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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM : American Embassy, London

No. 2773

December 20, 1951

DESP. NO.

DATE

AIR POUCH

PRIORITY

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For Dept.
Use Only

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

REF :
SUBJECT: Parliamentary Discussions of Falkland Island Dependencies.

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The recent Argentine announcement that an expedition is to be sent to the Falkland Island Dependencies during the Antarctic summer stirred some interest in the United Kingdom, and questions were asked in the House of Commons on December 3, 1951. The following is the text of the exchange which took place between Mr. Eden and his questioners, published in Hansard for December 3rd:

"Mr. Hamilton Kerr asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is aware that the Argentine Government in defiance of the agreement to abstain from naval demonstrations during the Antarctic summer, proposes to send an air and military expedition to the Falkland Islands; and whether he will lodge a protest.

"Mr. Eden: I understand that the Argentine Government propose to send a relief expedition to the Falkland Islands Dependencies early this month. According to my present information, the number of ships included in this expedition does not contravene the Tripartite Naval Declarations exchanged between His Majesty's Government and the Governments of Argentine and Chile.

"Mr. Kerr: Is my right hon. Friend aware that President Peron, in February of this year, publicly stated that he had refrained from military occupation of the Falkland Islands, because scientific expeditions would, bit by bit, give him possession?

"Mr. Eden: I am dealing with the Falkland Islands Dependencies. There is no question of any kind of an expedition to the Falkland Islands of which I am aware. As regards the Dependencies, the arrangement is a complicated one, but, if my hon. Friend would like to see it, I will have its terms circulated in the Official Report, so that hon. Members can judge for themselves.

"Lieut.-Colonel Lipton asked the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what representations he has made to the Governments of Chile and Argentina on their

occupation

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REPORTER(S)

PREPARATION TIME

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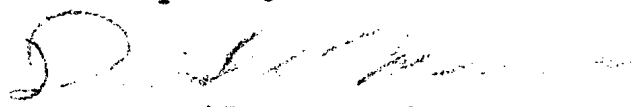
occupation of British territory in the Falkland Islands Dependencies.

"Mr. Eden: His Majesty's Government have on a number of occasions protested to the Argentine and Chilean Governments against their unwarranted acts of trespass on British Antarctic territory. The texts of these documents are available in the Library. During the summer of this year, there have been no further acts of trespass warranting representations to these Governments."

It will be noted that Mr. Eden suggested that he might have the terms of the Tripartite Naval Declarations circulated in the Official Report (Hansard). On December 4th, the following item was published in Hansard, with a reference to the previous day's proceedings quoted above:

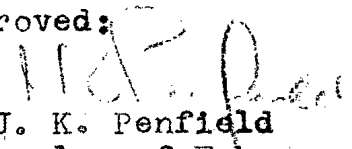
"Being anxious to avoid any misunderstanding in Antarctica which may affect the friendly relations between the United Kingdom, Argentina and Chile, the Governments of these three countries have informed each other that, in present circumstances, they foresee no need to send warships south of latitude 60 degrees during the 1951 to 1952 Antarctic season, apart, of course, from movements such as have been customary for a number of years."

Comment: Scattered comment in the British press has in general taken the line that, while the Argentine action is admittedly within the letter of the tripartite agreement, it does not conform with the agreement in spirit.



David K. Marvin
Second Secretary of Embassy

Approved:


J. K. Penfield
Counselor of Embassy

cc: Buenos Aires

DKMarvin:sml

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