

CLOSED

SEC. 12/56 (S.S.172)

H.C.1.

Previous No.

19/88/2

No. P.S. 16/2
Vol. 2.

HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR THE
UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Fi

SUBJECT:

ANTARCTICA : POLITICAL

SOVEREIGNTY, ETC.

CLOSED

See P.S. 16/3 for Falkland Islands + Dependencies
23rd December, 1954 - 6th September, 1957

SECRET

CLOSED

P.S. 16/2 - 23/12/54 - 6/9/57
Vol. 2.

Next Number

COPY

43/44

AIR BAG

23rd December, 1954

SECRET

SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PRETORIA

American Interest in the Antarctic

At a reception a few evenings ago a senior official of the State Department let slip (rather indiscreetly, I thought) the information that there had been an important change in their attitude towards the Antarctic. As you know, the United States Government have steadily refused to admit the claims of other countries in Antarctica and have themselves put forward no claims in this region. This official mentioned that he himself had for some time been pressing the State Department to consider the formulation of American claims and expressed his satisfaction that their legal experts were now engaged in working out a possible basis for such claims.

We have lately been sending you various press reports on the U. S. expedition which is now on its way to the Antarctic in the Navy ice-breaker "ATKA".

A. M. HAMILTON.

Counsellor of Embassy

pressure for the establishment of American bases in Antarctica was being exerted on the United States Government by certain interested groups; and, if there has been a reversal of policy it can be directly attributed to this pressure. Consequently there is some suggestion that as soon as the United States formally claims these areas we can expect to see the early establishment of American bases in the Antarctic.

Since the denial of the United States authorities that they had intentions of using Antarctica as an atomic testing ground mention of this topic has been virtually taboo. However it can without fear be predicted that once the United States announces its intention of laying claim to portions of the Antarctic discussion on this subject will be re-opened with renewed vigour.

On the question of the proposed trans-Antarctic Expedition, it seems that New Zealand and Australia will definitely participate with the British. We gather that, as tentative plans stand now, the idea will be to establish a base at McMurdo Sound and that half the expedition will proceed from there to the South Pole while the other half approaches the South Pole from a base which will be established on the other side of the Continent at Vahsel Bay. After meeting at the South Pole the entire expedition would then return to the base at McMurdo Sound. With the establishment of the trans-Antarctic expedition base at McMurdo Sound we believe, from our New Zealand colleagues, that it is not unlikely that the New Zealanders will, from there, find it easier and cheaper to establish a base at nearby Ross Island, and thus to meet the wishes of the Americans.

In conclusion, it would seem that if the United States decide to go ahead with claims to the Antarctic and to reverse their policy of not recognising claims by other countries we shall hear no more from them of the idea of an international regime for Antarctica; for then, less than ever, would the United States wish to see any United Nations intervention in Antarctica.

Copies to London, Paris and Ottawa.

A. M. HAMILTON

Ambassador

We have been told by our New Zealand colleagues, that the United States authorities have recently been encouraging them to establish an expedition and to coordinate their activities with the State Department.

this end they have been offered shipping space for supplies and equipment in the five American vessels which will leave for Antarctica late this year in preparation for the International Geophysical Year. Because of the doubt about the future usefulness of the United States base at Little America, the Americans deem it essential that a "friendly" base be established in Ross Sea; and, of course, a New Zealand base on Ross Island would suit admirably. We have gathered, moreover, that the Americans have indicated that they would like to see the Continent "sawn up" and all the claims recognized so that Russian intervention in the Antarctic could be forestalled. Consequently, it is believed that if the United States do lay claim to the unclaimed areas, they will submit their claim to the International Court for formal approval.

In this connection it is of interest that Little America actually lies within the New Zealand claim and that while the United States has in the past not recognized any claims, the embarrassment of a possible conflict of interest was obviated with the ATKA expedition, as it has, in previous expeditions, by the New Zealand Government extending an invitation to the United States Government for the visit to Little America. We are informed that the United States unofficially accepts these invitations.

At discussions at the State Department no mention has been made to us of any American plans for the Antarctic, other than plans associated with the International Geophysical year. We were told that the U. S. intends establishing three weather stations in the Antarctic: one at the South Pole, one at Little America or, if that were not possible, at nearby Kainan Bay, and one in the unclaimed Marie Byrd Land. The establishment of these three weather stations falls within the scope of United States participation in the International Geophysical Year and, we are informed, Dr. Wexler of the United States Weather Bureau has communicated these plans to the South African authorities.

The areas of the Antarctic in which the United States seems to be showing interest are Marie Byrd Land and the hinterland of the Norwegian claim which they believe is, like Marie Byrd Land, also unclaimed. If the Americans do lay claim to these areas, it would seem that their action will be welcomed by the other countries who have claims to Antarctica, for this would pave their way for a settlement of the whole question of Antarctic claims. I should add that we do not know how Norway is reacting to American interest in the hinterland of its claim.

It has been obvious for some time that strong

/pressure . . .

AIR BAG

15th March, 1955

SECRET

SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

CAPE TOWN section it is of interest that little
 is known of the United States policy towards the Ant-
 arctic. The Department of a new policy of
 interest has been observed with the United States
 in previous American Interest in Antarctica

On the 23rd December this Embassy reported that
 a senior State Department official had let slip, at a
 reception, that United States policy towards the Ant-
 arctic was undergoing an important change and that the
 State Department lawyers were working to devise a legal
 basis for possible United States claims. Since State
 Department contacts are not divulging any information
 along these lines at present, it is of interest to report
 now that our Commonwealth colleagues, by their own
 deductions, have come to the same conclusion.

At both the British and New Zealand Embassies
 the conviction is well-rooted that a new policy regarding
 the Antarctic is being formulated in the State Department.
 This policy will permit of the recognition by the United
 States of claims to the Antarctic by friendly countries,
 and it will provide for claims by the United States to
 the hitherto unclaimed areas. It is also being said that
 later in the year, when a declaration of this new policy
 might be expected, an Antarctic section of the State
 Department will be established. This is at the moment
 based on conjecture but it is significant that the New
 Zealand Embassy particularly, by virtue of its own very
 great interest and its necessary involvement in the
 arrangements for the ATKA expedition, has been in very
 close touch with the State Department.

We have been told by our New Zealand colleagues,
 for instance, that the United States authorities have
 recently been encouraging them to establish bases in
 Antarctica and so consolidate their claims; and to

/this . . .

SECRET



43/44

15th March, 1955

With the
Compliments of the
Embassy
of the
Union of South Africa
Washington, D.C.

The Political Secretary,
Office of the High Commissioner
for the Union of South Africa,
LONDON

H.V. 14
H/13
14

Mr. [Signature]
H/13

[Handwritten mark]

15th March, 1955

offer in the five American vessels which
in late this year in preparation
Geophysical Institute of the
usefulness of the
the American
be established
base on East
shared, with
would like
this regard
Antarctic could
viewed that if
claimed areas, they will submit
onal Court for formal approval.



AFFAIRS

on it is of interest that little
within the New Zealand and
States has in the past and recognition
present of a possible conflict of
with the ATKA expedition, as it has
by the State Department
Interest in Antarctica

America, to the
specially
member this Embassy reported that
ent official had let slip, at a
States policy towards the Ant-
an important change and that the
ers were working to devise a legal

basis for possible United States claims. Since State
Department contacts are not divulging any information
along these lines at present, it is of interest to report
now that our Commonwealth colleagues, by their own
deductions, have come to the same conclusion.

At both the British and New Zealand Embassies
the conviction is well-rooted that a new policy regarding
the Antarctic is being formulated in the State Department.
This policy will permit of the recognition by the United
States of claims to the Antarctic by friendly countries,
and it will provide for claims by the United States to
the hitherto unclaimed areas. It is also being said that
later in the year, when a declaration of this new policy
might be expected, an Antarctic section of the State
Department will be established. This is at the moment
based on conjecture but it is significant that the New
Zealand Embassy particularly, by virtue of its own very
great interest and its necessary involvement in the
arrangements for the ATKA expedition, has been in very
close touch with the State Department.

We have been told by our New Zealand colleagues,
for instance, that the United States authorities have
recently been encouraging them to establish bases in
Antarctica and so consolidate their claims; and to

/this . . .

American Enquiries Concerning Antarctic

1. Has New Zealand any long-range plans for operations in the Antarctic after the end of the International Geophysical Year?
2. What is New Zealand's attitude to the inclusion of the Soviet Union in international action relating to the Antarctic?
3. What are New Zealand's views on the possibility of holding an international conference to consider conflicting territorial claims in the Antarctic?
4. Has New Zealand any views on Soviet interests in the Antarctic?
5. What are New Zealand's views on the validity of conflicting national claims and on possible forms of international co-operation in the Antarctic?

... for the area expedition, has been in very close touch with the State Department.

It has been obvious for some time past that we have been told by our New Zealand colleagues, for instance, that the United States authorities have recently been encouraging them to establish bases in Antarctica and so consolidate their claims; and to

/this . . .

COPY

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

The United States has followed with interest plans announced by the Soviet Union for an Antarctic expedition in connection with the International Geophysical Year. We do not yet know whether Soviet activity in the Antarctic is motivated by real scientific interest or whether it heralds an attempt at permanent occupation of a portion of the Antarctic. We feel sure that our friends and allies who have a traditional interest in the Antarctic Continent share our concern over the latter possibility.

The United States has learned that the Soviet Union has informally requested assistance at recent International Geophysical Year meetings in the nature of landing rights at airfields as stopping points for planes en route to the Antarctic. We believe that the extension of such assistance would be contrary to the interest of all having an interest in the Antarctic unless we can be assured that the main Soviet interest is connected with the International Geophysical Year and thus limited in its duration.

In the common interest we believe we should adopt a common policy towards any official Soviet overtures by keeping each other informed of such developments.

American Embassy,
London,
November 22, 1955.

RWZimmermann/dtr

and of their future plans insofar as these have been determined. They would ask the Americans to do the same.

- (iii) They would suggest that there should henceforth be a regular exchange of information between the four Governments on Antarctic matters and consultation as regards in particular the attitude to be adopted towards Russian activity. They would consider with the Americans whether any special procedure or machinery was required for this purpose.
- (iv) On the United Kingdom side advantage would be taken of this approach to explain in more detail than has been done hitherto the background of the United Kingdom dispute with Argentina and Chile, and our efforts to achieve a settlement. We should thus hope to bring the Americans to a better understanding of our attitude.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE,
LONDON S.W.1.

7th December, 1955

ML

POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES

4. The Americans are taking a new interest in the Antarctic and are particularly concerned at future Russian activities there. (Cf. the recent United States Memorandum of which a ... copy is attached, requesting the withholding of transit facilities for Soviet aircraft bound for the Antarctic). American effort and expenditure far exceeds anything that the Commonwealth countries can contemplate, and there is every reason to suppose that their interest will continue after the end of the International Geophysical Year. They have hitherto been reluctant to disclose their plans to anyone, but they are anxious to find out more about the intentions of the Commonwealth Governments. The indications are that they may presently wish to assert a claim to some part of Antarctica although they would probably not wish to do so until they have had time to evaluate the results of the preliminary reconnaissance expeditions which they are now sending into Antarctica.

APPROACH TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

5. It seems to us that the time has come to seek a better understanding in Antarctic matters between the interested Commonwealth countries and the United States. Mr. Casey made it clear when in London last October that this is also the view of the Australian Government. We therefore suggest that the three Ambassadors should make an early approach to the State Department on the following lines:-

- (i) They would point to the importance of closer co-operation between the four of us, now that international exploitation of the Antarctic is being pushed ahead and the Russians are beginning to play a more active role in the area.
- (ii) They would give a frank account of the present Antarctic policy of the three Commonwealth Governments

/and of

of Staff are also strongly opposed to it. They say that we should need to divert ships from other stations in order to protect our bases from reprisals, and this would not be justified by any strategic considerations.

- (iv) We have considered an appeal to the Security Council as a possible alternative. But we cannot count on American support over such an issue, and there is little chance of obtaining any acceptable resolution in the Council without it.

FUTURE POLICY

2. We conclude that we must accept the fact that Argentina and Chile have come to stay in the Antarctic and do our best to limit their encroachments in our sector until the time is ripe for the whole international position in the Antarctic to be considered afresh by the Powers concerned. This means that we push ahead with our programme of expansion, and continue to serve protests on the Argentines and Chileans if they set up new bases, but take no further action against them unless they establish themselves within close range of our own bases or are otherwise deliberately provocative, or interfere with our activities. (The Tripartite Naval Declarations between the United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile, were renewed on November 21 this year; the Declarations preserve the naval status quo in the Antarctic and give us local superiority over Argentina and Chile). At the same time we would be ready to respond to any indication that the new regime in Argentina was disposed to negotiate a settlement.

3. The United Kingdom Government consider that the policy outlined above presents the only chance of holding their position in the Antarctic without a disproportionate diversion of effort from more important objectives. It is also a policy for which we can hope to obtain American support, and that is an important point.

/POSITION

SECRET

ANTARCTICA

PROPOSED COMMONWEALTH CONSULTATION WITH
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

BACKGROUND

Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have recently reviewed their policy in Antarctica. The following considerations have led to this re-appraisal.

- (i) We have failed to persuade Argentina and Chile to accept arbitration over their claims to our sector. Public interest in the Antarctic is increasing, the Southern winter has ended and we are already being asked in Parliament what we intend to do about the trespassers in our sector.
- (ii) The dispute with Argentina and Chile can no longer be treated in isolation. The International Geophysical Year (I.G.Y.) has brought both the United States and Russia into the Antarctic in a large way, and that means that we must look on our problems there in rather a different light.
- (iii) We have examined the possibility of using force to evict Argentina and Chile from their bases in our sector, but it is clear that we should lose more than we should gain by adopting this course. Our Ambassadors at Buenos Aires and Santiago consider that we could not use force without provoking a major upset in our relations with Argentina and Chile with a risk of serious retaliation from the Argentine Navy. Our Ambassador in Washington considers that the use of force would provoke a hostile reaction in the United States. The Chiefs

/of Staff

COPY

CONFIDENTIAL

MEMORANDUM

The United States has followed with interest plans announced by the Soviet Union for an Antarctic expedition in connection with the International Geophysical Year. We do not yet know whether Soviet activity in the Antarctic is motivated by real scientific interest or whether it heralds an attempt at permanent occupation of a portion of the Antarctic. We feel sure that our friends and allies who have a traditional interest in the Antarctic Continent share our concern over the latter possibility.

The United States has learned that the Soviet Union has informally requested assistance at recent International Geophysical Year meetings in the nature of landing rights at airfields as stopping points for planes en route to the Antarctic. We believe that the extension of such assistance would be contrary to the interest of all having an interest in the Antarctic unless we can be assured that the main Soviet interest is connected with the International Geophysical Year and thus limited in its duration.

In the common interest we believe we should adopt a common policy towards any official Soviet overtures by keeping each other informed of such developments.

American Embassy,
London,
November 22, 1955.

RWZimmermann/dtr

and of their future plans insofar as these have been determined. They would ask the Americans to do the same.

(iii) They would suggest that there should henceforth be a regular exchange of information between the four Governments on Antarctic matters and consultation as regards in particular the attitude to be adopted towards Russian activity. They would consider with the Americans whether any special procedure or machinery was required for this purpose.

(iv) On the United Kingdom side advantage would be taken of this approach to explain in more detail than has been done hitherto the background of the United Kingdom dispute with Argentina and Chile, and our efforts to achieve a settlement. We should thus hope to bring the Americans to a better understanding of our attitude.

COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS OFFICE,
LONDON S.W.1.

7th December, 1955

ML

POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES

4. The Americans are taking a new interest in the Antarctic and are particularly concerned at future Russian activities there. (Cf. the recent United States Memorandum of which a ... copy is attached, requesting the withholding of transit facilities for Soviet aircraft bound for the Antarctic). American effort and expenditure far exceeds anything that the Commonwealth countries can contemplate, and there is every reason to suppose that their interest will continue after the end of the International Geophysical Year. They have hitherto been reluctant to disclose their plans to anyone, but they are anxious to find out more about the intentions of the Commonwealth Governments. The indications are that they may presently wish to assert a claim to some part of Antarctica although they would probably not wish to do so until they have had time to evaluate the results of the preliminary reconnaissance expeditions which they are now sending into Antarctica.

APPROACH TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

5. It seems to us that the time has come to seek a better understanding in Antarctic matters between the interested Commonwealth countries and the United States. Mr. Casey made it clear when in London last October that this is also the view of the Australian Government. We therefore suggest that the three Ambassadors should make an early approach to the State Department on the following lines:-

- (i) They would point to the importance of closer co-operation between the four of us, now that international exploitation of the Antarctic is being pushed ahead and the Russians are beginning to play a more active role in the area.
- (ii) They would give a frank account of the present Antarctic policy of the three Commonwealth Governments

/and of

of Staff are also strongly opposed to it. They say that we should need to divert ships from other stations in order to protect our bases from reprisals, and this would not be justified by any strategic considerations.

- (iv) We have considered an appeal to the Security Council as a possible alternative. But we cannot count on American support over such an issue, and there is little chance of obtaining any acceptable resolution in the Council without it.

FUTURE POLICY

2. We conclude that we must accept the fact that Argentina and Chile have come to stay in the Antarctic and do our best to limit their encroachments in our sector until the time is ripe for the whole international position in the Antarctic to be considered afresh by the Powers concerned. This means that we push ahead with our programme of expansion, and continue to serve protests on the Argentines and Chileans if they set up new bases, but take no further action against them unless they establish themselves within close range of our own bases or are otherwise deliberately provocative, or interfere with our activities. (The Tripartite Naval Declarations between the United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile, were renewed on November 21 this year; the Declarations preserve the naval status quo in the Antarctic and give us local superiority over Argentina and Chile). At the same time we would be ready to respond to any indication that the new regime in Argentina was disposed to negotiate a settlement.

3. The United Kingdom Government consider that the policy outlined above presents the only chance of holding their position in the Antarctic without a disproportionate diversion of effort from more important objectives. It is also a policy for which we can hope to obtain American support, and that is an important point.

/POSITION

SECRET

ANTARCTICA

PROPOSED COMMONWEALTH CONSULTATION WITH
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

BACKGROUND

Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have recently reviewed their policy in Antarctica. The following considerations have led to this re-appraisal.

- (i) We have failed to persuade Argentina and Chile to accept arbitration over their claims to our sector. Public interest in the Antarctic is increasing, the Southern winter has ended and we are already being asked in Parliament what we intend to do about the trespassers in our sector.
- (ii) The dispute with Argentina and Chile can no longer be treated in isolation. The International Geophysical Year (I.G.Y.) has brought both the United States and Russia into the Antarctic in a large way, and that means that we must look on our problems there in rather a different light.
- (iii) We have examined the possibility of using force to evict Argentina and Chile from their bases in our sector, but it is clear that we should lose more than we should gain by adopting this course. Our Ambassadors at Buenos Aires and Santiago consider that we could not use force without provoking a major upset in our relations with Argentina and Chile with a risk of serious retaliation from the Argentine Navy. Our Ambassador in Washington considers that the use of force would provoke a hostile reaction in the United States. The Chiefs

/of Staff

explained then that there had not been any intention of necessarily excluding the Union from any approach to the United States. In drafting the memorandum they had not mentioned the Union solely because of uncertainty as to the extent of the Union's interest. If, however, the Union Government wished to be associated with the joint approach, and with any machinery for consultation which might be set up as a result thereof, either as a full member or possibly in an observer capacity, they would be glad to be informed.

As it is intended that the joint approach to the United States Government should be made early in January, the United Kingdom authorities would be grateful to receive as early as possible, and in any case before the end of December, any comments which the Union Government may have on the proposal as a whole and also an indication whether they wish to be associated with the approach and subsequent consultation.

The Department of State has been advised of this meeting of representatives of the High Commissioners for Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, and of a proposal that certain Commonwealth Governments should consult with the United States Government on matters relating to the Antarctic. **G. P. JOOSTE**, High Commissioner, stands on behalf of this Office.

The proposal is set out in a memorandum prepared by the Department of State, of which I enclose a copy. In the brief discussion which took place it appeared that the proposed approach to the United States has been suggested to some extent by a tentative approach made recently by the United States Government to a number of other Governments, including the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and also some non-Commonwealth Governments.

I do not know whether the Union was included in the United States approach (which took the form of a memorandum) but, in any case, I attach a copy of the memorandum, which the United Kingdom representatives will find enough to refer available to the Union.

It will be seen that the Americans appear to have in mind, inter alia, the holding of an international conference. The United Kingdom Government, however, appear to consider that there would be advantages in confining the form of consultation, at least in the initial stages, to the United States and those Commonwealth Governments having an interest in the Antarctic.

It will be seen from paragraph 3 of the U.S.G. memorandum that it is suggested that the approach to the State Department should be made by the "three ambassadors", i.e. the British, Australian and New Zealand Ambassadors in Washington.

In the discussion Mr. Jooste mentioned the Union's special interest in the Antarctic, as brought to the notice of other Governments concerned in 1918, and as stated in Parliament earlier this year by the Hon. the Minister of External Affairs. The Foreign Office representatives present

JS/AG

19/88/2

AIRMAIL

SECRET

9th December, 1955.

URGENT

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Antarctica

The Commonwealth Relations Office called a meeting this morning of representatives of the High Commissioners for Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, to consider a proposal that certain Commonwealth Governments should consult with the United States Government on matters affecting the Antarctic. Mr. Jordaan and Mr. Stewart attended on behalf of this Office.

The proposal is set out in a memorandum prepared by the Commonwealth Relations Office, of which I enclose a copy. In the brief discussion which took place it appeared that this proposed approach to the United States has been actuated to some extent by a tentative approach made recently by the United States Government to a number of other Governments, including the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and also some non-Commonwealth Governments.

I am not aware whether the Union was included in the United States approach (which took the form of a questionnaire) but, in case this did not occur, I attach a copy of the questionnaire, which the New Zealand representative was kind enough to make available to Mr. Jordaan.

It will be seen that the Americans appear to have in mind, inter alia, the holding of an international conference. The United Kingdom Government, however, appear to consider that there would be advantage in confining the forum of consultation, at least in the initial stages, to the United States and those Commonwealth Governments having an interest in the Antarctic.

It will be seen from paragraph 5 of the C.R.O. memorandum that it is suggested that the approach to the State Department should be made by the "three Ambassadors", i.e. the British, Australian and New Zealand Ambassadors in Washington.

In the discussion Mr. Jordaan mentioned the Union's special interest in the Antarctic, as brought to the notice of other Governments concerned in 1948, and as stated in Parliament earlier this year by the Hon. the Minister of External Affairs. The Foreign Office representative present

/explained

SECRET

NEW ZEALAND

COPY OF CABLEGRAM

No. 2780

Dated Wellington
Received London
Hended to Section concerned

1748 Hrs 8.12.55
1000 Hrs 8.12.55.
1100 Hrs 8.12.55.

Addressed Totara No. 377 Kauri No. 355 Deputy No. 1577.
Antarctic. Reply to American memorandum Soviet use of base facilities in New Zealand (text of which was conveyed to us by American Embassy on two December) has been made along following lines. Government shares American concern at Soviet plan but recognizes difficulty of excluding Soviet Union from Antarctic during I.G.Y. or of ensuring that its activities there are limited to I.G.Y. "New Zealand Government therefore adheres to the view which it has expressed on other occasions that the most effective means of meeting the threat of the Soviet Union's becoming permanently established in the Antarctic is for the other countries having substantial interests in that region to cooperate to the full in an endeavour to find a satisfactory settlement of territorial questions in the Antarctic as soon as possible." If request for facilities in New Zealand is received Government will be pleased to consult with United States and Commonwealth Governments concerned with a view to formulating common policy.

Kauri/Deputy only. Please convey terms of reply to Australian/United Kingdom authorities.

EXTERNAL

Mr Templeton.

SECRET

SECRET

2.

"The New Zealand Government is supporting the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition and New Zealand participation in the International Geophysical Year, and has made a substantial contribution towards the setting up of a New Zealand base at McMurdo Sound in the Ross Dependency for these purposes. The Government intends to take a continuing interest in the Dependency and to encourage New Zealand expeditions to visit it at frequent intervals in order to further the exploration of the area. It welcomes the forthcoming United States expedition, and it will continue to extend assistance and provide facilities to United States expeditions to Ross Dependency in the spirit of cooperation which has characterized the relations between the two countries in Antarctic matters up to the present time.

The New Zealand Government would not, however, regard with favour the undertaking of any extensive activities in the Ross Dependency by other powers and, in particular, by the Soviet Union. It feels that, while it would be difficult to exclude the Soviet Union altogether from scientific work in the Antarctic, it would be most undesirable to allow it to gain a strong foothold in any part of that region. Such a step could conceivably have serious strategic implications for the Anzus powers and their allies, and this possibility the New Zealand Government is anxious to avoid.

As to territorial claims, the New Zealand Government recognizes the right of the United Kingdom, Australia, France and Norway, to sovereignty over the respective sectors in the Antarctic claimed by them. Nevertheless, it realizes that certain conflicts of interest between them and other powers have arisen or may in future arise, in these extensive territories, and that these conflicts cannot easily be resolved. The New Zealand Government would be pleased, in consultation with other Commonwealth Governments concerned, to discuss at any time with the United States Government means of finding a practical solution to these conflicts. While it fully appreciates the desirability of achieving an overall settlement of the problem, the Government would not, however, be inclined to favour a general international conference on the subject at this time. It feels that in the present circumstances it would be difficult to hold such a conference without permitting the participation of the Soviet Union, and that this would, to a considerable extent, defeat the object of the conference itself. It also feels that a solution would, in any case, be more likely to be found by a series of limited negotiations than by multilateral discussion at an early stage. The New Zealand Government would not, however, wish to exclude the possibility of joining at a later stage in a conference with the other countries having claims in the Antarctic to consider steps towards greater international cooperation in the exploitation of that region."

Secretary of External Affairs.

SECRET

SECRET

COPY

NEW ZEALAND

P.M. 208/4/8

Department of External Affairs,
Wellington, N.Z.

25 October 1955

AMERICAN ENQUIRY ABOUT ANTARCTIC POLICY

Some time ago an enquiry was received from the American Embassy in Wellington about New Zealand's policy in the Antarctic and its attitude to the interests of other powers in that region. The Embassy asked for replies to the following specifications:-

1. Has New Zealand any long-range plans for operations in the Antarctic after the conclusion of the International Geophysical Year in 1958.
2. What is New Zealand's attitude to the inclusion of the Soviet Union in international activities relating to the Antarctic.
3. What are New Zealand's views on the possibility of holding an international conference to consider conflicting territorial claims in the Antarctic.
4. Has New Zealand any views on Soviet interest in the Antarctic.
5. What are New Zealand's views on the validity of conflicting national claims and on possible forms of international cooperation in the Antarctic.

It was ascertained that similar, though in most cases not so specific, enquiries were addressed to several other governments with territorial claims in the Antarctic. The object of these enquiries seems to have been to collect information about other countries' views on the political future of Antarctica, in preparation for a fundamental reexamination of American policy. Nevertheless, it was reported that such a reassessment was unlikely to be made in the immediate future, as the United States authorities had decided that the time was inopportune for any new departures in Antarctic policy and intended to postpone consideration of the matter for at least a year.

In the light of this information, and of consultations with the United Kingdom and Australian authorities, it was decided that the reply should be cautious and non-committal, and designed to impress upon the American authorities as far as possible the need for them to take a positive stand themselves, since until they have formulated their own policy, it is very difficult for other countries to decide theirs. The following reply, approved by the Minister, was accordingly given informally to the American Embassy.

SECRET

SECRET

IN YOUR REPLY PLEASE REFER TO

111/1/2

TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS :
"DEPUTY, LONDON"

TELEPHONE :
TEMPLE BAR
3241



NEW ZEALAND HOUSE,
415, STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.2.

9 December 1955

Dear *Jch,*

Enclosed, as we promised at the Antarctic Meeting at the Commonwealth Relations Office on 9 December, are copies of a New Zealand memorandum setting out American enquiries about Antarctic policy and New Zealand thinking on the subject, and of a New Zealand telegram replying to the American memorandum on possible Soviet use of base facilities in New Zealand.

Yours sincerely,

H. C. Templeton
(H. C. Templeton)

J. G. Stewart, Esq.,
South Africa House,
Trafalgar Square,
London, W.C.2.

Encl:

SECRET

4. Has New Zealand any views on Soviet interest in the Antarctic.
5. What are New Zealand's views on the validity of conflicting national claims and on possible forms of international cooperation in the Antarctic.

It was ascertained that similar, though in most cases not so specific, enquiries were addressed to several other governments with territorial claims in the Antarctic. The object of these enquiries seems to have been to collect information about other countries' views on the political future of Antarctica, in preparation for a fundamental reexamination of American policy. Nevertheless, it was reported that such a reassessment was unlikely to be made in the immediate future, as the United States authorities had decided that the time was inopportune for any new departures in Antarctic policy and intended to postpone consideration of the matter for at least a year.

In the light of this information, and of consultations with the United Kingdom and Australian authorities, it was decided that the reply should be cautious and non-committal, and designed to impress upon the American authorities as far as possible the need for them to take a positive stand themselves, since until they have formulated their own policy, it is very difficult for other countries to decide theirs. The following reply, approved by the Minister, was accordingly given informally to the American Embassy.

SECRET

SECRET

19/88/2

AIRMAIL

NEW ZEALAND HOUSE,
415, STRAND,
LONDON, W.C.2.

9 December 1955

SECRET

12th December, 1955.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Antarctica

Please refer to the High Commissioner's despatch
Nº 19/88/2 of the 9th December, 1955, about consultation
with the United States on matters affecting the Antarctic.
Reference was made therein to the approach made by the
United States Government to certain other Governments and
a copy was attached of the questions they had put to the
New Zealand Government.

The Office of the High Commissioner for New
Zealand has now made available to us the following documents
which are forwarded herewith as it is thought they will be
of interest to the Department:

- (1) Copy of a minute dated 25th October from the
New Zealand Department of External Affairs
about the American enquiry.
- (2) Copy of a telegram dated 8th December from the
New Zealand Department of External Affairs on
the subject of the American memorandum on
transit facilities for the Soviet Expedition.
(Annexure to the C.R.O. memorandum dated 7th
December.)

J. G. STEWART

Minister Counsellor.

In the light of this information,
the reply should be devised
to impress upon the American authorities as far as possible the
need for them to take a positive stand themselves, since until
they have formulated their own policy, it is very difficult for
other countries to decide theirs. The following reply,
approved by the Minister, was accordingly given informally to
the American Embassy.

SECRET

11/1/2

House

22

1955

, 1955.

19/88/2

12th December, 1955.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Thank you very much for the two documents on the Antarctic which you sent to me with your letter (111/1/2) of the 9th December.

Yours sincerely,

J. G. STEWART

...the High Commissioner's dispatch of the 7th December, 1955, about the United States on the subject of the Antarctic and made the approach made by the British Government to certain other Governments and the questions they had put to the Government.

The Office of the High Commissioner for New Zealand has now made available to us the following documents which are forwarded herewith as it is thought they will be of interest to the Department.

H. C. Templeton, Esq., dated 5th December 1955, New Zealand House.

JS/AG

copy of a telegram dated 11th Dec 1955 from the New Zealand Department of External Affairs to the British Embassy in Wellington on the subject of the Antarctic and New Zealand's interests with regard to the survey expedition.

(Annexure to the C.R.O. memorandum dated 7th December.)

J. G. STEWART

Minister Counsellor.

In the light of this information and in view of the fact that the United Kingdom and New Zealand have agreed that the reply should be conveyed to the American authorities as far as possible the need for them to take a positive stand themselves, since until they have formulated their own policy, it is very difficult for other countries to decide theirs. The following reply, approved by the Minister, was accordingly given informally to the American Embassy.

SECRET

SECRET

The emphasis in the memorandum had been on the United Kingdom point of view. It might be better to start off in discussions with the Americans with the United States and Soviet interest in Antarctica and not with the dispute between the United Kingdom and Argentina and Chile.

As regards our dispute, There were good legal arguments against the view that Antarctica was merely an extension of the western hemisphere. There was now good hope of persuading some Americans that the anti-Colonial attitude applied to European colonies in the American continent was not applicable in Antarctica.

MR. SPEAKMAN ^{He} did not see any difficulty in getting the Americans to enter into consultations with certain Commonwealth countries on Antarctica to the exclusion of other countries such as France and Norway, who also had territory in Antarctica. There were many other spheres of activity in which the Americans were quite prepared to have private discussions with members of the Commonwealth.

MR. DODDS-PARKER said that he hoped the Russians would not regard the U.K.'s failure to take any effective action so far to dislodge the Argentines and Chileans from their encroachments in our territory as a precedent for Russian encroachment on the territory of Commonwealth members.

MR. DODDS-PARKER ^{he} in conclusion asked for a quick reply from Commonwealth Governments about the proposed joint approach to the Americans, and thanked Commonwealth representatives for their attendance at the meeting.

He expected that the approach to the American in Washington would follow the broad lines indicated in the memorandum but that the details would be settled between the Ambassador in the light of the material they received from other popular fronts. The emphasis in the memorandum had been on the U.K. point of view, and he valued that the Ambassador and New Zealand fronts would probably prefer to open the discussions on the theme of the need for a common line towards Russia rather than start with our dispute with Argentina and Chile in which they had only a limited interest.

Parliament that South Africa took a keen interest in Antarctica. South African interest was concerned with whaling, meteorology and, of course, the strategic use that might be made of the territory by friendly powers or by the Russians. South Africa would, therefore, welcome the opportunity to comment on any approach to be made to the American Government in Washington.

MR. JOCKEL said that he had received the preliminary views of the Australian Government which were in general in favour of a concerted approach to the Americans. This would have to be confirmed after the Australian elections which were impending. Australia had some reservations about claims to sovereignty in Antarctica which might be made by the Americans.

by the three Ambassadors in Washington
would want to see the proposed approach, but he
might see points in para 3 of the memorandum which would be acceptable for their
claims to sovereignty into the scope of the talks with the American

The request that had been made by the U.S.S.R. for facilities for aircraft to stage through Australia on their way from Russia to Antarctica was still being considered by the Australian Government. Australia had promised to consult with the Americans before a final reply was sent. The Americans had undertaken to send to the Australian Government a C.I.A. assessment of Russian intentions in Antarctica. Australia would probably agree to grant facilities but would try to confine them to the I.G.Y. period. A public statement had been made some time ago by the Australian Government welcoming the activities of foreign powers in the Australian sector in connection with the I.G.Y. The Australian Government had also sent a note to the Soviet Government through the U.K. Embassy offering the Russians facilities, and, also, formally

MR. SPEAIGHT replied to some of the points which had been made in discussion. The approach to the Americans in Washington was not intended to follow exactly the lines of the memorandum which had been circulated to the meeting. He had in mind that the Commonwealth Ambassadors would have an exploratory talk to begin with, (with the State Department.)

^{December}
January. Instructions could then be sent to the Ambassadors in Washington early in January. ^{Mr.} Mr. Lloyd White said that New Zealand was not in favour of a full international conference, but thought that limited negotiations would have more chance of success. His Government intended to take a more continuing interest in Antarctica in future than they ~~have~~ done in the past.

The New Zealand Government was well aware of the difficulties created in Antarctica by the Russian activities. New Zealand had so far received no direct request for transit facilities from Russia. The New Zealand Government had, however, been approached by the United States Embassy on the lines of the memorandum attached to the memorandum circulated before the meeting. The New Zealand Government had replied that it shared American concern ^{with} of Soviet plans, but recognised the difficulty of excluding the Soviet Union from Antarctica during the I.G.Y. or of ensuring that its activities there were limited to the I.G.Y.; the most effective means of meeting the threat of the Soviet Union becoming permanently established in Antarctica was for the other countries having substantial interests in that region to co-operate to the full in an endeavour to find a satisfactory settlement of territorial questions in ~~the~~ Antarctica as soon as possible. If a request for facilities in New Zealand was received, his Government would be pleased to consult with the United States and Commonwealth Governments concerned with a view to formulating a common policy. He thought that a joint approach to the State Department by Commonwealth Ambassadors would be favoured by the New Zealand Government.

MR. JORDAAN said that he had received no instructions from the South African Government. In 1948, however, when certain American proposals for the administration of Antarctica were under discussion, his Government had shown that it was interested in the ^{control} ~~disposal~~ of Antarctica, and more recently Mr. Louw had indicated in the South African

of Staff saw no great strategic importance in Antarctica, the situation might change in the years to come.

The United States had not been very forthcoming about their own plans, perhaps because they were not clear in their own minds about their future intentions. Mr. Casey had found the same thing when he was in the States recently. We did not know whether the Americans were thinking in terms of making a territorial claim or of preventing the U.S.S.R. from making one, or whether their interests were purely scientific. If we volunteered our own plans to the Americans we might be able to draw them out. There would be a better chance of reaching an understanding if we could show a common front with other Commonwealth countries.

From the United Kingdom point of view, the approach to the Americans would provide an opportunity to explain the background to our dispute with Argentina and Chile. In Washington this dispute tended to be regarded as a Colonial matter and Antarctica as a projection of the South American continent. There was, therefore, an instinctive sympathy among many Americans for Argentina and Chile in this matter.

The New Zealand Government had told us that they did not feel the time was ripe for a full international conference and we would agree with this. We desired informal talks by the three Ambassadors in Washington, which we hoped would lead to a better understanding and to the regular exchange of information with the Americans. The machinery of consultation with the Americans would have to be considered, but it might be that no special machinery was needed. We should be grateful for the agreement of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa to an approach to the Americans on these lines.

MR. DODDS-PARKER in answer to a question by Mr. White about the status of the memorandum which had been circulated, said that he would suggest that the memorandum should be sent by the Commonwealth representatives to their Governments and that these Governments should be asked for a reply by the end of

January. Donegal.

RECORD OF A MEETING AT THE C.R.O. ON 9TH DECEMBER TO
DISCUSS A PROPOSAL FOR COMMONWEALTH CONSULTATION WITH
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON POLICY IN ANTARCTICA

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

Mr. A.D. Dodds-Parker, M.P.	in the Chair.
Mr. R.L. Speaight, C.M.G.	Foreign Office
Mr. R.J. Vile	Colonial Office
Mr. G. Jockel	Australia House
Mr. G.D.L. White	New Zealand House
Mr. H.C. Templeton	"
Mr. J.R. Jordaan	South Africa House
Mr. J.G. Stewart	"
Mr. I.F.S. Vincent	Foreign Office
Mr. A.J. Brown	Commonwealth Relations Office.

MR. DODDS-PARKER said that a memorandum had already been circulated to those attending the meeting, in which the background was given to a reappraisal which H.M.G. in the U.K. had recently made of their policy in Antarctica. This memorandum set out proposals for a joint approach to the United States Government by Commonwealth Ambassadors in Washington. He drew attention to the Russian threat in Antarctica which was a very real one, the importance of which was fully appreciated in the United States. In view of the recent happenings in the Middle East many Americans were now worried about the possible Soviet penetration in Antarctica also. Mr. Dodds-Parker then invited Mr. Speaight to speak in explanation and amplification of the memorandum.

MR. SPEAIGHT said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs

/of Staff



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

MEMORANDUM TO
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
ON
ANTARCTICA

Whitehall 2373/Ext.
Your Reference:
Please quote in reply:

12th December, 1955.

CONFIDENTIAL.



Dear Stewart,

I enclose a draft record of the meeting held here on the 9th December about Antarctica. Will you please let me know if you have any amendments to suggest?

Chair.
Office
1 Office
La House
land House
frica House

Office
alth Relations
fice.

ready been
the background
had recently
um set out
s Government
w attention
ry real one,

*364 Dodds
This seems to cover the
wishes adequately. Do you
wish to suggest any amendments?
If not, I think we must send
a copy of the draft to our
as follows up to our
own report of
Friday last.*

*Ernie's message,
A.B.*

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

*(A.J. Brown) to
12/12
Mr Stewart,
This seems to be
OK - copy
sent to C.A.
13/12*

... the importance of which was fully appreciated in the United States. In view of the recent happenings in the Middle East many Americans were now worried about the possible Soviet penetration in Antarctica also. Mr. Dodds-Parker then invited Mr. Speaight to speak in explanation and amplification of the memorandum.

MR. SPEAIGHT said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs

/of Staff

19/88/2

AIRMAIL

14th December, 1955.

Confidential

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Antarctica

With further reference to the High Commissioner's minute N8 19/88/2 of December 9th, I forward for information a record of the discussion at the meeting of Commonwealth representatives, which has been made available to us by the Commonwealth Relations Office.

J. G. STEWART
Minister Counsellor.

Note: The record sent to G.A. was the amended record received with the basis letter of 16/12/55.

JS/AG

MR. SPENCER said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs
/of Staff

19/88/2

14th December, 1955.

14th December, 1955.

Confidential

Dear Brown,

Thank you for sending me a draft record of the meeting about Antarctica held on December 9th. I have no amendments to suggest.

Yours sincerely

J. G. STEWART

A. J. Brown, Esq.,
Commonwealth Relations Office.

JS/AG

JS/AG

MR. SPEIGHT said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs

/of Staff

There were many other spheres of activity in which the Americans were quite prepared to have private discussions with members of the Commonwealth.

MR. DODDS-PARKER said that he hoped the Russians would not regard the United Kingdom's failure to take any effective action so far to dislodge the Argentines and Chileans from their encroachments in our territory as a precedent for Russian encroachment on the territory of Commonwealth members.

In conclusion he asked for a quick reply from Commonwealth Governments about the proposed joint approach to the Americans, and thanked Commonwealth representatives for their attendance at the meeting.

interested in the control of Antarctica, and more recently Mr. Louw had indicated in the South African Parliament that South Africa took a keen interest in Antarctica. South African interest was concerned with whaling, meteorology and, of course, the strategic use that might be made of the territory by friendly powers or by the Russians. South Africa would, therefore, welcome the opportunity to comment on any approach to be made to the American Government in Washington.

MR. JOCKEL said that he had received the preliminary views of the Australian Government, which were in general in favour of a concerted approach to the Americans by the three Ambassadors in Washington. This would have to be confirmed after the Australian elections which were impending. Australia would want to see the proposed agenda, but he thought the points in paragraph 3 of the memorandum would be acceptable. In their preliminary views the Government were not in favour of bringing their existing claims to sovereignty into the scope of the talks with the Americans.

The request that had been made by the U.S.S.R. for facilities for aircraft to stage through Australia on their way from Russia to Antarctica was still being considered by the Australian Government. Australia had promised to consult with the Americans before a final reply was sent. The Americans had undertaken to send to the Australian Government a C.I.A. assessment of Russian intentions in Antarctica. Australia would probably agree to grant facilities but would try to confine them to the I.G.Y. period. A public statement had been made some time ago by the Australian Government welcoming the activities of foreign powers in the Australian sector in connection with the I.G.Y. The Australian Government had also sent a note to the Soviet Government through the U.K. Embassy which offered the Russians facilities and, also, formally asserted Australia's title.

MR. SPEAIGHT replied to some of the points which had been made in discussion. We expected that the approach to the Americans in Washington would follow the broad lines indicated in the memorandum, but that the details would be settled between the Ambassadors in the light of the instructions they received from their respective Governments. The emphasis in the memorandum had been on the United Kingdom point of view, and we realised that the Australian and New Zealand Governments would probably prefer to open the discussions on the theme of the need for a common line towards Russia rather than start with our dispute with Argentina and Chile in which they had only a limited interest.

As regards our dispute, there were good legal arguments against the view that Antarctica was merely an extension of the western hemisphere. There was now good hope of persuading some Americans that the anti-colonial attitude applied to European colonies in the American continent was not applicable in Antarctica.

He did not see any difficulty in getting the Americans to enter into consultations with certain Commonwealth countries on Antarctica to the exclusion of other countries such as France and Norway, who also had territory in Antarctica.

/There

From the United Kingdom point of view, the approach to the Americans would provide an opportunity to explain the background to our dispute with Argentina and Chile. In Washington this dispute tended to be regarded as a Colonial matter and Antarctica as a projection of the South American continent. There was, therefore, an instinctive sympathy among many Americans for Argentina and Chile in this matter.

The New Zealand Government had told us that they did not feel the time was ripe for a full international conference and we would agree with this. We desired informal talks by the three Ambassadors in Washington, which we hoped would lead to a better understanding and to the regular exchange of information with the Americans. The machinery of consultation with the Americans would have to be considered, but it might be that no special machinery was needed. We should be grateful for the agreement of Australia, New Zealand and South Africa to an approach to the Americans on these lines.

MR. DODDS-PARKER in answer to a question by Mr. White about the status of the memorandum which had been circulated, said that he would suggest that the memorandum should be sent by the Commonwealth representatives to their Governments and that these Governments should be asked for a reply by the end of December. Instructions could then be sent to the Ambassadors in Washington early in January.

MR. LLOYD WHITE said that New Zealand was not in favour of a full international conference, but thought that limited negotiations would have more chance of success. His Government intended to take a more continuing interest in Antarctica in future than they had done in the past.

The New Zealand Government was well aware of the difficulties created in Antarctica by the Russian activities. New Zealand had so far received no direct request for transit facilities from Russia. The New Zealand Government had, however, been approached by the United States Embassy on the lines of the memorandum attached to the memorandum circulated before the meeting. The New Zealand Government had replied that it shared American concern over Soviet plans, but recognised the difficulty of excluding the Soviet Union from Antarctica during the I.G.Y. or of ensuring that its activities there were limited to the I.G.Y.; the most effective means of meeting the threat of the Soviet Union becoming permanently established in Antarctica was for the other countries having substantial interests in that region to co-operate to the full in an endeavour to find a satisfactory settlement of territorial questions in Antarctica as soon as possible. If a request for facilities in New Zealand was received, his Government would be pleased to consult with the United States and Commonwealth Governments concerned with a view to formulating a common policy. He thought that a joint approach to the State Department by Commonwealth Ambassadors would be favoured by the New Zealand Government.

MR. JORDAAN said that he had received no instructions from the South African Government. In 1948, however, when certain American proposals for the administration of Antarctica were under discussion, his Government had shown that it was

/interested

COPY

RECORD OF A MEETING AT THE C.R.O. ON 9TH DECEMBER TO
DISCUSS A PROPOSAL FOR COMMONWEALTH CONSULTATION WITH
THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ON POLICY IN ANTARCTICA

THE FOLLOWING WERE PRESENT:

Mr. A. D. Dodds-Parker, M.P. in the Chair

Mr. R. L. Speaight, C.M.G.	Foreign Office
Mr. R. J. Vile	Colonial Office
Mr. G. Jockel	Australia House
Mr. G.D.L. White	New Zealand House
Mr. H. C. Templeton	"
Mr. J. R. Jordaan	South Africa House
Mr. J. G. Stewart	"
Mr. I.F.S. Vincent	Foreign Office
Mr. A. J. Brown	Commonwealth Relations Office.

MR. DODDS-PARKER said that a memorandum had already been circulated to those attending the meeting, in which the background was given to a reappraisal which H.M.G. in the U.K. had recently made of their policy in Antarctica. This memorandum set out proposals for a joint approach to the United States Government by Commonwealth Ambassadors in Washington. He drew attention to the Russian threat in Antarctica which was a very real one, the importance of which was fully appreciated in the United States. In view of the recent happenings in the Middle East many Americans were now worried about the possible Soviet penetration in Antarctica also. Mr. Dodds-Parker then invited Mr. Speaight to speak in explanation and amplification of the memorandum.

MR. SPEAIGHT said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs of Staff saw no great strategic importance in Antarctica, the situation might change in the years to come.

The United States had not been very forthcoming about their own plans, perhaps because they were not clear in their own minds about their future intentions. Mr. Casey had found the same thing when he was in the States recently. We did not know whether the Americans were thinking in terms of making a territorial claim or of preventing the U.S.S.R. from making one, or whether their interests were purely scientific. If we volunteered our own plans to the Americans we might be able to draw them out. There would be a better chance of reaching an understanding if we could show a common front with other Commonwealth countries.

/From the ...

19/88/2

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



Whitehall 23x3/Ext.

Your Reference:

Please quote in reply: WES.147/33/7

16th December, 1955



TO
I TH
CA

CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Stewart,

I now enclose the record of the meeting
... held here on the 9th December about Antarctica.
It incorporates those amendments which have
been suggested.

e
ce
se
ouse

Yours sincerely,

AJB

(A.J. Brown)

House

e
Relations
ice.

*sent to A and
one minute of 10/12/55: (Lester)*

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

d already
high the
n the U.K.
is
the
in
in
of
n view
ricans
on in
Speaight
orandum.

MR. SPEAIGHT said that most of what the Foreign Office wished to say on the subject was in the memorandum, but he would like to make some further remarks. We were faced by a significant growth of interest and activity by other powers in Antarctica, and it was therefore important that like-minded countries should have a common line. Although the U.K. Chiefs of Staff saw no great strategic importance in Antarctica, the situation might change in the years to come.

The United States had not been very forthcoming about their own plans, perhaps because they were not clear in their own minds about their future intentions. Mr. Casey had found the same thing when he was in the States recently. We did not know whether the Americans were thinking in terms of making a territorial claim or of preventing the U.S.S.R. from making one, or whether their interests were purely scientific. If we volunteered our own plans to the Americans we might be able to draw them out. There would be a better chance of reaching an understanding if we could show a common front with other Commonwealth countries.

/From the ...

CONFIDENTIAL.DEPARTMENT OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
DEPARTMENT VAN BUITENLANDSE SAKS

PRETORIA.

11 DEC 1955

The Department of External Affairs presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America and, with reference to the latter's Note No. 58 of the 22nd November, 1955, in connection with possible Soviet requests for base facilities in Southern Hemisphere countries in support of the Soviet Antarctic programme during the International Geophysical Year, has the honour to state that the Union Government agree that it would be in the common interest of the countries concerned to keep each other informed of such developments.

So far the Union Government have not been approached by the Government of the Soviet Union.

Hi sal my weet indien u verslag kan doen oor enigele wat u oor hierdie saakleertheid ter ore mag kom. Dit moet agter blywer nie op hierdie stadium formeel met die owerhede van die land van u studeer bespreek word alvorens ons verdere werke ontvang van die vordering wat die Amerikaners in die saak gemaak het nie.

PRETORIA,

December, 1955.

JvD/MJ


 SECRETARIS VAN BUITENLANDSE SAKS.

friends and allies who have a traditional interest in the Antarctic Continent share our concern over the latter possibility.

"The United States has learned that the Soviet Union has informally requested assistance at recent IGY meetings in the nature of landing rights at airfields as stopping points for planes en route to the Antarctic. We believe that the extension of such assistance would be contrary to the interest of all having an interest in the Antarctic unless we can be assured that the main Soviet interest is connected with the International Geophysical Year and thus limited in its duration.

"In the common interest we believe we should adopt a common policy towards any official Soviet overtures by keeping each other informed of such developments."

The Embassy will be grateful to receive any information or comments which the Union Government may have on the foregoing.

PRETORIA

November 22, 1955.

CONFIDENTIAL.EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

No. 58

The Embassy of the United States of America presents its compliments to the Department of External Affairs and has the honor to refer to the activities which will take place in the Antarctic region during the International Geophysical Year. The United States Government is concerned over the possibility that the Soviet Union may formally request the use of base facilities in Southern Hemisphere countries in support of the Soviet Antarctic program during the International Geophysical Year. Inasmuch as the use of such facilities may not be limited to geophysical activities and may have other strategic significance, the United States Government hopes that a coordinated policy will be adopted by those countries most likely to be approached, namely the United Kingdom, Argentina, Chile, New Zealand, Australia and South Africa. Accordingly, the Embassy has been requested to convey the following message to the Union Government:

"The United States has followed with interest plans announced by the Soviet Union for an Antarctic expedition in connection with the International Geophysical Year. We do not yet know whether Soviet activity in the Antarctic is motivated by real scientific interest or whether it heralds an attempt at permanent occupation of a portion of the Antarctic. We feel sure that our

/.....