

WES 147/33/1

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
SANTIAGO.

April 4, 1957.

*J. G. Stewart Esq  
S. Africa House.*

*With the Compliments of the  
Under-Secretary of State for  
Commonwealth Relations*

*In view of the  
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8/3) enclosing a cutting from  
ut the Antarctic.

counsellor in the United States  
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, during their recent expedition  
on Robert Island in the South  
Counsellor was clearly  
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Robert Island. So far,  
o have seen fit to exploit this  
erence to the subject in the

press. We suppose it is just conceivable that the civilian side of  
the Chilean Government have been kept as much in the dark about it as  
the U.S. Embassy. More probably they have stored the matter away in  
their dossier and will use it at what they regard as the most  
favourable moment.

3. The Counsellor at the American Embassy said that he had never  
heard of the suggestion, also contained in the "New York Times"  
article, that naval specialists in Chile favoured building a large  
naval base in Nassau Bay. His own view was that the amount of money  
available for United States strategic requirements would not be  
sufficient to cover a project of this kind. The fact that the U.S.  
Navy Department had not followed up the chance of improving the  
repair facilities in the Chilean Navy Dockyard at Talcahuano  
illustrated, he thought, their general unpreparedness to put more  
into this part of the world for strategic purposes. He did not  
think there had been any modification in U.S. strategic thinking as  
regards the extreme South Atlantic.

4. We are copying this letter to the Chanceries at Washington and  
Buenos Aires.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY.

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1.

19/88/2.

AIRMAIL

Confidential

9th May, 1957.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

*Commonwealth Relations*

Antarctica

I send you copies of a letter of the 4th April from the British Embassy in Santiago to the Foreign Office about an airstrip which was built by the Chileans on Robert Island in the South Shetlands at the request of the United States Government.

A copy of the "New York Times" report referred to in this letter (sent to us by the Commonwealth Relations Office) is also enclosed.

C. F. G. von Hirschberg.

Minister.

CVH/SB

4. We are copying this letter to the Chanceries at Washington and Buenos Aires.

Yours ever,

CHANCERY.

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1.

Staatsdepartement se voorstel mag wel van die hand gewys word. Die Nasionale Veiligheidsraad mag besluit om enige formele optrede uit te stel tot aan die einde van die Internasionale Geofisiese Jaar, maar om intussen alles in gereedheid te bring vir toeëiening in 1959 gepaard met effektiewe stappe om Amerikaanse soewereiniteit dadelik te laat geld.

Die stigting van die „Antarctic Commission" waarvan ek in my laaste diensbrief melding gemaak het, word nou agterweë gehou tot tyd en wyl die Veiligheidsraad tot 'n beslissing geraak het (moontlik binne die volgende twee of drie maande). Met die afsterwe van Admiraal Byrd, wat grootse idees gehad het vir die Suidpool val die mantel nou op Admiraal George Dufek, 'n militaris wat baie min oor het vir die Staatsdepartement. Ek verstaan dat Dufek die dryfkrag is agter die Pentagon se afkeur vir formele toeëiening op hierdie stadium.

Die vraag bly steeds wat die Russe in 1959 gaan doen. Al die Russiese basisse is in die Australiese sektor en ig. sal blykbaar van Rusland verwag om die streek te ontruim sodra die Internasionale Geofisiese Jaar ten einde loop. Of hul hieraan gehoor sal gee (veral indien die Amerikaners intussen 'n toeëiening doen) en wat sal gebeur indien hul weier, is moeilik om te sê. Australië self, vir sover ek kan vaestel, het nie meer duidelikheid oor die saak as Washington en Londen nie.

Die Britte, volgens plaaslike aanduidings, is besig om hard te dink oor hul rol in die Suidpool. Die groot uitgawe en gebrek aan enige sigbare opbrengs in die vorm van grondstowwe neig twyfel te laat ontstaan oor die voortsetting van hul aktiwiteite na 1959. (Die „Economist" praat dan ook van die Suidpool as die „Frozen White Elephant".) Terwyl daar nog geen beleidsbeslissing geneem is nie, bestaan daar die gissing dat Brittanje die heringe sal intrek en dit sal oorlaat aan Australië, Nieu-Zeeland en die Unie om die paaie vir die Gemenebes verdeel te kry.

Die „Foreign Office" dokument van 21 Februarie (‐Possible United States Claims in Antarctica‐), afskrif waarvan aan Suid-Afrikahuis oorhandig is, bly nog van krag.

Daar bestaan 'n moontlikheid dat Londen, Wellington en Canberra, met die oog op moontlike optrede in die Nasionale Veiligheidsraad en deur die President, sal besluit om verdere voorleggings aan die Amerikaners te maak voordat die saak finaal na die Raad gestuur word. U mag ook wil oorweeg of ons beleid, soos oorgedra aan die Staatsdepartement in die Ambassade se Aide-Mémoire van 9 Februarie 1956, voldoende is en of daar enige verdere vertoë gemaak moet word voordat die Staatsdepartement na die Nasionale Veiligheidsraad gaan. Dit blyk miskien ook 'n geleë tyd te wees vir u om die moontlike ontwikkelings met die ander Ou-Gemenebes lande in Londen te bespreek met die oog op verdere gekoördineerde optrede in Washington.

Afskrifte aan Londen, Parys en New York.

W. C. DU PLESSIS

AMBASSADEUR

17 Mei 1957.

LUGSAKGEHEIM

Die Sekretaris van Buitelandse Sake,  
Kaapstad.

Die Suidpool-streek.

Sedert my skrywe van 16 Februarie het die Staatsdepartement besluit om die kwessie van Amerikaanse eise in die Suidpool-streek te berde te bring by die Nasionale Veiligheidsraad („National Security Council“) wat, soos u weet, 'n regeeringsorganisasie is op Kabinets-peil. Daar word ons meegedeel dat die Staatsdepartement sal voorstel dat die Veiligheidsraad nou moet oorweeg of dit nie raadsaam sou wees vir die President om 'n formele verklaring uit te reik waarin 'n deel van die streek toegeëien word nie. Daar word ook aanbeveel dat die Verenigde State bestaande eise van vriendskaplike lande erken, ten minste tot die mate waarin die eise nie met mekaar bots nie. Hierdie algehele omgeswaai in die Staatsdepartement kom us 'n verrassing en gaan saam met 'n onlangse verandering in die personeel wat die saak hanteer in die Departement. Sedert die gesamentlike optrede in Washington gedurende Februarie 1956, waarby my voorganger betrokke was, het Australië aansienlike druk uitgeoefen, veral in die vorm van persoonlike gesprekke van mnr. Casey met mnr. Sulles en Hoover; en die huidige plan kan die gevolg wees van 'n persoonlike beslissing van die Staatssekretaris.

Die Departement van Verdediging het egter ernstige bedenkinge en daar word verwag dat die Stafhoofde die voorstel sal teenstaan in die Nasionale Veiligheidsraad. Die Pentagon voel dat toeëiening en erkenning die Russe in die harnas sal jaag en sal verplig om self formele eise in te stel. Verder word daar gevrees dat die Russe dadelik die uitruil van geografiese inligting sal staak - inligting wat tans vir die Amerikaners van aansienlike waarde is. Meer belangrik egter is die Pentagon se standpunt dat, terwyl daar tot dusver geen belangrike neerslae van strategiese grondstowwe ontdek is nie, moet daar naarstiglik met die soektog voortgegaan word tot aan die einde van die Internasionale Geografiese Jaar voordat enige eise ingestel word. Dit is nog te vroeg om met enige sekerheid te sê dat geen groot neerslae van ekonomiese-ontginbare grondstowwe voor 1959 ontdek sal word nie, en dit miskien buite die gebied is wat die V.S.A. nou toeëien.

Hierdie argumente is nie sonder krag nie en die

2./...



*Minister  
Mrs C. J. van der Merwe  
Mrs van der Merwe  
Mrs V. van der Merwe*

With the  
Compliments of the

Embassy  
of the

Union of South Africa

Washington, D.C.

**SECRET**

*Plan de...  
WJ  
2/1/57*

stel mag wel 17 Mei 1957. ...  
veiligheidsraad mag besluit om ...  
tot aan die einde van die  
Jaar, waar om intussen alles ...  
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CONFIDENTIAL

COPY

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
QUITO.

1521/1/57.

May 3, 1957.

Dear Department,

We feel we should perhaps report that there are occasional references in the press to Ecuador's claim for a slice of the Antarctic cake. Some week ago, for example, there was a report on a lecture given by Lt. Col. Marco Bustamante under the auspices of the Law Faculty of the Central University and the Ecuadorean Institute of National Law. Lt. Col. Bustamante rejected the idea of a "plural Condominium", and argued in favour of the thesis that countries in the American continent and the Southern Hemisphere had the right to the Antarctic Sector formed by their limiting meridians. According to Poirer's thesis, the South American Antarctic extended from 20° W to 94°W, and this had to be split between Brasil, Uruguay, Argentine, Chile, Peru and Ecuador. Unfortunately, the claims of some of these countries were mutually incompatible, and not admitted by Great Britain, Japan and the United States. A modus vivendi had been established between Argentine, Chile and Great Britain, but there was no definitive solution, and no agreement between all the countries which had rights in the Antarctic. The western sector, bounded by the meridian of the furthest west of the Galapagos Islands, should belong to Ecuador; and the eastern sector, bounded by the meridian of the Fernando de Norona Islands, to Brasil. The full division should be as follows:-

BRASIL	from 20° W to 55° W
URUGUAY	" 55° W to 60° W
ARGENTINE	" 60° W to 68° W
CHILE	" 68° W to 77° W
PERU	" 77° W to 84° 40' W
ECUADOR	" 84° 40' W to 94° W.

As far as we know (but we have not, of course, enquired about this) the Ecuadorean Government has never made any official claim to the above sector. But we think it likely that if an International Conference were held, to try and arrive at a definitive solution, the Ecuadorean Government would demand a seat at the Conference; and that even if they did not press their own claim, they would oppose ours.

Please let us know whether you want us to try and find out informally what the official Ecuadorean attitude is (if there is one) towards this claim.

Yours ever,

(CHANCERY)

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London.

CONFIDENTIAL

WES.147/33/14

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

CONFIDENTIAL

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
QUITO.

May 3, 1957.

*J. G. Stewart, Esq.,  
South Africa House*

*With the Compliments of the  
Under-Secretary of State for  
Commonwealth Relations*

**CONFIDENTIAL**



**6 JUN 1957**

ARGENTINE

CHILE

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ECUADOR

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Yours ever,

(CHANCERY)

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London.

CONFIDENTIAL

P.S. 15/88/2

AIR MAIL

12th June, 1957.

CONFIDENTIAL

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

*With the Commission of the  
Under Secretary of State for  
Commonwealth Relations*

Antarctica

I send you copies of a letter of the  
3rd May from the British Embassy in Quito to the Foreign  
Office about claims being voiced in Ecuador for "a slice  
of the Antarctic cake."

Copy to Washington.

W. D. van SCHALKWYK

MINISTER

CvH/DL

*Roof 100  
Place relation file  
to me  
W.D. 13/6*

one) towards this claim.

Yours ever,

(CHANGERY)

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London.

CONFIDENTIAL

LUGPOS.  
AIR MAIL



102/2/7

UNIE VAN SUID-AFRIKA.  
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

DEPARTEMENT VAN BUITELANDSE SAKE.  
DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

GEHEIM.

PRETORIA.  
29 JUN 1957

Die Hoë Kommissaris vir die Unie van Suid-Afrika,  
LONDEN.

Antarktika.

Ek sal dit waardeer indien die aangehegte afskrif van 'n diensbrief van 27 Junie 1957 van die Waarnemende Sekretaris van Vervoer in verband met die Unie se houding ten opsigte van Antarktika aan die Sekretaris van Buitelandse Sake voorgelê kan word in aansluiting aan die memorandum oor dieselfde onderwerp wat voor sy vertrek na Londen voorberei is.

*R. Jones*  
WAARN. SEKRETARIS VAN BUITELANDSE SAKE.

*Die brief  
Aan die Hoë Kommissaris vir die Unie van Suid-Afrika  
in verband met die  
Sekretaris van B. Sake  
Londen.*

*Jill  
29/6/57*

one) towards this claim.

Yours ever,  
(CHANCERY)

American Department,  
Foreign Office,  
London.

CONFIDENTIAL

which had been reached with the United States. This seemed to infer something further than the exchanges about information on Soviet activity mentioned above, and I taxed my United States colleague with it. He explained that the reference to "an agreement" is misleading inasmuch as all that was arranged was an operational system for ad hoc exchanges of service facilities, such as carriage of stores and personnel. A propos, as my Chancery has already reported (in their letter No. 1521/53/57 of the 2nd of April), the United States Service authorities here, without reference to the political side of the United States Embassy, approached the Chileans some time ago asking them to build an airstrip on Robert Island in the South Shetlands for United States use. The strip, and dumps of petrol to be established there, were required for United States aircraft flying between Punta Arenas and the United States International Geophysical Year bases on the Weddel Sea. The United States Embassy quite realised that this approach to the Chileans by the American military might be used by the Chileans as a recognition of their sovereignty on Robert Island and they were embarrassed when my Chancery spoke to them about it. Although the President did not attempt, in his speech to Congress, to exploit the situation in this way, he obviously thought it advantageous to play up the so-called "agreement" for collaboration with the United States Government on Antarctic matters.

7. I have been considering whether there is any aspect of the Antarctic question, as it concerns Chile, and particularly the current state of public and official thinking here on the subject, which I should emphasise as possibly relevant to examination in London of future British policy towards that continent. The advice I have been giving for some time is that, if it is intended to enter into discussions with a view to a settlement, perhaps on the lines of a multinational régime for Antarctica, there is no hurry about initiating negotiations so far as Chile is concerned. Anglo-Chilean relations, generally, are not suffering by reason of the continuance of the present difference between us relating to Antarctica. Moreover, I have said that it would be advisable to delay approaching the Chileans until the Argentines have been brought into line, and that Chilean policy may well be to hold back until the United States Government have adopted a position. That is still my view.

8. On the other hand, there is now some ground for arguing that it would be difficult to find a more favourable atmosphere in Chile in which to conduct negotiations than that which prevails here at present; and that, in the prevailing quietus, when passions are low, it should be easier to talk sense with the Chileans about the Antarctic than for some time past. But the Chilean people have been taught to believe that the "Chilean Antarctic" is indisputably theirs: we have had experience of the ease and rapidity with which nationalistic feelings are stirred over this emotional issue. Moreover, there is the imponderable of next year's presidential election. While it is worth recording that opinion here, both official and public, has been much less worked up during the 1956-57 Antarctic Season, I do not suggest that Her Majesty's Government should consider jumping in precipitously now just because the atmosphere is calm.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Washington, Montevideo and Buenos Aires, to the Governor of the Falkland Islands and to the United Kingdom High Commissioners at Canberra and Wellington.

I have the honour to be,  
With the highest respect,  
Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

(Sgd) C. Empson

would approach us again later with a view to some statement on multilateral exchanges of view on the Antarctic. They have not done so, but the United Kingdom High Commissioner in Australia reported at the beginning of this year that the Australians had received a note from the Chilean Government suggesting an exchange of information on Soviet activities in Antarctica. The note went on to say that similar exchanges had been agreed with the United States and Argentine Governments. It was natural that the Chileans should seek information on Soviet activity from the Australia, the United States and Argentine Governments, rather than from us, because the Antarctic bases of all these countries are nearer to those of the Russians than are ours. But it was odd that no mention was made by the Chileans in their approach to the Australians of the informal understanding reached last year between the Chileans and ourselves that we have a mutual interest in comparing notes about Soviet activities in the area. In point of fact, however, this informal understanding has not so far borne much fruit; the only recent information conveyed under it has been a summary of details culled from the Soviet press relating to Soviet activities during the 1956-1957 season which this Embassy passed on to the Chilean Government in April on instructions from the Foreign Office.

4. In December the Chilean Government were invited to send an observer to join the R.R.S. "John Biscoe" on a visit to the Antarctic, but they were unable to accept owing to financial difficulties arising out of the Chilean Government's economy campaign. Both the Navy and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were pleased that a Chilean observer had been invited and genuinely regretted having to refuse.

5. Seen from Chile, the outstanding feature of the season as a whole has been the general lack of public interest displayed here towards the Antarctic question. This was illustrated by the apathetic response to the carefully stage-managed flight of the Chilean National Air Line to Antarctica in December last. A number of Ministers and prominent people took part in the flight and a great deal of publicity was stoked up for it. Whilst over-flying the Chilean bases a message from the President was transmitted by the 'planes' wireless and this was alleged to have been heard perfectly by Chilean service-men at the bases. However, the weather was so bad that the passengers apparently saw nothing of their beloved Chilean territory and the venture was generally regarded as a rather absurd and empty gesture. Likewise extremely little public interest was aroused by the Duke of Edinburgh's visit to Antarctica at the beginning of January. I confess that I had expected an outpouring of chauvinism to occur when the news was published of the Duke's arrival in Antarctica. But the reaction was surprisingly mild: the Chilean Government said nothing, though apparently they instructed the Chilean Base Commander at Deception Island to decline an invitation to meet the Duke informally; the Press refrained from any comment whilst reporting fully and somewhat smugly the heated outbursts in the Argentine newspapers. Not even the publication at the beginning of February in the pro-Government Santiago daily, "La Nación" of a sensational article from London, alleging the incubation in the Foreign Office of new positive proposals for an Antarctic settlement, seemed to arouse much public or official interest.

6. In his speech at the opening of Congress on the 21st of May, 1957, in which he reviewed the main events of the previous year in Chile, President Ibáñez spoke in moderate terms about Antarctica, emphasising its importance in the International Geophysical Year. He referred in particular to an agreement for collaboration on Antarctica in the interests of the International Geophysical Year,

/which

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
SANTIAGO.SECRET

June 12, 1957.

No. 98(1521/94/57)

Sir,

The purpose of this despatch is to summarise the main events of the 1956-1957 Chilean Antarctic season and to indicate the present state of public and official Chilean opinion on the Antarctic question.

2. The Chileans have not issued any report of their naval activities in the Antarctic during the past season, and there is no immediate intention to do so. The first units of the 1956-1957 Naval Expedition left Valparaíso on the 25th of October, 1956. The party included 41 Chilean scientists, of whom 14 were to remain in Antarctica for the following winter. In his press conference before the departure of the expedition, the Commodore in charge emphasised the importance of Antarctica to Chile, for both strategic and economic reasons. The main tasks of the expedition, so he explained, were to relieve and re-provision the Chilean bases, to exercise sovereignty in this distant part of Chile, and to give logistic support for the Antarctic phase of the International Geophysical Year. On the 19th of January, 1957, the Chilean transport "Angamos" left Valparaíso for the Antarctic with supplies and personnel for a new base to be set up for scientific studies in connection with the International Geophysical Year. The new base, which has been established near the existing Chilean Army base O'Higgins on the Trinity Peninsula, Graham Land, is named Luis Risopatrón. It is named by soldiers and scientists and, although nothing officially has been said about this, the intention apparently is that the soldiers will stay there after the completion of the International Geophysical Year. The Chilean Foreign Minister, Senor Osvaldo Sainte Maria, sent a message to the Chileans at this new base emphasising Chile's historical and juridical titles to Antarctic territories and saying that the work of the Chileans at the new base would help to reinforce Chile's sovereignty there besides contributing to the International Geophysical Year. The leading Chilean daily newspaper, "El Mercurio", also published a leading article welcoming the happy service both to Chile's self-interest and to international co-operation, which the new base would afford.

3. On the 23rd of November, 1956, the Chilean, Argentine and British Governments exchanged the customary annual tripartite declarations concerning the restriction of naval activity in Antarctic waters during the forthcoming season. The only new feature to record about this was the Chilean suggestion for adding a paragraph to the declaration expressing the interest of the three Governments in collaborating to the full in the scientific activities relating to the International Geophysical Year. The Chilean Government's intention in proposing this insertion was to pave the way for the possible adherence later by other Governments to some statement on general scientific co-operation in the Antarctic. However, Her Majesty's Government expressed reluctance to include this passage and it is understood that the Argentine Government was also adverse to it: so the idea was dropped, the declaration ultimately being issued on the same lines as in previous years. The Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, however, that they

/would

The Right Honourable Selwyn Lloyd, C.B.E., M.P.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1.

WIES 147/39/1

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE,  
DOWNING STREET, LONDON, S.W.1.

**SECRET**

9<sup>th</sup> July 57

Mr C. F. Von Hirschberg  
South Africa House

With the Compliments of the  
Under-Secretary of State for  
Commonwealth Relations

3 copies



**SECRET**

BRITISH EMBASSY,  
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June 12, 1957.

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declarations concerning the restriction of naval activity in  
Antarctic waters during the forthcoming season. The only new  
feature to record about this was the Chilean suggestion for adding  
a paragraph to the declaration expressing the interest of the three  
Governments in collaborating to the full in the scientific activities  
relating to the International Geophysical Year. The Chilean  
Government's intention in proposing this insertion was to pave the  
way for the possible adherence later by other Governments to some  
statement on general scientific co-operation in the Antarctic.  
However, Her Majesty's Government expressed reluctance to include  
this passage and it is understood that the Argentine Government was  
also adverse to it: so the idea was dropped, the declaration  
ultimately being issued on the same lines as in previous years.  
The Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, however, that they

/would

The Right Honourable Selwyn Lloyd, C.B.E., M.P.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1.

9/88/2

AIRMAIL

SECRET

12th July, 1957.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Antarctica

I send you copies of a despatch, dated the 12th June from the British Embassy in Santiago to the Foreign Office, summarising the main events of the 1956/7 Chilean Antarctic season and indicating the present state of public and official Chilean opinion on the Antarctic question.

d. H. SELFE

Minister.

KVS/SB

... as well as to the full in the scientific activities relating to the International Geophysical Year. The Chilean Government's intention in proposing this insertion was to pave the way for the possible adherence later by other Governments to some statement on general scientific co-operation in the Antarctic. However, Her Majesty's Government expressed reluctance to include this passage and it is understood that the Argentine Government was also adverse to it: so the idea was dropped, the declaration ultimately being issued on the same lines as in previous years. The Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs said, however, that they

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The Right Honourable Selwyn Lloyd, C.B.E., M.P.,  
etc., etc., etc.,  
Foreign Office,  
London, S.W.1.

Mr. Bass said that he had already approached officials in the Australian and New Zealand High Commissions, and was now informing us and the Canadians. Although the latter two were not envisaged as members of the international authority, the United Kingdom attached great importance to their views and support. Despite the clear meteorological and strategic importance of the area to South Africa, he did not think we could be admitted without also opening the door to other countries which had not yet attempted to establish interests in Antarctica. Mr. Bass agreed, however, that Russia was likely to seek more direct participation and thought this was one of the matters which could usefully be discussed at the proposed meeting in London.

Papers, including a draft agenda, would be circulated shortly and the four Commonwealth Governments would be invited to express their views on the United Kingdom proposals. A few preparatory meetings would probably follow at the official level to prepare the ground for the meeting of High Commissioners in September.

The United Kingdom Ministers considered that they had formulated their views in the light of the fact that there were in fact two main differences between them. In general, however, it would be useful to re-examine the views of members of the "old" Commonwealth as well as to seek the support of the other countries which approach the other countries with a view to international administration and, finally, to raise at international level the question of the Antarctic continent.

I. F. A. de VILLIERS.

19/vii/57

The agreement would, they thought, give the question of an international authority administering the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Argentina, Chile, Norway and France. These countries would contribute to a central budget and would administer Antarctica as a whole. The present territorial claims to Antarctica would be abandoned. Each country participating in the authority, as well as those outside it, would have access to any part of the territory subject to clearance granted by the central authority. Business would be permitted for commercial, scientific and other purposes, but the establishment of colonies would be prohibited. In all matters, the joint administration of Antarctica would be equally shared by all countries and the proper regulation of such "business" would be left to the discretion of the authority of which authority would be established by the agreement. The agreement would be subject to ratification and would be subject to the provisions of the Antarctic Treaty.

IdV/AG

THE MINISTER:International Authority for Antarctica

Mr. Bass, Head of the Western and United Nations Department of the Commonwealth Relations Office, asked me to call on him on July 17th.

Mr. Bass explained that the United Kingdom authorities were giving serious thought to the problem of finding a solution to conflicting claims to sovereignty in Antarctica and to the desirability of establishing some form of authority which would give reasonable satisfaction to the actual and potential claims of the interested parties. They understood that Mr. Casey, Minister for External Affairs of Australia, was also anxious to press for a solution; it was proposed, therefore, to take advantage of Mr. Casey's expected visit to London in September and to hold an "old" Commonwealth meeting, at High Commissioner level, about the second week of that month.

The United Kingdom Ministers concerned had not yet formulated their views in any final form and there were in fact various differences of opinion to be resolved between them. In general, however, they thought that it would be useful to co-ordinate their views with those of members of the "old" Commonwealth; as a second step, to seek the support of the Americans; as a third step, to approach the other countries with established interests in Antarctica; and, finally, to reach an international agreement outside (but registered with) the United Nations.

The agreement would, they thought, aim at the creation of an international authority consisting of the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Argentina, Chile, Norway and France. These countries would contribute to a central budget and would administer Antarctica as a whole. The present territorial claims to segments of the territory would be abandoned. Each country participating in the authority, as well as those outside it, would have access to any part of the territory subject to licences granted by the central authority. Licences would be granted for economic, meteorological and other purposes, but the establishment of military bases would be prohibited to all. In essence, the joint administration of Antarctica would be mainly aimed at ensuring that the precise conditions of each "licence" were complied with; the virtue of the authority of eight nations being that they had not only established the major claims in Antarctica and were thereby justified, but that they were in fact predominantly respectable and together strong enough to exercise their powers effectively in a spirit of international equity.

/Mr. Bass ....

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H. A. D. Williams

19/11/57.

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/Mr. Bass ....

Lugpos

Verw: 19/88/2

25 Julie 1957.

G E H E I M

DIE SEKRETARIS VAN BUITELANDSE SAKE.

Internasionale Gesag oor die Suidpoolstreek

Met verwysing na my diensbrief nr. 19/88/2 van 23 April 1957, en na verwante briefwisseling op u lêer nr. 102/2, heg ek hierby twee afskrifte van 'n memorandum aan wat deur mnr. de Villiers opgestel is na aanleiding van 'n bespreking wat hy op 17 Julie met 'n amptenaar van die Gemenebeskantoor gehad het.

Soos deur mnr. de Villiers aangedui, was die bespreking kloot informeel en voorlopig; sodra meer spesifieke voorstelle van die plaaslike owerhede ontvang word sal dit aan u deurgestuur word.

Dit sal egter op prys gestel word indien u my vroegtydig in kennis sal stel van watter houding ons hier moet inneem, eerstens, by die voorbereidende vergaderings wat op die amptelike peil hier gehou sal word en, tweedens, ten opsigte van die vergadering van Hoë Kommissarisse wat vir September in vooruitsig gestel word.

W. D. van SCHALKWYK

Minister.

IaV/AG

establishment of military bases would be prohibited. In essence, the joint administration of Antarctica would be mainly aimed at ensuring that the precise conditions of each "licence" were complied with; the virtue of the authority of eight nations being that they had not only established the major claims in Antarctica and were thereby justified, but that they were in fact predominantly respectable and together strong enough to exercise their powers effectively in a spirit of international equity.

/Mr. Bass ....

## PRESS CUTTING.

From Die Burger.

Dated

6th August, 1957.

### Die Russe ten Suide van Ons

**W**AT vang die Russe in Antarktika aan? Dié vraag word in die laaste tyd al dringender gestel.

Die Russe het 'n baie onskuldige antwoord: „Ons doen maar net wat 'n stuk of tien ander lande doen,” sou hulle kan sê. „Saam met hulle samel ons wetenskaplike gegewens in binne die raamwerk van die Internasionale Geofisiese Jaar. Waarom nou juis ons uitsoek?” Maar ander lande, veral die lande van die Weste, het al die gewoonte aangeleer om op hul hoede te wees wanneer hulle met die Russe te doen het.

Die land waar die vraag eintlik ontstaan het, is Australië, wat op 'n deel van Antarktika aanspraak maak. Ter bevordering van die internasionale wetenskaplike samewerking in die Internasionale Geofisiese Jaar het Australiërs daarmee genoë geneem dat die Russe in dié gebied studiebasisse inrig. Maar toe die Australiërs agterkom hoe die Russe in Antarktika te werk gaan, het hulle ongerus begin word. Die Russiese ekspedisie na die Suidpoolgebied het 'n al groter onderneming geword. Hulle het meer manne en materiaal daarheen gestuur as enige ander land behalwe

die Verenigde State. En die Australiërs het hulle begin afvra: Sal die Russe na afloop van die Geofisiese Jaar bereid wees om die basisse wat hulle nou teen so 'n gewedige koste inrig, te ontruim?

En as hulle nie padgee nie? Een vrees is dat die wetenskaplike basisse dan militêre basisse sou kan word. Een van daardie basisse is maar net tweeduisend myl van Australië, en in 'n toekomstige oorlog sou tweeduisend myl niks wees nie.

Die saak raak natuurlik meer lande as net Australië. Dit raak alle lande wat by die vrye vaart in die Stille Suidsee en die Suidelike Indiese Oseaan belang het, dus ook Suid-Afrika.

Nou is die saak in die Verenigde State geopper na aanleiding van gerugte dat die Russe proewe met militêre wapens in die Suidpoolgebied geneem het en dat Russiese duikbote daar rond gewaar is.

Wat Australië dolgraag sou wil hê, is dat die Verenigde State die Australiese aanspraak op die betrokke deel van Antarktika moet erken. Tot dusver was die Amerikaners se houding dat hulle geen aansprake op onontwikkelde gebiede kan erken nie. En dit verswak die Australiërs se saak.

(c) Question of future control with reference to the types of regime which have been suggested at various times.

3. We are ourselves in process of thinking out new ideas for a general international settlement of the Antarctic problem and a joint meeting should provide a useful opportunity to compare ideas on an informal and exploratory basis and may help us to clear our minds for any subsequent talks which may prove desirable with the Americans. In order that the essential groundwork may be got out of the way before September and to elucidate points of detail we are intending to hold preliminary meetings of officials during August.

4. Although South Africa has no territory of her own in Antarctica, we all fully appreciate her lively interest in the area. The views of the South African Government on its political and strategic future would be most valuable and I much hope that you will be able to attend the meeting.

*Ernest Bevin*  
Ernest Bevin

2nd August, 1957.

SECRET AND GUARD

*Alan J. Holloway* ANTARCTICA

In the early part of this year the Australian Minister for External Affairs and I had some discussions about the possibility of having a meeting at the official level later in the year about Antarctic matters. The outcome of our discussions is that the Australians, the New Zealanders and ourselves will be holding talks in London on this subject on 12th and 13th September. I understand that Australia and New Zealand hope to be represented by their High Commissioners and that Casey will himself be in London at that time.

2. The agenda which has been agreed between us is as follows:-

- (a) A review of the Antarctic situation with special reference to:
  - (1) the International Geophysical Year;
  - (2) growing international interest in the Region;
  - (3) the implications of the abortive Indian item of last year's United Nations General Assembly;
  - (4) Russian activity;
  - (5) possible developments in the U.S. policy.
- (b) Importance of the Antarctic;
  - (1) strategic and political;
  - (2) economic;
  - (3) scientific.

/(c)

His Excellency Dr. J. Holloway  
South Africa House.

19/88/2

8th August, 1957.

SECRET and GUARD

My dear Lord Home,

Antarctica

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd August about the proposed discussions about Antarctic matters which are to take place between yourselves, the Australians and the New Zealanders in London on the 12th and 13th September, and for your invitation to me to attend the meeting on behalf of the South African Government.

It is very probable that I shall be abroad during September, in which case I hope that it will be agreeable to you if Mr. van Schalkwyk, in his capacity as Acting High Commissioner, attends the meeting on my behalf.

Yours sincerely,

J. E. HOLLOWAY

The Rt. Hon. the Earl of Home,  
Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

IdV/AG

- (5) possible developments in the U.S. policy.
- (b) Importance of the Antarctic;
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  - (3) scientific.

/(c)

His Excellency Dr. J. Holloway  
South Africa House.

19/88/2

AIRMAIL

SECRET AND GUARD

8th August, 1957.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Antarctica

Please refer to the Minister's evenly numbered minute and enclosure of 25th July, 1957, on the subject of the proposed meeting of 'old' Commonwealth High Commissioners in September to discuss a general international settlement of the Antarctic problem.

I now enclose a copy of a letter, marked "SECRET and GUARD" which was addressed to me on the same subject on August 2nd by the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations. You will note that the proposed agenda is now somewhat more closely defined than was possible at Mr. de Villiers' preliminary discussion with the Commonwealth Relations Office on July 17th.

In view of the fact that it is my intention to leave this country on vacation in September, I propose that Mr. van Schalkwyk should attend the meeting on my behalf in his capacity as Acting High Commissioner.

I should be grateful if you would inform me as soon as possible what views, if any, should be expressed on behalf of the Union Government at the talks to be held on 12th and 13th September and at the preliminary meetings of officials which will take place during the course of this month.

J. E. HOLLOWAY  
High Commissioner.

IdV/AG

SECRET

Commonwealth Relations Office

Downing Street

WES 147/58/1

9th August 1957

SECRET and GUARD

Dear de Villiers,

Would you please refer to my Secretary of State's Secret and Guard letter of 2nd August to the High Commissioner about the talks to be held in London on the subject of Antarctica on the 12th/13th September?

Lord Home said in his letter that, in order that the essential groundwork for the proposed September meeting could be got out of the way, and in order to elucidate points of detail, we intended to hold preliminary meetings of officials during August.

The first such meeting is proposed for Thursday next, 15th August. If (as we hope) the South African Government are prepared to be represented at the September meeting, would it be possible for you to attend this proposed preliminary meeting on 15th August, at which I shall be in the Chair? If so, we should be very glad indeed to see you at the C.R.O.

✓ Like its successors, we contemplate that this meeting should be kept entirely confidential. We have not yet fixed a time for the meeting, but I would propose to let you know this as early as possible next week.

Yours sincerely,  
*J.M.C. James*  
(J.M.C. James)

I.F.A. de Villiers, Esq.  
South Africa House.

SECRET

J. E. HOLLOWAY  
High Commissioner.

IdV/AG

COPY

"It will be recalled that in 1948 the Union Government drew attention of the United States Government to the specific South African interests in the control and administration of Antarctica and asked that the United States Government should bear in mind the desirability of South African association with any international discussions that might take place on this subject.

The manner in which control of the Antarctic Continent is exercised must from the long term point of view inevitably prove of vital concern to the Union. Our important whaling interests in the Antarctic are well known. On the meteorological side we may hope to benefit from the establishment of meteorological stations at Antarctic bases. Our future interest in Antarctic air communications is apparent from the map. When the time comes for economic exploitation and development of the Continent the Union will, because of its geographic situation, be one of the natural and appropriate bases from which such enterprises will operate. In the field of long range and long term strategy, the control of Antarctica must always be a matter of primary concern to us.

Because of these considerations and in order to be enabled to play a full and useful part in the eventual economic development of the Continent as well as its safeguarding in the interests of national and international security, the Union Government is anxious to be associated with any machinery for consultation on the future of Antarctica that might be set up.

In line with this policy the Union Government may also wish to acquire certain territorial rights in the area. The manner in which such rights might be acquired, however, remains a matter for further consultation with the countries with specific interests in the Antarctic Continent."

COPY

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SECRET AND GUARD

Australian, New Zealand and South African Governments on these aspects together with their comments on the proposed establishment of an international Authority along the lines proposed, and the stage at which it would be desirable to consult other Commonwealth Governments (particularly the Indian Government). We should also welcome the views of the other Commonwealth Governments stated on the question of an early approach to the U.S. Government.

Commonwealth Relations Office,

August, 1957.

SECRET AND GUARD

stage on such subjects as free access of all countries to the Antarctic, whaling and sealing royalties for shore stations, exploration and exploitation of minerals, etc. Until or unless large-scale joint expeditions were organised, member-nations would be invited to administer their national bases and expeditions according to their own laws. But the Authority would retain the right, should the need ever arise, to draw up and administer a common code of law for the whole area. While member-nations would probably concentrate their activities in the area with which they were historically associated, they would agree to co-ordinate their activities so far as possible through the Authority along the lines already established so fruitfully in connection with the I.G.Y. Non-member-nations would be permitted unrestricted access to the Continent, though they ought to be required to pay a lease or a royalty to the Authority as a contribution towards its administrative expenses.

24. No nation, whether a member or not, would be permitted to install military bases in the area, although this would be without prejudice to the right of member-nations to continue to draw on Service resources where necessary for mounting their expeditions. Non-member-nations would be required to accept an observer on their expeditions, representing the Authority, if the Authority should so wish. The Authority would make clear that one of its raison d'etre was to ensure the complete neutralisation of the area.

Conclusion

25. No attempt has been made in this paper to provide solutions to a number of important points, e.g. the procedures to be adopted and the powers to be assumed by the proposed Authority. The U.K. authorities would be glad to learn the views of the Canadian,  
/Australian,

SECRET AND GUARD

maintaining a separate national administration as well as a condominium administration, as this system has been found to be inefficient.

20. The Antarctic authority, it is proposed, should be a separately constituted international authority formed by the powers primarily concerned. Each power concerned would delegate one representative, and the whole body would function as a Board of Directors. The authority would need to have funds, and it would also require a Secretariat. The latter need not be large and might in fact be as small as is permitted by the natural tendency of all international organisations to proliferate. The Secretariat could function satisfactorily anywhere. From the United Kingdom's point of view London would be the best place, but this is a matter for discussion.

21. The funds of the International Authority would be provided by contributions from the participating Governments. The contributions would be block grants, the Authority being responsible for its own expenditure.

22. The powers to be represented on the Authority would be those who have already laid claims to sectors of the Antarctic, viz. the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, Norway, France, Argentina and Chile, as well as the U.S.A., who are generally recognised as having legitimate grounds for making a claim in the unclaimed sector, and the U.S.S.R., who, although without real grounds for a claim to sovereignty, may be regarded as having established themselves as an Antarctic power by the scale of their present activities. The Union of South Africa in view of her propinquity to the area and interests generally may also wish to advance a claim for membership.

23. The Authority would have powers to make regulations to cover the whole Continent; regulations would be required at an early

/stage

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with equal rights.

18. In these circumstances we think it should be made clear from the outset that the whole proposal would be laid before the General Assembly. Some members of the Assembly might then press for membership of the authority to be expanded so as to secure a "balanced" authority on which Africa and Asia would also be represented. The extreme critics might even try to replace the authority altogether by a United Nations administering body with broad geographical representation, responsible to the General Assembly and paid for from the United Nations budget. Other countries pressing to be included in the authority might however be put off by making it clear in the draft constitution of the authority that all its members would share equally in the costs involved, and that the costs of the authority should not become a charge on the United Nations budget. As regards the relationship between the authority and the United Nations, an attempt might be made to secure for the General Assembly the right to examine and make recommendations upon the actions of the authority. In general it can be said that this aspect of the question presents serious difficulties and that any scheme likely to pass the Assembly might give the United Nations such powers of interference as to render the plan unacceptable to the Antarctic powers. Assuming support for the scheme as it stands from the United States, Argentina and Chile, the outcome would depend on the attitude of the Soviet Union and the Afro-Asians. With Soviet support there should be some prospect of securing approval for an acceptable arrangement.

19. The Antarctic authority should not, in the U.K. view be a condominium of a limited number of the powers concerned, on the lines of that existing in the New Hebrides, i.e. with each nation

/maintaining

SECRET AND GUARD

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whole weight of the Soviet bloc and their Afro-Asian supporters in the U.N. against the international authority as an instrument of collective imperialism which they would probably do if any effort were made to exclude them.

The United Nations

17. Any question of direct administration by the United Nations must, we consider, be ruled out. Although the United Nations Charter provides that the organisation can itself administer United Nations territories, a trusteeship solution in Antarctica would be entirely inappropriate, and a trusteeship administered directly by the United Nations would be open to a large number of political objections even if it were a practical possibility, which is most questionable. Nor, of course, is the United Nations a sovereign body. Nevertheless we believe there is no hope of carrying through the scheme without bringing the United Nations into the picture. The Americans are unlikely to put their weight behind any proposal which does not do so. The same might well apply to the Argentines and the Chileans. The Indians are likely to adopt a similar position and, though they are not "Antarctic" powers, they have great influence in the United Nations besides being members of the Commonwealth. The Indians have already once proposed that the Antarctic should be considered by the General Assembly, in 1956. Unless they can be satisfied that the scheme is generally compatible with the principles of the United Nations Charter they are likely to oppose it and perhaps revive their own proposal in a different form. Finally, the Russians will certainly insist that they should be included as a founder-member of the authority. In that event it is hoped that they would prefer to see the scheme limited to the "Antarctic" powers: but they would probably insist on an acceptable relationship with the United Nations and would certainly do all they could to wreck any scheme which excluded them from full membership

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among the Antarctic powers other than a shadowy claim that the Russian Admiral Bellingshausen was the first to sight the Continent. The Russians have, however, installed four bases in connection with the I.G.Y., all in the Australian sector, and like the United States her activities are on a very much greater scale than those of any other country. In the scale and efficiency of their operations the Russians benefit greatly from their long Arctic experience. It is generally accepted that they will wish to remain in the Antarctic after the I.G.Y. In 1950 the Soviet Government announced that they would wish to be included in any scheme such as the condominium proposed by the Americans in 1948, and they would probably press for inclusion in any scheme which might now be put forward. It would, of course, be easier both to secure the approval of the other participating powers and to make the international authority work smoothly if the Russians could be excluded. As it would be impracticable to eject them by force the only way in which their continued presence could then be formally provided for would be by an offer of a charter or a lease made by the international authority, (though it is very doubtful whether they would accept such an offer). Unfortunately the Russians have entrenched themselves in the Antarctic on so large a scale under cover of the I.G.Y., that it would in fact be unrealistic to try to set up an international authority without them. Moreover, experience in other parts of the world tends to show that where one of the two colossi, the United States or the U.S.S.R., is involved, the other has to be included too in the end. A condition for establishing the authority would be the complete neutralization of the continent. The main advantage of Russian participation would be that they would then probably not throw the

/whole

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the support of both these countries and particularly in overcoming any resistance to the project based on its alleged incompatibility with the 1947 Rio Treaty.

14. The United States have persistently declined to reveal their intentions in the Antarctic. They are believed to be waiting until the end of the International Geophysical Year (December 1958) before deciding whether and where to stake out a United States claim, in the hope that meanwhile their extensive activities in the Antarctic will assist them in deciding what areas, if any, are of special value. By virtue of exploration and subsequent activities they have established adequate grounds for an extensive claim in the so-called unclaimed zone, though this does not mean that they would not probably also claim patches of other areas, including the United Kingdom sector. They have hitherto not recognised the claims of other nations. Nevertheless there is reason to believe that an international solution might appeal to the United States Government. In 1948 it was they who put forward proposals for an eight-power condominium. At Bermuda a member of the United States Delegation expressed the view in informal conversation with a member of the United Kingdom Delegation that some international solution might be necessary. In any case it would be essential to the success of any scheme that the United States Government should not merely approve but actively press it on at least the Latin American countries.

15. The Norwegians opposed the United States proposal of 1948. Nothing is known about their present attitude. The same applies to France. The area at present claimed by France does not appear to be of much economic value, and she would therefore probably welcome an international arrangement.

16. Soviet Russia has no real ground for claiming to be included  
/among

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11. Antarctic policy in Argentina is at present largely dominated by the Navy. There is reason to believe that the Navy would be prepared to support proposals for some kind of settlement, though they are probably thinking rather in terms of a strictly local arrangement to cover only the dispute with the United Kingdom and Chile. It would be unwise, however, to raise the subject with the present provisional Government which is too conscious of its precarious provisional character and of the imminence of the national elections to dare take important decisions on any subject in which popular sentiment is deeply engaged. No approach could be made to the Argentine, therefore, until after the elections in February 1958. In the view of the United Kingdom Embassy in Buenos Aires it would also be preferable not to make any proposals public before the elections lest the political leaders should feel bound to commit themselves against it during the election campaign; on the other hand, a future elected Government might well be persuaded eventually to give it favourable consideration.

12. Popular feeling in Chile has been artificially stimulated to the point at which the Government would have some difficulty in retreating from their present position. Their reaction to the United States Government's proposals in 1948 for an eight-power international regime for the Antarctic was that it would be against the principles of the Rio Treaty of 1947 in which the Antarctic was included within the "security zone of the Americas". Both they and the Argentines might take the same line today. But in the view of the United Kingdom Embassy in Santiago, much will depend on the attitude of the Argentine. It would therefore be best to delay approaching the Chileans until some success had been achieved in discussions with the Argentines.

13. American pressure would probably be decisive in securing

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Whether or not such deposits, if and when located, could be worked economically would depend upon the mineral discovered and the demand for it. The answer at the moment, for any mineral, is probably "No"; but as the current rate of consumption of most metals which is likely to increase in the years to come, it can be assumed that any obstacle to exploitation would be overcome to secure a fresh supply of a vital mineral which was nearing exhaustion in the traditional mining areas. Membership of a consortium of nations controlling the whole area would keep us in the running without the expense of competing with others in the investigation of one specified piece of the continent.

8. The possible discovery of valuable mineral deposits is also a reason for arriving at a settlement with the other interested nations at this time; it would probably be much more difficult to get all the parties to agree to an international agreement of the kind contemplated once a sensational discovery had been made in a particular national sector. With so many expeditions now active in various parts of the Antarctic the chance of a lucky strike is much increased and any moment may bring news of an important geological discovery. The sooner therefore some kind of general settlement is reached the better.

9. Finally, the benefits to be obtained from Antarctica are less likely to derive from the discovery and exploitation of minerals than from advances in fundamental knowledge about the area leading to, e.g. the improvement of radio communications, long-range weather forecasting, etc. All these are subjects specially suited for international co-operation.

The Position of other Nations

10. It is likely that the same considerations may influence other Antarctic powers to a varying degree in favour of an international scheme.

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of view; of which the following are perhaps the most important:

- (a) does it ease financial burdens without loss of national prestige?
- (b) does it enable the U.K. to retain its stake in Antarctica and the benefits derived therefrom?
- (c) how would other Commonwealth Governments be affected?

The cost of the proposal to the U.K. Government as compared with present expenditure is dependent upon the kind of organisation set up and the extent to which individual national activity in the area is taken over by a central authority. This is discussed below in the section dealing with the type of international body envisaged. There is also the negative aspect that internationalisation might avoid the heavy additional expenditure which would almost certainly have to be incurred if things remain on their present competitive national basis. As regards the actual cost of maintaining the U.K. bases (as opposed to U.K. contributions to the costs of the Authority) economies over the present level of expenditure might be expected, since it would probably be possible to reduce the number of bases to be maintained. Further economies might also be effected by the possibility of pooling with other powers, particularly Chile and the Argentine over shipping for the relief and provisioning of bases.

6. The question of prestige, as always, is difficult to assess in precise terms. Properly handled, the internationalisation of Antarctic activity with the United Kingdom and other Commonwealth countries taking a fair share in the resulting organisation need involve no loss of prestige and, indeed, by appearing to be a generous gesture, could even enhance it.

7. Economically, anything worthy of exploitation, even if exploitation were feasible has yet to be discovered. Nevertheless, it is reasonable to suppose that this large continent has its share of the globe's mineral deposits.

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ject them has been considered and dismissed. On the assumption that withdrawal is ruled out at the present stage the only reasonable solution seems to be some form of international control and administration which will neutralise the Antarctic Continent and reduce or remove altogether the need for expensive competitive activities.

Arguments in Favour of an International Scheme

4. The possibility of placing the whole Antarctic continent under the supervision of an international body of some sort has already found favour in a number of quarters as a means of getting round the awkward features of the present sectoring of the area on a national basis and it is known that the idea is not repugnant to certain United States interests. The present I.G.Y. activity in the Antarctic is being pursued successfully on an international basis and forms an excellent precedent. To forward the idea of internationalising the Antarctic is not, therefore, to introduce a complete novelty. Moreover the arrival of the Russians and the Americans in the Antarctic has almost certainly predisposed others of the Antarctic powers, including the Argentine, in favour of the idea of reaching a settlement of the political problems in the area before the end of the I.G.Y. It is widely feared that otherwise the Americans may further embroil the situation in the sector in dispute between the United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile by laying claims to large parts of it and that the Russians may embarrass everyone by proposing internationalization under an United Nations regime. It may be said therefore that the present moment is particularly favourable for putting the proposal forward.

5. So far as Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom is concerned, the proposal has to be looked at from various points

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ANTARCTICA

Note by the Commonwealth Relations Office

1. Recent developments in the Antarctic Continent have led the United Kingdom Government Departments concerned to re-examine the question of the future administration of this area. The prime factors as we see them are the presence of the Russians in the Antarctic, combined with the doubt which we must all feel of their intentions on the expiry of the I.G.Y.; the possibility of United States claims to territory; the continued refusal of the Argentines and the Chilians to submit their claims to any arbitral body and, apart from these international factors, the urgent need so far as the United Kingdom is concerned to effect economies wherever practicable.

2. The scale of United Kingdom activity in the Antarctic is at present determined mainly by the need to maintain and strengthen legal claims in face of Argentina and Chile. Apart from activities arising out of the I.G.Y. ten bases have to be maintained at a cost of approximately £160,000 a year. Argentine activities tend to increase annually. Yet the Foreign Office Legal Advisers have warned that although U.K. unilateral application to the International Court in 1955 would help to secure our claims, it would not alone be sufficient and that increased activity in the relevant areas would be advisable to maintain claims in full.

3. The Argentines and Chileans have declined repeatedly to submit the dispute to adjudication by the International Court or an arbitral tribunal. There is no reason to believe that they will change their minds. The alternative of using force to

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Commonwealth Relations Office

Downing Street

14th August 1957

WES 147/58/1

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*Deon de Villiers*

As arranged, I enclose a copy of a paper setting out certain views on the problem of Antarctica.

The paper in its present form should be regarded as a preliminary study only, which does not in any way commit the United Kingdom Government. In particular, it has not yet been considered from the angle of defence or strategy; the views of the Chiefs of Staff are being sought and should be available in the very near future.

Our object in circulating the paper at this stage is to focus discussion at the informal meeting of officials which we are holding here tomorrow 15th August at 3 p.m. in the Conference Room. I expect to be in the Chair. We shall look forward to seeing you and Drake.

Yours sincerely,

*Monice James*

(J.M.C. James)

I.F.A. de Villiers, Esq.  
South Africa House.

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which would give the United Nations supervisory powers.

South Africa had made known its direct interest, when the Americans were jointly approached in 1955, in participating in negotiations aimed at reaching a settlement in Antarctica. South Africa's essential interests in regard to whaling, meteorology, air communications, economic exploitation of the area and the strategic implications (as set out in your Policy Review N° 84A of October, 1955-January, 1956) were again stressed. As regards the other considerations mentioned, we had no instructions but thought that the Union would not welcome any settlement which gave Russia permanent bases in Antarctica. Even if the area were neutralised, ostensibly non-military facilities like airstrips and oil depots could be of great potential danger in time of war. Furthermore, Suez could quickly be put out of action and the safety of the shipping lane between the Cape and the Antarctic coast - only 2,400 miles wide - would have to be considered in the context of long-distance rockets and other modern weapons. Defence views on the possibility of really effective neutralisation were therefore important if an international regime, with Russian participation, were being considered. Mr. de Villiers also thought his Government would be unlikely to favour a form of international agreement under the supervision of the United Nations. It was not yet possible to give the Union's views on the Authority as proposed in the United Kingdom paper or to say, therefore, whether a claim to membership would be advanced.

Canada was mainly concerned with the Arctic region, but was interested in being kept fully informed of the proposed negotiations for an agreement on Antarctica. The new Canadian Government had not yet formulated its views on this question.

India had not been invited to be present at these Commonwealth discussions and the United Kingdom representative enquired whether it might not be advantageous to have India's views at this early stage. It was generally felt, and the United Kingdom representatives agreed, that India's attitude on Antarctica had not been realistic in the past and was unlikely to be helpful at the present stage of the discussions. It might indeed be necessary to reach agreement with the United States before giving India the opportunity to raise difficulties by assuming her chosen role of mediator between East and West. In view of the above, the United Kingdom representatives stressed the need to maintain secrecy about the present discussions; if any consultation with the United States was necessary, it should be on a strictly confidential basis.

It is proposed to hold a further meeting at the official level on August 29th.

I. F. A. de VILLIERS.  
Minister.

The High Commissioner

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