. The licence to Messrs. Johan Rasmussen and Company was signed on the 22nd of February.

Note to Nor. Minr. 15. 2. 28.

Q. & A. Thompson Island.

Q. & A. Thompson & Bouvet Islands.

4. In view of the action taken by the Norwegian expedition, it has been thought desirable to draw the attention of the Norwegian Government to the passage in the Summary of Proceedings of the Imperial Conference, 1926 (Section XI) regarding certain other regions in the Antarctic. A copy of the note which has been addressed by His Majesty's Minister at Oslo to the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject is enclosed, together with a copy of the reply thereto received from the Norwegian Government.

Note fr. H.M. Minr. at Oslo 13. 2. 28

Note fr. Nor. Govt. 15. 2. 28.

5. His Majesty's Minister at Oslo has reported that, according to an announcement in a Norwegian Shipping Gazette, the s.s. "Norvegia," which is now said to be at South Georgia, will have to be laid up for the rest of the season on account of damage suffered through grounding near Bouvet Island.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY.

Pm. 103/3

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
Dominions No. 114
Secret.

Downing Street,
7 March, 1928.



Sir,

With reference to Lord Lovat's Secret despatch Dominions No.40 of the 24th January, regarding the Norwegian expedition which is at present visiting the Antarctic, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a note from the Norwegian Minister announcing that on the 1st December, 1927, the Master of the Norvegia" occupied Bouvet Island, placed a depôt there, and hoisted the Norwegian flag.

Note fr. Nor. Minr. 19.1.28.

2. This island is French by discovery but possession was taken of it on the 16th December, 1825, by Captain George Norris in the name of His Majesty King George IV. Further, in February 1927, an application was received by the Secretary of State for the Colonies from a Norwegian firm, Messrs. Johan Rasmussen and Company of Sandefjord, the Chairman of which appears to be the Vice-President of the Norwegian Whaling Committee, for a licence to conduct whaling operations in the neighbourhood of the island and of Thompson Island, and negotiations for the issue of such

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THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

of Consul Christensen's action. For meteorologists, says Mr.Foyn, it is of extraordinarily great importance to obtain an extension of the weather report, especially in this part of the world, where the distance between stations is, and must necessarily be, great, as the result of the enormous stretches of sea. The Bouvet Station will be specially useful in making observations connected with current, ice and temperature conditions, and not least regarding the irregularities in the strong west wind, which continually blows there. There can scarcely be any doubt that these data will have great importance, not only for shipping and whaling, but also for such purposes as weather forecasts in South Africa and in South America. Their scientific value would be immensely increased if the station would be worked the whole year round, since winter conditions in those regions are very little known.

As far as we understand Consul Christensen desires to keep the station going the whole year round, if this is possible, and the Meteorological Institute has promised all the support possible.

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Copy.

TRANSLATION.

The isolated situation of Bouvet Island long ago attracted the attention of meteorologists as an ideal spot for a weather station. The well-known Scottish scientist, R.C.Mossman, the meteorologist, perhaps the greatest expert in Europe regarding studies of meteorological conditions in the Antarctic regions, thus points out in a report which was published in 1920 by an English inter-departmental committee that it would be particularly desirable to have a meteorological station on Bouvet Island. Mossman lays stress in this connection that South Africa, India, Australia and New Zealand ought to cooperate to put up such stations on Bouvet, Crozet, Kerguelen, etc. in connection with the stations in the Falklands area. Mr.Mossman can hardly have anticipated that it would be Norwegians who would take the first step to realise this plan. But so it is, since Consul Lars Christensen has decided to set up a wireless meteorological station on Bouvet Island. Consul Christensen will himself pay all expenses both for setting up and carrying on the station, which will be of the greatest importance for the Norwegian whaling industry in the Antarctic.

This is initiated a new chapter in the glorious story which began with the occupation of the Island by Consul Christensen's people. To speak more accurately, the story began when his father, Captain Christensen, sent out the "Jason" about thirty-five years ago; and later the "Admiralen", the first modern whale boiling ship.

We asked Sub-Director Foyn in the Meteorological Institute to express an opinion as regards the importance

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Copy.



(W.1606/533/30)

BRITISH LEGATION,
O S L O.

No.101.

18th February, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my telegram No.9 of today's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of the article in the "Norwegian Journal of Commerce and Shipping" regarding Bouvet Island, which formed the subject of that telegram.

I have etc.

(sgd) F.O.LINDLEY.

The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
etc. etc. etc.

Pm. 103/3

DUPLICATE



JHD 1st

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 146

SECRET

Downing Street,

21 March, 1928.



Sir,

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No.114 of the 7th March, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding the proposed erection of a meteorological station on Bouvet Island.

18th February.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

.146

(W 2714/532/50.)



British Legation,

OSLO.

8th March, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.1 Overseas Trade "A" of the 18th January last, I have the honour to report that the Storting yesterday adopted a resolution setting up a council to be known as the "Svalbardog Ishavenesraad" (Spitsbergen and Ice Seas Council). It will be observed that the name has been slightly changed since my above-mentioned despatch was written, and this change denotes that the new Council will interest itself not only in Spitsbergen and the North, but also in the Antarctic Ocean. This extension of the activities of the Council came in for some criticism during the course of the debate in the Storting - members of the Right pointing out that the political complications present in the Antarctic were not questions with which the Council was competent to deal. Nevertheless the proposal was unanimously accepted and the Council was set up.

2. During the course of the debate Mr. Rolf Thommessen, the editor of the "Tidens Tegn" and one of the best friends of Great Britain in this country, expressed the opinion that recent events had shown that the Government had not kept themselves properly informed regarding Antarctic questions. He did not believe that the Norwegian Authorities knew anything about the annexation of Bouvet Island in 1825 when they agreed to the annexation of the island by Norway. Dr.Thommessen admitted that an annexation such as the British had little importance from the point of view of international law, but had there been a Council dealing with the Antarctic it would have been inconceivable that Norway should have been ignorant of the previous annexation, which would have had an important bearing on the treatment of the subject. In the official German work, published as a result of the Waldivia Expedition in 1924, there was a detailed description of the discovery and re-discovery of Bouvet Island and an authentic account of the whole incident of the British annexation of 1825.

I have etc.,

(Signed) F.O. LINDLEY.

The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain K.G., M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
etc., etc., etc.

24/4/28.

3. I replied that it seemed to me that the Norwegian Government might, without too great difficulty or loss of prestige, explain to the public here that, when they had agreed to the annexation of Bouvet Island, they had been totally unaware of the British claim and of the fact that the British Government had granted a concession in respect of the island to a Norwegian subject. As a matter of fact had the Norwegian Government been aware of these two facts, they would presumably not have annexed the island; and I could not see anything derogatory in the line of action I suggested. Moreover, it must be remembered that, though His Majesty's Government made no use of the island for over a hundred years after they annexed it, they began their negotiations with Mr. Rasmussen for a concession a good many months before the "Norvegia" hoisted the Norwegian flag; and the initiation of such negotiations showed that the British Government were prepared to make use of the islands as soon as circumstances were favourable. Had the "Norvegia" arrived at Bouvet a short time later, there would have been no doubt that the British claim would have been quite unassailable.

4. Mr. Vogt replied that there was one great difficulty which the Norwegian Government would have to face if they took the line I suggested. This difficulty lay in the fact that Captain Sverdrup had hoisted the Norwegian flag on certain islands lying to the north of Canada only twenty years ago, and that the Norwegian title to these islands had never been recognised by the Canadian Government. For the last two or three years the Norwegian Consul-General in Montreal had been trying to elucidate from that Government a definite reply regarding the Norwegian claim, but up to now he had been entirely unsuccessful. If the Norwegian Government were to give up their claim to Captain Sverdrup's discoveries, which had only been made twenty years ago, on the ground that they had not been utilised since the Norwegian flag was hoisted, it was difficult for them to act in precisely the opposite manner in the Antarctic and admit a claim on the plea of prior discovery when more than a hundred years had passed without that discovery being put to any practical use. I replied that I quite understood the difficulty to which Mr. Vogt referred, but I did not think an isolated island in the Antarctic could be treated on all fours with islands which might be said to belong geographically to the mainland of which the Canadian Government was in undisputed possession.

5. Mr. Vogt is returning to London on the 17th instant and will no doubt, by that time, be in full possession of his Government's views.

I have etc.,

(Signed) F.O. LINDLEY.

/532/50)

CONFIDENTIAL
Not to be published without previous authority of H. M's Government

British Legation,

O S L O.

12th March, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.146 of the 8th instant I have the honour to report that Mr. Vogt, Norwegian Minister in London, called on me this morning and soon turned the conversation to the subject of Bouvet Island. He began by asking me whether I had received an account of his last interview with you (see your despatch W 1898/532/50 of the 28th ultimo), in which you had expressed yourself somewhat forcibly regarding the action of the Norwegian Government in proceeding to annex Bouvet Island without consulting His Majesty's Government, in whose name the island had been annexed more than a hundred years ago. Mr. Vogt assured me with great earnestness that the Norwegian Government had no knowledge of the previous British annexation when they sanctioned the action of the Captain of the "Norvegia" in hoisting the Norwegian flag on the island. He had himself searched every atlas in the British Museum and had not found one in which the island was marked as British. He was sure that the Norwegian Government, in their eventual reply to your note of the 15th ultimo, would make it perfectly clear that they had acted in all good faith and without the slightest intention of going behind our backs.

2. Mr. Vogt then asked me whether I had any suggestion to make for solving the dispute. I replied that my Government considered that it was for the Norwegian Government, if they were not satisfied with the present state of the matter, to reply to the last British communication. But it seemed to me that whether the sovereignty of the island is vested in King George or King Haakon, the Norwegian whaling industry had, by virtue of the concession granted to Mr. Rasmussen, already obtained all the practical advantages attaching to the island. Mr. Vogt did not demur to this statement, but added that Mr. Rasmussen's concession being an exclusive one, his rivals in the industry would be sure to complain of being excluded. He himself was very averse to applying such heavy machinery as that provided by arbitration at the Hague or by an appeal to the League of Nations for settling a dispute of such insignificant practical importance as that involved in the question of Bouvet Island; but he was very doubtful whether his Government, after having officially annexed the island, would feel able to withdraw their claim to it. He had been turning over in his mind the possibility of the two Governments submitting the case to the opinion of some independent jurist whose impartiality could be depended upon and whose verdict might be accepted by both sides without the formalities of a regular arbitration case.

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The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.,
etc., etc., etc.
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs.

24/4/28.

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DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 223

Secret.

Downing Street,

30 April, 1928.

SECRET



Sir,

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No.146 of the 21st March, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding Bouvet Island.

12th March

2. I enclose also a copy of Sir F. Lindley's despatch of the 8th March regarding Norwegian activities in the Antarctic, which is referred to in his despatch of the 12th March.

8th March

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

No.248.

(W 5214/532/50)

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

7th June, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to your despatch No.251 of May 15th I have to inform you that His Majesty's Government much appreciate the offer which Mr. Rasmussen has made to forego the concession which he has obtained in respect of Bouvet Island if thereby a friendly settlement of the question of the sovereignty over that island may be facilitated. His Majesty's Government think it unnecessary, however, to take advantage at present of Mr. Rasmussen's readiness to embody his offer in a formal letter.

2. I shall be glad if you will inform Mr. Rasmussen accordingly.

I am, with great truth and regard,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(For the Secretary of State)

(Signed) G.H. VILLIERS.

The Honourable,

Sir Francis Lindley, K.C.M.G., C.B.,

etc., etc., etc.,

Oslo.

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THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

COPY.
(W 4758/532/50)
No.251.
IMMEDIATE.

BRITISH LEGATION,

OSLO.

15th May, 1928.

Sir,

I have the honour to report that Professor Hjort called on me this morning in order to give me a message from Mr.Rasmussen, who is the holder of the concession granted by the Colonial Office in respect of Bouvet Island. The Professor began by explaining that Mr. Rasmussen was still ill or he would have called on me himself. In Mr.Rasmussen's opinion it would be in the best interests of the Norwegian whaling industry if Bouvet Island were British, and he hoped that the outcome of the dispute would leave the island in British hands. At the same time, he did not wish his concession to afford any obstacle to a friendly settlement between the two Governments; and he was prepared, if I so desired, to write me a letter to this effect. There was another point to which Mr. Rasmussen attached importance. If the island should remain British, he was quite certain to be violently attacked in the newspapers for having applied for the concession, and he thought that in those circumstances it would only be fair if he were entitled to make known his action in notifying His Majesty's Government to the effect that he did not desire that the grant of the concession to him should stand in the way of a settlement.

2. I requested Projessor Hjort to thank Mr. Rasmussen for his very disinterested and publicminded attitude, which I was sure would be much appreciated by my Government. I was not in a position to say how the dispute would end, and I did not think it was necessary for Mr. Rasmussen to write me a formal letter until I had reported the matter to you, which I would do at once. As regards the second point made by Mr. Rasmussen, it seemed to me clear that, if he were attacked on account of his application for a concession, he was fully entitled to defend himself by making it known that he had been ready to withdraw from the field. I hoped, however, that the contingency would not arise.

3. I should be grateful if you would inform me whether you wish Mr. Rasmussen to address a letter either to me or to the Colonial Office offering to withdraw his claim to a concession in order to facilitate a settlement. The Colonial Office will no doubt take into consideration the question as to whether they should grant any ex gratise compensation to Mr. Rasmussen.

I have, etc.,
(Sd.) F.O. Lindley.

The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
etc., etc., etc.

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No.25
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As previously referred to, the master of the "Norvegia" was duly authorised by the Norwegian Government to take unoccupied lands in possession on behalf of Norway, and the subsequent occupation of Bouvet Island was formally ratified by a Norwegian Royal Decree whereby the Ministry of Justice was also empowered to take steps concerning the establishment of a police authority for the island. Apart from these measures, the master of the "Norvegia", during a stay of one month on and near Bouvet Island, carried on sealing and whaling operations there, while the scientists belonging to the expedition made extensive scientific studies of the island and the waters surrounding the same, the results of which studies will accrue to the world at large.

I am instructed by my Government to inform you that in view of the above they consider the occupation of Bouvet Island by Norway to be valid, that this also applies to the rights acquired by Mr. Christensen, and that they are of opinion that the Norwegian title to the island is securely founded in international law.

(Signed) B. VOGT.

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With regard to Bouvet Island, however, the existence of what was considered to be a British title was not, with the sole exception mentioned above, disclosed so that even British writers of authority have remained unaware of the matter.

My Government are strongly of the opinion that even if the act performed by Captain Norris in 1825 had given Great Britain an inchoate title to the island, this title would have become invalid owing to the fact that Great Britain, as above shown, allowed a period of about a hundred years to pass before manifesting that they considered such title to exist. My Government have had an opportunity of inspecting a map of the Antarctic, printed by the Hydrographic Office of the Admiralty, June 1839, and which belonged to Sir J.D. Hooker, who as assistant surgeon accompanied Sir J.C. Ross in the "Erebus" during the expedition in question. On this chart Bouvet Island is marked with a question mark, while Liverpool Island and Thompson Island are not entered at all. This seems to indicate, therefore, that the Hydrographic Office in 1839, 14 years after Norris's visit, was not aware of this visit. The further fact of the Admiralty Sailing Directions containing no record thereof until 1905 (after "Valdivia" a rediscovery of Bouvet Island) appears to afford additional evidence that the British Government had not taken any steps necessary to maintain any rights which they conceivably might have had in connection with the island. Prominent British writers on international law agree that an inchoate title cannot for an indefinite time constitute a bar to the occupation by another state. Thus, Hall writes (op.cit.p.102) that "An inchoate title acts as a temporary bar to occupation by another state, but it must either be converted into a definite title within reasonable time..... or it must at least be kept alive by repeated local acts showing an intention of continual claim". The same opinion is held by Westlake ("Chapters on the Principles of International Law", 1894, p.163-165), Cobbett (op.cit., p.110), and Oppenheim ("International Law", 3rd Edition, Vol.I., p.386). According to Westlake ("Le Conflit Anglo-portugais" in "Revue de Droit International et de Législation Comparée, 1893, p. 66) Lord Salisbury stated in 1889 in connection with the dispute then existing between Great Britain and Portugal i.a. the following: "Mais jamais l'annexion d'un territoire par écrit ne peut barrer le chemin aux autres nations, si aucune intention de l'occuper réellement n'a été manifestée et que, pendant des siècles, on n'ait pas mis en oeuvre la souveraineté réclamés". The British Government acted in analogy with this principle when including, a few years ago, in the Falkland Islands Dependencies i.a. Terre Louis Philippe and Joinville Isle discovered and occupied by the French Commandant Dumont d'Urville in 1838 on behalf of the French Government, the French title of these areas apparently not having been maintained. Great Britain has also in relation to the United States of America in various cases respecting the sovereignty of certain guano islands at different occasions refused to recognise occupations which had not effectively been maintained by the occupier. This applies i.a. to Christmas Island and Johnson Island (J.B. Moore: "A Digest of International Law", Washington 1906, Vol.I, p.572, 575).

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appear from the work by Sir R. Phillimore referred to above, of which the following is an excerpt (p. 330) : "In the various discussions which took place between the United States and Great Britain with respect to the right of the Oregon Territory, the title resulting from discovery was attempted to be pushed far beyond the limits of this doctrine, even to the extent of maintaining that the first discovery by an uncommissioned merchant-ship gave priority to the claims of America upon these regions. But such a position appears opposed to all authorities upon International Law, and it was steadily denied by Great Britain". The same principle has also been referred to by Hall (op.cit., p.110) and Smith ("International Law", 5th Edition, p.102). Another instance of the British Government themselves upholding this practice appears to be that of the South Shetland Islands; these were taken possession of in 1819 by the sealer W. Smith (Dr. H.R. Mill: "The Siege of the South Pole", p. 95, and "Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on Research and Development in the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands", 1920, p.2), and again by Mr. E. Bransfield in 1820 ("South America Pilot", Part II, Eleventh Edition, Supplement No.9, p.51). In Sir Edward Grey's note of April 30th, 1907, to Dr. Nansen, reference was made to this matter, and to the fact of Captain Heddell's visit to these islands in 1820-1823, while the note adds that "none of these seems to have taken formal possession of the islands". The note, on the other hand, states explicitly that "the British claim to the South Shetlands rests on the fact that Captain Foster of His Majesty's Ship "Chanticleer" took formal possession of the lands about the islands on January 7th, 1829, landing at Cape Possession, Hoseason Island, and that Sir John Ross landed on Cockburn Island in the South Shetlands group on January 6th, 1843, and took formal possession of this and contiguous lands". The foregoing would indicate that the British Government do not appear to have considered as conclusive the unauthorised and informal acts performed by Captain Smith and Mr. Bransfield. In this connection I am to say that my Government are unaware of any evidence showing that Captain Norris ever was authorised by the British Government to occupy land, nor does it appear that the unauthorised and informal act of occupation performed by him was afterwards, within a reasonable period, ratified by the British Government.

I am further to draw attention to the fact that apparently the British Government took no steps in order to make the occupation known. British authorities on international law agree that the acquisition of an inchoate title is subject to the occupation being notified in some way or another. I am aware, from Sir. E. Grey's note of April 30th, 1907, to Dr. Nansen, that it is not the practice of the British Government to notify to Foreign Governments additions to British territory made by annexation, occupation or otherwise. My Government understand, however, that for administrative and practical reasons it has been the practice also of the British Government to make known officially additions to British territory, as it was done in the case of the Falkland Islands Dependencies and the Ross Dependency.

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The chronology of the narrative would seem to indicate that it was Thompson Island on which the landing took place. As stated by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the House of Commons on February 20th, 1928, there does not appear to be any ground for questioning the existence of the latter island.

While my Government have later become aware that an existing facsimile of the said log-book includes entries also for December 14th and 15th, 1825, indicating that it was Liverpool Island rather than Thompson Island on which Captain Norris landed, they are somewhat puzzled by the circumstance that Sir James Clark Ross apparently had access to the original log-book of the "Sprightly". In the book describing his voyages (Vol.II, page 371) he thus states: "The log-book of the Sprightly, Captain Norris, is now before me, from which I quote the following passages": etc. It seems reasonable to assume that Sir James Ross himself must have been aware of the conclusion to which his quotations must inevitably lead.

I am also desired to say that even if it were established that Captain Norris in 1825 took possession of Liverpool Island (Bouvet Island) for Great Britain, this cannot be considered as conveying a valid British title to the island. It is a universally recognised maxim of international law, acknowledged also at the time of Captain Norris's landing more than a hundred years ago, that a state in order to acquire sovereignty over unoccupied territory must in fact take possession of such territory, and that the possession must be effective, a purely formal act not being sufficient. This maxim has been consistently upheld by modern as well as earlier British authorities on international law.

Thus, Sir Robert Phillimore says in "Commentaries upon International Law" (Vol. I, Third Edition, 1879) p.349, that "it may . . . be considered as a maxim of International Law, that Discovery alone, though accompanied by the erection of some symbol of sovereignty, if unaccompanied by acts of a de facto possession, does not constitute a national acquisition". The British Government themselves took the same stand in connection with the dispute between Great Britain and Spain relative to the subject of Nootka Sound. (Phillimore, op.cit., p.350).

While, naturally, it would not be reasonable to make the same demands as to the effectivity of the occupation of lands in the Arctic and Antarctic regions as in other and more hospitable parts of the world, it is generally admitted that also in Arctic and Antarctic regions the occupation must be something more than a matter of form in order to create a valid basis for an acquisition of sovereignty.

My Government further desire me to add that it appears to be at variance with British practice to base a claim of sovereignty on informal acts of occupation made by unauthorised persons unless such occupation has afterwards been confirmed or ratified by the Government. This principle is lucidly stated by prominent British authors on international law such as Phillimore (op.cit.,p.329), Hall ("A Treatise on International Law", 5th Edition, p. 102-103), and Cobbett ("Leading Cases on International Law", 4th Edition, I, p.110), while the British Government themselves have put this principle in practice, as will

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British flag on it and took possession of the island in the name of His Majesty King George IV. You further stated that the British Government consider the title thus acquired by them by virtue of occupation in 1825 to be valid, and that its existance must be generally known, since it is referred to in the 1905 Supplement of the 1901 edition of the "Africa Pilot", Part II, published by the Admiralty.

I am instructed by my Government to inform you that they were not aware that the British Government maintained that there existed a valid British title to this island. A search of the literature available had failed to disclose that Bouvet Island was considered to be British. Thus the "Encyclopaedia Britannica" (eleventh edition) does not contain any confirmation hereof. The British geographer Dr. R.N. Rudmose Brown states on p. 179 of his book "The Polar Regions" (London 1927) that Bouvet Island is unclaimed, also that Thompson Island is unclaimed, and adds that Captain Norris claimed Liverpool Island (which Dr. Brown believes to be identical with Bouvet Island) without authority for Britain. "The Times Atlas of the World" (1920) does not bear any indication to the effect that Bouvet Island was considered to be British. The same applies to The Statesman's Yearbook and other British publications of standing.

The sole exception in this respect is, as far as the Norwegian Government are aware, the said Supplement to the "Africa Pilot", to which their attention was drawn by your note of February 15th, 1928.

I am further desired to say that there does not seem to exist any conclusive proof to the effect that Liverpool Island, as described by Captain Norris is identical with Bouvet Island. The extent of Liverpool Island, according to Captain Norris as quoted by Sir James Ross, is much larger than that of Bouvet Island, while the position of Captain Norris's Liverpool Island also differs not a little from the position of Bouvet Island, as determined by the "Valdivia", the "Meteor" and the "Norvegia". The British Admiralty apparently were of this opinion when issuing the 1905 Supplement to the "Africa Pilot", Part II, 1901 edition, having evidently found that the island rediscovered by the "Valdivia" in 1898 did not correspond in extent or description with either of the islands seen by Norris. The Admiralty therefore seem to have taken it for granted that "Valdivia"s island was identical with the island seen by Lindsay in 1808, and that the position of Liverpool Island must be considered uncertain. Even assuming, however, that Liverpool Island and Bouvet Island are identical, it does not from the material at hand appear to be conclusively established that Captain Norris in 1825 landed on Liverpool Island. Sir James C. Ross does not state on which island Captain Norris landed; he quotes an extract from the "Sprightly's" log-book to the effect that Norris sighted Liverpool Island on December 10th, 1825, and Thompson Island on December 13th; the narrative then goes on to say that a landing on "the island" was made on December 16th.

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COPY.
(W 3978/532/50)
No. 44/1928.

NORWEGIAN LEGATION,
LONDON,
April 23rd, 1928.

Sir,

In my note of January 19th, 1928, I had the honour to inform you that on August 31st, 1927, my Government authorised Mr. Lars Christensen of Sandefjord to take possession on behalf of Norway of any new land that might be found in the course of the expedition of the "Norvegia" to the South Atlantic. The authorisation explicitly referred to land which had not previously in due form been occupied by any other Government. I was further instructed to inform you in my said note that the master of the "Norvegia" landed on Bouvet Island on December 1st, 1927, occupied it for Norway, placed a depot there, and hoisted the Norwegian flag.

I may say in this connection that replying to an enquiry from the Norwegian Whaling Association (of which Mr. Christensen is the vice-chairman and Mr. Johan Rasmussen the chairman), the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs stated in a letter of April 6th, 1927, to the said Association i.a. that it did not appear from the records available that Bouvet Island had been annexed by any nation.

I am also desired to draw attention to the note, dated February 13th, 1928, in which Sir Francis Lindley advised the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Professor Bull, that the British Government had deemed it desirable, in view of the authority given to the master of the "Norvegia" to hoist the Norwegian flag on any lands which he considered to belong to no other power, to remind the Norwegian Government of the discussions in regard to the Antartic regions which took place at the Imperial Conference held in London in 1926. Sir Francis Lindley at the same time transmitted to my Government a copy of the published Summary of Proceedings from the said Conference, containing an account of these discussions, and a list of those areas in the Antarctic to which a British title was considered already to exist by virtue of discovery. Bouvet Island was not included in this list. While my Government were aware that no British title to Bouvet Island existed by virtue of discovery, and that there was consequently no reason why Bouvet Island should be referred to in the said list, they were nevertheless inclined to interpret Sir Francis Lindley's note to the effect that the British Government had no observations to offer in connection with the occupation of Bouvet Island on behalf of Norway.

In your note of February 15th, 1928, you advised me that Bouvet Island on December 16th, 1825, was visited by Captain Norris, who hoisted the

The Right Honourable
Sir Austin Chamberlain, K.G., P.C.,
etc., etc., etc.



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DUPLICATE

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 327

SECRET.

Downing Street,

23 June, 1928.

RH 3017

JN. 3019



Sir,

Fr. Norwegian Min. 22nd April.

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No.223 of the 30th April, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a Note from the Norwegian Minister regarding Bouvet Island.

2. I have to state that the questions raised in the Note are at present receiving the consideration of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain, and that a further communication on the subject will be sent in due course.

Fr. H.M. Min., Oslo, No.251, 18th May.

To do. No.248, 7th June.

3. I take this opportunity to enclose a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo, together with a copy of the reply returned thereto, relative to the concession granted to Mr. Rasmussen in respect of Bouvet Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Captain Christensen intended to annex territories in the Antarctic, it would be a matter to which His Majesty's Government could not remain indifferent.

3. Monsieur Vogt said that in his previous expeditions Captain Christensen had had authority from the King to annex land which belonged to no power. It was under this authority that he had hoisted the Norwegian flag on Bouvet Island, the Norwegian Government being under the impression that, although the island had been discovered by Captain Norris a hundred years ago, it had never been annexed or regarded as British territory. He thought that Captain Christensen might possibly have the same authority as he had before, but if so he would only be authorised to annex territory not belonging to any other power, or to which no other power laid claim.

I am, etc.

(For Lord Cushendun)

(Sd) G.H.Villiers.

No.400.
(W 8362/532/50).

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.
19th September, 1928.

Sir,

The Norwegian Minister called recently on Sir R.Lindsay to talk about Bouvet Island. He said that the last step in the negotiations had been a note from the Norwegian Government to which no answer had yet been returned, and he was anxious to resume discussions. Sir R.Lindsay replied that he was not prepared to make any statement on the subject at once, but that he might be in a position to do so in the course of a few days.

2. During some further conversation about Antarctic affairs generally, Monsieur Vogt referred to the expedition of the "Norvegia" under Captain Christensen. He said that he had seen in the Norwegian paper that Captain Christensen intended to instal a wireless station on some island from which he would be able to communicate with his whalers. Monsieur Vogt when passing through Oslo, had referred to this report at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and had been informed that the Christensen expedition had no official character whatever. Sir R.Lindsay said that the "Norvegia" expedition excited a certain amount of interest here, and still more in the Dominions, and that if

The Honourable
Sir Francis Lindley, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Oslo.

Captain

-3-

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 486

Secret.

Downing Street,

26 September, 1928.



Sir,

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No.327 of the 29th June, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch to His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding Bouvet Island and the "Norvegia" expedition to the Antarctic.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

The enormous area of sea surrounding the South Pole and called by Maury so long ago as 70 years "a reservoir for the dynamic force of the winds, a regulator in the great meteorological machine of the world", has not yet been so thoroughly investigated as it should, and since the meteorological results from the Antarctic Sea and the adjacent land have, since Maury's time, assumed the greatest importance from the economic point of view, not only for the agriculture of South Africa, South America and Australia and for our whaling industry, but for the world in general, the plan of setting up a permanent meteorological station on Bouvet Island will certainly awaken the greatest interest, not only in the Norwegian Meteorological Institute in Oslo, which has promised its assistance, but also with every investigator into the meteorology of the earth.

built there. The tall iron masts for the radio which have been constructed at the Hølen workshops, are already lying finished at Sandefjord.

Mr.Otto Rogne has been appointed Director of the station. Since April 1924 he has been in charge of the radio station belonging to the Store Norske Kulkompani at Advent Bay in Spitsbergen; and his assistant will be Mr.Georg Heldal. Mr.Rogne, who on account of his experience during winters on Spitzbergen, has helped to design the building, has a first-class certificate from the Norwegian Navy. His assistant, who has a mate's certificate and who will act as his general help, is an experienced telegraphist, who has been in charge of the radio station at Advent Bay and has a knowledge of Meteorology. Since the question of housekeeping is of particular importance during the long dark winter months on which an exposed and desert spot as Bouvet, a steward with experience of hard winters will also be appointed.

The three men will leave Norway on board Mr.Christensen's big floating whale factory, the "Thorshammer", about the 1st October next; and at the same time all the gear of the radio station which has been ordered on the advice of Captain Cottwaldt of the Norwegian Navy, will be sent to the island, together with all the provisions, medicines, etc.

The

TRANSLATION.

According to a report to the "Interdepartmental Committee on Research and Development in the Dependencies of the Falkland Islands", the well-known Scotch meteorologist R.D.Mossman recommended strongly as long ago as July 1918 that a meteorological station, which he considered in the highest degree desirable, should be erected on one of the islands in the presumed Bouvet group, and that this should be done as quickly as possible in cooperation with the Governments of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand.

Mr.Mossman's proposal led to no result, but when Mr.Lars Chr.-istensen sent out last year his "Norvegia" expedition to Bouvet Island he instructed Captain Horntvedt to examine the possibility of setting up a permanent meteorological station there. If it were possible Mr.Christensen intended to send two meteorologists who should remain on the island during the whole year.

On the arrival of the "Norvegia" at Bouvet in December last year it was discovered that there were only two places which were possible for such a station, viz. New Sandefjord in Bollevika on Esmarch's Coast and a little beach which stretched from Cape Valdivia inside Sachsebasene on Victoria Terrasse; but since the first-named place would be exposed to landslides the beach south of Cape Valdivia has now been chosen as the site for the radio station which Mr.Christensen intends to erect on the island, and a completely modern station and house for the personnel will be

built

Copy.

(W 8931/532/50)

No.410.

British Legation,

Oslo.

7th September, 1928.

My Lord,

With reference to my telegram No.42 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith translation of an article which appeared in the "Tidens Tegn" of the 4th instant on the subject of the erection of a meteorological station on Bouvet Island. It will be remembered that the intention to erect such a station was reported in my telegram No.9 of the 15th February last.

I have etc.,

(Sd) F.O.Lindley.

The Right Honourable

The Lord Cushendun.

industry, prohibition of the killing of cows with their young, stipulations against the wasteful exploitation of carcases, and other measures of this nature. As regards an international agreement for the regulation of the industry, he anticipated that there would be a good deal of opposition from interests in Norway, who would be anxious to be able to send out free lance expeditions. He touched also on the obvious difficulties in the way of regulating Norwegian and British expeditions and allowing expeditions, entirely unregulated, to proceed under the flags of powers which might not have agreed to any convention that might be concluded between Norway and Great Britain. At the same time he frankly admitted that this was a rather narrow view, and that the necessity for controlling whaling, though it might not be urgent at the present moment, would become increasingly so in approaching years, and that the best avenue of approach was through a close Anglo-Norwegian co-operation. He also suggested that the transit duties levied by the Falkland administration on whale oil, though he admitted that out of these revenues the whaling industry profitted very largely, would nevertheless provoke a good deal of criticism in Norwegian circles.

I am, etc.,

(For Lord Cushendun)

(Sd) R.H.Campbell.

popular interest and enthusiasm that it would never be possible for them to haul that flag down again.

5. Dealing with the territorial aspect of the matter, the Minister pointed out that His Majesty's Government had already in the French, an actual neighbour in the Antarctic continent, a fact which Sir R.Lindsay did not dispute. He pointed out that if we failed to reach an agreement otherwise it might be necessary to have recourse to arbitration over Bouvet Island, but thought that this would be unfortunate. He suggested that from the Norwegian side it might be preferred to secure first the recognition of the Norwegian title to Bouvet Island and that agreement on other points might thus be more easily attained. Sir R.Lindsay replied that he was unable to commit himself definitely, but that His Majesty's Government would probably wish to be assured beforehand of their ground in some manner or other.

6. As regards regulations for safeguarding the whaling industry, Monsieur Vogt mentioned that his government had agreed on a law which was to be introduced shortly in the Norwegian Parliament with this object. He did not know whether it would be passed, but he told me that it contemplated a prohibition of Norwegian expeditions from whaling in temperate waters, a limitation of the number of whaling enterprises authorised to pursue the

.. industry

3. To sum up it appeared that there were three elements to be considered.

(1) The undoubted desire of His Majesty's Government that no further annexations should be made by other powers in the Antarctic regions.

(2) Their equally strong desire to come to terms with the Norwegian Government for a whaling agreement of a satisfactory nature.

(3) Bouvet Island, a question which might be regarded as separate from the wider issues and perhaps of lesser importance. Sir R.Lindsay said that personally he would be inclined to regard it as an incident which might lead to a settlement of the other two greater questions, and he was authorised to state that His Majesty's Government would have no hesitation in recognising the Norwegian sovereignty of this island if they could be met substantially on the other questions. At the same time Sir R.Lindsay emphasised that he was not putting this down as an absolute condition, but merely desired to indicate the best method of approaching a complex question.

4. The Minister promised to report Sir R.Lindsay's remarks to his government. He did not feel able to give any definite indication as to the probable nature of their reply, but he felt convinced that no Norwegian Government would ever be able to abandon the claim to Bouvet Island, because the hoisting of the Norwegian flag on it had excited so much

popular

Shackleton expeditions, was the most valuable contribution to the knowledge of these regions that the world at present possessed. Sir R.Lindsay explained that in these circumstances he would be lacking in frankness if he did not say that the preference of the British Government and even more of the Dominions, was that the Empire should have no neighbours at all in the Antarctic or in its adjacent islands.

2. As regards the other aspects, which was commercial, Sir R.Lindsay observed that the only governmental activity interesting itself in the whaling industry of the southern waters was British, and the whaling industry owed a great deal to the control which had hitherto been exercised. This control had always been exercised in an impartial spirit as between British and Norwegian interests, and it was certainly indispensable that some control should continue to be exercised in a wise and well regulated manner, in view of the danger that the whales in the southern seas might in the course of time vanish almost as completely as they had in the northern oceans. His Majesty's Government had, however, no desire whatever to exclude Norwegians from an industry which they had prosecuted with such skill and enterprise, and they would be anxious to come to an agreement with the Norwegian Government as to the best means which could be taken for the further and even more efficient protection of the best interests of the whaling industry.

3.

Copy.

No.451.

(W 9978/532/50).



FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.,

October 18th, 1928.

Sir,

At Sir R.Lindsay's request the Norwegian Minister called recently to discuss the question of Bouvet Island. Sir R.Lindsay said that whilst His Majesty's Government were anxious to approach this question in a perfectly reasonable spirit, wider issues seemed to be involved than those relating to Bouvet Island alone, and that the two governments were really approaching the discussion of the whole Antarctic question. Of this there were two aspects; the first was political and territorial. Considerations of geography alone, with the British Dominions of South Africa, Australia and New Zealand projecting down towards the Antarctic continent, gave the British Empire a very special interest in the political rights over those areas, particularly in view of the growing disposition of the Dominions to interest themselves in the disposal of Antarctic territories. The justification of the general attitude of Great Britain in this matter was the fact that for many years British administrative activities alone had been exercised in Antarctic waters. Moreover without belitting the admirable Norwegian efforts in the same field, it could not be denied that Great Britain had done the major part of the exploration in the Antarctic and that the scientific work carried out by Great Britain, especially by the Mawson and Shackleton

A.D.F.Gascoigne, Esq.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Oslo.

DUPLICATE

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
Dominions No. 525
Secret.

Downing Street,

6 November, 1928.



Sir,

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No. 486 of the 26th September, regarding the Norwegian claim to Bouvet Island, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, copies of despatches to His Majesty's Representative at Oslo summarizing conversations with the Norwegian Minister in London.

To Mr. Gascoigne 18th Oct.
To -do- 23rd Oct.

2. The situation is engaging the consideration of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain and a further communication will be sent on the subject.

3. I take this opportunity to enclose a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding the proposed erection of a meteorological station on Bouvet Island.

Sir F. Lindley 7th Sept.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble servant,

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE



10 13/72

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 555

Downing Street,

21 November, 1928.

Sir,

I have the honour to state, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, that after careful consideration of the issues involved, His Majesty's Government in Great Britain have decided to waive their claim to Bouvet Island and withdraw their opposition to its annexation by the Norwegian Government. A verbal communication in this sense was made on the 14th November to the Norwegian Minister, who expressed the liveliest satisfaction at this intimation and said that it would greatly gratify his Government.

2. An announcement of the decision reached by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain in this matter has been made in Parliament in the following terms:-

"After a careful review of the issues involved and having regard to the friendly relations existing between our two countries, His Majesty's Government have waived the British claim to Bouvet Island in favour of Norway."

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

On the same occasion Norwegian Minister read two memoranda (1) stating that the Norwegian Government were prepared to express their willingness to refrain from occupying any land within the territories referred to in the Summary of Proceedings of the Imperial Conference 1926 (2) expressing the great interest of his government in the question of the preservation of the stock of whales and the protection of animal life in the Arctic and Antarctic, summarizing the legislation they have in mind for prohibiting the capture of fur seals and controlling the capture of whalebone whales, and stating their willingness to discuss at any time such questions of common interest to Norway and the British Empire. Norwegian Minister was informed in reply that the statement contained in (1) above was greatly appreciated and that with regard to (2) it was possible that we might have proposals to make to the Norwegian Government for devising machinery with a view to closer co-ordination of our mutual interests as regards the preservation of the whaling industry. Norwegian Minister expressed confidence that his Government would be anxious to further this aim by any means which were practicable.

Copies of record of conversation and of the two memoranda read by Norwegian Minister follow by mail in continuation of my despatch of 6th November Dominions No.525. Secret.

Copy

D.11846/28.

TELEGRAM from the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to the Governor General of New Zealand.

(Sent 2.45 p.m. 16th November 1928)

---

16th November. No.166 Secret.

My telegram 11th October No.143 Secret. Antarctic. From attitude which Norwegian Minister assumed in course of negotiations over Bouvet Island it became clear that it would serve no useful purpose to attach conditions to our offer to withdraw our claim to the Island since such a course might result only in antagonising the Norwegian Government without effecting their withdrawal from the Island of which they may be regarded as in occupation (see last enclosure in my despatch 6th November Dominions No.525 Secret) and would thus render more difficult the achievement of the main objects which we have in view. The wiser course seemed to be to withdraw our claim at once as an act of grace and to rely on the goodwill which such action would be likely to inspire to move the Norwegians to reciprocate by giving us assurances which they know that we are anxious to receive as to (1) abstention from further annexations (2) control of pelagic whaling. Norwegian Minister was accordingly informed verbally on 14th November that His Majesty's Government in Great Britain withdrew any claim they might have had to Bouvet Island and would raise no objection to its annexation by the Norwegian Government. Norwegian Minister expressed the liveliest satisfaction at this announcement and said that it would greatly gratify his Government.

On

(W.10837/532/50)

Duplicate.

P.M.

The Norwegian Government have learnt with satisfaction that His Britannic Majesty's Government are favourably disposed as regards the question of the Norwegian sovereignty over Bouvet Island. They would be glad to receive as early as possible H.B.M.'s Government's official communication on the subject. The Norwegian Government strongly hold the opinion that it would be best to decide this question upon its own merits and that it should not be connected with other questions.

However, the Norwegian Government take the greatest possible interest in the question of the preservation of the stock of whales and the protection of animal life in the Arctic and Antarctic Regions. H.B.M.'s Government will be aware that a provisional Order in Council was issued on the 10th of August, 1928, prohibiting the capture of fur seals by Norwegians. The Bill proposing the enactment of this measure will be submitted to the next Storting. The Norwegian Government will submit to the same Storting a Bill proposing regulations for the capture of whalebone whales. This Bill is now under preparation.

The Norwegian Government would be glad at any time to discuss with H.B.M.'s Government such questions of common interest to Norway and the British Empire, and in this connexion they would like to say that they sincerely desire to meet the wishes of H.B.M.'s Government as far as in any way possible having regard to Norwegian interests in Arctic Regions.

Norwegian Legation,

London, 16/10/1928.

Duplicate.

P.M.

The Norwegian Government have not sufficient knowledge of the basis upon which are founded the British claims to each one of the territories which the last Imperial Conference asserted to be British. The Norwegian Government however are prepared to express their willingness to refrain from occupying any land within these territories.

Norwegian Legation.
London, 14/11/1928.

Dun

Government would on all occasions give them the most sympathetic consideration possible. He greatly appreciated the statement which the Minister had made to him in regard to the territories mentioned in the Imperial Conference proceedings, and thought it possible that His Majesty's Government might have proposals to make to the Norwegian Government for the devising of machinery with a view to closer co-ordination of the interests of the two countries as regards the regulation of the whaling industry. Monsieur Vogt replied that he felt quite confident that the Norwegian Government would be anxious to further this aim by all practicable means.

I am, etc.,

(For Lord Cushendun)

(Sd.) R.H. CAMPBELL.

DUP COPY.

No.497.
(W.10837/532/50).

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.
November 15th, 1928.

Sir,

The Norwegian Minister called yesterday on Sir R.Lindsay to continue the discussion regarding the sovereignty of Bouvet Island.

2. On Sir R. Lindsay remarking at the outset that he felt confident the matter would be settled that day, the Minister expressed his gratification and proceeded to read the two memorenda of which copies are enclosed.

3. Sir R.Lindsay then reminded Monsieur Vogt that when he had seen him on a previous occasion he had carefully refrained from making the attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to Bouvet Island in any way conditional on the fulfilment of the desiderata which he had expressed to the Minister on behalf of His Majesty's Government. He was now anxious to carry the logical implications of that attitude a step further by stating formally that His Majesty's Government withdrew all claim to Bouvet Island, and would raise no objection to its annexation by the Norwegian Government. Monsieur Vogt expressed the liveliest satisfaction at this announcement and said that it would be a source of much gratification to his government.

4. Sir R.Lindsay then went on to say that His Majesty's Government still attached great importance to the desiderata which he had mentioned on a previous occasion and I had subsequently repeated, and he hoped the Norwegian Government

A.D.F. Gascoigne, Esq.,
etc.. etc.. etc..

Dup

Nov.15th.

3. I enclose a copy of a despatch to His Majesty's Representative at Oslo giving an account of the conversation with the Norwegian Minister and containing copies of the two memoranda referred to above. The considerations which have influenced the attitude of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain in this matter are explained in the telegram to New Zealand, a copy of which is also enclosed.

16th Nov.

4. It will be appreciated that it is important that, in any public statement which may be made on the matter, no particulars should be given beyond those contained in the announcement which has been made in Parliament in this country, the terms of which are being communicated to you in my despatch Dominions No. 555 of to-day.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

etc.. etc.. etc..

DUPLICATE





UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Secret.

Downing Street,

21 November, 1928.

Sir

In connection with my despatch Dominions No. 555 of the 21 November, on the subject of Bouvet Island, I have the honour to invite reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No. 525 of the 6th November.

2. I would explain that, in the course of the interview at the Foreign Office during which the Norwegian Minister was informed of the decision of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain to withdraw their claim to this I sland, M. Vogt read two memoranda which had been communicated to him by his Government. The first of these memoranda stated that the Norwegian Government were prepared to express their willingness to refrain from occupying any land within the territories referred to in the Summary of Proceedings of the Imperial Conference, 1926. The second memorandum expressed the great interest of the Norwegian Government in the question of the preservation of the stock of whales and the protection of animal life in the Arctic and Antarctic, summarised the legislation which they have in mind for prohibiting the capture of fur seals and controlling the capture of whale-bone whales, and intimated their willingness to discuss at any time such matters of common interest.

3.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Antarctic should not be underestimated.

"The attitude of Great Britain will arouse general satisfaction in Norway. There was reason to believe that Great Britain regarded the Norwegian annexation with mixed feelings in view of her own efforts to develop her whaling industry and there is therefore all the more reason to regard the action of Great Britain as evidence of the close and good relations existing between the two nations.

"This thought was also given a form in the British official communiqué which should meet with general approval".

4. "Morgenbladet", the leading conservative organ, limits itself to giving a history of the Norwegian occupation of the Island and states that, according to the united press, the recognition of Norwegian sovereignty must be regarded as a friendly gesture and not as a sign that it is acknowledged that the British claims were unjustifiable.

5. Of the organs of the Left "Arbeiderbladet" merely reports His Majesty's Government's decision and offers no comments. "Norges Kommunistblad", however, the organ of the Moscow communists, referring to the British communiqué, expresses the opinion that it is as a favour that Great Britain has given the Island to Norway -- "an act of favour as thanks for Norway's excellent performance of the role of lackey which she has been awarded by British imperialism and which role she will continue to play in the future.

Norway's acquisition of Bouvet Island is thus neither a victory for Norwegian diplomacy nor for Norwegian military force, but it has been arrived at by the grovelling of capitalist Norway before 'British predatory imperialism'".

I have etc.

(sgd) A. GASCOIGNE.

Copy

No.497.

BRITISH LEGATION,

OSLO.

17th November, 1928.

My Lord,

With reference to Your Lordship's telegram No.44 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to report that the Norwegian press, as a whole, have, apart from merely reporting the decision arrived at by His Majesty's Government in regard to Bouvet Island and referring to the history of the Norwegian occupation, offered surprisingly little comment.

2. "Tidens Tegn" of November 16th, however, contains an article by Consul Aagaard, a Norwegian business man, praising Great Britain for the self sacrifice which she has displayed in renouncing her claim to that "outpost of Empire". Consul Aagaard further states that the recognition by Great Britain of Norwegian sovereignty over the Island is a "triumph of our good cause, our Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and for British fair play".

3. The same newspaper also publishes a leading article expressing satisfaction and praising the attitude adopted by His Majesty's Government. The article concludes with these words:-

"The annexation was somewhat in the nature of an adventure but real interests were at stake. The annexation was defensible on the grounds that Norwegians utilise those regions more than any other nation. Although Norwegian whaling will be more and more independent of foreign concessions the moral and political importance of a permanent footing in the

Antarctic

The Right Honourable

The Lord Cushendun.

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Downing Street,

Dominions No. 568

30 November, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch Dominions No.555 of the 21st November, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Representative at Oslo summarising the comments which have appeared in the Norwegian press on the decision of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain with regard to Bouvet Island.

37/1170

17th November, 1928.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 568

Downing Street,

30 November, 1928.

37/1170

17th November, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch Dominions No.555 of the 21st November, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Representative at Oslo summarising the comments which have appeared in the Norwegian press on the decision of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain with regard to Bouvet Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

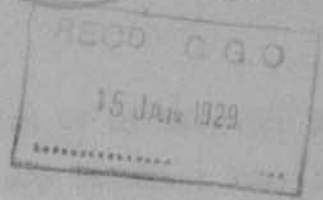
humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.
Dominions No. 591
Confidential.

Downing Street,
18 December, 1928.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch Dominions No. 555 of the 30th November, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copies of despatches from His Majesty's Representative at Oslo reporting Norwegian comments on the decision of His Majesty's Government in Great Britain with regard to Bouvet Island.

S. 37/170

502: 21st Nov.
505: 23rd Nov.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble servant,

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

COPY.

(W 5456/98/50)

No. 188.

British Legation,

Oslo.

29th May, 1929.

Sir,

It was not until this morning that I had an opportunity of speaking to the Prime Minister on the subject of Dougherty Island, in accordance with the instructions contained in your despatch No.188 (W 3397/98/150) of the 8th instant. I reminded His Excellency that I had already mentioned to him, (see last paragraph of my telegram No.7 of the 27th February last), that Mr. Bull, a Norwegian subject, had been granted a licence by His Majesty's Government in respect of this island in 1913, and I also drew his attention to the fact that Consul Lars Christensen, the owner of the s.s. "Norvegia", had himself applied to His Majesty's Government for a licence in respect of the same island in 1926. Both these facts were mentioned in Imperial Conference Paper No.E.130 and in its Appendix A. As regards Mr. Christensen's application, I mentioned that the Norwegian Naval Attaché in London had personally intervened on his behalf.

2. Mr. Mowinckel took careful note of what I had to say, but did not go further than to state that Dougherty Island would not be annexed by the Norwegian Government without further communication with His Majesty's Governme

I have, etc.,
(For H. M. Minister)
(Signed) Alvary Gascoigne.

Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,
etc., etc., etc.

COPY.

(W 3397/98/50)

No.188.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

8th May, 1929.

Sir,

With reference to your despatch No.73 of February 28th, I have to inform you that it is not desired that you should volunteer any statement to the Norwegian Government on the subject of the reported official occupation of Peter I Island by the s.s. "Norvegia". If, however, the Norwegian Government should themselves approach you in the matter you should reply that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom make no claim to the island. You should at the same time, in view of the reported intention of the s.s. "Norvegia" to visit Dougherty Island, take the opportunity of drawing the attention of the Norwegian Government (a) to the circumstances relating to the issue of a licence to a Norwegian subject in 1913 in respect of Dougherty Island, as summarised in Appendix A to Imperial Conference Paper No. E 130, a copy of which is understood to be in your possession; and (b) to the fact, also recorded in paper No. E 130, that in 1926 Captain Christensen, the owner of s.s. "Norvegia", himself applied to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom for a whaling licence in respect of Dougherty Island. You should add that, in reply to enquiries made by the Dominions Office, additional information in connexion with his application was supplied by the Naval Attaché at the Norwegian Legation in London, who personally intervened on Captain Christensen's behalf.

I am, etc.,
(For the Secretary of State)
(Signed) A. W. A. Leeper.

The Honourable
Sir Francis Lindley, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
etc., etc., etc.,
Oslo.



D 22365 - 28 G I

During the voyage from South Shetlands no shoals of whales were seen nor any copepods.

The "Norvegia" left Peter Ist Island on February 9th and met the pack ice at 70° South Latitude and 92° 30' West Longitude. At 109° 30' West Longitude it was impossible to proceed farther south. The ice there was on a level with the ship's bulwarks, and there was not the slightest opening in it. At 122° West Longitude the ice forced the "Norvegia" to the north west. On February 15th the ship was at 69° South Latitude and 127° West Longitude and steered to the north west towards the Ross Sea sector. During that voyage the "Norvegia" sailed over areas which were quite unknown, and some distance to the south of the line which is marked on charts as the ice barrier, in a sea which was named after Roald Amundsen. According to a wireless message received today the "Norvegia" was yesterday at 50° South Latitude and about 170° West Longitude, seeking Swain's Island, concerning which I reported in my articles on the 25th and the 26th instant.

As was the case during the voyage of "Odd I" it was also found this year that the waters of the west of the Shetland Islands are practically devoid of whales and copepods. Thus the "Norvegia" reports from Peter Ist Island that they only met 25 whales in all, blue whales, finbacks and humpbacks.

The idea of establishing a meteorological station on Bouvet Island this year had to be entirely abandoned, but a fresh attempt would be made next year.

Fredriksvern, February 26, 1929.

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The Geographical Journal in an article concerning Bouvet Island produced in No. 6, 1928, maintained that in consideration of Captain Norris's decided contention that he discovered Thompson Island in 1825, and on the basis of the confirmation which Captain Fuller had given with regard to the existence of the Island in 1893, there was no reason to doubt the existence of the Island. Lieutenant Commander R. T. Gould, R.N. (retired) came to a similar conclusion and maintained this in his recently published book "Oddities". In that connection Captain Larsen on the "Norvegia" received telegraphic orders to make a careful search for Thompson Island and "The Chimnies".

In conformity with these instructions the "Norvegia" left Bouvet Island on the 20th December, and cruised about for 8 days within an area limited by 4° 35' west Longitude and 6° 17' East Longitude and 52° South Latitude and 55° South Latitude searching for Thompson Island, but without result. No land or signs of land were observed in or near the positions given by Norris, Fuller and Gould. It must therefore be taken for granted that what Norris saw on December 13th, 1825, and which he believed to be an island, was nothing but a large capsized iceberg upon which there had fixed themselves stones and gravel whilst it was aground on the west coast of the Island which we now call Bouvet Island. Similar black icebergs were observed by the "Norvegia" expedition this year, and Captain M. Halbert Mikkelsen, on Consul Lars Christensen's tankship the "Thoröy", in a letter to the owners written on board that vessel at sea, 40° South Latitude, dated January 9th, 1929, reported that on the way home from the pack ice his ship passed the position given on the British Admiralty's charts for Thompson Island and "The Chimnies", without having seen them. On the other hand he met several coal black icebergs which at first he took to be islands. To one of them he had even given the name "Thoröy" before he discovered his mistake.

If Norris and Fuller really saw Thompson Island and "The Chimnies" in 1825 and 1893 respectively, which is very doubtful, then the only explanation of the disappearance of the island and rocks is that after 1893 they must have been swallowed up by a submarine sinking of the crust of the earth, a deluge, or by a volcanic eruption similar to that at Krakatau.

After these resultless investigations the "Norvegia" went back to the "Thorshammer" in order to bunker, and left that vessel on January 4th with Deception Island as its destination. The "Norvegia" arrived there on January 23rd, and also during that voyage scientific investigations were made, and she then proceeded to Peter 1st Island which one of Christensen's sailing ships, "Odd I" had visited in the season 1926-27. On that island, which was discovered by the Russian Circumnavigator von Bellingshausen on January 10th, 1921, the Norwegian flag was hoisted and the island taken in to possession in the name of King Haakon VII on February 2nd, 1929. During their stay at the island the weather was very bad, and storms and fog rendered the work difficult.

(Enclosure to Sir F. Lindley's Despatch No. 73, 28.2.29.)

TRANSLATION FROM:

"Norges Handels og Sjøfartstidende".

(The Norwegian Journal of Commerce and Shipping.)

February 27th, 1929.

"The area west of South Shetlands practically devoid of whales.

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"In the Roald Amundsen's Sea the "Norvegia" saw only 25 whales and no copepods.

"The vessel has been farther south in those waters than any other expedition. Bouvet Island is not to have a wireless station this season.

"Coal black drifting icebergs which looked surprisingly like islands.

"Thompson Island is probably such an "island".

By Bjarne Aagaard.

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As mentioned in the official communiqué yesterday, the "Norvegia" left South Georgia on November 18th, 1928, on its new expedition under the command off Captain Nils Larsen, who was first officer on the previous voyage.

On the way to Bouvet Island meteorological and oceanographical investigations were constantly undertaken by Dr. Olstad's assistant, who went on board in South Georgia, whilst Dr. Olstad, who was the scientific leader of the expedition, was to join at Bouvet. He left for Bouvet Island on October 14th, on board the floatingfactory "Thorshammer", and on his arrival went on board the "Norvegia", which in the meantime had reached the meeting place agreed upon. From December 9th to 13th a quantity of material belonging to the meteorological station was transferred from the "Thorshammer" to the "Norvegia". This was finished just before the arrival of the "Pythia", another floating factory belonging to Christensen, whereupon, a quantity of material was taken from the latter. On December 16th investigations were made with regard to a suitable spot for the meteorological station and this work was continued on the 17th and following days. the results were that the only suitable spot was found to be Lars Island, and doubts were even expressed regarding that. The weather was very bad most of the time, with storms, fog and high seas. As long as they remained at the sland wireless connection was very bad, a phenomenon which was also noticeable during the "Norvegia's" first voyage. Bouvet appeared to be what is known as "a dead point". During their stay there members of the expedition went ashore in Bouvet Island and also on Lars Island.

his mistake. This may possibly be the explanation of the myth concerning these islands.

From Bouvet Island the ship proceeded to the edge of the ice and thence to Deception on South Shetlands where it took a full cargo of coal, and further westward to Peter Ist Island, which on February 7th by authority from the Norwegian Government was occupied as Norwegian territory. No claim to Peter Ist Island has been made by other Powers. It was first seen in 1821 by a Russian expedition under the command of Admiral von Bellinghausen and later by a Frenchman Charcot. But no one had been on shore there before. The island is 9 nautical miles long in a northerly to southerly direction.

As will be remembered, Consul Christensen sent his ship "Odd I" to the Island in 1927. They succeeded for the first time in approaching close to it but nobody went on shore. However, maps were made and photographs taken, soundings were made in the vicinity, and by bottom scraping a collection was made for samples of stone which have subsequently been scientifically investigated and described by Herr Olaf Anton Broch, B.Sc.

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(Enclosure to Sir F. Lindley's Despatch No. 73, 28.2.29)

TRANSLATION FORM

"Tidens Tegn"

27.2.29.

In connection with the above report Consul Christensen has given us the following complete information regarding the expedition.

The "Norvegia", which as will be remembered was severely damaged during her last expedition, has been lying at South Georgia for repairs during the winter under the direction of Larsen, first mate, who is in command of the vessel on the present expedition. In order to achieve its object, viz., to investigate the occurrence of whales off the Falkland Islands, the "Norvegia" has a complete scientific equipment on board. Thus there are all kinds of instruments for sounding deep water, for measuring temperatures and for obtaining samples of water from the depths of the sea. The expedition has paid special attention to securing complete observations of the occurrence of ice and the direction of currents, matters which are of great interest to whalers. The occurrence of copepods is also of course of the greatest importance, and whenever there has been an opportunity the lanes in the ice have been entered and samples taken of the copepods beneath the surface of the ice, where as a rule they are deposited like a brown layer. There is also on board a complete equipment for undertaking bottom scraping, and this has been done extensively around Bouvet and Peter Ist Island. According to the reports discoveries have been made there which Dr. Olstad, who is a Zoologist and was in South Shetlands and South Georgia last year, considers to be hitherto unknown species. The expedition has twice crossed the old whaling area in the Falklands section, and in addition, has followed the ice for some distance eastward, south of Bouvet. They have thus undoubtedly made valuable observations regarding the stock of whales, observations which in future will be of great importance for Norwegian whaling. Besides landing on Bouvet Island they also went ashore on a little island in the neighbourhood which has been given the name Lars Island after Consul Christensen's little son.

Great interest is attached to the information that the expedition was not able to find Thompson Island and "The Chimnies", although it cruised for nine days, from December 20th - 29th, in the waters where Englishmen assert that the Islands lie, and the soundings were taken down to 1500 m. without reaching bottom. In this connection it may also be stated that the Captain on Consul Christensen's tank boat "The Thorøy", when he returned home in January, had orders to make his course according to the alleged position of the islands, but he, too, saw nothing of them. In his report to the owners the Captain of "The Thorøy" wrote that he had observed no islands but had several times been deceived by coal black icebergs, and that in one case he had even named a large iceberg "Thorøy" before he discovered

reports an interview with Mr. Christensen on the subject of the expedition.

3. I should perhaps mentioned that the "Arbeiderblad", in commenting last night on the latest acquisition of new territory by Norway, sounds a warning note and seems to assume that negotiations with Russia, as the country which first discovered Peter Ist Island, would be necessary before the Norwegian title is recognised.

I have the honour to be,
with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
humble Servant,

F.O. Lindley.

No. 73.

BRITISH LEGATION

OSLO.

February 28th, 1929.

Sir,

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 7 and 8 of the 27th instant, I have the honour to report that the message published by the official Norwegian Telegraph Bureau in the evening newspapers of the 26th regarding Peter Ist Island runs as follows in translation :-

"The owners of the 'Norvegia' inform us that the vessel left South Georgia on November 8th, 1928. The principal object of the expedition is to search for whales and in that connection make observations of ice, currents, the temperature of the water, the appearance of whale food along the ice and within the water channels, make notes of all whales seen, take soundings, etc. Trawls will be lowered and collections made for scientific examination.' The leader of the expedition is Dr. Ola Olstad.

"The ship first sailed across the Falkland Sector and thereafter followed the ice and in the new whaling area south and east of Bouvet. A number of landings were made on the Island. Afterwards the ship searched the waters in which Thompson Island and "The Chimnies" are marked as lying. It is the opinion of the expedition that neither of these two exist.

"Thence the ship took a more southerly course over the Falkland Sector to South Shetland. The course then was led to Peter Ist Island, which was occupied for Norway on February 2nd. Thence the ship penetrated into the pack ice as far as 70° South Latitude, from which point she worked her way westward until about the edge of the Ross Sea Sector at 140° West Longitude.

"The ship has apparently sailed over unknown areas. The area where Peter Ist Island lies has been christened Roald Amundsen's Sea.

"The ship is now looking for the mysterious Swain's Island, or Dougherty, which is supposed to have been observed several times but which it has not been possible to rediscover."

2. I have the honour further to transmit translations of two articles from the Norwegian press on the subject of the Island. The first article, which appeared in the Shipping Gazette last night, is written by the well-known authority on Arctic research, Mr. Bjarne Aagaard. It will be seen from this article that very few whales were observed by the "Norvegia" during her cruise. The second article is from "Tidens Tegn" of yesterday and

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The Right Honourable
Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary
of State for Foreign Affairs,
London.



D 22365 - 28 G I

DUPLICATE

Bn 103/14

No. 75.

11/10

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 313

Secret.



Downing Street,

10 July, 1929.



Sir,

With reference to my predecessor's Confidential despatch Dominions No.591 of the 18th December, 1928, and connected correspondence, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of correspondence with His Majesty's Representative at Oslo on the subject of the official occupation of Peter I. Island by the s.s. "Norvegia" and the reported intention of that vessel to visit Dougherty Island.

28th Feb.
8th May
29th May

2. A copy of the Imperial Conference Paper No.E.130 to which reference is made was enclosed in Mr. Amery's Secret despatch of the 5th January, 1927.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

experiments was very promising, and the expedition would, besides feeding the crew on the whale meat, prepare about twenty tons of tinned meat for sale. A further subject on which Mr. Christensen was working was the utilization of the glands, marrow and ovaries of whale for medical use.

I have etc.,

(Signed) F.O. LINDLEY.

bays. Soundings would be taken by means of the echo sounding apparatus, and samples of the bottom of the sea would be examined. These observations would be carried out from a number of different points, probably about a hundred. The expedition would also attempt to bring home living specimens of fur-bearing animals for the zoological gardens, as well as specimens of other animals and samples of stone, moss, etc.

3. Mr. Christensen mentioned further that twenty-five whales had been marked last year by the "Norvegia", and that further marking would be carried on during the coming expedition. Special darts had been constructed, on which was engraved the capital letter "N" and a number; and it was very much hoped that anyone who took whales with these marks on them would report the occurrence to him.

4. Mr. Christensen continued that the "Norvegia" would sail over the area where the mysterious Nimrod Islands were placed, and would again look for Dougherty Island in the position given by Bull. During the flights the aeronauts would attempt to discover whether the top of Bouvet Island was a crater, as well as to chart that island and Peter Island with the help of photographs from the air. In Bouvet Island a new depôt would be placed instead of the one which was carried away last winter.

5. Finally, it was mentioned that the "Thorshammer" would have on board the first machinery for preparing whale meat hermetically. The inventor was a Mr. Vetlesen, who had been experimenting for over three years with the object of eliminating the taste of oil in the meat. The result of his

experiments....

COPY

No. 329.

(W.8349/98/50)



British Legation,

OSLO.

22nd August, 1929.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.188 of the 29th May last I have the honour to report that an interview with Mr. Lars Christensen on the subject of the forthcoming cruise of his ship "Norvegia" in the Antartic was published in the Norwegian "Shipping Gazette" last night. Mr. Christensen is reported as having stated that the "Norvegia" was now lying in South Georgia, and that the "Thor I" was leaving Norway tomorrow with the crew of the "Norvegia" on board, and that the "Thorshammer", with Captain Riiser--Larsen and Mr. Lutzow--Holm and their flying machines was leaving the day after. It is intended that the "Norvegia" should meet the "Thorshammer" at Bouvet Island and take on board the flying machines and act as their mother-ship. The "Norvegia" and the airmen would help Captain Bull in the "Thorshammer" as long as it was desirable, but as soon as Captain Nils Larsen and the "Norvegia" had obtained their object, it was intended that the "Norvegia" should follow the ice barrier right round the Antartic basin.

2. It was reckoned that the voyage would take about four months. Capter Riiser-Larsen would undertake the scientific work which would include investigations regarding the ice, the ocean currents, the temperature of the sea and the presence of whale food along the ice and within the open bays.....

The Right Honourable

Arthur Henderson, M.P.,

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

LONDON.

DUPLICATE

Pn 103/3

Pn 11/10

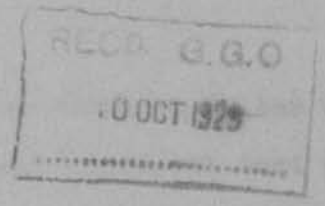
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Dominions No. 441

S E C R E T

Downing Street,

18 September, 1929.



Sir,

With reference to my Secret despatch Dominions No. 313 of the 10th July, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding a proposed Norwegian expedition to the Antarctic.

S. 37/1170

329. 22nd August

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

COPY.

(N 2325/1804/30).

No. 56/1929.

NORWEGIAN LEGATION,

Londres,

le 9 mai, 1929.

Monsieur le Ministre,

D'ordre de mon Gouvernement, j'ai l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de Votre Excellence que l'île de Jan Mayen, par Décret Royal du 8 mai 1929, a été soumise à la souveraineté de la Norvège.

L'autorité de police dans l'île est exercée par le chef de la station météorologique.

Veuillez agréer, Monsieur le Ministre, les assurances de ma plus haute considération.

(Signé) B. Vogt.

The Right Honourable

Sir Austen Chamberlain, K.G., P.C.,

etc., etc., etc.

COPY.

No. 9.

BRITISH LEGATION

OSLO.

January 14th, 1930.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that, in the King of Norway's Speech opening the Storting on the 13th instant, His Majesty mentioned that Jan Mayen Island had been taken under Norwegian sovereignty by Royal Proclamation on May 8th last.

2. To-day the Minister of Social Affairs introduced into the Odelsting a Bill proposing that Norwegian Municipal law, Criminal law and laws on judicial procedure shall be applied to the new Norwegian possessions of Bouvet and Jan Mayen Islands. It provided, however, that with regard to the judicial procedure laws, the King is empowered to introduce such modifications as are necessitated by the conditions obtaining, whilst His Majesty is also empowered to make regulations for carrying out the legislation in force.

I have, etc.,

(SGD.) Charles Wingfield.

The Right Honourable
Arthur Henderson, M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary
of State for Foreign Affairs,
London.

Br 103/14

JAD 12/3

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
Dominions No. 91
CONFIDENTIAL.

Downing Street.

17 February, 1930.

Sir,

I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding the annexation of Jan Mayen Island by Norway and the application of Norwegian laws to Jan Mayen and Bouvet Islands.

S 37/1170
No. 9. 14th Jan.

2. As regards Bouvet Island, I would invite reference to Mr. Amery's confidential despatch Dominions No. 691 of the 18th December, 1928, and previous correspondence.

3. I take the opportunity to enclose, with reference to the first paragraph of Mr. Wingfield's despatch, a copy of a note from the Norwegian Minister of the 9th May last announcing the formal annexation of Jan Mayen Island by Royal Decree of the 6th May, 1929.

9th May, 1929.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

CAPE TIMES, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 23, 1929.

# AN ISLAND OF MYSTERY.

## EXPEDITION'S RETURN FROM BOUVET.

## WHAT DID THEY FIND?

## DIFFICULTIES OF LANDING.

Bouvet Island, which lies some 1,800 miles to the south-west of Cape Town, has always been associated with some mystery or other.

The latest query concerning the place is perhaps the most interesting of all.

Why has Bouvet Island suddenly changed its external appearance? To-day it resembles an iceberg, for which it might easily be mistaken but for the fact that it never moves!

No land whatever is visible along its coastline—nothing but ice.

In 1898 members of the Valdivia (German) expedition brought back some remarkably good pictures of Bouvet. They showed the island to be mountainous and ice-capped over the greater part of its upper surface. But the steep black cliffs, with glaciers running down to the sea here and there, were unmistakable signs of terra-firma, although bleak and inhospitable.

### EXPEDITION THAT FAILED.

About two years ago the German survey ship Meteor also visited the island, and found similar signs of land. Both expeditions, however, reported that it was most difficult to effect a safe landing on the island, as the sea was invariably rough and no natural harbour of any sort existed.

Notwithstanding this information, however, the enterprising whaling firm, Byrde and Dahl, of Sandefjord, Norway, decided to couple meteorological investigations with their first whaling activities in this isolated part of the South Atlantic. For the whalers Bouvet was merely to be a rendezvous for the mustering of the whaling fleet; for the meteorological experts it was to be a home for at least a year.

Fortunately for Byrde and Dahl the whaling season has been extraordinarily successful. In two weeks alone 4,000 tons of oil was secured, which is now on its way to Rotterdam. But the meteorological expedition, as already reported, has ended in complete failure, and the disappointed personnel who reached Cape Town from Bouvet about two weeks ago are now homeward-bound to Norway.

### QUESTIONS UNANSWERED.

What did they find at Bouvet Island, and why did they return so quickly? These were the questions one expected these gentlemen to answer during their few hours' stay in Cape Town. But no. They had received specific instructions to say nothing about their mission of disappointment to the island of mist and mystery.

On Monday last the announcement was made that all attempts by the expedition to effect a landing at Bouvet had proved fruitless. From later information, however, it is possible to say that this is hardly correct.

Dr. Olstad (leader of the expedition), Mr. Otto Rogne (scientist and chief wireless operator), Mr. George Heldahl (second wireless operator), and Mr. Anton Larsen (Steward) all landed successfully on Bouvet Island from an open boat. Ice was everywhere, even covering the black cliffs they expected to find, and the foreshore.

To jump ashore, virtually on an iceberg, unhampered by luggage, was great enough difficulty in itself. Every man was thoroughly heartbroken. Land was nowhere visible, and it quickly became apparent that it would be sheer madness to attempt to land the bulky and costly meteorological gear, radio apparatus and tons of stores, including a ready-made house, at such a place. And so the scheme was abandoned.

Dr. Olstad joined the first available ship homeward-bound from Bouvet, and it is believed that the route he took landed him firstly at some South American port. His colleagues, who went down to Bouvet with him by the factory ship Thorshammer (which left Cape Town on November 27), transferred to the Thoroy, and, as already stated, are now northward-bound from Cape Town with whale oil.

### PROFITABLE SIDE-LINE.

Meanwhile, all the costly equipment intended for the island settlement is still down south on board the Thorshammer, where it is likely to stay until that ship returns to her home port. Among the "effects" of the abandoned expedition are several pairs of silver foxes, valued at £200 each. Fox-farming was to have been a profitable side-line for the meteorologists in their island home.

In view of the prosperous whaling season the Bouvet fleet is expected to return early—possibly within the next month. Thorshammer alone is capable of carrying 13,000 tons of whale-oil in addition to her present conglomeration of deck cargo.

Bouvet Island has formed the topic of many an illuminating discussion in the British Parliament. When whaling rights or the ownership of the island were not being questioned, someone would be asked to define its position and whether the name "Bouvet" signified one island or a group. Thompson Island would creep into the argument, and the reply would be given that this island was sighted in 1825, but at no time since. And as far as Thompson Island is concerned, the position remains unchanged at the moment. The Norwegian meteorologists certainly did not find it, and if the skippers of the Thorshammer, Pythia and other boats, due shortly, report no discovery, one may assume that Thompson Island is in every way "off the map."

If British M.P.'s, however, still have a liking for Bouvet, the House may find some diversion in future if somebody puts the question: Why has Bouvet Island suddenly been turned into an "iceberg"?

COPY.

British Legation,

Oslo.

No.61.

20th February, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.9 of the 14th ultimo I have the honour to report that the Bill proposing that Norwegian Civil law, criminal law and laws on judicial procedure shall be applied to Bouvet and Jan Mayen islands was adopted unanimously by the Odelsting on the 14th instant without debate.

2. According to "Tidens Tegn", Jan Mayen Island will, by the terms of this Bill, become an integral part of the Kingdom in the same manner as Spitsbergen. Bouvet Island, however, is to be considered as a Norwegian possession, and in this connection "Tidens Tegn" points out that it is therefore not untransferable("uavhendelig").

3. The Bill will now, in accordance with the usual procedure, be laid before the Lagting, after which, if it is passed by that body, it will be submitted for the Royal assent.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) CHARLES WINGFIELD.

The Right Honourable

Arthur Henderson, M.P.,

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State

for Foreign Affairs,

etc., etc., etc.

DUPLICATE

Pn. 103/14

DM 27/3



UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 122

Confidential.

Downing Street,

6 March, 1930.



Sir,

With reference to my Confidential despatch Dominions No. 91 of the 17th February, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a further despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo regarding the annexation of Jan Mayen Island by Norway, and the application of Norwegian laws to Jan Mayen and Bouvet Islands.

637/1170

61: NO. 2. 30.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

The Right Honourable
THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Enclosure to Mr. Wingfield's despatch No.83. 18.3/1930.

TRANSLATION.

Law concerning Jan Mayen, 27th February 1930.

§ 1. The Island of Jan Mayen is a part of the Kingdom of Norway.

§ 2. Norwegian civil law, criminal law and laws on judicial procedure shall be applied to Jan Mayen. The King shall decide as to the extent to which other laws shall be applicable. The King is empowered to make such modifications with regard to the laws concerning judicial procedure as may be necessitated by local conditions.

The clause in § 4 of the Law concerning Svalbard of July 17th 1925 shall have corresponding application.

§ 3. All land which has not been transferred to private owners belongs to the State.

No person can acquire ownership or usufruct over State land.

Rights possessed by the State over transferred land cannot be lost by prescription.

§ 4. Special rights possessed over real property on Jan Mayen and which were acquired before May 8th 1929 must, in order to be retained, be notified to the public registrar for entry in the folio of the property within six months after this law comes into force.

§ 5. This law comes into force at once.

British Legation,

O S L O.

No.83.

18th March 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.61 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a translation of the text of a law dated the 27th ultimo, declaring the Island of Jan Mayen to be incorporated in the Kingdom of Norway and providing for the application of Norwegian law to that island.

2. I also beg leave to enclose herein a translation of the text of another law of the same date, declaring that Bouvet Island is taken under Norwegian Sovereignty as a possession, and providing for the application of Norwegian law to that island.

3. Two copies of "Norsk Lovtidende" No.8, 1930, containing the Norwegian texts of the above-mentioned laws are also transmitted herewith.

I have the honour to be,

with the highest respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient, humble servant,

(Sd.) CHARLES WINGFIELD.

The Right Honourable

Arthur Henderson, M.P.

His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

etc., etc.

1.

Pm 103/14.

DUPLICATE





UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.
Dominions No. 225
Confidential.

DOWNING STREET.

15 April, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my Confidential despatch Dominions No.12 of the 6th March I have the honour to transmit for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo communicating the texts of two Norwegian laws, the first declaring the Island of Jan Mayen to be incorporated in the Kingdom of Norway and the second declaring that Bouvet Island is taken under Norwegian Sovereignty as a possession. It will be observed that in each case provision is made for the application of Norwegian law to the Islands.

S37/1170

18th March.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your most obedient
humble servant,

(Signed) PASSFIELD.

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

TELEGRAM.

FROM: Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs.

TO: Minister of External Affairs.

2.8.30.

Secret. As a result of negotiations conducted with the Norwegian Government at the instance of His Majesty's Government in Canada it is expected that the Norwegian Government will shortly recognise the Sovereignty of His Majesty over Otto Sverdrup Island(s) (Certain islands in Canadian Arctic sector discovered by Captain Sverdrup as leader of the second Norwegian Polar expedition 1898-1902). When they have done so it is proposed to instruct His Majesty's Minister at Oslo to address a note to Norwegian Minister of Foreign intimating that recognition by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Norwegian Sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island (See my despatch of 17th February Dominions 91 Confidential and subsequent correspondence). This island which lies between Iceland and Spitzbergen was discovered by a British Subject in 1607 but has hitherto been regarded as terra nullius.

S. 37/1170

Commonwealth of Australia 144. New Zealand 133. Union of South Africa 111 (also ? sent to ?) Irish Free State.

BS

The stipulations contained in the law respecting Svalbard of July 17th, 1925 §§9-12 are to apply *mutatis mutandis* to Jan Mayen.

2. In the memorandum contained in my despatch No.258 of the 29th ultimo, I have endeavoured to explain the nautre of the Norwegian Courts referred to above. I need only add that a "Byfoged" is a Sheriff whose duties are often extensive, including those of a mayor in some of the smaller towns as well as magisterial ones.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) CHARLES WINGFIELD.

No.284.

BRITISH LEGATION,

OSLO.

October 21st, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No. 83 of March 18th last, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of the "Norsk Lovtidende" of the 8th instant containing a Royal Resolution respecting the administration of Jan Mayen Island, of which the following is a translation:-

Royal Resolution.

I. The "Sysselmann" in Svalbard shall provisionally serve as "Sysselmann" for Jan Mayen.

II. The extent of the duties of the "Sysselmann" on Jan Mayen is the same as was fixed for the "Sysselmann" on Svalbard in law No.11 of July 17th, 1925 (please see Sir Francis Lindley's despatch No.170 of June 18th, 1925.).

III. The "Lagmannsrett" for the Troms "Lagsogn" shall for the present be the Lagmannsrett for Jan Mayen.

IV. Jan Mayen constitutes a separate "Domssogn".

The business which by law belongs to the "Herreds" and Byretter" is allocated for the present to the office of the Tromsö "Byfoged".

The

The Right Honourable
Arthur Henderson, M.P.,
His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State
for Foreign Affairs,
London.

MEMORANDUM.

In accordance with the law respecting Courts of Justice of August 13th, 1915, Norway is divided into a number of "Lagdommer" (Circuits) one for each "Lagmannsrett" or Assize Court. This Court consists of three or more judges and tries civil or criminal cases having, when the law so directs, the assistance of a jury or of lay associate-judges (Lagrette or "Domsmenn"). The "Lagdommer" in their turn are divided into "Lagsogn" which may be different for criminal or civil cases. In such "Lagsogn" there are one or more assize towns where the "Lagmannsrett" sits at specified dates.

The kingdom is also divided into "Domssogn", each corresponding to a Rural or Urban Court (Herreds or Byrett.) Each "Domssogn" either constitutes a "Tinglag" or is split up into two or more "Tinglag" either for criminal cases or for civil ones, or for both. In each "Tinglag" one or more spots are fixed for the rural or urban courts on fixed dates. In ordinary cases which come before these courts only one judge will sit, but he can be assisted by "Domsmenn"(lay associate judges) in those criminal or civil cases in which the law provides for this.

In every commune there are one or more Conciliation Councils. Each such Council consists of three Conciliators and as many substitutes. They meet on fixed days at a fixed spot, generally at least once a month. They can, however, meet on other dates and at other places.

"IV. Bouvet Island constitutes a separate Domssogn. The business which by law belongs to the Herreds and Byretter is allocated for the present to the Oslo Urban Court.

"The stipulations contained in the law respecting Svalbard of July 17th, 1925 ~~ss~~ 9 to 12, (please see Sir Francis Lindley's despatch No.170 of June 18th, 1925) are to apply mutatis mutandis to Bouvet Island."

2. I enclose herein a memorandum in which I have endeavoured to explain briefly the nature of the Norwegian courts to which reference is made in the above paragraphs and the areas in which they exercise jurisdiction.

I have, etc.,

(Sd.) CHARLES WINGFIELD.

COPY

BRITISH LEGATION,

No.258.

OSLO.

September 29th, 1930.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.83 of March 18th last dealing with legislation providing for the application of Norwegian law to Bouvet Island, I have the honour to inform you that the issue of the "Norsk Lovtidende" dated the 22nd instant contained the text of a Royal Resolution of the 19th instant, of which the following is a translation:-

"Royal Resolution.

"I. The Department of Commerce takes over the administration of Bouvet Island. The authority devolving upon the "Fylkesmann" (Superior Authority) under the Kingdom's legislation shall in the case of Bouvet Island be exercised by the Department of Commerce.

"II. The duties of the Chief Constable (Chief of the Police) on Bouvet Island are allocated to the Department of Justice.

"III. The Lagmannsrett for the Oslo Lagsogn shall for the present be the Lagmannsrett for Bouvet Island.

"IV.

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
ARTHUR HENDERSON, M.P.,
HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
LONDON.

DUPLICATE

Pm 103/14

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 601

Downing Street,

18 November, 1930.



Sir,

I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister at Oslo communicating the text of a Norwegian Royal Resolution dated the 12th September, on the subject of the application of Norwegian law to Bouvet Island, and a memorandum explaining the nature of the Norwegian Courts to which reference is made.

20.2.30. ✓

Memorandum ✓

21.10.30. ✓

2. I take the opportunity to enclose also a copy of a despatch from His Majesty's Minister communicating the text of a Royal resolution published in the "Norsk Lovtidende" of the 8th October last, regulating the administration of Jan Mayen Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
JAMES THOMAS, M.P.,
PRINCIPAL SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
LONDON.

THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE

Pm 103/14

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Dominions No. 602

Confidential.



Downing Street,

18 November, 1930.

Sir,

In connection with my despatch Dominions No. 601 of to-day's date regarding the administration of Bouvet and Jan Mayen Islands, I have the honour to invite reference to Lord Passfield's Confidential despatch Dominions No. 825 of the 15th April, 1930.

S. 37/11/70

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Extract from Official Report of 17th November, 1930.

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JAN MAYEN ISLAND.

17. Commander SOUTHBY asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of his reply to a question asked on the 19th May, 1930, he is now in a position to give any information regarding the ownership of Jan Mayen island?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Mr. Dalton): My right hon. Friend has within the last few days instructed His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Oslo to hand in a note to the Norwegian Minister for Foreign Affairs announcing the recognition by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Norwegian sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

DUPLICATE

Pm 103/14

Word 30/12

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

No. 471

Downing Street,

1 December, 1930.



S. 37/1170

Sir,

With reference to my despatch Dominions No. 601 of the 18th November, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying extract from House of Commons Official Report of the 17th November containing a statement regarding the recognition by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Norwegian Sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE

Pm 103/18

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

No. 472

SECRET.

Downing Street,

1 December, 1930.



Sir,

With reference to my Secret telegram No.111 of the 2nd August, I have the honour to state, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa that, by an exchange of notes completed at Oslo on the 5th November, the Norwegian Government have recognised the Sovereignty of His Majesty the King over the Otto Sverdrup Islands.

S.37/1170

2. His Majesty's Minister at Oslo has therefore been authorised to address a note to the Norwegian Government informing them that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom recognise Norwegian Sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

19th November 1930.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Monsieur le Chargé d'Affaires,

In a note of the 18th instant you were so good as to state that His Britannic Majesty's Government recognises Norway's sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

I have the honour, while acknowledging the receipt of your note, to ask you to convey to your Government the thanks of the Norwegian Government for their friendly attitude towards Norway, which has found expression in the above-mentioned recognition.

I avail myself, etc.

(For the Minister of Foreign Affairs)

(Sgd.) AUG. ESMARCH.

Mr. Kenneth Johnstone,

H.B.M. Chargé d'Affaires,

etc., etc., etc.

Copy

No.128

BRITISH LEGATION

OSLO.

18th November 1930.

Monsieur le Ministre d'Etat,

As Your Excellency is doubtless aware, on May 9th, 1929 the Norwegian Minister in London addressed a note to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, announcing that, by a Royal Decree dated May 8th Jan Mayen Island had been placed under Norwegian sovereignty.

I now have the honour by direction of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform Your Excellency that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have taken note of this Decree and formally recognise Norwegian sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

I am instructed to add that, His Majesty's Government not having been informed of the grounds on which Norwegian sovereignty was extended to Jan Mayen Island, their recognition of that sovereignty is accorded independently of and with all due reserves in regard to the actual grounds on which the annexation may have been based.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to you, Monsieur le Ministre d'Etat, the assurance of my highest consideration.

(Sgd.) KENNETH JOHNSTONE.

Son Excellence

Monsieur J.L. Mowinckel,

etc., etc., etc.

DUPLICATE

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

No. 505

Downing Street.

24 December, 1930.



S. 37/1170

10th November.
19th November.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No. 471 of the 1st December, I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copies of notes exchanged with the Norwegian Government on the 10th and 19th November regarding the recognition by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Norwegian Sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE

RECD. G.G.O.
8- APR 1931

D 9/4

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Circular despatch A. No. 60

Downing Street,

18 March, 1931.

Sir,

With reference to my despatch No.505 of the 24th December, 1930, I have the honour to transmit for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copies of Treaty Series Paper No.14 of 1931 (Cmd. 3792) containing the text of the notes exchanged between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Norwegian Government respecting the recognition of Norwegian Sovereignty over Jan Mayen Island.

S. 37/1170

Cmd. 3792.

2. Further copies are being sent by Library despatch.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

D 9/4

R

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE

7 MD 19/6





UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Circular despatch A. No. 93

Downing Street.

27 MAY 1931.

Sir,

I have the honour to state, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, that His Majesty's Minister at Oslo has reported that Norwegian sovereignty over Peter I Island was proclaimed at a Cabinet Council held at Oslo on the 1st May.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

X Dis 19/6

DUPLICATE

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Circular despatch A. No. 94

SECRET.

Downing Street.

27 MAY 1931.



Sir,

In connection with my despatch Circular A. No. 93 of today's date, regarding the proclamation of Norwegian sovereignty over Peter I Island, I have the honour to invite reference to Lord Passfield's Secret despatch Dominions No. 318 of the 10th July, 1929.

S. 37/170

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble Servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Cab 23/7

DUPLICATE Mn 103/18

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
Circular Despatch A No. 109

Downing Street,

30 JUN 1931



Sir,

I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copies of Treaty Series Paper No.25 of 1931 (Cmd.3875), containing the text of notes exchanged between His Majesty's Government in Canada and the Norwegian Government, on the 5th August, and the 5th November, 1930, regarding sovereignty over the Otto Sverdrup Islands.

✓ Cmd.3875.

2. Further copies are being sent by Library despatch.

Lib Gile
Return for extraction
Cab 23/7

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your most obedient
humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DUPLICATE

P.M. 103/18

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA
No. 194
SECRET

Downing Street,

30 JUN 1931



Sir,

In connexion with my Circular despatch A. No. 109 of today's date regarding sovereignty over the Otto Sverdrup Islands, I have the honour to invite reference to my Secret despatch No. 472 of the 1st December, 1930, on the subject.

S.37/170

S.37/1170

2. This despatch is being sent to the Commonwealth of Australia No. 285 New Zealand No. 218 the Union of South Africa No. 194 and the Irish Free State No. 148

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

COPY

No.W.192/192/50.

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W. 1.

14th January, 1932.

Your Excellency,

With reference to the enquiry of the 1st December concerning Bouvet Island, I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that the Norwegian Minister informed Sir Austen Chamberlain in a note, dated the 19th January, 1928, that a Norwegian expedition to the South Atlantic in the steamship "Norvegia" had been authorised to take possession for Norway of any new land which might be found, and that the master of the "Norvegia" had occupied Bouvet Island on the 1st December, 1927, established a depot there and hoisted the Norwegian flag.

2. The statement made by Sir Austen Chamberlain in the House of Commons, to which you referred, was based on a note of the 15th February, in which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom replied to the Norwegian Government, informing them of the existence of a prior British claim and formally reserving all their rights.

3. In November 1928, however, after a careful review of the issues involved and having regard to the friendly relations existing between the two countries, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom decided to waive their claim to Bouvet Island in favour of Norway.

4. Further I have the honour to transmit herewith to you copies of the Parliamentary Question and Answer, in which this decision was publicly announced in the House of Commons on the 19th November, 1928.

I have, etc.,

(For the Secretary of State)

(Sd.) C. HOWARD SMITH.

His Excellency,
Monsieur A. de Fleuriau, G.C.V.O.,
etc., etc., etc.

COPIE

(W.13677/29/50)

Le 20 février 1928, la question des droits à la possession de l'Ile Bouvet avait fait l'objet d'une déclaration du Secrétaire d'Etat pour les Affaires Etrangères à la Chambre des Communes.

Le Gouvernement français désirerait, si celà était possible, connaître l'état de cette question.

1er décembre, 1931.

JD 23/v

DUPLICATE

Pm 103/14

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Circular despatch A. No. 16

Downing Street,

28 January, 1932.





Sir,

5.37/170

1st December, 1931.
14th January.

With reference to Mr. Amery's despatch Dominions No.555 of the 31st November, 1928, and connected correspondence, I have the honour to transmit for the information of His Majesty's Government in the Union of South Africa, the accompanying copy of a note from the French Ambassador concerning Bouvet Island, together with a copy of the note sent to the French Ambassador in reply.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) J. H. THOMAS

WAM

Subsequent despatches retained for one year only.
File

JD 29/9/33

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS,

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

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| 24.I.28. | Desp. from S of S Doms. | No.39.CONF. |
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| 30.4.28. | do | 223.SECRET. |
| 29.6.28. | do | 327.SECRET. |
| 26.9.28. | do. | 486.SECRET. |
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| 6.3.30 | do. | Doms. No. 122, Conf. |
| 15.4.30 | do. | Conf.Doms.No.225. |
| 2.8.30 | Tel. from S. of S. No. 111 Secret. | |
| 18.11.30 | Despatch from S. of S. No. 601. | |
| 18.11.30 | Despatch from S. of S. Doms. No. 602 Conf. | |
| 1.12.30 | -do- | No. 471. |
| do. | -do- | No. 472 Secret. |
| 24.12.30. | -do- | No. 505. |
| 18.3.31 | -do- | Cir. desp.A. No. 60. |
| 27.5.31 | -do- | 93. |
| do. | -do- | 94 Secret. |
| 30.6.31 | -do- | 109. |
| -do- | -do- | No. 194 Secret. |
| 28.1.32 | -do- | Cir. A. No. 16. |