

DUPLICATE

Commonwealth Relations Office,

Downing Street,

11 March, 1949.

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Circular Despatch D.No. 9

CONFIDENTIAL.

Sir,

I have the honour to state for your information that at a General Meeting of the Geographical Society of the U.S.S.R., which took place in Leningrad on February 10th, a resolution was adopted in the following terms :-

"The general meeting of the Geographical Society of the U.S.S.R. notes the outstanding role played by Russian explorer-scientists in the discovery of the Antarctic, who refuted by their discoveries the assertions of a number of foreign explorers, including the famous British navigator James Cook, who denied the existence of the Antarctic mainland.

This role of the Russians in the discovery of the Antarctic is particularly clear from the results of the Russian expedition to the Antarctic in the beginning of the 19th Century. The Russian navigators Bellingshausen and Lazarev in 1819 and 1821 sailed round the Antarctic mainland, and for the first time approached its shores, and in January, 1821, discovered Peter I Island, Alexander I Land, Traverser Island and others. To mark the recognition of the services of Russian navigators, one of the South Polar seas was named Bellingshausen Sea.

From what has been stated there arises the indisputable right of the Soviet Union to take part in the solution of questions concerning the Antarctic.

All attempts to decide on the question of the Antarctic regime without the participation of the U.S.S.R. can have no justification. Questions of the Antarctic should be decided first and foremost by those States which have the historic right to take part in such a decision.

Yet, according to reports published in the world press, certain States are attempting to obtain a decision on questions of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union, against which the Geographical Society of the U.S.S.R. must protest most resolutely.

Any decision on the question of the regime of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union can have no legal force, and the U.S.S.R. has every justification to refuse to recognise any such decision."

A full summary translation of the Report of this meeting, as published in Pravda for the 11th February, is enclosed.

His Majesty's United Kingdom Ambassador in Moscow has since reported that the meeting appears to have

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PART II.

PRAVDa (Cont'd)

SECTION B.

11th February, 1949.

and present-day interest in it', and having exchanged opinions on the report, arrives at the following conclusions:

- "1. The Society deems it necessary to point out the outstanding role of the Russian scientist-explorers in the discovery of the Antarctic, they having refuted by their discoveries the assertion of a number of foreign explorers, including the well-known British navigator, James Cook, who denied the existence of an Antarctic continent. This role of the Russians in the discovery of the Antarctic is especially apparent from the results of the Russian expedition to the Antarctic in the early 19th century.

"The Russian navigators Bellingshausen and Lazarev in 1819-1821 circled the Antarctic continent, first approached its shores and on January 22, 1821 discovered Peter I Island, Alexander I Land, the Traverse Islands and others. In recognition of the services of the Russian navigators one of the southern Polar Seas was named Bellingshausen Sea.

- "2. From what is stated in section 1 stems the indisputable right of the Soviet Union to participate in the solution of problems of the Antarctic. No attempts to solve the problem of the regime of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union can find any justification. The problems of the Antarctic must be solved in the first instance by those states which have the historical right to participate in this solution. However, according to reports in the foreign press certain states are attempting to secure a solution of problems of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union, against which the Geographical Society of the USSR cannot but register a most decisive protest.
- "3. No solution of the problem of the regime of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union can have legal force, and the USSR has every reason not to recognise any such solution."

PRAVDa - 11.2.49.

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PL. VD. (Cont'd)

11th February, 1949.

Academician Berg's report aroused lively debates.

"Lately", said Professor S.V. Kalosnik, "many governments by means of unilateral acts have been trying to declare this or that sector of Antarctic land to be their property without any consultations with the Soviet Union, which also has its interests in the Antarctic."

"The Geographical Society deems it necessary to remind the whole world once more that the real Columbuses of the Antarctic were the crews of the Russian vessels 'Vostok' and 'Mirny'."

"The Geographical Society also believes that the entire geographical public of the country, which it represents, should not only lift its voice in defence of the Russian initial explorers of the Antarctic and, accordingly, in defence of historical truth, but should also urgently request the Soviet Government to inform the foreign states concerning the Soviet rights and interests in the Antarctic."

"Remarkable", said Professor V. Yu. Vize, "were the geographical investigations of Bellingshausen and Lazarev in the Antarctic, restored in our memory by the report of L.S. Berg. The Soviet Union, engaged in the defence and strengthening of its young state, during the first period of its existence naturally was unable to devote due attention to questions of the Antarctic. However, Soviet people never forget the great discoveries made by the Russians in the Antarctic and have always considered it necessary to remind that priority in the discovery of the southern continent belongs to the Russians."

"Following the Great Patriotic War the Soviet Union deemed it necessary to organise a whaling expedition in the Antarctic. This work came to be accompanied by scientific investigations in the Antarctic waters. Thus the prolonged interruption in the Russian Antarctic expeditions has come to an end."

"However, the long interruption in the exploration of the Antarctic by Russians can in no way shake the historically justified right of the Russians to participation in the solution of problems of the Antarctic."

The floor was given to Rear-Admiral Professor E.E. Shvede, who stated that the Russian Antarctic expedition of Bellingshausen and Lazarev was also notable in the respect that its entire personnel consisted exclusively of Russians.

Russian navigations in Russian vessels had been the first to discover the Antarctic and thereby had asserted Russian priority for this discovery.

In conclusion the general meeting unanimously adopted the following resolution:

"The general meeting of the Geographical Society of the USSR, having heard the report of the president of the Society, Academician L.S. Berg 'Russian Discoveries in the Antarctic

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"From the South Shetlands the 'Vostok' and 'Mirny' set their course for Rio de Janeiro and returned to Kronstadt on July 24, 1821 after 751 days. In all they traversed over 92,000 kilometres.

"The description of this remarkable voyage was published by Bellingshausen under the title 'Two Explorations in the Antarctic Ocean and a Voyage around the World in the Course of 1819, 1820 and 1821'. The description comprised two volumes with an atlas of maps and views.

"The voyage of the 'Vostok' and 'Mirny' belongs among the most remarkable geographical discoveries in history.

"It should not be forgotten - and we emphasise this - that the right of priority in the discovery of a number of territories of the Antarctic historically remains for Russia and, by succession, for the USSR - the same right by which France lays claim to Adelig Land, discovered by Dumont D'Urville. Russia never abandoned these rights and the Soviet Government has never given consent to anyone to control territories discovered by Russian seamen.

"In the 20th century, following the First World War, interest in the Antarctic, the only continent not yet divided up, greatly increased. A number of countries - Britain, France, Norway, Chile and Argentina - began to lay claim by unilateral acts to this or that expanse of the Antarctic continent.

"In 1931 and 1939 Norway declared Peter I Island, discovered by Russians in 1821 to be hers and 'joined' the expanse between the Australian and British (Falkland) sectors. On January 27, 1929 the Soviet Government informed Norway that it could not accept this action by Norway as legal and considered it necessary to reserve its point of view concerning the state ownership of the territory discovered by the Russian navigator, Bellingshausen. It is important to note that at the same time (January, 1939) the U.S.A. through statements to Britain and France also reserved its point of view on sovereignty in the Antarctic. Thus the question of the latter remained open by virtue of the statements of the two great powers.

"The Soviet public and Soviet science could not neglect the problem of the Antarctic and forget the rights and interests of our Motherland in this question. Naturally the Geographical Society, of which both great Antarctic explorers - Bellingshausen and Lazarev, were members cannot but take an interest in this question."

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SECTION B

PR.VD. (Cont'd)

11th February, 1949.

"The geographers and seamen of the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries were under the influence of the discoveries of the British captain, James Cook. Let us note here his voyages in the Antarctic.

"At the end of 1773 Cook sailed south from the shores of New Zealand in search, as he put it, of the Southern continent. Just one year later Cook was in the South of the Atlantic Ocean. Here he discovered the Isle of Georgia and Sandwich Land (the South Sandwich Islands), but did not find the desired 'southern', or Antarctic, continent.

"In 1819 the Russian Naval Ministry equipped two expeditions 'for discoveries': one to the South Pole, the other to the North Pole.

"The expedition to the Antarctic was despatched in two vessels. One of them - the sloop 'Vostok', about 40 metres long - was under the command of the well-known Russian seaman (subsequently admiral), Captain Faddei Bellingshausen, chief of the expedition, and the other - the sloop 'Mirny', was commanded by the renowned seaman (subsequently admiral) Mikhail Lazarev.

"On July 4 (old style) of 1819 both sloops left Kronstadt and on November 2 arrived in Rio de Janeiro. On December 15 they were in the region of South Georgia, discovered by Cook in 1775. Here our navigators discovered Annenkov Island, so named in honour of Lieutenant Annenkov, who was sailing on the Mirny. On South Georgia Island two capes were placed on the map, Cape Poryadina (actually Poryadin, in honour of the pilot Poryadin) and Cape Demidova (in honour of the Midshipman Demidov), the Gulf of Novosilski (in honour of Midshipman Novosilski), Cape Kupriyanova (in honour of Midshipman Kupriyanov). From South Georgia Island they sailed to the South Sandwiches, some of which were noted by Cook. In this group Bellingshausen discovered the volcanic Leskov Island, named in honour of Lieutenant Leskov, Vysoki Island, 900 metres in height and the active volcano Zavadovski Island, named in honour of Captain-Lieutenant Zavadovski. All three islands were named the De Traverse Islands in honour of the then Naval Minister.

"On January 16, 1820 they were close to the Antarctic continent (in the region of Princess Martha Land), later (1930) noted by Norwegian ships. Hitherto these shores had not been visited by anyone and had not been placed on the map.

"On February 5, 1820 the expedition was in the vicinity of the Antarctic continent (region of Princess Ranshilde Land).

"After a voyage in the Pacific Ocean the 'Vostok' and 'Mirny' in the spring of 1820 again set off on a voyage through the Antarctic Ocean. On January 9 (old style) 1821, they discovered Peter I Island. On January 16, 1821 the expedition discovered the mountainous territory named Alexander I land.

"A week later they reached the South Shetland Islands, which were placed on the map.

COPY

PART II

SECTION B.

NO. 42.

FR. V.D.

FRIDAY, 11TH FEBRUARY, 1949.

POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

GENERAL MEETING OF ALL-UNION GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY

LENINGRAD, 10TH FEBRUARY

Today a general meeting of the members of the All-Union Geographical Society opened here.

The President of the Geographical Society of the USSR Academician L.A. Berg delivered a report on "Russian Discoveries in the Antarctic and present-day interest in it". In his report he said :

"In recent years reports have not seldom appeared in the world press concerning various expeditions to the Antarctic and about speeches by statesmen of various countries on the question of the international regime of the Antarctic or the proprietorship of this or that country over various parts of it. The question of the Antarctic is taking on an acute character.

"The reason for this is clear: with the Antarctic are linked very real interests, which have stimulated the American "Saturday Evening Post" (December, 1947), for example, to declare that this continent may prove to be a gigantic treasure chest !

"The Antarctic continent, which exceeds Europe in size, possesses deposits of very valuable minerals (coal, gold, silver, lead, iron). The existence of uranium ore is probable. A large whaling and sealing trade is conducted in the Antarctic waters by a number of countries, including the Soviet Union.

"The shortest air routes between the three populated continents of the Southern Hemisphere - Africa, Australia and South America - traverse the Antarctic. Finally the Antarctic serves as a spot of important meteorological observations. Thus this continent is acquiring international significance.

"It cannot but be noted that the negotiations concerning the Antarctic are being conducted behind the scenes and thus far without the participation of the USSR, although the Soviet Union in any case has no less right to the Antarctic territories discovered by Russians than has France, for example, which claims sovereignty over Adelic Land on the grounds that this territory was discovered in 1840 by the French navigator, Dumont D'Urville (and named after his wife). At the same time, the Russian navigators Bellingshausen and Lazarev 20 twenty years before Dumont D'Urville proved for the first time the erroneousness of the then reigning ideas that there was no land beyond the Polar Circle, and discovered the existence of the Antarctic.

opened with a discussion on the Antarctic and that no other business was conducted. The subject was introduced by a report on "Russian discoveries in the Antarctic and present day interest in it." This report was delivered by Academician L. M. Berg, the President of the Geographical Society, and the foremost Soviet Geographer. Mr. Berg began by referring to recent expeditions to the Antarctic and to the interest lately shown by other countries in the ownership of the area. He affirmed that "the question of the Antarctic is taking on an acute character", and declared this to be clearly due to the very real interests aroused by the Antarctic, in particular by its mineral wealth, including possibly uranium; by its whaling and sealing trade, in which the Soviet Union took part; and by its importance to air communications and meteorology. Negotiations concerning the Antarctic were going on behind the scenes, and so far without Soviet participation, although by virtue of Russian discoveries the Soviet Union had rights to Antarctic territory no less than, for example, those of France.

Mr. Berg then launched into a detailed account of discoveries said to have been made in 1820 and 1821 by a Russian expedition under Bellinghausen, claiming for it the first discovery of the Antarctic continental mass as opposed to the surrounding islands. On the outcome of this expedition he based the claim that "the right of priority in the discovery of a number of territories in the Antarctic historically remains with Russia and by succession with the U.S.S.R." Mr. Berg added that "Russia never abandoned these rights and the Soviet Government has never given consent to anyone to control territories discovered by Russian Seamen."

On the question of the "unilateral acts" by which other countries had subsequently laid claim to Antarctic territories, Mr. Berg recalled that in 1929 the Soviet Government had reserved its position regarding Norway's annexation of Peter I Island, one of the discoveries attributed to Bellinghausen. He also referred to the action of the United States Government when in 1939 it reserved its views on sovereignty in the Antarctic. He concluded by the declaration that this whole question "remained open by virtue of the statements of the two great powers".

His Majesty's United Kingdom Ambassador states that the Soviet Press has for some time past shown only occasional interest in the Antarctic, although there had been brief reports of the United States Government's proposals for an Eight Power Condominium, and of the cautious reactions to those proposals of some of the powers approached. The publication of the report in question would therefore appear to mark a new stage of Soviet interest. In the Ambassador's view, such publicity would certainly not have been given to the Geographical Society's claims if they had not had the prior approval of the Soviet Government. Similarly, the Society's demand for action by the Soviet Government must clearly have been approved, if not actually inspired, by the Kremlin. It may therefore be reasonable to assume that some official Soviet move of the kind suggested in the resolution passed by the Society will be forthcoming at some future date.

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

(Sd.) P. J. NOEL-BAKER

19/38/2

See See

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(Polar Committee)

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Yet, according to reports published in the world press, certain States are attempting to obtain a decision on questions of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union, against which the Geographical Society of the U.S.S.R. must protest most resolutely.

Any decision on the question of the regime of the Antarctic without the participation of the Soviet Union can have no legal force, and the U.S.S.R. has every justification to refuse to recognise any such decision."

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found their task greatly lightened through the exploits and work of de Gerlache and his companions. Hence, it is not without reason that the great French explorer Charcot called de Gerlache "pioneer of the Antarctic".

The Belgian Government wishes to point out here that the expedition of the Belgica was subsidized by the Belgian Government and received its full support. Shortly after the return of the expedition, a Commission was formed under the auspices of the Government to make the most of the results obtained. The work of the Belgica Commission was resumed and carried on by the Administrative Commission of the Property of the Royal Museum of Natural History of Belgium. Its results are set forth in a publication at present containing 60 volumes, which is to be completed by several works in progress.

In consideration of the Belgian contribution to the discovery and exploration of certain southern lands, the Belgian Government considers itself entitled to make its voice heard at any International congress summoned to examine the statute which is to govern the Antarctic by convention or, more strictly, that part of the Antarctica in which are situated the lands discovered and explored by the expedition of the Belgica.

The Belgian Government cannot think that at such a congress, the titles that it acquired through the expedition in question should not be recognized.

The Belgian Government would appreciate it if the Government of the United States of America would be good enough to acknowledge receipt of the present note, the purpose of which is to define Belgium's position in the question of the Antarctica.

MEMORANDUM

In view of the present interest in the problem of the Antarctic, the economic, geo-political, and even strategic aspects of which are frequently evoked, the Belgian Government has the honor to invite the attention of the Government of the United States of America to the part played by the expedition of the Belgica in 1898-1899 in the discovery and methodical exploration of certain southern lands.

That expedition, under Captain de Gerlache, attracted world attention at the time. Captain de Gerlache and his courageous companions were in fact the first to winter in the frigid zone beyond the Antarctic Circle.

The lands discovered and methodically explored at the time of the Belgica's voyage are situated between the 61st and 65th meridians west of Greenwich. They border on Belgica Strait, which geographers later renamed, calling it "Gerlache Strait" as a special tribute to the brave navigator. This strait is formed by a winding arm of the sea, which in the western part of the South Polar Archipelago separates the land of Dance from the Palmer Archipelago. These lands have been given names that evoke the contribution made by the navigators of the Belgica to the conquest of the South Pole: thus the islands discovered are called Anvers/Antwerp/, Gand/ Ghent/, Brabant, Liege...

A comparison of the chart of the regions discovered and explored with that made at the time by the British Admiralty for those same areas shows that the hypothetical contours that, for want of anything better, had been adopted before the expedition of the Belgica, were replaced by clear and exact outlines. These outlines, as well as all the new scientific data enriching mankind's heritage of knowledge, are to be placed to the credit of the expedition of the Belgica, which made several landings (more than 20) under conditions that are hardly comparable to those enjoyed by the later Polar explorers. The latter have

both private and official expeditions, over a long period of time and covering a large part of the area of Antarctica give it a sound basis for taking the initiative in this matter.

As will be seen from the attachments hereto, the United States Government believes that the most advantageous manner of reaching a solution of territorial problems in Antarctica is through some form of international regime. The United States Government believes that the principal values of Antarctica are scientific and technological, especially meteorological. The economic and strategic considerations alluded to in the memorandum of the Belgian Embassy seem to the United States Government to be of relatively slight significance. The United States Government believes that an international administration would promote the development in Antarctica of scientific and technological programs of benefit not only to the countries which participate in the administration of an international Antarctic regime, but to all of the countries of the world. It is believed that the Belgian Government will appreciate the desire of the United States to eliminate a subject of international disagreement and at the same time promote international cooperation for the general benefit.

The Department of State will be glad to keep the Belgian Government informed of the progress and trend of the exchange of views on the subject. The matter is at present at an exploratory stage, and its consideration by an international conference is not contemplated before there has been a full exchange of views, which is likely to take considerable time.

Department of State,

Washington, December 31, 1948.

SECRET

Annex to P (49)8

The Department of State has noted with interest the summary contained in the Belgian Embassy's memorandum delivered to the Department on October 8, 1948 of the part played by the Belgica expedition of 1898-99 in the discovery and methodical exploration of a portion of the Antarctic area. The Department of State fully appreciates that no review of Antarctic exploration could omit the substantial accomplishments of this expedition and the valuable publication of its results under the sponsorship of the Musée Royal d'Histoire Naturelle de Belgique.

The memorandum of the Belgian Embassy states that the Belgian discovery and investigation of certain Antarctic areas entitle Belgium to make its voice heard at any international conference which might be called to consider a convention for the administration of Antarctica, or at least that part of Antarctica which was explored by the Belgica expedition. The memorandum of the Belgian Embassy further states that the Belgian Government can not think that such a conference would fail to take account of the Belgian rights acquired through the Belgica expedition.

There is annexed for the strictly confidential information of the Belgian Government a copy of the aide memoire (with attachment) which was handed on August 8 and 9, 1948 to the diplomatic missions in Washington of the countries which have made official claims to sovereignty over some portions of Antarctica. There is also enclosed, for convenient reference a copy of the Department of State's press release No. 689 of August 28, 1948.

It will be noted that the United States approach was made only to those countries which have advanced claims to sovereignty over portions of Antarctica. The United States feels that although it has not itself as yet advanced claims to ownership of any portion of Antarctica, the activities of its nationals, on

For Mr. A. Hamilton,
South Africa House.

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P(48)32

Previous Ref. P(48)32.

SECRET

UNITED STATES PROPOSALS
FOR INTERNATIONAL REGIME IN
THE ANTARCTIC
BY BELGIAN INTEREST

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Annexed, for the confidential information of members of the Committee, are copies of an undated Memorandum left at the State Department by the Belgium Embassy, and of the State Department's reply of the 31st December, 1948.

(Signed) JOHN CHADWICK

Secretary

Polar Committee.

Copies sent to SA, 22/1/49

Commonwealth Relations Office.

16th March, 1949.

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"At the end of 1773 Cook sailed south from the shores of New Zealand in search, as he put it, of the Southern continent. Just one year later Cook was in the South of the Atlantic Ocean. Here he discovered the Isle of Georgia and Sandwich Land (the South Sandwich Islands), but did not find the desired 'southern', or Antarctic, continent.

"In 1819 the Russian Naval Ministry equipped two expeditions 'for discoveries': one to the South Pole, the other to the North Pole.

"The expedition to the Antarctic was dispatched in two vessels. One of them - the sloop 'Vostok', about 40 metres long - was under the command of the well-known Russian seaman (subsequently admiral), Captain Faddei Bellingshausen, chief of the expedition, and the other - the sloop 'Mirny', was commanded by the renowned seaman (subsequently admiral) Mikhail Lazarev.

"On July 4 (old style) of 1819 both sloops left Kronstadt and on November 2 arrived in Rio de Janeiro. On December 15 they were in the region of South Georgia, discovered by Cook in 1775. Here our navigators discovered Annenkov Island, so named in honour of Lieutenant Annenkov, who was sailing on the Mirny. On South Georgia Island two capes were placed on the map, Cape Poryadina (actually Poryadina, in honour of the pilot Poryadin) and Cape Demidova (in honour of the Midshipman Demidov), the Gulf of Novosilski (in honour of Midshipman Novosilski), Cape Kupriyanova (in honour of Midshipman Kupriyanov). From South Georgia Island they sailed to the South Sandwiches, some of which were noted by Cook. In this group Bellingshausen discovered the volcanic Leskov Island, named in honour of Lieutenant Leskov, Vysoki Island, 900 metres in height and the active volcano Zavadovski Island, named in honour of Captain-Lieutenant Zavadovski. All three islands were named the De Traverse Islands in honour of the then Naval Minister.

"On January 16, 1820 they were close to the Antarctic continent (in the region of Princess Martha Land), later (1930) noted by Norwegian ships. Hitherto these shores had not been visited by anyone and had not been placed on the map.

"On February 5, 1820 the expedition was in the vicinity of the Antarctic continent (region of Princess Rånkilde Land).

"After a voyage in the Pacific Ocean the 'Vostok' and 'Mirny' in the spring of 1820 again set off on a voyage through the Antarctic Ocean. On January 9 (old style) 1821, they discovered Peter I Island. On January 16, 1821 the expedition discovered the mountainous territory named Alexander I Land.

"A week later they reached the South Shetland Islands, which were placed on the map.

TRANSLATION OF ARTICLE FROM 'PRAVDA'.

Today a general meeting of the members of the All-Union Geographical Society opened here.

The President of the Geographical Society of the USSR Academician L.A. Berg delivered a report on /Russian Discoveries in the Antarctic and present-day interest in it". In his report he said :

"In recent years reports have not seldom appeared in the world press concerning various expeditions to the Antarctic and about speeches by statesmen of various countries on the question of the international regime of the Antarctic or the proprietorship of this or that country over various parts of it. The question of the Antarctic is taking on an acute character.

"The reason for this is clear: with the Antarctic are linked very real interests, which have stimulated the American "Saturday Evening Post" (December, 1947), for example, to declare that this continent may prove to be a gigantic treasure chest !

"The Antarctic continent, which exceeds Europe in size, possesses deposits of very valuable minerals (coal, gold, silver, lead, iron). The existence of uranium ore is probable. .. large whaling and sealing trade is conducted in the Antarctic waters by a number of countries, including the Soviet Union.

"The shortest air routes between the three populated continents of the Southern Hemisphere - Africa, Australia and South America - traverse the Antarctic. Finally the Antarctic serves as a spot of important meteorological observations. Thus this continent is acquiring international significance.

"It cannot but be noted that the negotiations concerning the Antarctic are being conducted behind the scenes and thus far without the participation of the USSR, although the Soviet Union in any case has no less right to the Antarctic territories discovered by Russians than has France, for example, which claims sovereignty over Adelie Land on the grounds that this territory was discovered in 1840 by the French navigator, Dumont D'Urville (and named after his wife). At the same time, the Russian navigators Bellingshausen and Lazarev 20 twenty years before Dumont D'Urville proved for the first time the erroneousness of the then reigning ideas that there was no land beyond the Polar Circle, and discovered the existence of the Antarctic.

For Mr. A. Hamilton,
South Africa House.

P(49)9

Previous Ref: P(48)12

POLAR COMMITTEE

RUSSIAN INTEREST IN THE ANTARCTIC

Annexed is the translation of an article which appeared in "Pravda" on the 11th February, reporting the previous day's meeting in Leningrad of the All-Union Geographical Society.

(Sgd.) JOHN CHADWICK.

Secretary,
Polar Committee.

Cover sent to EA 20/3/49

Commonwealth Relations Office.

17th March, 1949.

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To Mr. T. Hewitson,
C.R.O.
3a. South Africa House.

Milton,
Africa House.

No. F. 2872/7.
Subject: Soviet interest
in the
Antarctic.

SECRET

Reference to previous correspondence:

P(50)2. despatched on
3rd FEB.

LITTEE
THE ANTARCTIC

With the compliments of

Mr. E. N. Larmour.

Publication of an article
on the 11th February,
at the meeting in
of the Geographical Society.

tion

~~message has also been sent to,~~
It is regretted that the present
enclosures were not transmitted
with the above mentioned P(50)2.

JOHN CHADWICK.
Secretary,
Polar Committee.

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Commonwealth Relations Office,
Downing Street,

1/3/1950.

Secretary,
Polar Committee.

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COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE.
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erroneousness of the then reigning ideas that there was no land
beyond the Polar Circle, and discovered the existence of the
Antarctic.

It is not difficult to see that the essence of the imperialist theory of "internationalisation" and of the sectoral system is almost one and the same thing: the only difference is that the sectoral division of the Antarctic involves the seizing of different parts of it by the various capitalist states, whereas "internationalisation" of the Antarctic region in accordance with the American imperialists' plan is aimed at facilitating its domination by a single state - the USA.

True internationalisation of the Antarctic must be built up upon the idea of actual international cooperation, the idea of respect for the interests and rights of other states, with the necessary active participation of the Soviet Union, to which belongs the honour of discovery of the Antarctic mainland...

The Soviet Union proposes the only right way to reach agreement on the question of the Antarctic regime.

Having an inalienable right to take part in the solving of the Antarctic problem, the Soviet Union proposes that it be decided internationally on the basis of an agreement between all the interested states.

(Pages 38-43) (Condensed text) Soviet State and Law No. 3, 1951

The sectoral system of dividing the Antarctic leads to militarisation of the Antarctic region, for the imperialists of various countries, the USA and Britain above all, in attempting to hold on to the positions they have taken, are surrounding the Southern mainland with a network of military bases, are establishing control of the air and sea ways crossing this region, thereby violating the interests of other countries.

The sectoral division of the Antarctic therefore represents a threat to peace and security.

The groundlessness of the division of the Antarctic into sectors has led certain bourgeois jurists to deny the theory of sectors. In its place, and in counterbalance to it, the theory of condominium, i.e., of joint rule, has been put forward...

It must be noted that the bourgeois theories of condominium are built up upon the false idea of the struggle with sovereignty, of the subordination of sovereignty to international law.

Thus, Daniel considers erroneous the opinion that a state has the right to define the territorial limits of its own jurisdiction and waxes ironic over the struggle of sovereignties in the Antarctic. One is forced to the conclusion that the sovereignty of a state must be subordinated to international law. The same idea slips in in N. Accioly's work.

This basically incorrect tenet, which restricts the sovereign rights of a state, leads to bourgeois cosmopolitanism and the reactionary idea of the peoples' repudiation of state sovereignty and independent existence.

In our opinion, international rule of the Antarctic must mean not repudiation of sovereignty, but the cooperation of sovereign states in the matter of the exploitation and peaceful utilisation of the Antarctic regions. The Danube Convention of August 18, 1948, resting as it does upon respect for the sovereignty of the Danube countries, provides an example of such cooperation of sovereign independent states.

Aggressive US circles are trying to use the theory of condominium for their own interests.

In August, 1948, the US State Department announced the beginning of unofficial talks with the Argentine, Chile, Australia, New Zealand, Britain, France and Norway concerning the "form of internationalisation of the Antarctic", concerning the setting up of "international rule" of it.

Carrying on behind-the-scenes talks on the regime of the Antarctic without the participation of the USSR, the American imperialists are trying to limit the legitimate rights of the Soviet Union proceeding from the great Russian discoveries in the Antarctic. It is quite clear that the American theory of "internationalisation" is a fig leaf covering the American imperialists' craving to seize the whole of the Antarctic.

The aggressive essence of the American plans for "international rule" of the Antarctic is so obvious that even states dependent on the USA - the Argentine, Chile, and also Norway, have refused to take part in the talks.

Such, in general lines, is the theory of sectors. In appraising it one must bear in mind the immense difference between the northern and southern polar regions of our planet.

The Arctic consists of an ocean (the "very cold sea" of our forebears) with islands and archipelagos situated in it which have, to a considerable extent, been assimilated by the states which lie in direct proximity to the Arctic regions. Many narrow Arctic seas, small in dimension and situated near populated centres of Europe and America, can rather be put in the category of "historic gulfs". The population of the states adjacent to the Arctic have long since assimilated these desert-like areas, ice-covered, but rich in fauna and minerals. For example, for the population of the extensive territory of the Soviet Union's Arctic coast these lands and seas are the basic sources of foodstuffs essential for existence. Finally, Arctic regions situated fairly close to populated centres of the adjacent states are of great defensive significance.

It can be concluded that the Soviet Union, like other states adjacent to the northern polar regions, is closely bound to these regions both economically and strategically.

All these facts conditioned the setting up of an appropriate juridical regime for the Arctic: the states lying adjacent to the northern polar regions extended their sovereignty to the lands lying within the corresponding polar sectors...

Thus, the theory of sectors in the Arctic can be justified historically, economically and strategically.

The conditions which have taken shape in the southern polar regions are quite different. Whereas certain Arctic areas are economically and strategically connected with adjacent states and are of important significance mainly or even only for these states, the Arctic (sic) continent is not surrounded by states adjoining it over a great distance, and is of international significance. The seas of the Antarctic are a continuation of three oceans and belong to the category of open seas. The seaways and airways lying across the Antarctic are first and foremost international in character.

Only one conclusion can be drawn from what has been said: the question of the juridical regime of the Antarctic can only be decided on an international basis; the theory of sectors, however, cannot be applied in deciding this question.

However, in the period of imperialism, with its aspiration to world partition, the imperialist states have carried out this theory in practice...

All the facts prove with sufficient convincingsness that the theory of sectors and its application to the Antarctic is completely unacceptable. The sectoral division of the Antarctic involves, as may be seen by the example of the conflict between Britain, Chile and the Argentine, disputes and clashes between the imperialist states which go as far as armed demonstrations.

US ARMED AGGRESSION ON TAIWAN

By B.A. Aleksandrov

...Review of a number of questions of international law and international politics connected with the US armed aggression on Taiwan permits one to draw a number of conclusions.

1. The American aggression against Taiwan is a continuous part of the American aggression against China as a whole, part of the general attack made by American imperialism on a wide front against the democratic countries of east and south-east Asia.

2. In the field of international law the act of aggression against Taiwan and the attempts to justify this aggression and legalise it under the sign of the UN amount to a campaign by American imperialism, against the wartime agreements won by the peoples' blood, under the slogan "No return to Teheran and Yalta", against the UN Charter and the universally accepted norms of international law which assert that the sanctity and inviolability of the international agreements and acts concluded.

3. Making vain attempts to pass as "friends" of the Chinese people, the American imperialists and their arms-bearers are trying to galvanise their notorious doctrine of the "open door" in China and are disguising the campaign of the capitalist powers for the imperialistic partition of China, which they took up earlier, as the crusade of world imperialism against the Chinese People's Republic by concealing it with the screen of the UN, i.e., factually retaining its command for themselves.

4. The State Department and its legal consultants, like chameleons, change their "principles" and "conceptions" of international law to suit the political weather, adapting them to the interests of and tasks set by the American monopolies and American military.

Truman, Acheson, Dulles, Austin, and the others are trying to convert international law from an instrument for the international intercourse and peaceful co-existence of the peoples into a tool for war and the destruction of mankind fabricated in the arsenals of the Pentagon and US capitalist monopolies.

(Pages 44-51) (Excerpt)

Soviet State and Law No. 3, 1951

REGARDING THE QUESTION OF THE REGIME OF THE ANTARCTIC

By B.V. Kostitsyn

...The legal position with regard to the Antarctic is one of the most controversial issues of international law...

The so-called theory of sectors appeared in the beginning of the twentieth century. The essence of it is that individual states can establish their sovereignty over "polar sectors", which have the Pole as their apex, certain meridians as their sides and, as their base, either the coast of the adjacent country (for the Arctic) or some latitude parallel (for the Antarctic)...



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Whitehall 2323

Ext.:

Your reference :

Please quote in reply : F.2876/28

DOWNING STREET

LONDON S.W.1

CONFIDENTIAL

30th July, 1951

Dear Hewitson,

... You may be interested to see a copy of a translation of
"The question of the regime of the Antarctic" by B.V. Kostritsyn
which appeared in Soviet State and Law No.3 in March 1951.

I am asked to say that the translation, although carefully
prepared, is not official and should not be quoted as such.

I am writing similarly to Rae, Waller and Sir Cecil Day.

Yours sincerely,

T. Hewitson, Esq.,
South Africa House.

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in the beginning of the twentieth century. The essence of it is
that individual states can establish their sovereignty over "polar
sectors", which have the Pole as their apex, certain meridians as
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Antarctic)...

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Airmail.

31st July, 1951.

Confidential.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS:

Antarctic.

The Commonwealth Relations Office have sent us the attached copy of a translation of "The question of the regime of the Antarctic" by B.V. Kostritsyn which appeared in "Soviet State and Law" NS 3 in March 1951.

The Commonwealth Relations Office have emphasized that the translation, although carefully prepared, is not official and should not be quoted as such.

T. HEWITSON.

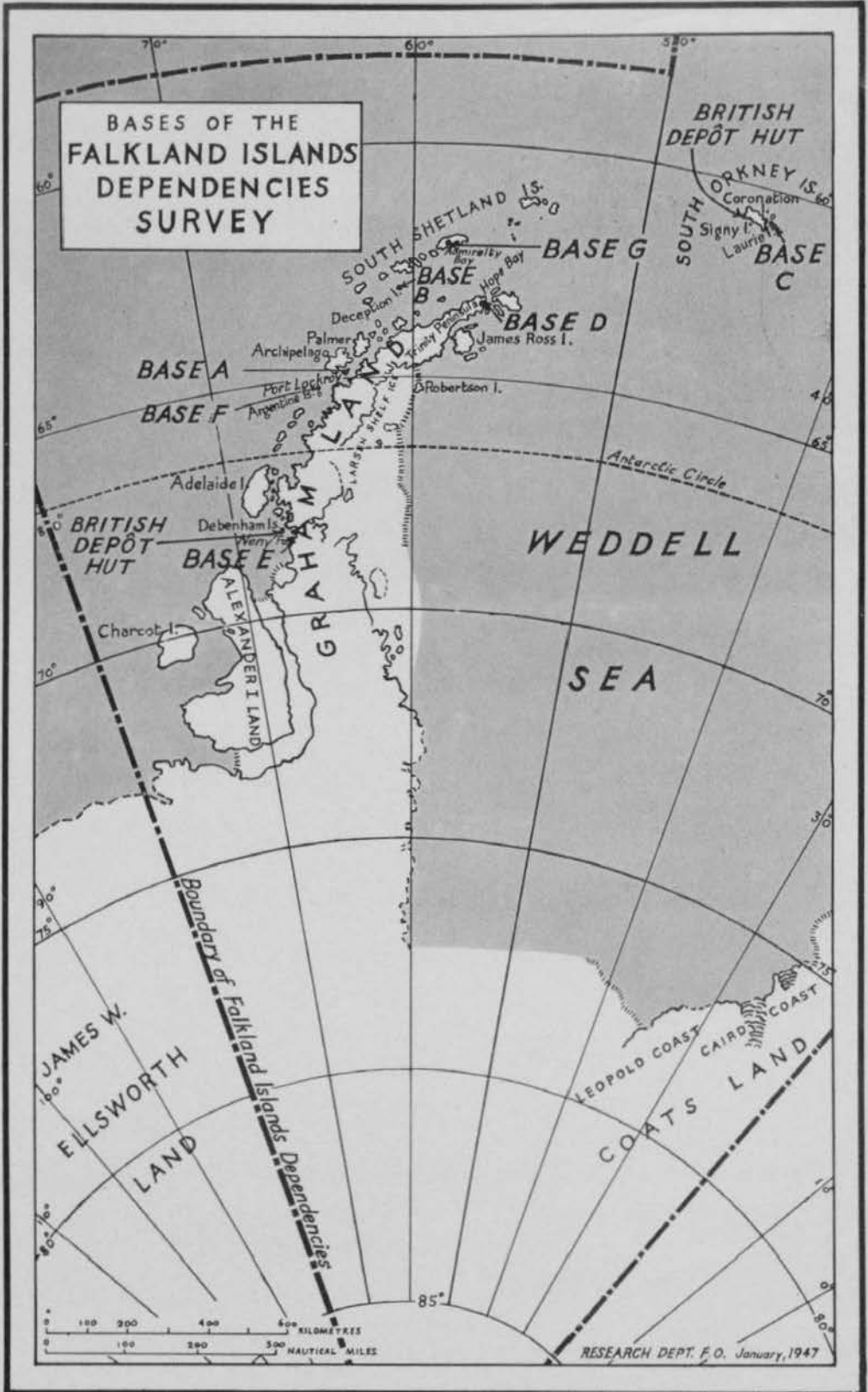
Political Secretary.

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their sides and, as their base, either the coast of the adjacent country (for the Arctic) or some latitude parallel (for the Antarctic)...

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