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Extract from Imperial Conference Report, 1930

Secret
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Committee on Polar Questions

The Committee noted that the spheres of sovereignty of the countries bordering the Arctic Circle are generally well-defined, and that the 'sector principle' is now in a fair way to securing general acceptance. They agreed, however, that while this might be a matter for private satisfaction, so far as Arctic questions were concerned, public reference to the 'sector principle' was to be deprecated as likely not only to irritate Norwegian opinion, which was still hostile to the principle, but also to give rise to inconvenient claims in the Antarctic. If, for instance, the 'sector principle,' as applied in the Arctic, were to be applied to the Antarctic, a large portion of the Antarctic continent, including the greater part of the Falkland Islands Dependencies, would fall within the sphere of sovereignty of Chile and Argentina. The Committee noted in this connection that the progress made by His Majesty's Government in Canada in organising a system of police patrols covering all the islands north of the Canadian mainland was such that the title to these islands now rested not only on the theoretical application of the 'sector principle' but also on the solid ground of effective occupation.

Finally, the Committee decided to associate themselves in their Report with the views expressed by the Committee of the Imperial Conference, 1926, which considered British policy in the Antarctic, to the effect that discovery and formal acts of annexation did not by themselves constitute a valid title and must be followed by occupation; that the important element in considering whether a title by occupation has been established is the degree of control which can, in the circumstances, be exercised in the area; that such control in the case of the South Polar regions need not be continuous (since this would be impossible), but may be intermittent or periodical, provided, however, that it attains such effectiveness as is reasonably possible along the coasts of the areas which are the subject of a claim, whether those coasts consist of land or of frozen sea."

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13 MAY 1937

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Mr. King

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IMPERIAL CONFERENCE, 1937.

PUBLICITY ARRANGEMENTS.

Memorandum by the Joint Secretariat.

IT is suggested that it would be convenient that the arrangements as regards publicity should follow generally those adopted at the Imperial Conference of 1930.

2. In accordance with that precedent, a United Kingdom Minister would be made generally responsible for the publicity arrangements. He would be assisted by a Minister who would be in actual charge of the arrangements. The latter, as a general rule, would attend the principal meetings of the Conference and its Committees. At the end of each meeting of the Conference or its Committees a communiqué should be drawn up and submitted to the Conference or Committee, and the Minister in charge of publicity would arrange for its communication to the Press in the most convenient manner together with such explanatory information as can properly be given.

3. The Minister in charge would be assisted by the Chief Press Liaison Officer and by the Press Officer of the Dominions Office; the two latter would attend meetings of Committees of the Conference in cases where their presence is thought desirable. It is suggested that, in order to secure full co-operation between the Delegations, the Minister in charge of publicity should also be assisted by the Press Liaison Officers from the Dominion and Indian Delegations.

4. It is proposed that Mr. Malcolm MacDonald, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, should be the Minister generally responsible for the publicity arrangements and that the Marquess of Hartington, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, should be the Minister in actual charge of the arrangements.

2 Whitehall Gardens, S.W. 1,
May 13, 1937.

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