

APPENDIX "A"

Draft Note to French Government

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and in the Commonwealth of Australia have given most careful consideration to your note of 5th October last on the subject of the boundaries of Adélie Land, and I have the honour to inform you that, while appreciating the friendly spirit in which the French Government has acted in this matter, it is felt that, in view of the tremendous amount of work and expenditure that has already been undertaken by His Majesty's Governments in connexion with the exploration of the whole of the coastline and portions of the interior of the Australian Antarctic Territory, and also of Adélie Land, and of the fact that the only French effort which has been directed towards this area of the Antarctic has been the extremely brief visit of Commodore d'Urville in 1840, the suggestion of the French Government that the eastern boundary of Adélie Land should be fixed to the east of the 142nd meridian of longitude east of Greenwich cannot be accepted.

While His Majesty's Governments would be happy to give the widest definition to the sector over which the French Government have rights, it is clear that the only rights the French Government might maintain in international law in this area are those based on actual discovery, and His Majesty's Governments feel that the widest limits that the French Government can possibly claim are from 136° longitude to 142° longitude east of Greenwich. It is extremely doubtful whether the coastline seen by Commodore d'Urville would extend even to those limits. In arriving at this conclusion one is impressed by the remarkably accurate and painstaking manner in which all the charts and records of d'Urville were prepared, and the fact that no mention is made of, nor claim laid to having seen, any land to the east of 142°, nor even to land as far east as 142° of longitude east of Greenwich.

In 1913, when Sir Francis Bertie's Note was handed to M. Pichon, His Majesty's Government were, in the absence of any corroborating evidence as to the extent of coastline seen by Commodore d'Urville, unable to assess accurately the range of coastline that had been seen by d'Urville. Pending the return of Dr. Mawson, who was in the Antarctic at this time, 1913, the only other information that was apparently available at that time was an account which appeared in a Sydney newspaper in 1840, and which, when speaking of d'Urville's discovery of Adélie Land, stated that "its extent, as seen, was a bout 150 miles, between 66° and 67° latitude, 136 and 147 longitude." As it was impossible to determine from the evidence available exactly where, within these limits, Adélie Land was to be drawn, and as the question at issue when this Note was written was not what were the limits of Adélie Land, but whether the boundaries of King George V Land, as defined by Sir Francis Bertie, were outside those limits, his Note cannot be regarded as any determination of the boundary issue.

Since that Note was written two factors have come to light which make it certain that d'Urville could not have sighted land any further to the east than the 142nd degree of longitude east of Greenwich. In the first place both Sir Douglas Mawson and Captain Davis are agreed as to the accuracy of d'Urville's work, and, secondly, recent research has shown that the account which was published in the Sydney newspaper was based upon an earlier account apparently written on board the "Astrolabe," which was published in the French language in a Hobart newspaper, and in which the following statement appears:—

"... Le Commodore d'Urville a nommé la terre nouvellement découverte Terre Adélie. La partie reconnue d'environ 150 milles d'étendue est comprise entre le 66° et 67° degré de latitude sud d'une part; entre 136° au 142° degré de longitude E. de l'autre..."

As further research disclosed that there was other contemporary evidence to support this statement, His Majesty's Governments therefore felt that they were justified in restricting the possible length of coastline sighted by d'Urville to that shown on his charts, namely, the coastline lying between the 136th and 142nd meridians of longitude east of Greenwich.

Bearing this in mind, His Majesty's Governments on perusing the Report of the Minister of the Colonies relating to, *inter alia*, Adélie Land, which appeared in the Journal Officiel de la République Française of the 27th November, 1924, came to the conclusion that the French Government had thus officially acknowledged that they claimed only the area actually sighted by d'Urville, which had been shown by Sir Douglas Mawson's discoveries to extend at the most from the 136th meridian to the 142nd meridian.

The statement upon which His Majesty's Governments relied in coming to this conclusion read as follows:—

"... Dans l'ignorance ou l'on fut longtemps de la valeur économique de ces terres inhabitées, situées à l'écart des grandes routes maritimes, il n'avait point paru indispensable, en effet, de confirmer, par l'établissement d'une autorité effective, les droits de souveraineté que, de longue date, la France s'était acquis sur les archipels et sur les parties du continent antarctique reconnues par nos navigateurs."

As no reason has since been advanced by the French Government that would justify His Majesty's Governments in relinquishing their title to an

area in which a great deal of exploratory work has been done by British enterprise and which was formally claimed on behalf of His Majesty by Sir Douglas Mawson at Cape Denison in March, 1912, His Majesty's Governments regret that they are unable to agree to the delimitation of the boundary between Adélie Land and the eastern portion of the Australian Antarctic Territory at any other point than the 142nd degree of longitude east of Greenwich.

In this connection His Majesty's Governments would like to emphasise that Cape Denison, which is only 16 miles to the east of the 142nd meridian, has, by the labours of the Australasian Antarctic Expedition of 1911-1914, become indelibly associated with Australian tradition and history.

On Cape Denison itself is erected a memorial cross to the two members of the expedition who so tragically lost their lives in the exploration of the icy wastes of this region. Cape Denison was again visited by the members of the British, Australian and New Zealand Antarctic Research Expedition of 1929-1931, and will undoubtedly be revisited by British expeditions in the near future.

In many other directions His Majesty's Governments have taken steps actively to implement its sovereignty over King George V Land, and are now arranging for a further survey of this area.

His Majesty's Governments are prepared to accept the 60th parallel of south latitude as the northern limit of the area within which the land is to be considered to be French, but His Majesty's Governments would remind the French Government that in January, 1909, Sir Ernest Shackleton took possession, in the name of His Majesty, of the South Polar Plateau. They therefore cannot agree that the sector comprising Adélie Land continues as far to the south as the South Pole.

APPENDIX "B"

"Extract from Imperial Conference Report, 1926

Secret
E 130

Committee on British Policy in the Antarctic

In the Memorandum E 101* reference was made to the territorial claim of Canada in the Arctic, and the view was expressed that the adoption of the proposals put forward in the memorandum would not appear to prejudice the rights of Canada in the Arctic. The Committee concur in this view. In this connection their attention has been drawn to a decree issued by the Soviet Government in April of this year (Appendix (B)) defining their territorial claims in the Arctic. This decree claims as Russian territory all islands and lands, known or unknown, lying within that portion of the Arctic Ocean which is bounded on the southward by the Russo-Siberian coast and on the east and west meridians drawn from the North Pole to Bering Strait and to the Russo-Norwegian boundary respectively. The Committee have considered the attitude which it would be desirable to adopt in relation to this decree, having regard both to the claim of Canada in the Arctic and to the policy advocated for adoption in the Antarctic, and they are of opinion that the most satisfactory course would be to take no action. It is advantageous for the British Government to be able to treat the silence with which the Falkland Islands Dependencies Letters Patent and the Ross Dependency Order in Council were received by foreign Powers as constituting acquiescence by such Powers in their issue, and it is therefore desirable to follow the same course in connection with the Soviet Decree.

* Note.—Reference is made in the above quotation to Memorandum E 101; the paragraph of that memorandum referred to appears to be the following:—

The limits of the Ross and Falkland Islands Dependencies are so defined as to extend to the South Pole. The same plan should be followed in regard to the territories specified by the Admiralty. This will involve regarding Adélie Land as similarly extending to the Pole, but as the practical value of the hinterland appears at present negligible, this need not be regarded as entailing any inconvenient consequences. It seems clear from the French Decree of the 26th March, 1924, that the French Government do in fact contemplate defining the limits of Adélie Land with reference to meridians of longitude. It may be mentioned here that Canada claims, in the Arctic regions, all land known or unknown between the meridian of 141° W. and a line passing midway between Greenland and Baffin, Devon and Ellesmere Islands and thence northward as far as the Pole (see Appendix (V)).

