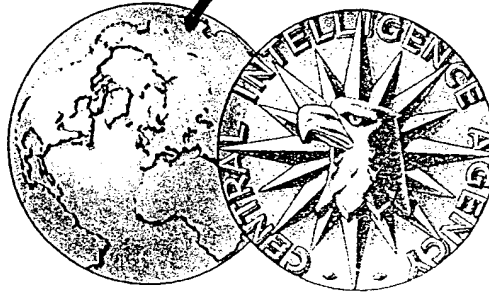


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SPITSBERGEN

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SPITSBERGEN

SUMMARY

The Spitsbergen archipelago is situated on the great circle route from northern Russia to Greenland and the east coast of the US. It furnishes potential sites for air facilities, guided missile emplacements, weather and Loran stations, and radar posts. For a few months of the year, it could be used as a destroyer and emergency submarine base. Longyearbyen, its main settlement, is 3600 statute miles from New York, 3500 from Chicago, 2300 from Point Barrow, Alaska, and 717 from Murmansk.

In accordance with an agreement signed in 1920 by all interested powers and adhered to in 1935 by the USSR, Spitsbergen is a possession of Norway. The treaty provides that no military installations of any kind will be allowed, and that foreign nationals, under regulations set forth by the Norwegian Government, will be granted concessions for the economic exploitation of coal and other resources found in the islands. The UK, USSR, and Norway are currently taking advantage of this arrangement, and the latter two countries are actively exploiting claims. Shortly before the end of the war, however, at a time when Norway was in a position to be intimidated by a Soviet army of "liberation," Moscow manifested additional interest in Spitsbergen in the form of such demands as for outright cession of Bear Island and a condominium with Norway over the archipelago in place of the existing treaty agreements. All Soviet proposals for greater influence in Spitsbergen were later rejected by the Norwegian parliament, and the issue has not been

raised again by the USSR to date (1 June 1950). The matter cannot be considered closed, however, because the Soviets can renew their demands whenever it suits their purpose.

Although Spitsbergen contains several minerals of strategic importance, none of them to date has been profitably mined except coal. To Norway, the archipelago is valuable as a non-foreign producer of coal which can supply about 40 percent of its domestic needs. The USSR, however, has had no real need of Spitsbergen coal since the development of mines and railway transportation in northern Russia, and none of the other known resources of the islands would be of importance to the Soviet Union even if their exploitation should prove physically practicable. The USSR, nevertheless, maintains four claims, covering 102 square miles (less than Norway but more than the UK), currently employs perhaps 3,000 people there, and appears to be constantly expanding its installations. Numerous loaded ships leave the Soviet claims but the Soviets have not as yet reported on production for the 1949 season.

In accordance with treaty provisions, a Norwegian inspector of mines visits the Soviet concessions, but the Russians request advance notice of his arrival and he is not permitted to survey any activities other than the mines themselves. Although no indications of unusual activity on the part of the Soviets have been seen, and there is no immediate evidence of construction of air or seaplane bases, it would be possible to conduct fairly consider-

Note: This report has been prepared on the initiative of the Central Intelligence Agency to satisfy a current need for finished intelligence on Spitsbergen, a need which has been apparent from correspondence between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the Department of State, and from various other indications. The report undertakes to assemble and evaluate available intelligence on the area. The intelligence organizations of the Departments of State, Army, Navy, and the Air Force have concurred in this paper. It contains information available to CIA as of 15 June 1950.

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able operations in areas not normally exposed to observation. Air reconnaissance has not revealed any activity not connected with mining, but equipment and material could be stored in fairly large quantities which would not be observed from the air and would not be seen by the inspector. The Soviets maintain a radio station at Pyramiden and are reported to have a meteorological station there.

Despite prewar failures to exploit concessions on Spitsbergen profitably, a British firm has renewed its claims and is attempting to raise the capital required to begin work. This venture, welcomed by Norway because it temporarily prevented the Soviets from consolidating claims and thus further frustrating observation, was motivated not only by possible economic advantage but by British interest in maintaining a foothold in Spitsbergen to observe Soviet activities in the area and to deter possible Soviet violations of the treaty. To date, the company, whose claims will lapse unless it commences actual operations, has neither been able to attract sufficient private capital nor to interest the UK

or US Governments in subsidization of the venture.

Several factors indicate continuing Soviet exploitation of the resources in their claims. Even though maximum possible production of coal will not make a significant contribution to the Soviet economy, coal mining affords an incontestable reason for the presence of Soviet personnel. Development of claims including construction and related activities can all be justified as essential to mining operations. Communications facilities, similarly justified, serve the additional purpose of transmitting weather data which are useful in meteorological studies and in weather forecasts for the European continent. Demonstrated interest in the strategic potential of the archipelago makes it unlikely that the USSR will abandon this observation post from which it can keep a watchful eye upon the activities of other nationals in Spitsbergen.

Norwegian exploitation of the resources in their claims will also continue at about the present rate.

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SPITSBERGEN

1. Introduction.

The Spitsbergen archipelago, which belongs to Norway, lies approximately 500 miles due north of Tromsø in Norway, within an area extending from longitude 10°E to 35°E and from latitude 74°N to 81°N. It consists of five large and a number of smaller islands.

	<i>Square Miles</i>
Vestspitsbergen	14,633
Nordautlandet	6,550
Edgeøya	1,969
Barentsøya	544
Prins Karls Forland	241
Smaller Islands	332
	24,269

When the following islands are added, the Norwegians call the entire group Svalbard, meaning "Cold Coast" in old Norse.

	<i>Square Miles</i>
Kvitøya	97
Kong Karls Land	128
Hopen	18
Bjørnøya (Bear Island)	69
	24,581

The location of Spitsbergen gives it potential strategic value as a site for air facilities, guided missile emplacements, weather and Loran stations, and radar posts. It could be used as a destroyer and emergency submarine base for a few months in the year. In its present undeveloped state, however, its value as a base for offensive operations is negligible.

Spitsbergen's chief economic resource is coal. The most valuable fields, located in the central basin of the west coast, are estimated to contain 8,000 million metric tons. Considerable deposits of gypsum, iron ore, copper pyrites, molybdenite, and lead are also known to exist, but only gypsum and coal are readily available. Deposits of marble, zinc-blende,

galena, and asbestos have been reported but details regarding them are lacking.

The Gulf Stream, running along the west and north coast, enables ships to navigate these waters, but only for about five months of the year and makes the western half of Vestspitsbergen and Prins Karls Forland the most accessible for economic exploitation. The east coast and the eastern half of the north coast are for the most part inaccessible because of the drift ice.

2. Historical Background: Claims of Sovereignty.

Spitsbergen is said to have been discovered by Norsemen in 1194, but knowledge of the area thereafter faded until its rediscovery by a Dutch explorer in 1596. During the 17th century, Dutch and English whalers, as well as Danish-Norwegian craft, plied the surrounding waters, and the Danish kings claimed sovereignty over the islands. After the end of whaling in these waters in the 18th century the question of sovereignty became less important, since the resources of the islands themselves were meager. The Russians were the first to winter in the archipelago and were reported in 1770 to have three or four settlements there. Russian hunters were also active on Bear Island, but when Norwegian hunters commenced to winter there in the 1820's the Russians had gone. Beginning in 1827 the Norwegians and Swedes undertook scientific expeditions to the archipelago and eventually in 1871-72 a Swedish explorer sought royal protection for the establishment of a colony. The UK, France, Germany, Denmark, Holland, and Russia were consulted, and Spitsbergen's status as "*terra nullius*" was reaffirmed.

During the last years of the 19th and first of the 20th century, increasing attention was given to the islands partly for strategic reasons but also because profitable working of the Spitsbergen coal deposits had become possible. Norwegians and Swedes were alarmed lest one or another of the great powers should

occupy the area; their fears were intensified after a short but sharp conflict of interest over Bear Island between Russia and Germany in 1900. International negotiations concerning the status of the islands were frequent, and conferences were held in 1910, 1912, and 1914 without satisfactory settlement. After the separation of Norway from Sweden in 1905 there was some rivalry between the two countries with respect to Spitsbergen, and between both Scandinavian countries and Russia. In fact, all nations which had any claims or interests in the area (including the US, Germany, and the UK as well as the three northern powers) feared that the firm establishment of sovereignty by any one power would prejudice the rights and privileges of others. Yet all admitted the desirability of an orderly settlement of the problem. The outbreak of World War I put a temporary end to negotiations.

After the war the problem was taken up by the Norwegian Government in a memorandum to the President of the Peace Conference asking that the Spitsbergen islands, including Bear Island, be placed under the jurisdiction of Norway. The Supreme Council of the Allied and Associated Powers appointed a four-man committee to handle the problem and to consider such claims on Spitsbergen as might be made by powers other than Norway. The report of this committee, recommending full Norwegian sovereignty over the archipelago, was accepted by the Supreme Council on 25 September 1919. A treaty was drafted safeguarding the rights of non-Norwegians, and its content was approved by the Norwegian Government. It was signed on 9 February 1920 by the authorized representatives of the US, Great Britain, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Union of South Africa, India, Denmark, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, Netherlands, and Sweden. After those nations had effected formal ratification, the treaty was proclaimed in effect on 7 January 1925, and the Norwegian Government took formal possession of the archipelago on 14 August of the same year.

Russian nationals and companies were accorded the same rights under the treaty as nationals of the signatory powers, and pro-

vision was made for Russian adherence to the treaty after such time as a Russian Government should be granted recognition by the signatories. In accordance with this procedure, the USSR ratified the treaty with effect as of 7 May 1935.

Sovereignty over the archipelago, including Bear Island, was given to Norway, which undertook "not to create nor to allow the establishment of any naval base in the territories . . . and not to construct any fortification in the said territories, which may never be used for warlike purposes." The nationals of the signatories (and of Russia) were granted equal liberty of access and entry for the purpose of conducting maritime, industrial, mining, or commercial enterprises, subject, however, to regulations made by the Norwegian Government in accordance with the terms of the treaty. The same rights and privileges were to be accorded to all countries subsequently adhering to the treaty.

3. Developments during World War II.

In 1940 only Norway and the USSR had companies exploiting the coal resources of Spitsbergen; about 800 Norwegians and 1800 Russians were in the islands. These residents were evacuated late in 1941, and the mines were put out of operation by allied combat engineer troops. Subsequently the Germans established a garrison of 25 men. In May 1942, the Norwegians landed a small force; and somewhat later the Germans withdrew. A German naval force shelled Longyearbyen and Barentsburg in September 1943 and severely damaged the installations; the Norwegian garrison escaped destruction, however, and stayed on until after Norway's liberation. Norwegian coal mining activities were renewed in the 1945-46 winter season.

Soviet strategic interest in Spitsbergen was demonstrated in 1944 by a demand upon Norway for outright cession of Bear Island and the establishment of a condominium over Spitsbergen, in order to protect lines of communication vital to the Soviet Union. Inasmuch as Soviet troops were then occupying northern Norway, the Norwegian Government felt constrained to propose that negotiations for joint military defense of the islands be

initiated, with final plans to be submitted to the Allied Government. In agreeing to this proposal, the USSR further suggested that negotiations be carried on at the same time regarding the exploitation of coal deposits and other resources on Spitsbergen and about the possibility of abrogating the Spitsbergen Treaty.

The Norwegian Government accepted the Soviet proposal but with four qualifications: (a) the Storting must approve the final agreement; (b) any defense measures adopted would be on an equal basis between the two states and should be designed to fit whatever international security organization was to be established; (c) the Soviets were to furnish additional information concerning their views on the exploitation of resources; and (d) abrogation of the Spitsbergen Treaty should be carried out in accordance with international law, with consent of all signatories except former adherents to the Axis. In April 1945, Norway presented to the USSR the draft of a joint declaration stating that the neutralization of Spitsbergen was impractical and expressing the desire of the two nations to utilize the island as a link in an international security chain and as a means of protecting their own interests. To this proposal the Norwegians received no reply.

The Soviets brought the Spitsbergen matter up twice verbally in 1946, once in August at the Paris Peace Conference and again at the November meeting of the UN General Assembly. Both times they suggested to the Norwegians a meeting to settle the matter, but on the second occasion they indicated a desire that the USSR be given preference in the exploitation of Spitsbergen's natural resources, and they gave the impression that the USSR would now expect exclusive ownership and control of any airbases to be established in the islands.

On 15 February 1947, the Storting voted 101-11 against further bilateral military negotiations with the USSR concerning Spitsbergen and Bear Island, and this resolution was formally transmitted to Moscow. Norway offered to continue bilateral discussions with the USSR on economic aspects of the treaty, this being regarded as a gesture designed to

soften the Storting's relatively harsh refusal to discuss military aspects. The Soviet Government has not replied to this note; the initiative for renewed discussions lies with it, since Norway is satisfied with the existing demilitarization provisions.

4. Strategic Location and Importance.

Spitsbergen is situated on the northern flank of the ocean route to the Soviet ports of Murmansk, Archangel, and Petsamo; Bjørnøya (Bear Island) is on the great circle route from Northern Russia to Greenland and the east coast of the US. Longyearbyen, the most important settlement in Spitsbergen, is distant from certain points as follows (in statute miles):

Petsamo	660
Murmansk	717
Reykjavik, Iceland	1,239
Oslo, Norway	1,271
Narvik, Norway	677
Scapa Flow	1,395
Jameson Land, Greenland	857
Point Barrow, Alaska	2,300
Chicago	3,500
New York City	3,600

The location of Spitsbergen gives it potential strategic value as a site for air facilities, guided missile emplacements, weather and Loran stations, and radar posts. It could be of value as a destroyer and emergency submarine base. As a meteorological station it could be an important link in a Greenland-Iceland-Jan Mayen-Spitsbergen chain of polar reporting stations. In its present undeveloped state its value as a base for offensive operations is negligible.

Navigation in Svalbard waters is impracticable except during the summer months. Pack ice, which is the principal hindrance to shipping, arrives from the east and northeast, rounds the south cape of Spitsbergen, and moves northward up the west coast. The most southerly fjords of Vestspitsbergen—Hornsund and Bellsund—are often ice bound until July and may freeze over early in the fall; neither is considered as practicable for bases as Isfjorden which is located about half way up the west coast. Isfjorden also has flat

land along much of its shore, many natural harbors and waterside areas suitable for settlement, and the longest navigation season—it is generally free of pack ice from June to October. Bjørnøya is normally ice free the year round.

There are no established airfields in Spitsbergen. Except in the fjords, where low lands lie at the mouths of the rivers, mountain ranges rise precipitously, close to the shore of the island. Airfield possibilities are restricted to: (1) the narrow belts on the southern part of the west coast; (2) alluvial land in the interior of the three deep bays which indent the west coast; and (3) the plateaus adjacent to the Wijdefjord in the northeast. Air and ground reconnaissance has been and is being made to determine facilities for land-based aircraft and seaplanes; to date estimates are largely confined to the Isfjorden and Bellsund areas. Several natural sites exist on the coasts of these fjords which, with slight preparation, could probably be used for light and medium aircraft during the summer and early fall (August through October), but would often be unusable during the period of maximum thaw (June and July). At a natural field in Adventdalen, which was used by the German Air Force during World War II, JU-88's, HE-111's, and JU-52's landed and took off during September and October and even in May and June. At this location a gravel terrace offers possibilities for a runway of 2500-3000 feet. Considerable engineering work would be necessary to build a field for anything but occasional use, and any runway would have to be constructed to resist damage by frost heave. When frozen (October through May) it would be serviceable, but darkness and unfavorable flying weather at that season would limit its usefulness. In the Gipsdalen area there are two sites where, with slight surface leveling, it would be possible to construct runways of 3000 to 4500 feet. They would be serviceable in winter when frozen and in summer except during the thaw (June and July) for light and medium aircraft. It is doubtful that any usable field could be constructed at Sveagruva, although some other site in Bellsund might prove serviceable.

The four principal bays (Bellsund, Isfjorden, Hornsund, and Kongsfjorden) on the west coast of Vestspitsbergen offer landing areas for seaplanes in the summer and landings on ice in the winter. Hornsund and Bellsund frequently have a shorter ice free season than Isfjorden; Kongsfjorden is often ice free the year round. Drift ice and ice from glaciers are the greatest hazard to seaplane landings in the bays, but Adventfjorden and Grønfjorden in the Isfjorden area have been used for the purpose. In April and May the Germans were able to land on the smooth bay ice of Adventfjorden. The British and Norwegians have made seaplane landings in these fjords.

5. Economic Importance.

The natural resources of Svalbard are of little economic importance. For Norway, Spitsbergen is a useful non-foreign source of coal, and has supplied more than a third of annual Norwegian requirements. The USSR has had no real need of Spitsbergen coal since the development of mines and railway transportation in northern Russia, and none of the other known resources of Svalbard would be of importance to the Soviet Union even if their exploitation should prove physically practicable. Up to the present, coal is the only resource which has been profitably exploited.

Svalbard has no indigenous population and is not economically self-sustaining. Communities established there must import virtually all necessities.

a. Coal.

Coal resources are estimated at about 8,000 million metric tons, consisting mostly of tertiary deposits in the Isfjorden and Kongsfjorden areas. Since World War I Norwegians, Swedes, Dutch, Russians, and British have mined them at one time or another, but all except Norwegians and Russians had abandoned their operations by the early 1930's. Prewar (1932-40) average annual coal production from Spitsbergen was approximately 600,000 tons, Norwegian and Soviet mines producing about equal quantities. The Soviets operated mines at two of their four concessions and in 1941 were planning to commence

operations at a third claim. Prewar Soviet operations involved between 1500 and 2000 Soviet nationals. During the same period 700-800 Norwegians were employed at the three Norwegian mines.

Most of the mining facilities were destroyed during the war, and both Norwegians and Russians undertook reconstruction of their properties soon after 1945. The British have renewed their claim but have not commenced operations.

The Norwegians plan to get from 500,000 to 550,000 tons of coal a year from Spitsbergen. This would satisfy about 40 percent of Norwegian coal needs and in so doing reduce appreciably the expenditure of foreign exchange. Of the 400,000 tons mined in 1949, half was used in North Norway while the other half was divided between state railways and steamships which bunkered in northern Norwegian ports.

Spitsbergen coal is not well suited for use in many types of coal-burning installations. Its extreme friability causes a large proportion of it to fall through the fuel grates or be carried out the stack, while its relatively low melting point and alkaline reaction produce abnormally rapid deterioration of silica fire brick. Moreover, in the customary coking processes it yields a very porous and chemically weak coke, which crumbles when handled or stored. The Norwegian Government, in cooperation with industry, is trying to select a coking process suitable for Spitsbergen coal. Good results have been achieved in pilot plant operation, but extensive plant facilities and considerable electric power capacity will be required to advance the process beyond its present stage. Petroleum by-products, including gasoline, can be extracted in the process, but preliminary estimates indicate that the cost of production would be double the cost of equivalent products imported from abroad. It therefore appears doubtful that any early increase in Norwegian demand for Spitsbergen coal will result from these developments but the capability exists if future economic conditions should warrant the costs.

Soviet production was and is shipped to the northern Soviet ports of Murmansk, Arch-

angel, and Petsamo. Prewar production was of considerable value for bunkering ships in these northern ports and for coal needs of the northwest area. The demand for Spitsbergen coal has decreased with postwar industrial and transportation expansion in northern USSR and it is probable that the major portion of the coal requirements of the northwest area is now supplied by the Pechora fields.

b. Other Resources.

There are large gypsum deposits at the eastern end of Isfjorden. Past British attempts at exploitation did not prove remunerative although the quality of gypsum is excellent and loading of ships presents no serious obstacle. To date no other resources have been exploited.

Oil shale has been reported but development has not yet been deemed practicable. Rich and extensive deposits of magnetic ore are found near Recherchefjorden in Bellsund. The field is some 17 miles long and the ore has tested 64 percent iron. Phosphate beds are known to exist. Deposits of copper pyrites, molybdenite, and lead have been identified.

6. Current Activities.

Nationals of Norway, the UK, and the Soviet Union are engaged in operations in Svalbard. Pursuant to its obligations under the treaty of 1920, which accords to nationals of those countries adhering to the treaty equal rights in the exploitation of the resources of Svalbard, the Norwegian Government has established certain regulations governing the acquisition and working of claims. Any party desiring to investigate natural resources in Spitsbergen must first obtain a two-year search license from the Norwegian authorities. If the licensee discovers a natural deposit, he acquires thereby a right to the discovery and is entitled to a claim on the discovery point. If no demand for a claim is made within five years, the right lapses.

After filing notice of discovery, the party may apply for a claim survey, paying a stipulated fee. Notice of time of survey and other pertinent data are published in the Official Svalbard Gazette in Norway and serve as no-

tice to any who may assert a better right to the land to contest the claim. The Commissioner of Mines determines the applicant's right to the claim chiefly on the basis of discovery, and if within six months there is no opposition by an interested party, the claim is finalized and the holder has the sole right to extract the minerals. There is no specified time of expiration, but the holder must begin operations within four years after the claim has become final and conduct them so that in each succeeding period of five years at least 1500-man-days-work are performed; failure to fulfill the work requirement causes the claims to lapse. Dispensations from this requirement can be obtained if sufficient impediments to its fulfillment, beyond the claim-holder's control, are shown.

A British company, the Scottish Spitsbergen Syndicate, has four claims covering an area of 267.2 square kilometers (approximately 103.2 square miles). The USSR, through a state-owned company "Artik-Ugol," maintains four claims consisting of 251.5 square kilometers (approximately 102 square miles). Norwegians, through both private and government-owned companies, have claims covering 4,773 square kilometers (approximately 1,455 square miles). (In addition Norway has a claim covering the whole island of Bjørnøya.) Soviets are operating three of their claims, and the Norwegians operate at three principal locations. Besides those where coal is presently mined, Norwegian nationals hold numerous claims which are presently not being worked. Of the four Soviet claims there is no evidence of exploitation at one—Bohemanneset.

a. Norwegian Activities.

Mining. Coal mining operations are carried on at three places: (1) Longyearbyen—along the southern coast of Isfjorden, from the eastern shore of Adventfjorden and Adventaldalen southwest to the Russian concession at Grumantbyen; (2) Sveagruva—at the eastern end of Bellsund; and (3) Ny Alesund—on the southern coast of Kongsfjorden. The most extensive operations are at Longyearbyen, the largest community and the seat of the Government for Svalbard, where two mines belonging to the Store Norske Spitsbergen Kulkompani produced and sent 308,000 metric

tons of coal to Norway in 1949. A population of 800-900, of whom about 650 are miners, lives at Longyearbyen. Mining operations continue throughout the year, but the shipping season extends from about May to October. There is an unloading jetty at the end of Adventfjorden capable in good weather of taking ships up to 10,000 tons. Arriving ships go first up the fjord to the unloading jetty to discharge cargo and then return to Hotellneset at the mouth of the fjord, where there are two berthing quays to load coal. One quay can accommodate ships up to 10,000 tons, the other not over 2,000.

At the Sveagruva claim, also owned by the SNSK, where about 250 miners are employed, 98,937 tons of coal were mined in 1949. The coal at Sveagruva is of poor quality, and the ice conditions in Bellsund make the shipping season short. SNSK therefore plans to discontinue operations at Sveagruva and to concentrate on mining at Longyearbyen, where the annual production capacity of about 450,000 tons represents the maximum that Norway wishes to import from the company under normal conditions.

At Ny Alesund in Kongsfjorden, the two mines are operated by the government-controlled Kings Bay Coal Company and the normal annual output is 100,000 tons. A new mine is projected, with operations to commence in 1950. Ships of 3,000 tons can berth at the jetty in Kongsfjorden; annual shipments number about 40 during the May-October season.

The Norwegians are no longer operating their coal mining claim on Bear Island.

Meteorological and Communications. The Norwegians have a main W/T Station, Svalbard Radio, at Longyearbyen which handles all traffic between Spitsbergen and Norway through Harstad Radio. Internal W/T communications are maintained through Svalbard Radio and stations at Kapp Linne, Sveagruva, and Ny Alesund. A new radio station at Longyearbyen is planned.

The Norwegians maintain four meteorological stations in the Arctic: (1) Isfjorden area; (2) Hopen; (3) Bjørnøya; and (4) Jan Mayen. There are four radio and eleven light beacons in Spitsbergen waters.

Administration: Svalbard falls under the jurisdiction of the Polar, or Svalbard Institute, a Norwegian Government institution for the exploration, development, and administration of arctic areas. The Governor of Svalbard is Haakon Balstad, who resides at Longyearbyen. A mining inspector oversees the mining operations to insure conformance with Norwegian regulations; he also inspects the mines operated by non-Norwegians in Spitsbergen. The Svalbard Institute has inaugurated and maintained various special expeditions to Svalbard, mainly for topographical, geological, and zoological research and exploration. A hydrographic expedition has been charting Svalbard waters for navigational purposes, installing radio beacons and servicing extant beacons and lights. These operations are carried on in conjunction with the Norwegian Navy, and the Norwegian Air Force was asked to aid in making map surveys.

b. Soviet Activities.

In October 1946 the Soviet Union asked permission to reopen its coal mining concessions. In the same month the Soviets sent to Spitsbergen one corvette, three steamers, an icebreaker, and a seaplane. This expedition brought in specialists, work crews, and equipment.

The Soviet claims on Spitsbergen, operated by "Artik-Ugol," are located at: (1) Pyramiden—at the northern end and on the west coast of Billefjorden; (2) Barentsburg—on the southern shore of Isfjorden extending east from Grønfjorden along the coast to Colesbukta; (3) Grumantbyen—also on the southern shore of Isfjorden just east of Barentsburg claim, extending from Colesbukta and Colesdalen northeast to the Norwegian Longyearbyen claim; (the Barentsburg and Grumantbyen claims are surrounded by Norwegian claims, of which only Longyearbyen is exploited); and (4) Bohemanneset—on the northern coast of Isfjorden, a point at the mouth of Nordfjorden on its eastern shore.

Coal mining is in progress at Barentsburg, Grumantbyen, and Pyramiden. The Russians have apparently decided to concentrate their efforts and locate their largest settlement at Pyramiden, but they have also reconstructed the settlements at Grumantbyen and Barents-

burg (which were totally destroyed by the Germans) even though the original Barentsburg coal seam is said to be depleted.

In the summer of 1947 there were 620 Russians in Svalbard: 340 at Pyramiden, 160 at Barentsburg, and 120 at Grumantbyen. The population has increased since 1947, reconstruction work has been extensive, and there appears to be a constant flow of equipment to the areas in the summer months. It is estimated that 2500 Russians spent the winter of 1948-49 in Spitsbergen and that there were 2500 to 3000 working there in the winter of 1949-50. Coal shipments were resumed from the Russian mines in 1948; at the end of the 1948 navigation season the Soviet Mine Director reported that 70,000 tons had been mined. During July and August 1949 one ship of 3,000 to 4,000 tons passed through Billefjorden each week, arriving light and leaving full. To date the Soviets have not reported on production for the 1949 season.

The exact harbor and berthing facilities at the Russian concessions are unknown. At Heerodden, which could serve both the claims at Grumantbyen and Barentsburg, ships of 3,000 to 7,000 tons can be accommodated. It is thought that supplies for Pyramiden are transhipped to lighters at Barentsburg, and although there are apparently coal-loading facilities for 3,000-ton ships at Pyramiden, it is possible that lighters and barges are also used to load ships in Pyramiden harbor.

The Soviet Consul for Spitsbergen, a vice consul, mining director, and mining engineer are located at Pyramiden. A mining director is at Barentsburg.

The Soviets maintain a main radio station at Pyramiden for traffic with the USSR as well as for messages to and from Barentsburg and Grumantbyen. They are reported to have a meteorological station at Pyramiden. It is reliably established that the Soviets have constructed no airfields at any of their concessions. No extensive operation of seaplanes in the area has been observed.

The Norwegian inspector of mines visits the Soviet concessions to inspect their mining operations. Relations are cordial, but the Russians do not permit him to survey any activities or installations other than the mines

themselves, and they insist upon advance notice of his trips. It is not known whether the USSR is planning exploitation of any resources other than coal; reports of prospecting for oil are not confirmed. Although no indications of unusual activity on the part of the Soviets have been seen, it would be possible for them to conduct fairly considerable operations in areas not subject to observation. Air reconnaissance indicates extensive construction activities in the area of their concessions, but so far these seem to be connected with mining operations. Equipment and material could be stored in fairly large quantities, however, which would not be observed from the air, and of which the mine inspector would not be cognizant.

Meteorological installations are not in violation of the treaty, and it is likely that the Soviets have established weather reporting stations in the archipelago. It is not known whether the Soviets have any radar installations.

c. British Activities.

A British concern, the Scottish Spitsbergen Syndicate (SSS), has four claim areas on Spitsbergen. One of these is at the northern end of Prins Karls Forland and two others are at the northeast end of Isfjorden in Gipsdalen, extending inland north from the coast of Billefjorden to Nordenskiöldbreen (glacier). The fourth area is on Petuniabukta at the northern end of Billefjorden close to the Russian claim. Only the latter of the three claim areas on Isfjorden has an outlet to the fjord.

Prewar British attempts at exploitation of Spitsbergen's resources proved unprofitable, and the claims lapsed. In the summer of 1948, however, an expedition directed by the former British naval attache to Norway and sponsored by the SSS visited the island to begin proceedings for their re-establishment. New British applications for claims in the Billefjorden-Gipsdalen area and Prins Karls Forland were finally put through in 1949. Meanwhile, a Norwegian Company, Jacob Kjøde, A/S, from Bergen, had in 1947 finalized claims on the northeastern coast of Templefjorden, extending all the way along the northern coast of Sassenfjorden and the full length of Billefjorden on its eastern shore up

to Ebbadalen in Petuniabukta at an average depth of about one mile. The British SSS claims previously had included this area, but its new claims have water frontage only at the head of Petuniabukta.

In the summer of 1949 a geological expedition from Cambridge University set up headquarters at Brucebyen and has since been exploring geological features of the area. It is doing some work toward location of additional coal fields, and on the geological formations in connection with possible airport construction and harbor facilities. There is no evidence to date that the SSS has commenced construction at Brucebyen-Gipsdal.

The Scottish Spitsbergen Syndicate venture, in re-attempting exploitation of Spitsbergen, is motivated not only by possible economic advantage, but by British interest in maintaining a foothold in Spitsbergen to observe Soviet activities in the area and to deter possible Soviet violations of the treaty. The company's participants feel that the mineral rights provide a cover for useful work in relation to intelligence activities and to the strategic utilization of the area; but the SSS has indicated that it is having difficulty in interesting capital. Whereas expeditions have concluded that should coal deposits prove to include quantities suitable for coking, the commercial prospects would be fair, the expense of the initial outlay apparently is discouraging. A representative of the SSS, who was instrumental in getting the Syndicate to re-establish its claims, has attempted to determine the degree of interest from a strategic and intelligence standpoint which the British and US Governments have in retention of lands in Svalbard.

The Soviet Union is reported to have shown interest in acquiring claims in the area since leased by SSS in 1948. If the British company fails to exploit its claims, they will lapse. The Norwegians were pleased, therefore, to have the British renew the lease, for they did not wish the Soviets to acquire claims along Billefjorden, opposite the Soviet claim at Pyramiden, thus further isolating the Soviet operations in Svalbard. Norway cannot legally deny the Soviets a claim in this area if British claims lapse. Likewise it is probable that

Jacob Kjøde's application for claims on the coast was welcomed for the same reason, since Norwegian authorities were not then certain of Britain's desire to renew activities.

The claims in this area, both Mr. Kjøde's and those of the SSS, are secure for at least four years before the requirement of man-hours of development work becomes operative. Actually another five years, leeway is then given. However, the SSS may not have sufficient practical interest to pay the annual fees on its present area.

7. Probable Future Developments.

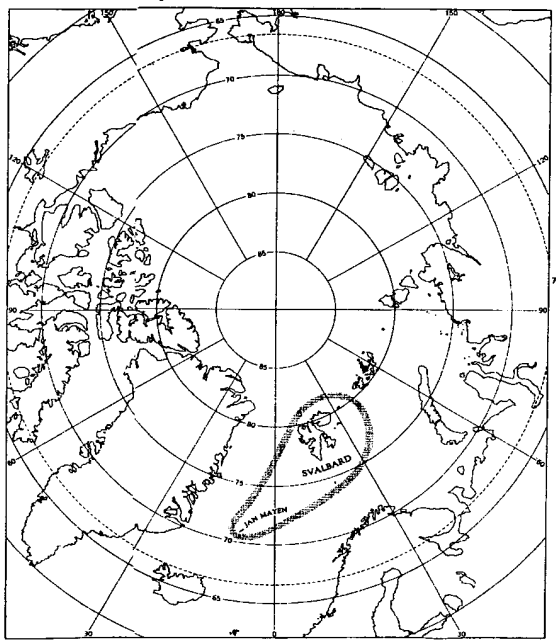
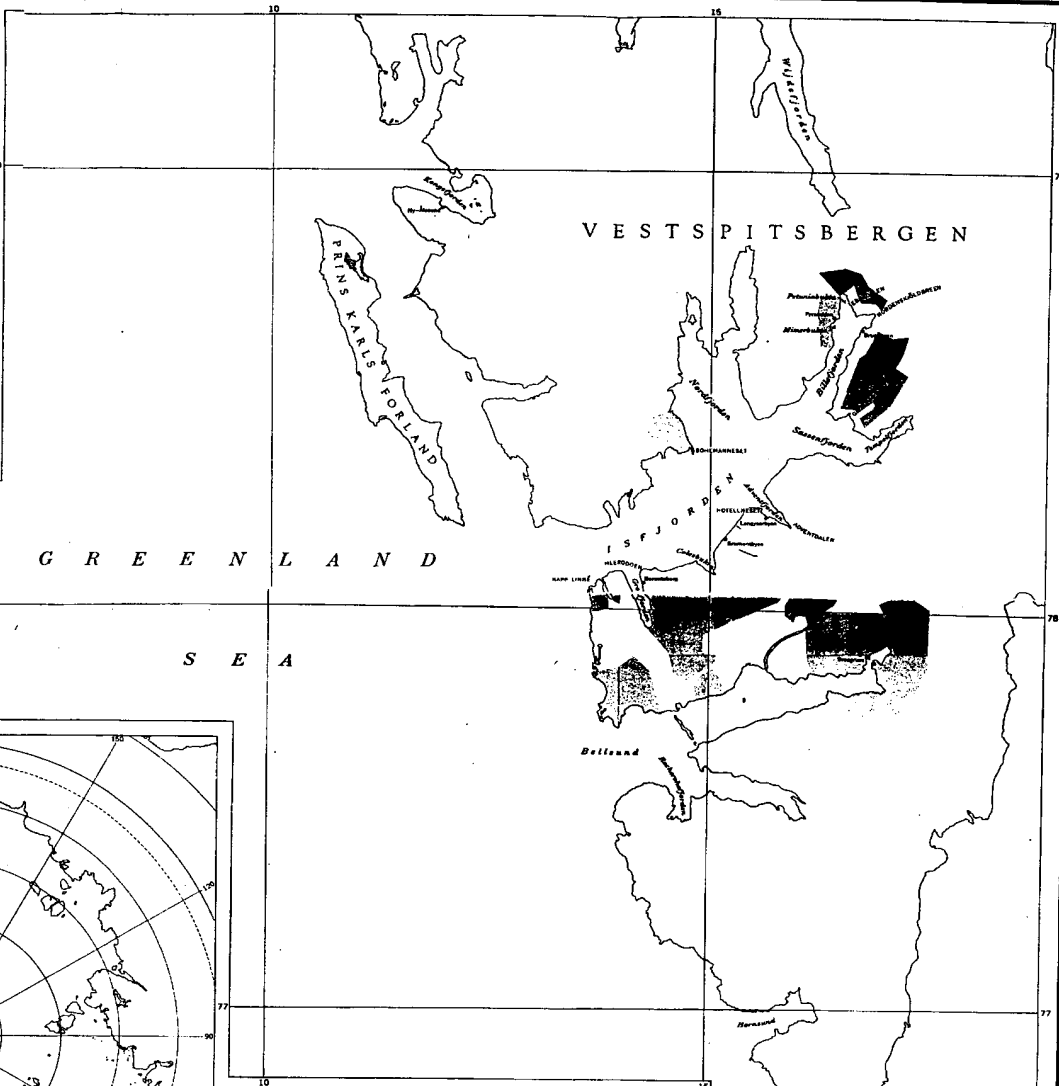
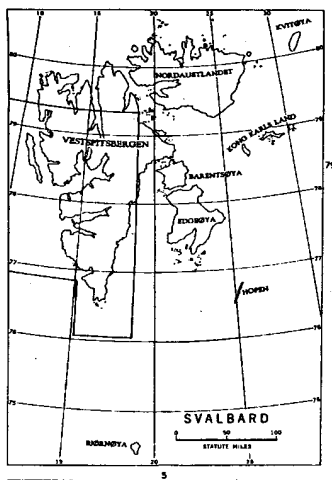
Several factors indicate continuing Soviet exploitation of the resources in their claims. Even though maximum possible production of coal will not make a significant contribution to the Soviet economy, coal mining affords an incontestable basis for the presence of Soviet personnel. Development of their claims, including construction and related activities, can all be justified as essential to mining operations. Communications facilities, similarly justified, serve the additional purpose of transmitting weather data which are useful in meteorological studies and in weather forecasts for the European continent. Demonstrated Soviet interest in the strategic potential of the archipelago makes it unlikely that the USSR will abandon its present convenient observation post from which it can keep a watchful eye upon the activities of other nationals in Spitsbergen. Also, since the archipelago lies on the route from the Atlantic to the Barents Sea, it is a substantial factor in influencing Soviet

plans for future development of the ports of Murmansk, Archangel, and Petsamo. The presence of hostile forces on Svalbard could restrict, if not deny, the egress of Soviet shipping from the Barents Sea into the Atlantic and conversely, Soviet bases there would restrict the movement of hostile vessels.




Norwegian exploitation of Spitsbergen's coal resources will continue at about the present level. Domestic consumption of Spitsbergen coal appears to have leveled off, and an increase would require processing to permit its efficient use in a greater variety of coal burning installations. An attempt is being made to extend the shipping period by providing additional icebreaker service, but the maximum possible extension will not greatly increase current totals.

British exploitation of Spitsbergen solely for economic purposes appears improbable. The British claims contain extensive gypsum deposits, but the representatives of the Scottish Spitsbergen Syndicate have been reluctant to resume operations. According to latest available information, attempts to interest the government of the US or the UK in subsidizing those operations as a means of insuring continuing access to the area have been unsuccessful. But Norwegian officials have assisted British renewal of expiring prewar claims and probably will encourage future operations.

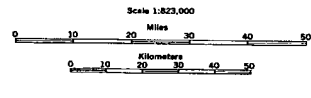
As a weather observation post Spitsbergen will continue to be utilized by the Norwegians and almost certainly by the Russians.



**SPITSBERGEN
RECOGNIZED CLAIMS**

-  RUSSIAN AREA
-  BRITISH AREA
-  NORWEGIAN AREA

BASE: SPITSBERGEN 1:423,000. Reproduced from BRITISH ADMIRALTY CHART No. 2751, 1936, by Geographical Section, General Staff (GSGS 4237) and Army Map Service (AMS 8311)



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