

CONFIDENTIAL

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO BUENOS AIRES

Cypher/OTP

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

No. 95

23rd February 1953

D. 9.05 p.m. 23rd February 1953

IMMEDIATE
CONFIDENTIAL

Addressed to Buenos Aires telegram No. 95 of 23rd
February

Repeated for information Saving to Santiago No. 16
Washington No. 585

Your telegram No. 90 [Deception Island].

I have now seen text of local protest delivered to British base on Deception Island on 16th February and signed by Captain Panzarini, "Commander of the Antarctic Land Forces". After protesting against "grave act of aggression" on territory belonging to Argentina, statement continues "at the same time I wish to express my intention not to use force, as is my right, in defence of the interests of the Nation, since this action would be contrary to the peaceful methods of conduct to which all the actions of the Argentine Government conform."

QQQ

Foreign Office telegram No. 91 to Buenos Aires

- 2 -

Sir Edward Keeling

Can my Right Hon. Friend say whether Argentina and Chile are rival claimants or did they intend to go shares?

Mr. Eden

My Hon. Friend must address that question to the Governments concerned.

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FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO BUENOS AIRES

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND WHITEHALL

DISTRIBUTION

No. 94

23rd February, 1953.

D: 7.29 p.m. 23rd February, 1953.

IMMEDIATE

Addressed to Buenos Aires telegram No. 94 of 23rd February,
and to Santiago No. 47 and Washington No. 828.

My immediately preceding telegram.

Following are supplementary questions and answers.

Captain Pilkington

Is my Right Hon. Friend aware that there will be widespread approval of the action which has been taken and that this action shows to these two Governments that it is high time to stop this childish trespassing on other people's territory?

Mr. Arthur Henderson

Can the Right Hon. Gentleman say whether apart from rejecting the offer of the British Government to refer this matter to the International Court, either of the Governments concerned has made any alternative suggestion for obtaining a peaceful solution?

Mr. Eden

There is nothing pertaining to a peaceful solution. I think that they have suggested reference to another authority which in our view would not be covered by this matter.

Brigadier Prior-Palmer

Would my Right Hon. Friend say whether this action in any way constitutes a breach of the Tripartite Naval Declarations covering the movement of ships south of the 60th latitude?

Mr. Eden

No. We have not in any way infringed the arrangements under the Tripartite Naval Declarations. We adhere to these and the presence of a British frigate south of that latitude is quite customary during the Antarctic summer. I ought to add, to make the position quite plain, that these men were expelled not as invaders but as illegal immigrants. They were dealt with under the civil law of the Dependencies themselves.

/ Sir Edward Keeling ...

Argentine and Chilean claims to the territory, protesting against our action, and calling upon us to restore the dismantled buildings and return the arrested men.

In taking the steps I have described the Government have been concerned to dispel any doubt about their attitude to encroachments of this type on British territory. At the same time they have repeated the offer made to both countries by the late Government to refer the conflicting claims to territory in the Antarctic to the International Court of Justice. I am sorry to say that both countries, in their Notes, have seen fit once more to reject this offer.

[Ends].

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Ps. 17/104

Feb

FROM FOREIGN OFFICE TO BUENOS AIRES

En Clair

FOREIGN OFFICE AND
WHITEHALL DISTRIBUTION

No. 93

23rd February, 1953

D. 7.10 p.m. 23rd February, 1953

And to:

Santiago No. 46

Washington No. 827

IMMEDIATE

Following is text of my statement in the House of Commons this afternoon.

[Begins]

At the beginning of this month Her Majesty's Government were informed that Argentina and Chile had established naval parties on the airstrip adjoining the British base at Port Foster, Deception Island, which is British territory, and that permanent buildings had been erected. These encroachments represented not merely an infringement of our sovereignty on the Island, but a nuisance and an obstruction to those who were maintaining our base.

Instructions were accordingly given to the Acting Governor of the Falkland Islands to dismantle the buildings which had been erected and to arrest and deport under the Falkland Islands Aliens Ordinance any occupants found in them. These instructions were carried out on the 15th February by the British Magistrate assisted by constables of the Falkland Islands Police. The party travelled to Deception Island in Her Majesty's Frigate SNIPE and Royal Marines were available if needed in support of the civil power. Two occupants of the Argentine hut were arrested, without resistance, and the Argentine and Chilean huts were dismantled. The Chilean hut was unoccupied. The two arrested men were handed over at South Georgia on 18th February to the master of an Argentine vessel bound for Buenos Aires.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Buenos Aires and Santiago presented Notes on 16th February informing the two Governments of the action we have taken and protesting against the infringement of our sovereignty by the Argentine and Chilean parties. Replies were received on 20th February asserting the
/Argentine and Chilean

23rd Feb., 1953.

DECEPTION ISLAND

My paragraph 6. Following is text of statement.

Begins.

At beginning of this month Her Majesty's Government were informed that Argentine and Chile had established naval parties on airstrip adjoining British base at Port Foster, Deception Island, which is British territory, and that permanent buildings had been erected. These encroachments represented not merely an infringement of our sovereignty on the Island, but a nuisance and an obstruction to those who were maintaining our base.

Instructions were accordingly given to Acting Governor of Falkland Islands to dismantle the buildings which had been erected and to arrest and deport under Falkland Islands Aliens Ordinance any occupants found in them. These instructions were carried out on 15th February by British Magistrate assisted by constables of Falkland Islands Police. The party travelled to Deception Island in Her Majesty's Frigate SNIPE and Royal Marines were available if needed in support of civil power. Two occupants of Argentine hut were arrested, without resistance, and Argentine and Chilean huts were dismantled. Chilean hut was unoccupied. The two arrested men were handed over at South Georgia on 18th February to master of an Argentine vessel bound for Buenos Aires.

H.M. Ambassadors at Buenos Aires and Santiago presented Notes on 16th February informing the two Governments of action we have taken and protesting against infringement of our sovereignty by Argentine and Chilean parties. Replies were received on 20th February asserting Argentine and Chilean claims to the territory, protesting against our action, and calling upon us to restore the dismantled buildings and return the arrested men.

In taking steps I have described the Government have been concerned to dispel any doubt about their attitude to encroachments of this type on British territory. At same time they have repeated the offer made to both countries by the late Government to refer the conflicting claims to territory in Antarctic to International Court of Justice. I am sorry to say that both countries, in their Notes, have seen fit to reject this offer. Ends.

C.R.O. 33

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

.....24/2/.....1953

SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations presents his compliments to H.E. the High Commissioner for...*South Africa*.....in London and begs to forward for the information of His Excellency, a copy of a message which H.E. the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in ...*Cape Town*.....has been instructed by telegraph/~~airmail~~ to convey to the appropriate Ministry in ...*Cape Town*..

A copy of this message is being sent to the High Commissioners in London for
...*Canada Australia New Zealand*.....
.....

WJH/3/3
F.
[Signature]
17/2/2

received on 20th February asserting Argentine and Chilean claims to the territory, protesting against our action, and calling upon us to restore the dismantled buildings and return the arrested men.

In taking steps I have described the Government have been concerned to dispel any doubt about their attitude to encroachments of this type on British territory. At same time they have repeated the offer made to both countries by the late Government to refer the conflicting claims to territory in Antarctic to International Court of Justice. I am sorry to say that both countries, in their Notes, have seen fit to reject this offer. Ends.

Moreover, the building destroyed consists of a *shoer*, specifically intended for scientific observations, on which duty not less than thirty men were employed and specialists in the divers problems of the Antarctic. These problems are predominantly scientific, it being natural for the Argentine Government to investigate and observe its own territory and to make its scientific discoveries available to all countries.

The tasks carried out there do not contravene the provisions of the Tripartite Declaration already mentioned, as is revealed by the fact that this Government has usually employed the same naval unit as during the previous Antarctic season. These consist of two transports, two tugboats and one oil tanker, whose characteristics and activities were not objected to in any circumstances by the British Government.

9. Regarding the reservation as to procedure [*i.e.*, action by civil magistrate] made by your Excellency, the Argentine Government, without wishing to take the matter beyond the limit of mutual tolerance in which happily our relations continue to develop, is obliged in its turn to formulate its own procedure in defence of its legitimate rights and interests and firmly to reject at the same time the responsibility which you claim to assign to it.

10. On the basis of the principles above stated, I should be glad if your Excellency's Government would take measures with due urgency for the immediate release and return to the scene of these happenings of the arrested persons and of the effects and documents seized as a result of this incident, amongst which there is material of a scientific character, and also to reconstruct what has been destroyed in order thus to re-establish in its complete integrity the state of things that existed up to the moment that the aggression, which is the cause of my Government's protest, took place.

11. Your Excellency repeats as a means for the general settlement of the matter the offer made to submit it to the International Court of Justice at The Hague. In this respect my Government states that as the republic forms part of the Inter-American system and is a signatory of the Treaty of Mutual Aid of Rio de Janeiro, 1947, it reserves the right to submit it to the Organisation of American States when it thinks fit and to invoke in its favour the provisions of the aforesaid treaty in defence of its territorial patrimony as affected by acts committed by a non-Continental Power.

I avail myself, &c.,

(Signed) GENERAL SOSA MOLINA,
Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs.

4. For the reasons stated above I reaffirm that the Malvinas Islands, the South Georgia Islands, the South Sandwich Islands and the Antarctic sector included between the meridians 25° and 74° longitude west of Greenwich, south of the 60th parallel of latitude south as far as the pole, are territories which belong unquestionably to the sovereignty of the Argentine Republic; and in consequence the arguments invoked in the note under reference are based on a false premise and consequently the conclusion must necessarily be false also.

5. Your Excellency refers to the situation which arose because of the installation on Deception Island during the month of January last of a hut, tent, flag and other equipment by the commander and naval crew of the Argentine tug *Chiriguano*; alleging that the islands referred to are a British possession and describing the activities mentioned as being calculated to cause serious nuisance and obstruction to British subjects and interests in Deception Island. In view of this your Excellency informs me that orders have been given to the person called the acting governor to remove and arrest the occupants of those buildings and further to dismantle the buildings set up, and you add that those instructions have already been put into effect and that in order not to aggravate feeling Her Majesty's Government has decided to treat the case as a question of civil law.

In this regard I declare to your Excellency that should any nuisances have been caused, even involuntarily, these are the natural consequence of a State occupying without title territories which belong to another State.

As regards the orders issued these have been given to a person who at the best is completely lacking in any jurisdiction to exercise the alleged powers.

6. The Argentine Government fully shares the anxiety of your Government conveyed by your Excellency not to aggravate feeling. Nevertheless, the note to which the present is a reply is dated 16th February, 1953, and was delivered to this Ministry at 10 a.m. on the morning of the same day. As stated previously, this note contains the information that the instructions issued would already have been put into effect; according to the information in possession of my Government the action in fact took place on 15th February after mid-day.

Considering that the landing and the constructions which are the cause of the situation in question date from the month of

January there is, in the opinion of the Argentine Government, complete discrepancy between the intention of avoiding friction and actual events.

Your Excellency's representations were therefore made after the aggressive measures adopted by the British Government; moreover, the action in fact lacked the spontaneity which is the only factor which can justify, if any factor can, an act of violence.

7. By virtue of the previous history, principles and arguments expressed above the Argentine Government rejects the protest and the representations of your Excellency and at the same time requests you to transmit to Her Britannic Majesty's Government the energetic protest of the Government of the republic against the acts perpetrated by the British Government which prejudice the sovereignty of my country in the Antarctic territories.

8. The Argentine Government, after giving full attention to the representations of your Excellency, observes with the greatest interest that neither in the terms nor in the spirit of the note to which the present is a reply, does there arise any reference to the provisions of the Argentine-British-Chilean Declaration, signed on 26th November, 1952. To this highly suggestive circumstance is due, in the opinion of this Government, the fact that the arguments brought forward therein seem somewhat hesitant, as if they were dominated by anxiety to avoid the least reference to that international obligation, the greatest care being exercised in order not to refer to it, as if it were already considered broken. For its part, my Government considers that its activities in the Antarctic zone, such as the setting up of the installations which have been removed, have at all time been in accordance with the terms of the Tripartite Declaration.

Your Excellency's Government, however, in order to counteract an action of my Government entirely within the rules of international law—a normal procedure in the Antarctic region—has proceeded to land infantry in the violent circumstances and with the premeditation I have mentioned, ignoring contracted obligations and flagrantly violating them. In this connexion, a significant fact which supports the above statement, is the criterion laid down on 7th February, 1951, in the debate in the House of Commons in which it was established that the installation of bases does not imply a breach of that declaration.

UNCLASSIFIED

Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution

A 15212/86

ANTARCTICA
21st February, 1953
Section 1**TRESPASS BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT UPON BRITISH
TERRITORY IN THE FALKLAND ISLAND DEPENDENCIES***Telegram from Buenos Aires to Foreign Office. (Received 21st February)**En Clair*Sir H. Mack
(No. 85. Immediate)
20th February, 1953

Following is translation of Argentine Government's note:—

In replying to the note No. 53, dated 16th February, which your Excellency addressed to me under instructions from Her Britannic Majesty's Government, I am once again under the necessity, to begin with, of clarifying the criterion on which the note referred to is based, in so far as it refers to the territories which the British Government describes, without foundation, as "The Malvinas Islands Dependencies."

In this connexion I repeat to your Excellency the position invariably maintained by the republic in support of its irrevocable rights over the Malvinas Islands, whose active *de facto* occupation by Great Britain constitutes an incontrovertible illegal act. Similarly—and as a logical consequence—I reiterate my Government's firm and absolute refusal to recognise the extension of that illegal pretension to the so-called "Malvinas Islands Dependencies."

2. In paragraph 6 of your note your Excellency invokes the legal justification of the pretended British sovereignty over territories belonging to the republic, and mentions the fact of discovery and declarations, whose legal force has been rejected on repeated occasions by my Government. On this question and without implying a tacit admission of the statements made I point out for your Excellency's consideration that in international law it is generally recognised that the circumstances of discovery alone is not by itself sufficient cause to justify territorial sovereignty. As regards the letters patent of the year 1908 which your Excellency mentioned, my Government, as your Excellency knows, has stated to Her Britannic Majesty's Government on repeated occasions that it was a

unilateral declaration lacking any obligatory force in the international field, and furthermore your Excellency well knows that this document contains serious geographical errors which a similar instrument of the year 1917 endeavoured to correct.

Furthermore, still considering the hypothesis previously rejected that this document might have had validity as an administrative act of your Excellency's Government, the document would have appeared null and void since it was preceded by various manifestations of the exercise of a responsible power by my country. Amongst others, permit me to recall to your Excellency the note which the Argentine Government sent to the Chilean Government on 10th June, 1906, with regard to that country's concessions in the Antarctic, in connexion with which the note stated: "I refer, Mr. Minister, to the Antarctic zones in which my country is exercising acts of jurisdiction which are universally known."

It is obvious that the sovereignty of the republic did not, as is mistakenly stated, date from the year 1943 only, but that many actions of much earlier date furnished evidence of the exercise of responsible Power.

3. I am once again obliged to insist on pointing out to your Excellency's Government that Argentine sovereignty over the territories mentioned is based, amongst other reasons, on deep-rooted historical rights—maintained firmly in every circumstance by the Argentine Government—which are spiritually identified with the feelings of the entire people of the nation; on the superior geographical position of the republic; on the geological continuity of its land with the Antarctic territories; on the climatological influence which the neighbouring polar zones exercise on its territories; on the rights of first occupants; on the necessary diplomatic action: and, finally, on its uninterrupted action in the Antarctic territory itself.

Islands which seriously injures the activities and interests of my country in its Antarctic territory, and they demand the restoration of the hut dismantled by the said British authority; otherwise the Chilean Government may see itself obliged to adopt measures calculated to achieve the same object.

8. The Chilean Government cannot understand how Chilean activities in their Antarctic territory, undertaken in the full exercise of their sovereignty in the zone, should affect alleged British rights and interests therein, since, as this Ministry has had the honour to point out on previous occasions, particularly in their note to the embassy of 17th May, 1951, the said claims have never been recognised by the republic. As your Excellency insists on claiming British title to the Antarctic region, I have to repeat once more that the Government of Chile consider O'Higgins Land, the South Shetland Islands and the other archipelagos of the region as integral parts of their national territory by virtue of titles which they consider definite and indisputable and that the said British titles based on discovery, exploration, administration and the Letters Patent of 1908 and 1917, by which the British Government declared its ownership of a large part of my country, cannot be accepted by my Government.

9. As regards what your Excellency calls an armed incursion by personnel of the Chilean armed forces into British waters and territories, I wish to emphasise to your Excellency that these are no more than the normal movements which have taken place for some years past on the express instructions of my Government in regions belonging of old to the republic, and which are, furthermore, strictly in accordance with the Tripartite Agreement concluded on 26th November, 1952, between Chile, Argentina and Great Britain. On the other hand, my Government consider the British installations in Chilean Antarctic territory as violations of the frontiers of the republic, as has been pointed out on former occasions.

These, nevertheless, have not been disturbed by the Government of Chile, who saw in them mere scientific activities of general interest, even when they are undertaken without their consent or approval.

10. As regards the offer of your Excellency's Government to submit the matter for the consideration of the International Court of Justice, my country, which can demonstrate with pride a steadfast tradition of submission to international jurisdiction or arbitration in controversies over jurisdiction, cannot accede to the suggestion put forward by the British Government in your Excellency's note of taking the matter before the International Court, since it concerns territory that is manifestly Chilean and this would imply submitting to the judgment of third parties their own national sovereignty.

11. The Government, while taking note of the statement contained in your Excellency's note under reply that any consequences that may arise from Chilean activities in the Antarctic region will be their exclusive responsibility, would inform Her Majesty's Government that the Republic of Chile cannot renounce such activities which signify the full exercise of her sovereignty but will continue to carry them on in whatever form she deems convenient, at the same time taking the measures necessary in order duly to safeguard all Chilean sovereignty and interests in the Antarctic region.

12. Furthermore, the Government of Chile must point out to Her Majesty's Government that all matters relating to the South American Antarctic are of prime interest to our continent, as being essential to the security of the Western Hemisphere; the rights of Chile in the Antarctic being thus closely linked to the principles of continental security, my country, in unwaveringly defending them, is merely fulfilling the duties she has contracted respecting those principles.

I avail myself of this opportunity to renew to your Excellency the assurance of my highest and most distinguished esteem.

ARTURO OLAVARRIA B.

Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution

ANTARCTICA
25th February, 1953
Section 4

A 15212/120

**TRESPASS BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT UPON BRITISH
TERRITORY IN THE FALKLAND ISLAND DEPENDENCIES**

Incident on Deception Island

Mr. Stirling to Mr. Eden. (Received 25th February)

Enclosure with Mr. C. N. Stirling's despatch No. 42 of 21st February, 1953.

*Translated text of Chilean Government's Note-Verbale of 20th February
concerning incidents in the Antarctic*

(No. 42. Unclassified) *Santiago,
21st February, 1953.*

Señor Embajador,

I have the honour to refer to your Excellency's Note No. 6 of 16th February expressing the emphatic protest of Her Majesty's Government at the erection in January last by personnel of the Chilean navy of a hut on Deception Island at a distance of approximately 500 metres from the English base already established there. Your Excellency added that your Government, wishing to avoid unnecessary friction and having regard to the friendly relations subsisting between our two countries, had contented themselves with protests through the diplomatic channel and offers to refer to the International Court of Justice the complaint against violations of the Chilean Government, but that this latest supposed Chilean encroachment not only constituted an infringement of British sovereignty in the area but was calculated to cause nuisance and obstruction to British subjects and interests on Deception Island. Your Excellency accordingly informed me that the Acting Governor of the Falkland Islands had received instructions to dismantle the said hut and that these instructions had already been put into effect.

2. You added that Her Majesty's Government considered this not only a deliberate act of infringement of the laws in force in the said dependencies but that, as ships and personnel of the Chilean armed forces had participated, it constituted an armed incursion into British territory and waters; in order, however, not to exacerbate the situation you had decided to treat the matter simply as an infringement of civil law.

3. In insisting upon the alleged British titles to the zone, based on discovery, exploration and administration, your Excellency maintained that the steps taken by the Acting Governor had been taken in accordance with the laws and regulations and required no justification.

4. Your Excellency concluded by stating that if the Government of Chile did not accept the offer made on 17th December, 1947, to take the matter to the International Court of Justice, an offer which still remained open, any possible consequences of Chilean activity in that area were the sole responsibility of the Chilean Government.

5. In delivering to me the above-mentioned note your Excellency proposed that this regrettable incident should not receive undue publicity. At the same time the British Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs expressed a similar wish to our representative in London. This reservation was accepted in the hope that your Excellency's Government would respect our sovereignty in the Antarctic and would repair the damage caused.

6. In face of the facts now accomplished I must express to your Excellency on behalf of my Government the deepest astonishment at the inexplicable action of Her Majesty's Government in giving publicity to the events which have occurred.

7. In reply to your Excellency's note the Government of Chile reject the protest of Her Majesty's Government and, through me, communicate to your Excellency their most emphatic protest at the grave attempt against the national sovereignty committed by the Acting Governor of the Falkland

it was well founded, he hoped that the States of America as a whole would give Chile their support under the provisions regarding hemispherical defence.

5. I said that I was grateful to Señor Olavarria for this clear statement of his Government's intentions. I would, of course, transmit it to Her Majesty's Government who would, I was sure, consider it carefully. Speaking privately I said that I could well understand that the Chilean Government might wish to discuss questions of common concern with the other American Governments but it seemed to me that this would not advance us much towards a solution of the present dispute. Her Majesty's Government were not members of the Organisation of American States and could obviously not recognise any decision by this body to the effect that the Antarctic regions, which include what we claim to be British territory, were of exclusive concern to the nations of America.

6. Señor Olavarria said that he understood our point of view but that it was his duty to pursue every means open to him of securing the Chilean claims by juridical means. This gave me an opening to take up his rejection of our proposal to refer the matter to the International Court. The argument in his note that the Chilean Government could not submit to the court a question affecting their sovereignty did not, I suggested, seem to be logical. Carried to its conclusion it would mean that territorial disputes between two Powers could never be referred to any form of international adjudication. In fact, however, the Chilean Government had in the past submitted a number of frontier questions to international instances of one kind or another. The Minister at once replied that there was a difference between arbitration and reference to the International Court. Arbitration, he alleged, was concerned with the determination of facts and also took into

consideration "moral and spiritual factors." The Chilean Government could not, however, justify to their people the submission to interpretation by an international tribunal of titles which they considered indefeasible. I said that this seemed to threaten us with a deadlock, as our titles were indefeasible, too. It seemed useless to take the argument further and we agreed to differ.

7. I found some difficulty in following the Minister's remarks at this point, as the loud speakers for President Peron's broadcast were being tested on the balcony just outside his window, but I understood him to say that he preferred a direct negotiation for the settlement of such questions, because in such a case one knew what one was getting and could strike a balance of advantage. To this I replied, emphasising that I was speaking personally, that I did not know whether the present moment was the right one for attempting to reach a solution. There were Argentine claims involved as well as Chilean and British. If at any time the Chilean Government, who were in close contact with the Government of Argentina, wished to suggest new means for discussing or settling the Antarctic question, I hoped he would let me know.

8. Finally I told the Minister that Her Majesty's Embassy would not seek to stimulate controversial publicity for the British point of view, although we had a strong case, provided that the discussion in the press did not become inflamed. The Minister agreed that public controversy on the subject should be avoided. I told him that we had given the text of our note to the press agencies at their request, but had asked them not to regard this as an official publication. Señor Olavarria said that our procedure was quite natural and correct.

9. I am sending a copy of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Buenos Aires and Washington.

I have, &c.

C. N. STIRLING.

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution

ANTARCTICA
25th February, 1953
Section 3

A 15212/12

TRESPASS BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT UPON BRITISH
TERRITORY IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES

Incident on Deception Island

Mr. Stirling to Mr. Eden. (Received 25th February)(No. 43. Confidential) *Santiago,*
Sir, *21st February, 1953*

In my telegram No. 37 of to-day's date I reported briefly the conversation which I had with the Minister for Foreign Affairs this afternoon about the incident on Deception Island. I thought it as well to propose a visit to the Ministry this morning in order to find out if possible what line the Chilean Government intended to take after the publication of their note last night, and I received the reply that the Minister would see me at half-past twelve.

2. I began the interview by saying that judging from the reference to publicity in Señor Olavarria's note he did not seem to have been informed of the explanation I had given to his Ministry yesterday of the circumstances in which the London communiqué had been published. The Minister was evidently suspicious at first and clearly thought that Her Majesty's Government had provoked publicity deliberately. He pointed out that no news had in fact been published except from London. In the end I think I convinced him that the only motive of the Foreign Office in issuing the communiqué had been to forestall the publication of sensational rumours from Buenos Aires.

3. Señor Olavarria went on to say that it was fortunate that the Chilean public had plenty else to occupy them at the moment otherwise our action would have aroused very widespread resentment, particularly the fact that we had acted without giving prior warning to the Chilean Government. If the Chilean Government had followed our example, they might have sent two cruisers to re-establish their base, and where would that have landed us? Chilean opinion generally was friendly to Great Britain, unlike that in the Argentine, where there was a certain amount of resentment against us. This, if anything, made matters worse,

since they felt our high-handed action doubly as coming from a friend. I replied that the same was true on our side. Whatever the merits of our respective claims in the Antarctic, the Chilean action in constructing a building practically on the airstrip built by Sir Hubert Wilkins in 1928, and within 400 yards of our base, was, he must see, an intolerable provocation. As regards our having acted without warning, the Minister would remember that my Government had made a number of protests in the past about the establishment of Chilean bases without any result, and it might well seem to them, therefore, that the best course was to take action quickly and get it over, particularly where that action involved nothing more than the dismantling of an unoccupied hut.

4. The Minister went on to say that the Chilean Government would take no action until they received Her Majesty's Government's reply to their request for the replacement of their hut. I warned him, speaking privately, that this was out of the question. Nevertheless, he said they would like to have an answer. If they did not receive satisfaction, he would have no choice but to refer the matter to the Organisation of American States. He added that the Chilean Government were in no hurry. They had not, like the Argentine Government, to consider the arrest of any of their nationals and could afford to be patient, but soon or later they would have to take a decision. It might be that the American Treaty of Mutual Assistance would prove to be merely a scrap of paper, but it existed; it seemed to him that the present incident constituted precisely the sort of case which it had been framed to deal with; and it would be his duty to his country to invoke it if necessary. Perhaps the other signatories would consider that the Chilean case was not sound; that would be all the better for us; but if they considered

way affected or impaired notwithstanding the Chilean claim to this area put forward for the first time in the decree of 6th November, 1940: nor is British sovereignty affected by the various illegal activities and trespasses of the Chilean parties which have occurred in British territory in this area in which no Government of the United Kingdom has ever acquiesced.

7. In this last connexion I would recall that, in addition to numerous protests against these activities, a formal offer to the Chilean Government was made on 17th December, 1947, to refer the whole case to the International Court of Justice. This offer has not been withdrawn and is still open, but as Her Majesty's Government have not failed to note, it has never been

taken up by the Chilean Government. If the Chilean Government consider they have a good claim to the sovereignty over any part of this area, their correct course in view of the undoubted prior United Kingdom title is to accept the offer which has been made to refer the matter to the International Court: failure to do this places on the Chilean Government the sole and entire responsibility for any consequences that may ensue from their activity in this area.

I have, &c.

C. N. STIRLING.

His Excellency

Señor don Arturo Olavarria Bravo,
Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Santiago.

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Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution

A 15212/118

ANTARCTICA
25th February, 1953
Section 2

**TRESPASS BY THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT UPON BRITISH
TERRITORY AT DECEPTION ISLAND IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS
DEPENDENCIES**

Mr. Stirling to Mr. Eden. (Received 25th February)

(No. 35. Unclassified) *Santiago,*
19th February, 1953.

Enclosure in Mr. C. N. Stirling's P/L
despatch No. 35 (1521/68/53) of 19th
February, 1953

British Embassy,
Santiago.
16th February, 1953.

1521/43/53
(No. 6)

Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour, under instructions from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to convey to your Excellency an emphatic protest at the erection in January by the commanders and naval crews of the Chilean frigate *Iquique* and the tug *Lientur* of a hut at Deception Island in the South Shetland Islands. These islands, as your Excellency's Government well know, and as has been made clear in previous notes from this embassy, are (both as a group and as respects Deception Island individually) British territories, over which Her Majesty's Government alone are entitled to exercise sovereignty.

2. The Chilean hut was erected, in spite of protests made by the British magistrate at Deception Island, only 500 yards away from the buildings of the British settlement, and at the edge of the airstrip constructed by Sir Hubert Wilkins in 1928 and since maintained by the Falkland Islands Dependencies for their own use. The word "Chile" has been painted in large white letters in the middle of the land strip.

3. In the past instances of trespass by the Chilean Government, Her Majesty's Government, wishing to avoid unnecessary friction and having regard to the friendly relation subsisting between our two countries, contented themselves with diplomatic protests and offers to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice referred to below. They cannot, however, forgo the

right to take such other measures as appear to them necessary to protect British territory from undesirable and unauthorised incursions. This latest encroachment by the Chilean Government not merely constituted an infringement of the sovereignty of Her Majesty's Government, but was further calculated to cause serious nuisance and obstruction to Her Majesty's subjects and interests at Deception Island.

4. I am therefore to inform your Excellency that the acting Governor of the Falkland Islands has been instructed to effect the dismantling and removal of the hut erected by the Chilean party on Crown land under Common Law powers obtaining in British territories and to dispose of it as he sees fit. These instructions will now have been put into effect.

5. Her Majesty's Government must point out that not only was this a deliberate act of trespass amounting to a flagrant contravention of the laws in force in the Dependencies, but since the vessels and party used formed part of the Chilean armed forces, it was an armed incursion into British territory and waters, which Her Majesty's Government would be fully entitled to treat as such. In order, however, not to exacerbate the situation, Her Majesty's Government have decided to deal with the case simply as an infringement of Civil Law.

6. The steps taken by the acting Governor in British territory, in accordance with local laws and regulations, require no justification, but I would remind your Excellency very briefly that British sovereignty over the area of the Falkland Islands Dependencies generally and over this part of it in particular, based originally on discovery, exploration and administration, dates from at latest 1908 when sovereignty over component parts of the area involved, including the South Shetlands and Deception Island, was proclaimed by Letters Patent. This sovereignty cannot be in any

Point. This sovereignty cannot be in any way affected or impaired by the Argentine claim to this area first made in the Argentine Government's memorandum of 15th February, 1943; nor is British sovereignty affected by the various illegal activities and trespasses of the Argentine parties which have occurred in British territory in this area in which no Government of the United Kingdom has ever acquiesced.

7. In this last connexion, I would recall that in addition to numerous protests against these activities a formal offer to the Argentine Government was made on 17th December, 1947, to refer the whole case to the International Court of Justice. This offer has not been withdrawn and is still open but, as Her Majesty's Government have not failed to note, it has never been taken up by the Argentine Government. If the Argentine Government consider that they have a good claim to sovereignty over any part of this area the correct course in view of the undoubted [prior]* United Kingdom title is to accept the offer which has been made to refer the matter to the International Court: failure to do this places on the Argentine Government the sole and entire responsibility for any consequences that may ensue from their activities in this area.

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

Monsieur le Ministre,
your Excellency's obedient Servant.
(Sgd. HENRY B. MACK)

His Excellency

*Dr. Jerónimo Remorino,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship,
Palacio San Martín,
Buenos Aires.*

Enclosure No. 2 to Sir Henry B. Mack's
despatch No. 36 of 19th February, 1953

*British Embassy,
Buenos Aires.*

(No. 54) 16th February, 1953.
Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour on instructions from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government's attention has been drawn to a report of an announcement by the Argentine Minister of Marine to the effect that the Argentine transport *Bahia Aguirre* has visited Half

Moon Island at Livingstone Island in the South Shetland group and delivered mails to the Argentine garrison there. From this announcement Her Majesty's Government must conclude that the Argentine Government have illegally established a further base on British territory.

2. On numerous occasions in the past, and most recently on 5th July, 1952, my predecessors and I have addressed protests to your Excellency against acts of trespass by the Argentine Government upon British territory in the Falkland Islands Dependencies. As your Excellency's Government well knows from previous correspondence, Her Majesty's Government have exercised sovereign powers over the Falkland Islands Dependencies since 1908, and their title to the general area of the Dependencies, and to the South Shetlands in particular, is beyond dispute. Her Majesty's Government have nevertheless afforded the Argentine Government every opportunity to substantiate their own claims before the International Court of Justice, and have undertaken to accept the Court's jurisdiction as binding, but the Argentine Government have not availed themselves of this opportunity to arrive at a settlement, and have persisted in a course which could only lead to a deterioration in the friendly relations between the two countries.

3. I am to point out to your Excellency that, in face of Her Majesty's Government's undoubted prior title, and their standing offer for a reference to the International Court, the siting of the Argentine posts at various places in this area cannot in law either impair the United Kingdom title or further Argentina's, while it can only further prejudice good relations.

4. I am accordingly instructed, in recording a formal protest against the infringement of British sovereignty at Half Moon Island, once more to request the Argentine Government to agree to a reference of all the disputed questions of title in this area to the International Court.

I have the honour to be with the highest consideration,

Monsieur le Ministre,
your Excellency's obedient Servant.
(Sgd. HENRY B. MACK)

His Excellency

*Dr. Jerónimo Remorino,
Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship,
Palacio San Martín,
Buenos Aires.*

* This word was inserted and initialled H.B.M.

Marine and I would be informed of the result of their consultation. Unless he informed me to the contrary I could assume that the Ministers agreed on the question of publicity.

8. When Señor Speroni called on me late on the evening of 16th February in order to check what I had said about publicity I gave him the Spanish translation of what I had said and he confirmed that he had got it right. Señor Speroni seemed to be in a somewhat happier frame of mind than he had been that morning.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Washington and Santiago.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY B. MACK.

Enclosure No. 1 to Sir Henry B. Mack's despatch No. 36 of 19th February, 1953

*British Embassy,
Buenos Aires.*

(No. 53) 16th February, 1953.
Monsieur le Ministre,

I have the honour, under instructions from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to convey to your Excellency an emphatic protest at the erection in January by the Commander and naval crew of the Argentine tug *Chiriguano* of a hut, tent, flag and other equipment at Deception Island in the South Shetland Islands. These islands, as your Excellency's Government well knows, and as has been made clear in previous notes from this embassy, are (both as a group and as respects Deception Island individually) British territory, over which Her Majesty's Government alone are entitled to exercise sovereignty.

2. In spite of protests made by the Acting Governor of the Falkland Islands to the Commander of the existing Argentine post at Port Foster and to the Commanding Officer of the naval landing party, the Argentine buildings were erected only 400 yards away from the buildings of the British settlement and at the southern end of the airstrip constructed by Sir Hubert Wilkins in 1928 and since maintained by Falkland Islands Dependencies for their own use. Moreover, the Argentine boats used the landing stage belonging to the British settlement in order to construct and maintain these buildings.

3. In the past instances of trespass by the Argentine Government, Her Majesty's Government, wishing to avoid unnecessary

friction and having regard to the friendly relations subsisting between our two countries, contented themselves with diplomatic protests and offers to refer the matter to the International Court of Justice referred to below. They cannot, however, forgo the right to take such other measures as appear to them to be necessary to protect British territory from undesirable and unauthorised incursions. This latest encroachment by the Argentine Government not merely constituted an infringement of the sovereignty of Her Majesty's Government, but was further calculated to cause serious nuisance and obstruction to Her Majesty's subjects and interests at Deception Island.

4. I am therefore to inform your Excellency that the Acting Governor has been instructed to effect the removal of the occupants of the new buildings in the exercise of the powers vested in him by the Falkland Islands Aliens Ordinance, 1949; and in accordance with the requirements of this ordinance the occupants were to be arrested and detained by the British Magistrate, assisted by the Falkland Islands police and deported from Her Majesty's Government's territory. Instructions have also been given that the buildings erected on Crown lands be dismantled and removed under the common law powers obtaining in British territories, to be disposed of as the Acting Governor sees fit. These instructions will now have been put into effect.

5. Her Majesty's Government must point out that not only was this a deliberate act of trespass amounting to a flagrant contravention of the laws in force in the Dependencies but also since the vessel and party used formed part of the Argentine armed forces it was an armed incursion into British territory and waters which Her Majesty's Government would be fully entitled to treat as such. In order, however, not to exacerbate the situation, Her Majesty's Government have decided to deal with the case simply as an infringement of civil law.

6. Steps taken by the Acting Governor in British territory in accordance with local laws and regulations require no justification but I would remind your Excellency very briefly that British sovereignty over the area of the Falkland Islands Dependencies generally and over this part in particular, based on original discovery, exploration and administration, dates from at the latest 1908 when sovereignty over the component parts of the area involved including the South Shetlands and Deception Island was proclaimed by Letters

CONFIDENTIAL

Foreign Office and Whitehall Distribution

ANTARCTICA
25th February, 1953
Section 1

A 15212/119

TRESPASS BY THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT UPON BRITISH
TERRITORY IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES*Sir H. Mack to Mr. Eden. (Received 25th February)*(No. 36. Confidential) *Buenos Aires,*
Sir, *19th February, 1953.*

With reference to my telegram No. 72 of 16th February, I have the honour to submit further details of the action taken here.

2. On receipt of your Emergency telegram No. 72 on the evening of 15th February my Chancery succeeded, after some other efforts had failed, in speaking to Señor Amaya, the Permanent Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, at his private address. Señor Amaya was told that I had an urgent communication to make to the Minister for Foreign Affairs or to him if the Minister was not available and that I wished to make it either that evening or early on the following morning. Señor Amaya asked that I should call on him at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at 10-00 hours on the following morning.

3. The Argentine Government take their holidays seriously and seem to insist on officials doing the same. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to be especially opened for my reception. Señor Amaya received me in the Minister's room, accompanied by Señor Speroni, the head of the Commonwealth Department. They obviously had no inkling of the reason for my visit. I delivered the note about the removal of the Argentine and Chilean posts on Deception Island of which the text was given in your telegram No. 63 of 13th February. The amendment to the final paragraph in your telegram No. 73 of 16th February had arrived just before I left the Embassy House and I had written in the word "prior" in manuscript, and initialled the addition in the margin. A copy of the note as delivered is enclosed herein.

4. Señor Amaya read the Spanish translation while Señor Speroni, whose English is excellent, read the English text. They were both clearly surprised and perturbed. They asked why we had taken the action stated instead of taking the matter up with

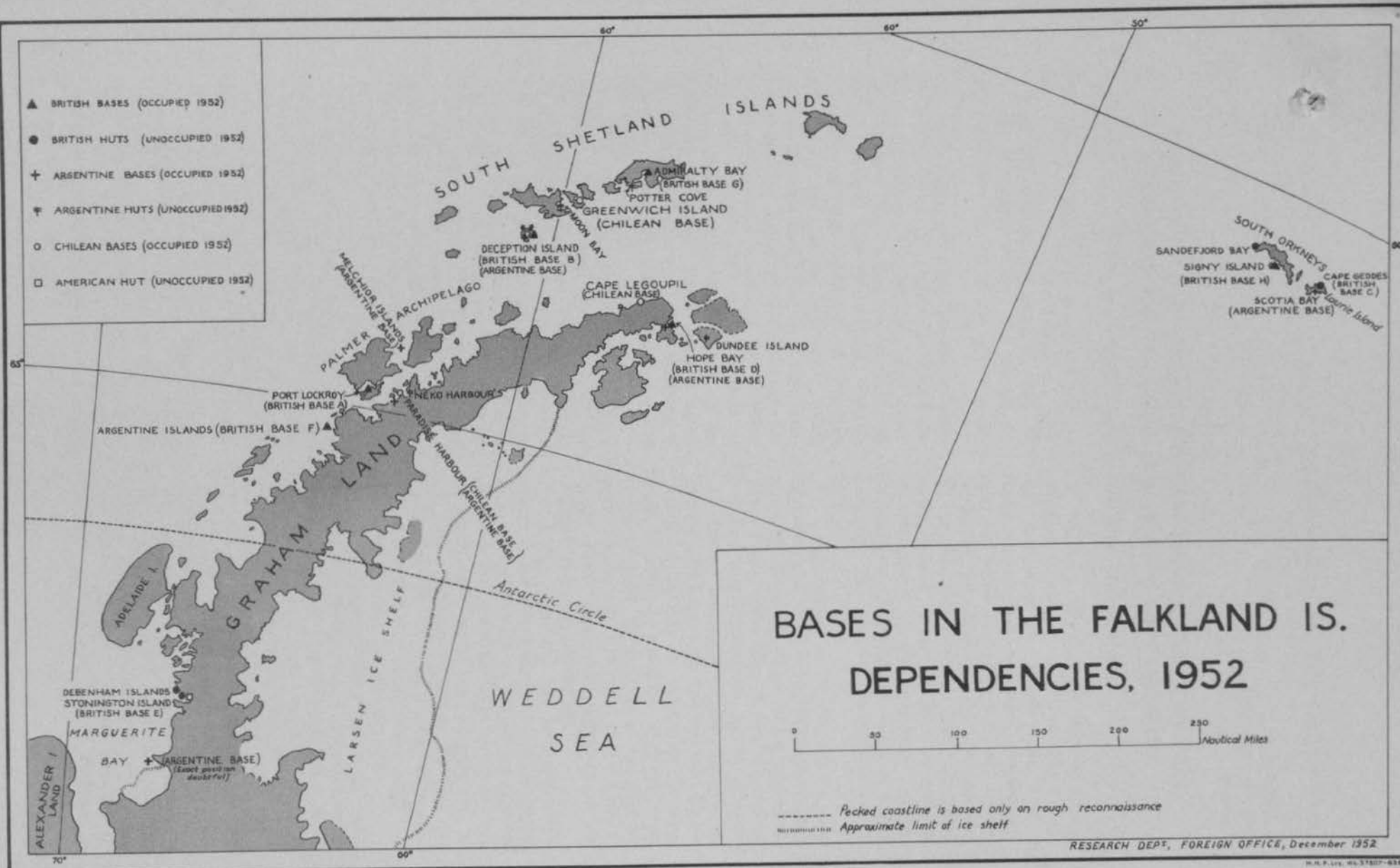
the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as on previous occasions. I invited them to re-read paragraph 3 of my note and I emphasised that the Argentine post was less than 400 yards from the buildings of the British settlement and at the southern end of our landing ground. This impressed them. Señor Amaya seemed puzzled by the reference to the Falkland Islands Aliens Ordinance in paragraph 4 of my note and I said that this provided the politest way of acting.

5. I volunteered no further information as I thought it well to avoid provoking questions about the details of the operation. When I was asked when it had taken place I replied that I presumed on the previous day since I had received instructions last evening and I was sure that you would have wished to inform the Argentine Government as soon as possible. For the same reason I made no mention of the Chilean post. Moreover I thought that to do so might have been misinterpreted as an attempt to excuse our action.

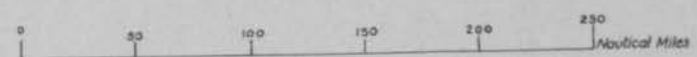
6. I then delivered the note about the report of the establishment of an Argentine base at Half Moon Island at Livingstone Island in the South Shetland group the text of which was given in your telegram No. 68 of 13th February. Señor Amaya and Señor Speroni were very relieved to find that it was a protest in customary terms. A copy of this note is also enclosed.

7. I next spoke about publicity and I was careful to use the exact wording in paragraph 5 of your telegram No. 62 of 13th February. I said that Her Majesty's Government desired to keep the matter in its proper perspective and did not propose to take the initiative in stimulating publicity. Nevertheless you wished to be free if necessary to publish the text of the notes without delay. Señor Amaya was very relieved to hear this and said that he entirely agreed. He would at once report my communication to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and to the Minister of

- ▲ BRITISH BASES (OCCUPIED 1952)
- BRITISH HUTS (UNOCCUPIED 1952)
- ✦ ARGENTINE BASES (OCCUPIED 1952)
- ✧ ARGENTINE HUTS (UNOCCUPIED 1952)
- CHILEAN BASES (OCCUPIED 1952)
- AMERICAN HUT (UNOCCUPIED 1952)



BASES IN THE FALKLAND IS. DEPENDENCIES, 1952



----- Dashed coastline is based only on rough reconnaissance
 - - - - - Approximate limit of ice shelf

RESEARCH DEPT., FOREIGN OFFICE, December 1952

Base dinghy in and out of the sea. Two short sledge journeys have been made to Gourlay Point to bring back seal meat for dog feeding, and the dog spans moved to clean snow away from the Base buildings. A further seal count has been completed at Borge Bay and a geological collection begun.

The area is clear of fast sea ice but small areas of light pack ice are seen drifting north periodically.

7. S.V. "John Biscoe".

The following particulars have been extracted from the vessel's deck log book:-

Dates	Voyage	Nautical miles	Average speed knots
17/6/52-21/6/52	P. Stanley to Montevideo	1014	10.68
23/6/52-18/7/52	Montevideo to Southampton	6024	10.24
This gives the total distance travelled during the 1951/52 season as 27,600 nautical miles (see also P(52)5, and P(52)6.			
20/10/52-14/11/52	Southampton to Montevideo	6031	10.09
16/11/52-20/11/52	Montevideo to P. Stanley	1013	10.72
24/11/52-17/12/52	Bases D, B. G. H & S. Georgia	2650	10.28
Total miles to date 1952/3 season:		<u>9694</u>	

The vessel had completed loading by the 12th January and is expected to leave Port Stanley on the morning of the 13th for her second Southern voyage to all Bases.

8. All Bases

Normal meteorological and wireless schedules have been maintained at all Bases and South Georgia and all new personnel are settling in very well. The injury to Edward's wrist reported in P(53)2 proved to be a fracture and on medical advice he was embarked on the SS "Fitzroy" for return to England. The Base personnel are all well except for minor ailments.

A Chilean float plane No. 910 was seen over the Base almost every day between the 28th December and 5th January.

3. Base 'D', Hope Bay

The new radio masts and anemometer tower have been erected, a porch constructed at the windward end of the hut and the remainder of the rooms double floored. High temperatures experienced towards the end of December caused an extensive thaw and melt streams twenty feet wide pouring down past the hut prevented stores being hauled up from the Beach. A period of high winds blew down all the radio masts at the Argentine Base.

A sledge party (Blaiklock, Stratton, Stoneley and Colcy) left Base on the 28th December for further survey and geology between the Base and Duse Bay.

The Base reports that an Argentine Tug was seen in Antarctic Sound on the 13th December and the Rug R.28 called in at Hope Bay on the 17th, sending a rowing boat ashore to the Argentine Base for half an hour. The Tug "Chiriguano" R.H.F.I. entered Hope Bay at 1830 GMT on the 24th December and left again at 2000 GMT on the 25th. A Chilean seaplane, believed to be a "Kingfisher" circled the Bay at 0200 hours GMT on the 5th January, 1953.

Brash and pack ice is moving north up Antarctic Sound and once or twice after periods with a northerly wind, Hope Bay has been completely blocked.

4. Base 'F', Argentine Islands

A period of reasonably good weather has provided the opportunity to complete painting and other outside maintenance work on the Base buildings. The dinghy has been overhauled and several days have been spent catching seals for later transfer to Hope Bay.

The Islands are not yet clear of fast ice but there are now signs of it breaking up. There is open water to the north-west of the Three Little Pigs with heavy pack and tabular bergs beyond moving north. The Penola Strait is open north of Base as far as the Lemaire Channel.

5. Base 'G', Admiralty Bay

Work has progressed satisfactorily with the sledging of new stores from the landing beach up to the Base Hut, and with the erection of the new Emergency Store Hut. Stocktaking is in progress and indents for 1954 being prepared.

The Chilean float plane No. 910 was reported flying over the Base on the 30th December and 5th January.

The Chilean vessels "Iquique" and "Leucoton" arrived at Admiralty Bay at 0045 hours on the 6th January; ship's officers paid a social call at the British Base before their ships sailed, the former at 0400 and the latter at 0900 G.M.T.

6. Base 'H', Signy Island

All the new stores landed this season have now been checked and stored away in the store sheds; indents for 1954 are being prepared. A slipway has been built to facilitate handling the

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES SURVEY

Report for Period 10th December 1952 to 12th January 1953

1. Base 'A', Port Lockroy

Personnel have been mainly occupied during this period with outside maintenance to the Base buildings, stocktaking and the preparation of annual reports. Several short boat journeys have been made away from Base to collect penguin eggs and fresh meat.

2. Base 'B', Deception Island

All stores delivered this season have been checked and stored away and indents for 1954 are in the course of preparation. Several rooms in the main hut have been thoroughly spring cleaned and painted out.

The light at Collin's Point was blown out twice during gales due apparently to a faulty mechanism which has since been repaired.

Several short journeys have been made away from the Base to collect penguin eggs and seals for dog feeding.

The 'cook of the week' made and decorated a large cake and Xmas was celebrated in the traditional manner. An Argentine party paid a social call bringing Xmas greetings to British personnel, while a return visit was made to the Argentine Base on New Year's Day.

The following foreign ships have visited Deception Island during the period:-

Name	Registration	Arrived Date/Time	GMT	Departed Date/Time	GMT
Tug R.28	Argentine	30/11/52	1125	19/12/52	1930
Olympic Leader	Panama	10/12/52	0530	10/12/52	1645
Chiriguano Tug R.H.F.1.	Argentine	16/12/52	0100	16/12/52	1150
Bahia Aquirre	Argentine	17/12/52	A.M.	24/12/52	0915
Chiriguano Tug R.H.F.1.	Argentine	3/1/53	A.M.	7/1/53	1230
Bahia Aquirre	Argentine	3/1/53	A.M.	7/1/53	1230
Iquique	Chile	7/1/53	0010	8/1/53	1105
Leucoton	Chile	7/1/53	0800	8/1/53	1105

An Argentine Gruman seaplane was seen flying round the Island on the 23rd December and again on the 5th and 11th January when she put down in Port Foster. An Argentine Lincoln aircraft was seen over the Base on the 11th January.

4 copies sent to K.A.
under comp. slip
d'd 25.2.53. by
surface mail.
P.W.
28/2.

RESTRICTED

P(53) 3

Previous Reference P(53)2

POLAR COMMITTEE

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES SURVEY

(1952/1953)

The attached report, covering the period 10th December 1952 to 12th January 1953, has been received from the Governor of the Falkland Islands and is circulated for the information of members of the Committee.

(Signed) A. H. Reed

Secretary
Polar Committee.

Commonwealth Relations Office,
Downing Street.

25th February, 1953.

Argentine	Argentine	16/12/52	0100	16/12/52	1150
Bahia Aquirre	Argentine	17/12/52	A.M.	24/12/52	0915
Chiriguano Tug R.H.F.l.	Argentine	3/1/53	A.M.	7/1/53	1230
Bahia Aquirre	Argentine	3/1/53	A.M.	7/1/53	1230
Iquique	Chile	7/1/53	0010	8/1/53	1105
Leucoton	Chile	7/1/53	0800	8/1/53	1105

An Argentine Gruman seaplane was seen flying round the Island on the 23rd December and again on the 5th and 11th January when she put down in Port Foster. An Argentine Lincoln aircraft was seen over the Base on the 11th January.

/A

The United Kingdom Government are ensuring that adequate forces are stationed on the island, and the frigate Snipe and cruiser Superb are remaining in the vicinity to meet any surprise attack.

A. M. HAMILTON.

political secretary.

CYS/AS

AIR BAGSECRET

5th March, 1953.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.Antarctica

The British Ambassador in Santiago recently reported that a local British subject, who had served with the R.A.F. during the war and claimed to have contact with the Chilean air force, had told him that the Chilean and Argentine authorities were said to be conniving at a plan to carry out a raid on the British base on Deception Island. Chilean air force personnel would seize a Catalina aircraft at Punta Arenas and join a similar machine from the Argentine base at Ushuaia. The aircraft were expected to carry about seven men each. If the raid was unsuccessful it would be disowned by the two Governments. The Ambassador recalled that a Chilean air force officer had recently undertaken an unauthorised flight from Punta Arenas to Deception Island but had been forced down on the way by bad weather. The flight, which had been officially disowned, would have been applauded as a national achievement if successful. This precedent, he remarked, lent some colour to the report of the British subject.

The United Kingdom Government replied that they doubted whether an attack would be attempted in view of the considerable hazards involved in landing an airborne force. However, they could not exclude the possibility of an unofficial raid by hotheads and if the evidence could be confirmed, the Ambassador was, at his discretion, to inform the Chilean Foreign Minister that he had heard this report and, while reluctant to believe it, felt bound to pass it on to him. If there was any substance in it, the Foreign Minister would doubtless wish to stamp on it. There were Royal Marines on the Island and a raid would involve a serious risk of casualties. The repercussions would be serious and responsibility would lie unmistakably with the attackers.

On the 28th February, the Ambassador telegraphed that he had not yet been able to confirm the information. His source now stated that the Chilean air force appeared unenthusiastic about the project. They had at present only two Catalinas fully serviceable and were doubtless reluctant to hazard them. The Argentines appeared more disposed to make an attempt and if they decided to, fighters would, according to the source, use Gallejos as their base. Around 14th March had been mentioned as a possible date.

/The

27th March 1953

DECEPTION ISLAND

Paragraph 3 of above telegram refers to Notes received from Argentine and Chilean Governments on 20th February. It was decided not to return a written reply to these Notes, but United Kingdom Ambassadors in Buenos Aires and Santiago were authorised to speak to Argentine and Chilean Governments on following lines:-

(a) We cannot accept arguments in the respective Notes nor can we agree to restoring status quo ante 16th February. Indeed it follows from our premises that our action was taken in order to restore position, which we regard as normal, existing before the Argentinian and Chilean huts were erected in January.

(b) Compliance with this request would lead to co-existence at Deception Island of three bases superimposed upon one another and could only result in acrimony and violence hitherto fortunately absent from dispute.

(c) United Kingdom Government share Chilean view that dispute is in essence judicial, and for this reason have suggested reference to International Court. They would however gladly examine sympathetically, and without prejudice to their legal position, any constructive suggestion that Chilean Government may have to make for its solution.

(d) United Kingdom Government reserve right to send a written reply to respective Notes if circumstances should so require.

2. In reply to above, Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs has said informally that he would like to reach a friendly solution of dispute and will think over whole question again.

3. Reactions of Chilean Government have been unhelpful in that they have delivered a memorandum reiterating their demand for replacement of dismantled Chilean hut. We are considering what reply, if any, should be returned to memorandum.

C.R.O. 33

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

.....28.3.....1953

SECRET

SECRET/CONFIDENTIAL

The Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations presents his compliments to H.E. the High Commissioner for *S. Africa*.....in London and begs to forward for the information of His Excellency, a copy of a message which H.E. the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in *S. Africa*.....has been instructed by telegraph/airmail to convey to the appropriate Ministry in *Belm*.....

A copy of this message is being sent to the High Commissioners in London for *Baneda Australia & New Zealand*.....

Mr van Huisenberg
kn
L. 74

2. In reply to above, Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs has said informally that he would like to reach a friendly solution of dispute and will think over whole question again.
3. Reactions of Chilean Government have been unhelpful in that they have delivered a memorandum reiterating their demand for replacement of dismantled Chilean hut. We are considering what reply, if any, should be returned to memorandum.

Hope Bay has generally been ice free except during periods of northerly winds. Large tabular bergs can be seen on the northern horizon.

4. Base 'F', Argentine Islands

Personnel have been busy during the period overhauling equipment and machinery, and preparing annual reports ready for the arrival of the S.V. "John Biscoe". Seals have been plentiful and a number have been killed and stored ready for later transfer to Hope Bay.

Ice cover has increased and there is now about eight tenths heavy pack and bergs in all directions including the Neymeyer and Peltier Channels. The pack is generally moving from the south and west towards the north-west.

5. Base 'G', Admiralty Bay

Reports indicate that the new store shed is now completed and all stores delivered this year safely inside. The main hut foundations have been cleared of ice and rubble in preparation for extensive structural repairs to be carried out this season. Base equipment has been overhauled and out-buildings repaired.

A party of four men left the Base in the Base dinghy on 4th February to visit Point Thomas. During the short period they spent ashore there, a sudden gale sprang up and they were not able to return to Base until the 14th. They were in good health and spirit in spite of having spent four nights in the open.

Admiralty Bay has been generally ice free during the period.

6. Base 'H', Signy Island

Regular visits have been paid to G_ourlay Point for work on Sheathbills and geological collections have been made from Cummings Cove to Port Jebson.

HMS Snipe called at the Base towards the end of January and took on board a number of husky dogs for transfer to Deception Island (and later to Hope Bay by S.V. "John Biscoe").

The seas have generally been ice free except for streams of light brash entering Orwell Sound via Normanna Strait.

7. All Bases

Normal meteorological and wireless schedules have been maintained at all Bases and South Georgia. Base personnel are all well.

HMS SNIFE called in at Deception Island for a few hours on the 15th February and on the 26th was again reported at anchor in Whalers Bay.

3. Base 'D', Hope Bay.

Base reports that all the new stores have now been sledged up from the landing point to the Base Hut and that the explosives have at last been extricated from the ice and are now stacked and ready for later disposal by the S.V. "John Biscoe". Survey and geology of the local area around Base continues and Marsh reports that he is making satisfactory progress with his haematological and Vitamin 'C' investigations. The seal depot at Duse Bay was visited towards the end of January and found to have been partly eaten by Skua gulls.

A sledge party (Powell, Kemp, Blaiklock and Marsh) left Base on the 6th February for Duse Bay. Marsh and Blaiklock travelled as far as Bald Head to make ice observations while the rest of the party set up a permanent camp at View Point. The main purpose of this camp is to enable the majority of the dogs to be fed and maintained there, but with the dual purpose of providing an interesting comparison in the weather on each side of Trinity Peninsula. View Point Met. Station was established on the 8th February at approximately 63°32'S, 57°27'W, and six-hourly observations are being transmitted to Stanley via Hope Bay. Seals are numerous within two miles of the station and a considerable quantity have already been killed and stored. Marsh and Blaiklock returned to Base on 13th February and reported that the sea ice in Duse Bay is showing signs of breaking up - there are open water leads from three to four miles wide stretching across from Beak and Eagle Islands to View Point and continuing nearly to the head of the Bay. There is open water south of the line between Beak Island and the Seven Buttresses and large areas off Bald Head and View Point. Areas are rapidly increasing.

A party of three (Stratton, Stoneley and Coley) left Base on the 20th February to relieve the View Point Met. Station. The party were to find an overland route and flag the difficult sections. The out-station has since reported that the relief party arrived safely having found a safe land route.

The following foreign vessels were seen in Hope Bay during the period:-

Name	Registration	Arrived	Departed
Punta Ninfas	Argentine	9th Jan. a.m.	9th Jan. p.m.
Tug (?)	"	9th Jan. a.m.	9th Jan. p.m.
Bahia Buen Suceso	"	21st Jan. 2355	31st Jan. 2355
Chiriguano	"	6th Feb. a.m.	6th Feb. 1700
Chiriguano	"	11th Feb. a.m.	14th Feb. 0600
Tug RHF ²	"	14th Feb. 2200	16th Feb. 1700
Chiriguano	"	15th Feb. 1930	16th Feb. 1700
Tug RHF ²	"	16th Feb. 2000	17th Feb. 1530

On the 31st January when the Suceso left, the Bay and Antarctic Sound was some six tenths cover of pack ice. The vessel experienced considerable difficulty in making a passage and finally called for a helicopter to pilot her out to open water. Gruman and Lancaster aircraft were seen flying over Hope Bay several times on the 8th and 11th February.

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES SURVEY

Report for Period 13th January to 26th February 1953.

1. Base 'A', Port Lockroy

Ionospheric routines continue on a limited scale; sufficient observations are being made however to satisfy Bulletin B means.

Ice conditions vary from day to day but heavy pack ice still moves up from the South and between seven and nine-tenths cover persists over the whole area.

On the 24th February in the late evening, the Argentine Tug RHF1 was observed in the Neymeyer Channel navigating towards the British Base but was forced to retreat because of ice.

2. Base 'B', Deception Island.

Work has mostly been confined to stocktaking and the preparation of Indents for 1954, but a number of indoor repairs and alterations to fittings have been completed and one of the new radio masts erected. Fishing and sealing trips have produced good results. Pendulum Cove and the old Outer Light have been visited by Base parties.

The following foreign ships have visited Deception Island during the period:-

Name	Registration	Arrival DTG GMT	Departure DTG GMT
Chiriguano	Argentine	141530 Jan.	150140 Jan.
Chiriguano	"	151505 "	180045 "
Bahia Buen Suceso	"	172200 "	191115 "
Iquique	Chilean	172200 "	180230 "
Lieucoton	"	180510 "	181045 "
Lientur	"	180045 "	182242 "
Punta Ninfas	Argentine	201828 "	Not known
Lieucoton	Chilean	211708 "	261805 "
Lientur	"	221000 "	261805 "
Iquique	"	252012 "	281900 "
Lieucoton	"	280510 "	281900 "
Lientur	"	280510 "	311825 "
Chiriguano	Argentine	071440 Feb.	080625 Feb.
Bahia Buen Aguirre	"	081955 "	091800 "
Bahia Buen Suceso	"	170105 "	182315 "
Chiriguano	"	170825 "	172334 "
Tug RHF2	"	180435 "	182200 "

Argentine Gruman Goose aircraft were seen over the Island (and on several occasions landed in Whalers Bay) on the 14th, 20th, 24th and 31st January and on the 6th, 8th, 13th, 16th and 24th February; Lincoln aircraft were seen on the 15th, 22nd January and the 8th and 25th February; Lancaster aircraft on the 8th, 9th, 13th and 25th February and a Sikorsky Helicopter on the 20th January.

/HMS Snipe

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by surface mail
under comp slip
dtd 30.3.53.

RESTRICTED

P(53)6

Previous Reference P(53)3

POLAR COMMITTEE

FALKLAND ISLANDS DEPENDENCIES SURVEY

(1953)

The attached report, covering the period 13th January to 26th February 1953, has been received from the Governor of the Falkland Islands and is circulated for the information of members of the Committee.

(Signed) A. H. REED

Secretary
Polar Committee

Commonwealth Relations Office,
Downing Street.

March, 1953.

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/HMS Snipe

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of informing the press that the Ambassador's visit to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was in connection with the trade protocol.

Unfortunately a leakage in the United States to the "New York Times" led to agency enquiries based on garbled rumours necessitating the issue of a brief statement in London on the night of 19th February.

On the 20th February the Argentine authorities published the United Kingdom note and their reply. The note, which is in strong terms, concludes with a statement that the Argentine reserves the right to submit the matter to the Organisation of American States. (The Department is not aware whether the Chilean note, which was not then published, contains the same reservation.)

infringement of British sovereignty by the Argentine and Chilean parties. The offer made to both countries by the previous British Government to refer the conflicting claims to territory in the Antarctic to the International Court of Justice, was repeated in the notes.

Replies were received on the 20th February asserting the Argentine and Chilean claims to the territory, protesting against the British action and demanding restoration of the dismantled buildings and return of the arrested men. The offer of placing the matter before the International Court of Justice was rejected.

On the 24th February, the Department was informed by the Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom that when the British Ambassadors took the above-mentioned action, both the Argentine and Chilean authorities agreed to avoid publicity, and the former went to the length

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/HMS Snipe

March 1953

P.S. 17/104

INCIDENTS AT DECEPTION ISLAND IN THE SOUTH SHETLANDS.
(Restricted)

On the 30th January, 1953, the Office of the High Commissioner for the United Kingdom in Pretoria informed the Department that during that month the Argentine and Chile had established Naval parties on an airstrip adjoining the British base at Port Foster, Deception Island, which is British territory, and that permanent buildings had been erected. Protests were lodged with the Commanders of the landing parties by the British base leader. This was a second Argentine camp as they have illegally maintained a base on Deception Island since 1947.

The United Kingdom Government reached the conclusion that the only possible course was to remove the Argentine and Chilean intruders from the Island and to dismantle the buildings which had been erected. This decision was carried out on the 15th February. Two men at the new Argentine base were arrested. The Chilean hut was found empty and was demolished, as were installations at the new Argentine base. The arrested men were embarked on an Argentine tanker at South Georgia on the 18th February for repatriation to the Argentine.

The British Ambassadors at Buenos Aires and Santiago presented notes on the 16th February informing the two Governments of the action taken and protesting against infringement of British sovereignty by the Argentine and Chilean parties. The offer made to both countries by the previous British Government to refer the conflicting claims to territory in the Antarctic to the International Court of Justice, was repeated in the notes.

Replies were received on the 20th February asserting the Argentine and Chilean claims to the territory, protesting against the British action and demanding restoration of the dismantled buildings and return of the arrested men. The offer of placing the matter before the International Court of Justice was rejected.

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/HMS Snipe

let-out to the Chileans and they are being left^{alone} on the off-chance that, with their many other preoccupations, they may let the matter drop.

So far as the Argentine Government are concerned, they have evidently been content to let the affair rest where it is but, in the view of the British Ambassador in Buenos Aires, if the Chileans raise the question again in any active manner, it is inconceivable that the Argentines will allow them to hold the stage.

It may be mentioned here that the State Department have recently made it known to the British Embassy in Washington that they are apprehensive lest the United Kingdom Government are underrating the damage which might be done if the Chileans took the Deception Island dispute to the Organisation of American States. Though the dispute may be relatively unimportant in itself, the State Department feel that, if ventilated in the O.A.S., it might arouse all sorts of anti-colonialist emotions throughout Latin America which it is in the interests of both the United Kingdom and United States to keep dormant. According to their information the Chileans would welcome a face-saving solution, though the State Department had no suggestions to offer in this regard. Nor were they prepared to say at this stage what their own attitude would be if the matter were raised in the O.A.S. They promised, however, to keep the Embassy informed of any move on the O.A.S. front.

The State Department have been assured that the United Kingdom Government are well alive to the wider aspects of the problem and that, though the present Chilean demands were obviously unacceptable, they would welcome a settlement for the reasons the State Department had mentioned.

A. M. HAMILTON.

Political Secretary.

AIR BAGSECRET

16th April, 1953.

THE SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.Antarctica

The United Kingdom Government refused to comply with the Chilean request for restoration of their hut on Deception Island and decided against returning a written reply to the Chilean memorandum referred to in the final paragraph of C.R.O. telegram Y N: 92 of the 27th March. On the 1st April, however, the British Ambassador in Santiago, on instructions from the Foreign Office, spoke to the Chilean Minister of Foreign Affairs on the following lines:

- (a) The United Kingdom Government strongly deprecated the action of the Chilean Government in returning to the oral representations a written memorandum drafted in controversial terms, and in making the text of this document available to the press before the United Kingdom Government had had an opportunity to acquaint themselves with it;
- (b) In the United Kingdom Government's view, the disturbance of the status quo at Deception Island occurred in January when the Chilean Naval forces appeared and established the Chilean refuge there - not, as the Chilean Government averred, when the Chilean hut was dismantled. The Chilean Government were well aware of this view and that the United Kingdom Government were not prepared to contemplate any reversal of the action taken by them to restore the position. The Chilean demand that the status quo before the 16th February should be restored could, therefore, not be entertained;
- (c) The United Kingdom Government's proposals for a solution of the Antarctic dispute by means of a joint reference by the parties to the International Court of Justice still held good.

Shortly after the interview, the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement that the Chilean Government intended to lay the matter immediately before the Organisation of American States. However, the Foreign Minister resigned at about that time and apparently no further steps have since been taken. The United Kingdom Government are not raising the question with the new Minister of Foreign Affairs in any form. There is no

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I POLITICAL MATTERS.1. INCIDENTS AT DECEPTION ISLAND. (Restricted)

In the fourth paragraph of item 2 of Policy Review No. 66 reference was made to Notes received by the United Kingdom Government from the Argentine and Chilean Governments about their claims to Deception Island.

The United Kingdom Government decided not to return a written reply to these Notes but the British Ambassadors in Buenos Aires and Santiago were authorised to speak to the Argentine and Chilean Governments on the following lines:

- (a) The United Kingdom Government cannot accept the arguments in the respective Notes, nor can they agree to restoring the status quo ante February 16th. It follows from British premises that their action was taken in order to restore the position which they regard as normal and which existed before the Argentine and Chilean huts were erected in January.
- (b) Compliance with the Chilean and Argentine request would lead to the co-existence at Deception Island of three bases superimposed upon one another, and could only result in acrimony and violence hitherto fortunately absent from the dispute.
- (c) The United Kingdom Government share the Chilean views that the dispute is in essence judicial, and for this reason they have suggested reference to the International Court. They would, however, gladly examine sympathetically and without prejudice to their legal position any constructive suggestion that the Chilean Government may have to make for its solution.

In reply to the above the Argentine Minister for Foreign Affairs has said informally that he would like to reach a friendly solution of the dispute and would think over the whole question again.

The reactions of the Chilean Government have been unhelpful in that they have delivered a memorandum re-iterating their demand for the replacement of the dismantled Chilean hut. The United Kingdom Government are considering what reply, if any should be returned to the memorandum.

- (c) The United Kingdom Government's proposals for a solution of the Antarctic dispute by means of a joint reference by the parties to the International Court of Justice still held good.

Shortly after the interview, the Chilean Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement that the Chilean Government intended to lay the matter immediately before the Organisation of American States. However, the Foreign Minister resigned at about that time and apparently no further steps have since been taken. The United Kingdom Government are not raising the question with the new Minister of Foreign Affairs in any form. There is no