



MINISTÈRE
DE L'EUROPE
ET DES AFFAIRES
ÉTRANGÈRES

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*



Archives diplomatiques

L'ANTARCTIQUE, UN ENJEU INTERNATIONAL

Dossier pédagogique

Présentation

Niveau concerné

- Classes de terminale générale.
- Enseignement en discipline non linguistique (DNL) : anglais et espagnol.

Objectifs disciplinaires

- Géographie, tronc commun. Mers et océans, entre appropriation, protection et liberté de circulation.
- Spécialité HGGSP. Thème 1 : conquêtes, affirmations de puissance et rivalités. Jalon 2 : vers une nouvelle gouvernance mondiale des océans.

Organisation du dossier

- Le dossier aborde les enjeux du continent antarctique à travers la question des îles Shetland du Sud et des zones économiques exclusives (ZEE) entre 1955 et 2007, dans le cadre de la négociation du traité sur l'Antarctique, signé le 1^{er} décembre 1959.
- Problématique possible : comment les négociations du traité sur l'Antarctique en 1959 ont-elles gelé les revendications territoriales jusqu'à aujourd'hui ?
- Notions : multilatéralisme, ZEE, territoire, droit international, revendications territoriales et territorialisation des mers.
- Deux parties : séquence DNL anglais ; documents pour une séquence DNL espagnol.

Sources

- Ambassade de France en Argentine, 132PO/10.
- Ambassade de France au Chili, 616PO/126.
- Ambassade de France en Grande-Bretagne, 378PO/972.
- *The Guardian*.

Ce dossier peut être utilisé en classe ou lors d'une séance aux Archives diplomatiques. Des activités pédagogiques basées sur ce corpus de documents peuvent être proposées par le service éducatif.

Dossier conçu en 2022 par le service éducatif du Centre des Archives diplomatiques de Nantes (Caroline Cazaban-Mazerolles, Thomas Doublier, Éric Lechevallier, Frédéric Leroux).

POUR ALLER PLUS LOIN

→ Secrétariat du Traité sur l'Antarctique (www.ats.aq)

1. Les demandes britanniques

Séquence DNL anglais.

Documents

Doc. a. 17 octobre 2007. « Britain to claim more than 1m sq km of Antarctica », *The Guardian*.

Doc. b. 1968. Carte argentine de l'Antarctique.

Doc. c. 4 mai 1955. Carte britannique des dépendances des îles Falkland (annexe à la requête déposée par le Royaume-Uni contre le Chili à la Cour internationale de justice).

Doc. d. 4 mai 1955. Requête déposée par le Royaume-Uni contre le Chili à la Cour internationale de justice.

Doc. e. 22 février 1958. Extrait du *Guardian*.

Doc. f. 10 juillet 1961. Première réunion consultative du traité de l'Antarctique, discours du chef-adjoint de la délégation argentine.

Sources : archives des ambassades de France en Argentine (132PO/5/10 et 616PO/2/126), au Chili (378PO/6/972) et en Grande-Bretagne (378PO/6/972).

Activités proposées

1- British claim on Antarctica

Why is the United Kingdom claiming sovereign rights over a part of the seabed of Antarctica? Why could this claim anger neighbouring South American countries? (doc. a)

Compare maps of the same region from 2 different sources. (doc. b & c)

2- Researches on your own

In order to prepare an oral presentation, list all official agreements or protocols referred to in the article, in chronological order. Specify their goals and achievements.

3- Study of archives documents

Prepare an official speech at the UN in 2007 to defend the British claim using the informations in all the documents.

Doc. a. *The Guardian*, October 17, 2007

Britain to claim more than 1m sq km of Antarctica

Move would extend UK oil, gas and mineral rights

By Owen Bowcott

<https://www.theguardian.com/news/2007/oct/17/antarctica.sciencenews>

The United Kingdom is planning to claim sovereign rights over a vast area of the remote seabed off Antarctica, the Guardian has learned. The submission to the United Nations covers more than 1m sq km (386,000 sq miles) of seabed, and is likely to signal a quickening of the race for territory around the south pole in the world's least explored continent.

The claim would be in defiance of the spirit of the 1959 Antarctic treaty, to which the UK is a signatory. It specifically states that no new claims shall be asserted on the continent. The treaty was drawn up to prevent territorial disputes.

The Foreign Office, however, has told the Guardian that data is being gathered and processed for a submission to the UN which could extend British oil, gas and mineral exploitation rights up to 350 miles offshore into the Southern Ocean. Much of the seabed there is at such a depth that extraction of gas, oil or minerals is not yet technically feasible, but the claim may still anger neighbouring South American countries who believe they have more entitlement to the potentially valuable territory. The Antarctic submission reflects the UK's efforts to secure resources for the future as oil and natural gas reserves dwindle over the coming decades.

Last month the Guardian revealed the UK is working on three other sub-sea claims in the Atlantic: around South Georgia and the Falkland Islands, surrounding Ascension Island and in the Hatton/Rockall basin, west of Scotland. Britain has already lodged a joint claim at the UN - with France, Ireland and Spain - for a large area of seabed in the Bay of Biscay. The Foreign Office confirmed yesterday that the UK was working to extend sovereign territory into new areas. "There are five claims in total that the UK is hoping to put forward," a statement said. "They are in the Bay of Biscay, around Ascension, off the British Antarctic Territory, around the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and in the Hatton/Rockall basin.

"We believe these five meet the geological conditions required. The claims are based on article 76 of the UN convention of the law of the sea."

Karen Sack, head of oceans for Greenpeace International, said little was known about the environmental impact on marine life of drilling and exploration at great depths. "What we don't know is what kind of impact these [prospecting] activities are having right now. We have more maps of the moon than we do of the deep sea. Whenever there's deep-sea fishing there's always new species identified. We would hope [states] would leave the [Antarctic] wilderness as it is."

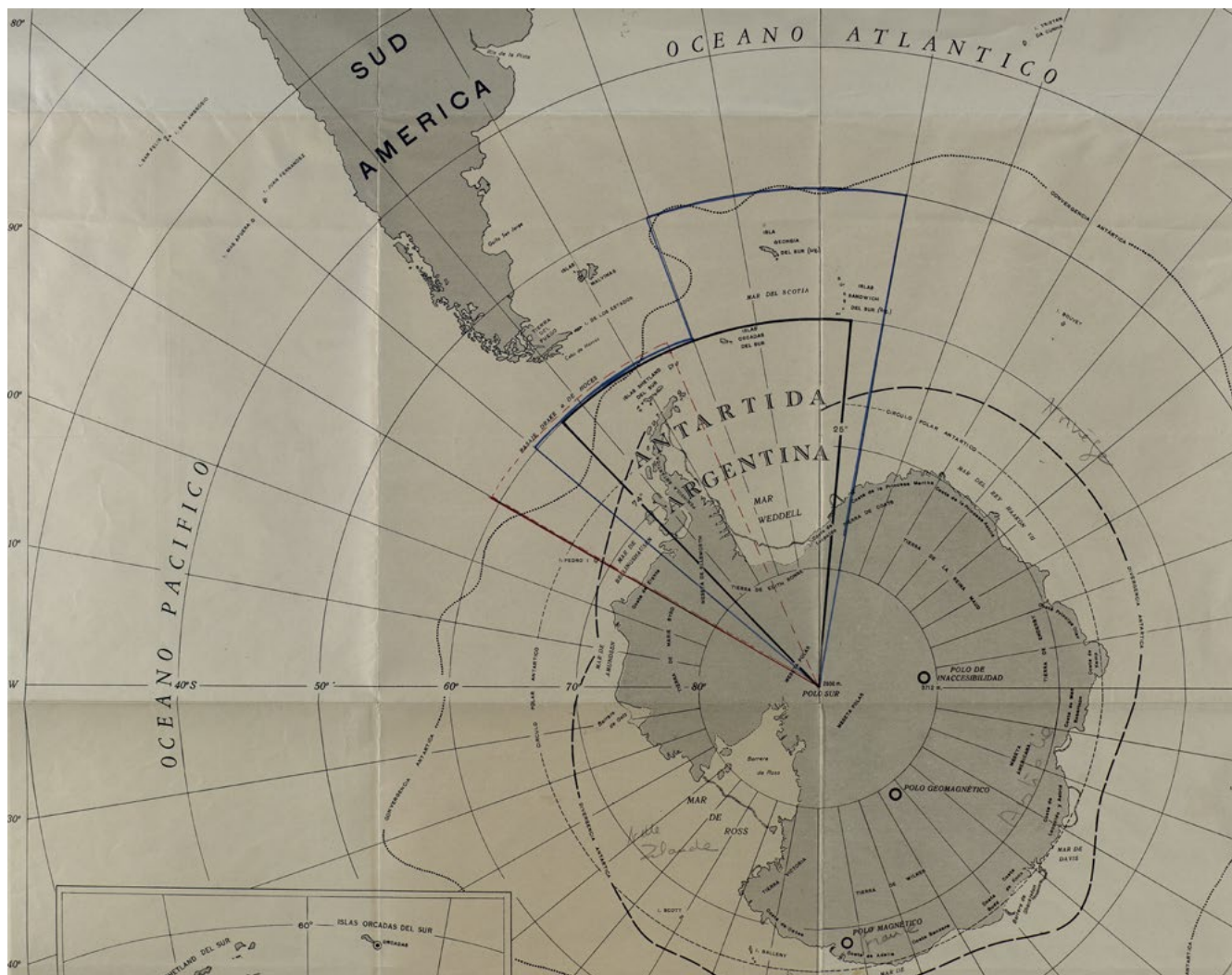
The British Antarctic Territory, first claimed in 1908, forms a triangular wedge, with its apex at the south pole. It covers 666,000 sq miles and has two permanently-manned scientific stations. It is due to celebrate its centenary next year by issuing its first ever legal tender coin.

A British submersible recently dived to depths of more than two miles in the waters around the edge of the continental shelf. The seas are swarming with krill, shrimp-like crustaceans, brittle stars - which are similar to starfish - and sea cucumbers.

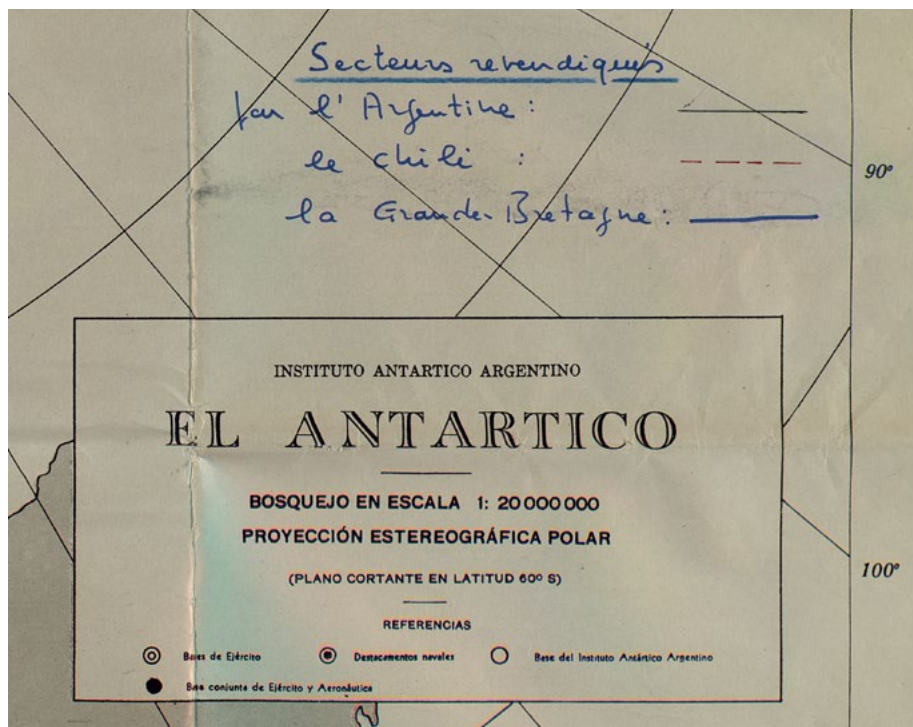
International interest in exploiting the new frontier on the oceans' floors comes as global warming is opening up previously frozen seas at the icecaps and the world's major economies are competing for fresh energy sources. During the summer Russia was subject to criticism for making claims beneath the Arctic Ocean, while France registered a claim to thousands of square miles around New Caledonia, in the Pacific.

The UK claim on Antarctica will be its most controversial because it depends on proximity to the British Antarctic Territory which overlaps rival land claims by Chile and Argentina. The environmental protocol to the Antarctic treaty, agreed in 1991, currently prohibits all mineral related activity, other than for scientific research.[...]

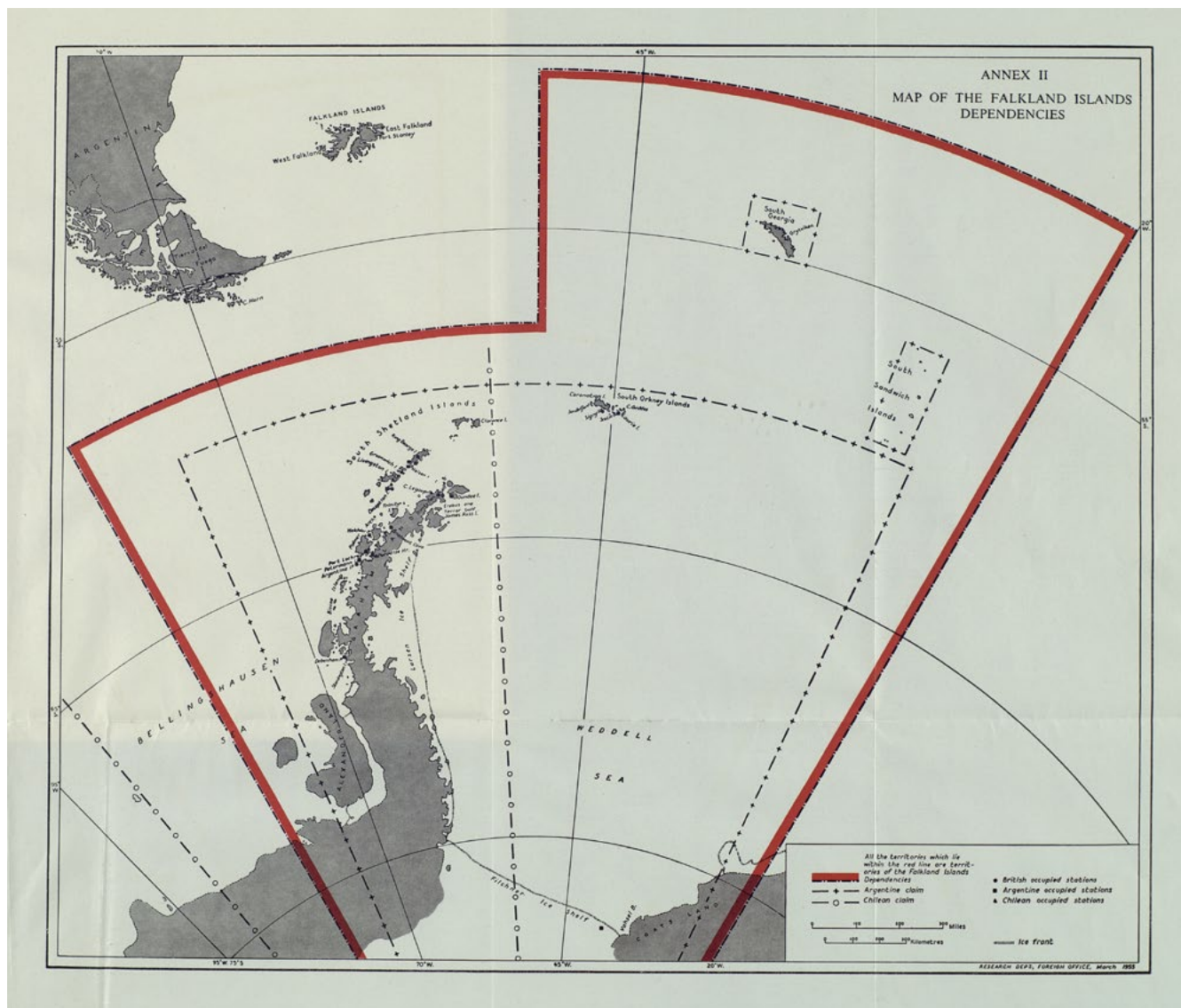
Doc. b. Argentine map of Antarctica, 1968



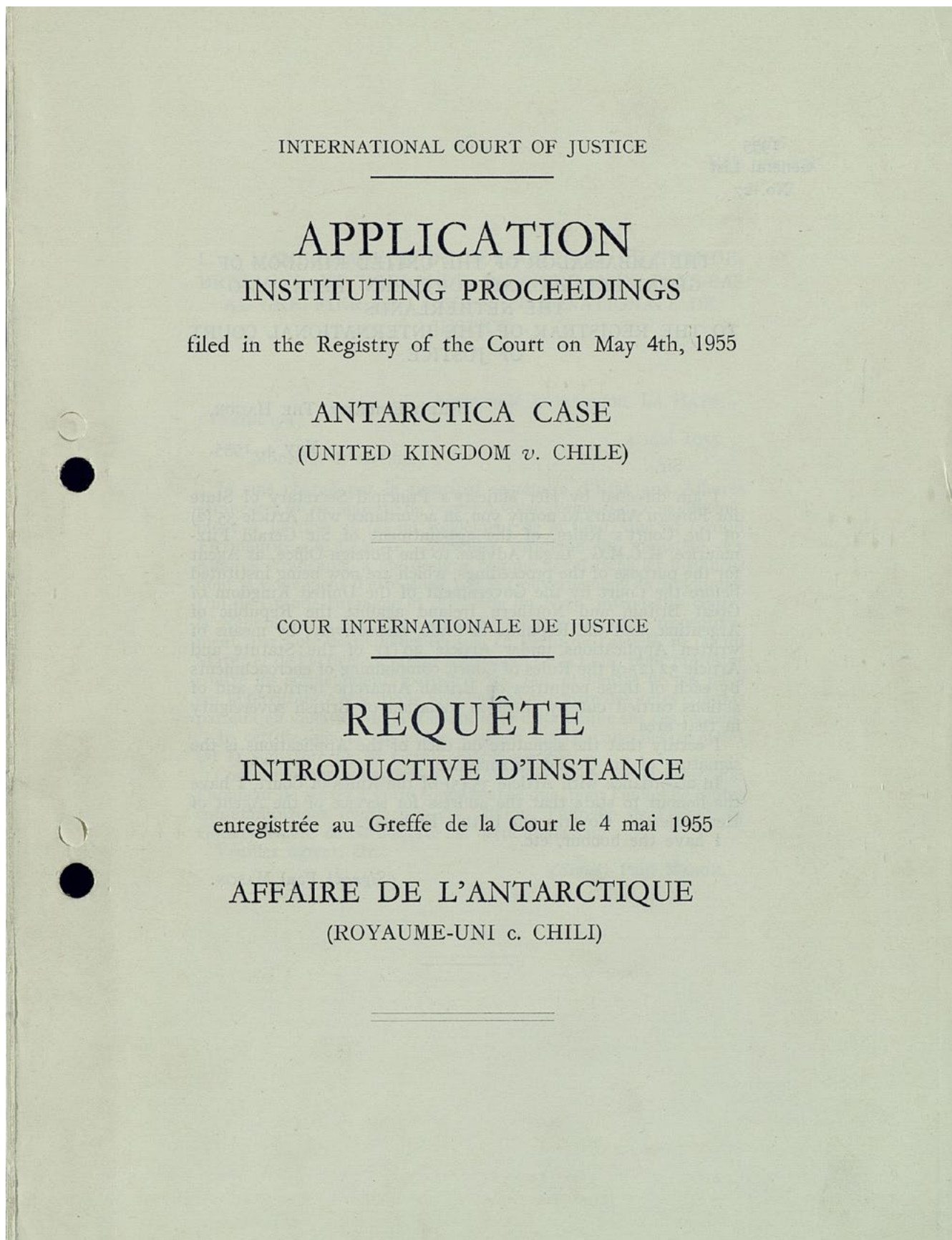
Doc. b. Argentine map of Antarctica, 1968



Doc. c. British map of the Falkland Islands dependencies Falkland (annexe to the British proceedings submitted to the International Court of Justice, May 4, 1955)



Doc. d. British proceedings submitted to the International Court of Justice, May 4, 1955



Doc. d. British proceedings submitted to the International Court of Justice, May 4, 1955

8. The *South Shetland Islands* were discovered by the English sea captain William Smith on February 18, 1819. Revisiting the islands in October of the same year, he landed, planted the British flag and formally took possession of the group in the name of King George III, calling it New South Britain—(this was afterwards changed to South Shetlands, named after the Shetland Islands, north of Scotland). A few months later, Edward Bransfield, R.N., accompanied by William Smith, proceeded again to the islands and made a survey of the whole group. On January 16, 1820, he landed on the largest island (King George Island) in the centre of the group and took possession formally in the name of King George IV. After a voyage south-westwards between the South Shetlands and Graham Land, to which further reference is made in paragraph 10 below, he returned to the South Shetland Islands. On February 4 he landed on the most easterly island of the group, taking possession formally in the King's name and calling the island Clarence Island in honour of the Duke of Clarence, the brother of the King.

Announcement of Chile's Pretensions to the South Shetlands and Graham Land on November 6, 1940

26. The Chilean Government, as related in paragraph 24 (3) above, made no protests or reservations in respect of the issue of the British Letters Patent of 1908, or those of 1917, or in respect of the frequent and public display of State authority by Great Britain in and in regard to the Dependencies. For more than 30 years after the issue of the Letters Patent of 1908, no interest was shown by the Chilean Government in the South Shetlands or Graham Land. The only Chilean interest in those territories during this period was that of the whaling company, the Sociedad Ballenera de Magallanes which, as mentioned in paragraph 24 (3) above, took out British whaling licences for the two territories between 1907 and 1914, and conducted their operations under British laws and regulations. Although one of the principal objects of the important international conferences for the regulation of whaling held between 1927 and 1939 was the preservation of the whale stocks in the seas surrounding the Dependencies, and especially in the Bransfield Strait between the South Shetlands and Graham Land, Chile neither took any part in those conferences nor acceded to the resulting conventions, which, if she had had sovereignty over these territories she might

be expected to have done. Nor did she voice any objection to the fact that the United Kingdom took a leading part in those conferences in its capacity as the State responsible for the regulation of whaling in the Dependencies, and especially in the South Shetlands and Graham Land. It was only after the outbreak of the second world war that the Chilean Government, by a decree of September 7, 1939, established a special commission to examine into Chile's interests in the Antarctic. Thirteen months later, the Chilean Government issued the Presidential Decree of November 6, 1940, the text of which is given in paragraph 3 of the present Application, and by this decree laid claim, *inter alia*, to the British territories of the South Shetlands and Graham Land.

Doc. e. *The Guardian*, February 22, 1958

[...] Internationalisation seems the only effective answer to the problem of regulating future activities in Antarctica. It was first proposed in 1939, and on more recent occasions a United Nations trusteeship has been suggested. In 1947 the United Kingdom proposed submitting her dispute with either Argentina or Chile to the International Court of Justice, but no reference to the court has been possible. The General Assembly of the United Nations could, by virtue of its powers, seek an advisory opinion from the court on this vexed problem. Since, however, the International Council of Scientific Unions is preparing to extend the I.Y.G (International Year of Geophysics) programme relating to the establishment of Antarctic bases the time is opportune for an international conference on the broader issue of state claims to the whole of Antarctica.[...]

The only basis to sovereignty claims rest upon discovery and occupation. As the United States Secretary of State Hughes declared in 1924 in a well-known statement :

« Discovery of lands unknown to civilisation even when coupled with a formal taking of possession does not support a valid claim of sovereignty unless the discovery is followed by an actual settlement of the discovered country... »

SPEECH BY DR. R. E. GUYER, DEPUTY LEADER OF THE ARGENTINE DELEGATION, AT THE OPENING SESSION OF THE MEETING, 10 JULY 1961

Mr. Chairman, Delegates,

On behalf of the Argentine Delegation I should like, first and foremost, to express my appreciation of the generous hospitality which the Australian Government has extended to us on this occasion of the First Consultative Meeting on the Antarctic Treaty.

The Antarctic Treaty, incidentally, brings out clearly the fact that we are neighbours at the South Pole. There are many affinities between Argentina and Australia. Both countries are characterized by their agricultural and pastoral resources, by the evolution of their industrial development, by their population, their climate, and their geographical situation in the Southern Hemisphere.

For years men from all parts of the world have been travelling to that region of eternal ice, inspired by a variety of motives, but the hostile environment has always stood as an insurmountable obstacle in the way of utilization of those vast areas for the benefit of mankind. Only a few countries—and Argentina, which since 1904, at the cost of great sacrifice, has carried out there an uninterrupted and continuous scientific programme, is one of them—had given any inkling of the importance which the Antarctic would in time acquire in the march of human progress. With modern scientific and technical advances, however, intense activity is being carried out by the countries gathered here and this has made it more and more vitally necessary to reach an understanding permitting beneficial and widespread co-operation at the international level in an area that is ceasing to be shrouded in mystery, and in an age when man is overcoming one by one the physical obstacles which until recently have stood in the way of his conquest of the earth.

Much negotiation has gone into the formulation of this Treaty, but it has been rewarding. From our point of view four objectives: *inter alia*, have been attained to which we assign the greatest importance: the safeguarding of our rights, the prohibition of nuclear explosions, peaceful utilization and international scientific co-operation.

Because of its geological continuity, its geographical proximity, and the efforts exerted there over many years, the Argentine Antarctic is a part of our national territory. The specific clauses of the Treaty which safeguard our rights will enable us, in reaffirming them, to contribute in a positive manner to the common task we have all undertaken, namely, to carry out with maximum efficiency the activities connected with scientific research.

As one of the countries adjacent to Antarctica we attended the Washington Conference on Antarctica in 1959 with one overriding concern. The possibility of this territory being used as a testing ground for nuclear explosions implied a serious threat to the health of our people. The removal of this threat was imperative, and with the agreement on the prohibition of nuclear explosions and the disposal of radioactive waste material the conclusion of the Treaty became feasible. The implementation of the relevant Article will give back to the inhabitants of the areas adjacent to Antarctica the peace of mind which would otherwise have been perpetually disturbed.

The peaceful use of Antarctica will enable it to be kept isolated from international tensions, present and future, should man be unable to find a suitable formula by which he can live in peace in a world created by Providence for living in peace and not at war.

One of the main aims of the Treaty and the basic aim of this First Consultative Meeting is, primarily, international scientific co-operation and its organization.

The world-wide interchange of scientific knowledge today is a necessity imposed by progress. Widespread acquaintance with the results of research will without doubt contribute to improving and speeding up the development of science. For the same reason the knowledge which this research brings to light should be interchanged in an informative, reliable and effective manner.

Doc. f. Report of First Consultative Meeting for the Antarctic Treaty. Canberra, July 10-24, 1961

The provisions of the Treaty constitute a guarantee in this respect and indicate to us the paths we must follow. The proposed agenda for this First Consultative Meeting takes these aspects of international scientific co-operation into consideration, and the conclusions we reach in the course of our deliberations will be the structural base for the common task in which we are engaged.

At the same time, we shall have to consider certain subjects of vital importance which, although they do not refer to science as such, make scientific activity possible; for example, logistic support. In this field, too, close co-operation is indispensable, for any technical error could result in irreparable loss of human life.

Cordiality and harmony have been outstanding characteristics of scientific work in Antarctica. These same characteristics, despite differences in views, were again evident in the lengthy diplomatic negotiations which culminated in the Antarctic Treaty of 1959 and continued in evidence during the interim group meetings held subsequently in Washington.

If this spirit continues to pervade our discussions, we believe that in addition to the specific gains we obtain we shall set an example for other negotiations, other spheres and other aims, and demonstrate that understanding is possible in international problems, however difficult, so long as they are approached with a sincere will to serve the higher interests of mankind.

2. Le point de vue chilien

Documents pour une séquence DNL en espagnol.

Documents

Articles du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio* (616PO/2/126)

Doc. a. 18 mars 1958

À New Delhi, l'ambassade du Chili affirme qu'elle ne peut accepter aucune proposition de « droit international » sur l'Antarctique et réaffirme la souveraineté chilienne sur certaines de ces régions. La déclaration coïncide avec la visite officielle du Premier ministre et du ministre des Affaires étrangères de Nouvelle-Zélande, qui déclarait un mois auparavant qu'il était favorable à un contrôle international de l'Antarctique par l'ONU. Le Chili déclare également que le gouvernement indien a renoncé à présenter la question de l'Antarctique aux Nations unies, par signe de bonne volonté.

Doc. b. 20 mars 1958

L'ambassade du Chili fait remarquer que Harold MacMillan, Premier ministre britannique, a aussi suggéré un contrôle international de l'Antarctique, ce qui est inacceptable pour le Chili. Le secteur antarctique situé entre le 53° et le 90° degrés de longitude ouest appartient au Chili, qui ne permet pas d'interférence dans sa juridiction.

Doc. c. 24 avril 1958

La possibilité que le Chili participe à un programme de coopération internationale sur les territoires antarctiques est exposée au gouvernement, sur proposition des États-Unis, dans le même esprit que l'organisation de l'Année géophysique internationale qui se termine le 31 décembre. Onze pays sont invités qui ont des activités en Antarctique. Le gouvernement chilien est d'accord avec la proposition.

Doc. d. 17 avril 1960

Résumé en espagnol de la session parlementaire et analyse du journaliste chilien : "nuestros derechos de soberanía" (nos droits de souveraineté).

Doc. e. 30 décembre 1961

Depuis 1949, la Grande-Bretagne, le Chili et l'Argentine agissent de concert pour éviter les malentendus sur l'Antarctique et ne pas envoyer de bateaux de guerre au Sud du 60° parallèle, sauf les mouvements habituels. Ces gouvernements considèrent qu'il n'y a plus de déclaration à ce sujet à faire en raison du traité sur l'Antarctique, qui garantit l'utilisation purement scientifique du continent.

Doc. f. 10 septembre 1962

M. Sotomayor, ministre chilien des Relations extérieures, répond aux journalistes à propos de la déclaration de la Grande-Bretagne sur les territoires chiliens en Antarctique : il doit être clair que la Grande-Bretagne émet des réserves sur les droits chiliens, mais que le traité doit s'appliquer.

Sources : archives de l'ambassade de France au Chili.

- Doc. a. Article du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio*, le 18 mars 1958
- Doc. b. Article du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio*, le 20 mars 1958
- Doc. c. Article du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio*, le 24 avril 1958

REPUBLICA DE CHILE
MINISTERIO DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
AU CHILI

Visita
recibe la 1 MAR. 1958
Cote 31.12

Firmé par
M. d'Amélie - M. Delgado
M. Pelletier - M. C...
Voluntarios

3.

9

La Dirección del Ceremonial y Protocolo saluda muy atentamente a los Señores Jefes de Misiones Diplomáticas y, por encargo del Señor Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores tiene el honor de invitarlos, en compañía de miembros de su Embajada, a una exhibición privada de documental cinematográfico sobre las actividades del Año Geofísico Internacional en el territorio que se efectuará en el Teatro Metro próximo a las 11.30 horas.

La Dirección de Ceremonial y Protocolo tiene el honor de comunicar a los señores Jefes de Misiones Diplomáticas que, la audiencia diplomática de este día es de carácter de importancia.

La Dirección de Ceremonial y Protocolo aprovecha esta oportunidad para recomendar a los señores Jefes de Misiones Diplomáticas las señas de distinción y distinguida consideración.

Santiago,

El Mercurio 18-3-58

Exclusivos del Exter

Control Internacional de la Zona Antártida Es Inaceptable Para el Gobierno de Chile

La Embajada chilena en Nueva Delhi entregó hoy una declaración en tal sentido, reafirmando al mismo tiempo la soberanía de nuestro país en ciertas regiones de ese Continente

NUEVA DELHI, 18 (martes).— (Reuter).— La Embajada de Chile en esta capital ha entregado una declaración que afirma que el Gobierno de Chile no puede aceptar ninguna proposición para el control internacional de la Antártida, y que reafirma la soberanía chilena sobre ciertas regiones de ese continente.

La declaración fué emitida de modo que coincidiera con la llegada a Nueva Delhi, en visita oficial, del Primer Ministro y Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores de Nueva Zelanda, Walter Nash. Nash dijo el mes pasado que Nueva Zelanda está dispuesta a plantear la cuestión del control internacional de la Antártida en las Naciones Unidas. El Premier neozelandés propuso una administración internacional para la Antártida, ateniéndose al mismo espíritu que ha permitido a los hombres de ciencias de diferentes países cooperar durante el desarrollo del actual Año Geofísico Internacional.

DECLARACION CHILENA

La declaración chilena dice que el Gobierno de este país "no puede aceptar ninguna proposición para la internacionalización de parte alguna de su territorio nacional ubicado en la Antártida, en América o en cualesquiera de sus posesiones insulares del Pacífico Sur".

La declaración de la Embajada también dice que el Gobierno de India ha retirado la presentación del caso antártico a las Naciones Unidas "en vista de las muy estrechas y cordiales relaciones con Chile y con todos los países latinoamericanos".

Agrega que el Gobierno de India ha comunicado oficialmente al Gobierno chileno que no tiene intención alguna de poner en duda los derechos chilenos en la Antártida.

Participación de Chile en una Conferencia Antártica

Reunión efectuada en el Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores, con asistencia de comisiones parlamentarias

La posibilidad de que Chile participe en un programa de cooperación internacional en territorio antártico, fué expuesta por el Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores, a los miembros de las Comisiones de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado y la Cámara de Diputados. Al respecto, la Cancillería, entregó la siguiente información oficial:

"El Gobierno de Estados Unidos de Norteamérica, por intermedio de su Embajada en Santiago, ha consultado al nuestro sobre la posibilidad que habría para realizar un programa de cooperación internacional en la Antártida, dentro del mismo espíritu y orientación del Año Geofísico Internacional que finaliza el 31 de diciembre próximo.

Se ha invitado a participar en la realización de este programa a los once países que han desarrollado actividades antárticas, en cumplimiento del plan establecido para dicho importante evento internacional.

Con este motivo, el Ministro de Relaciones Exteriores se reunió al mediodía de hoy en el salón rojo de la Cancillería, con los miembros de las Comisiones de Relaciones Exteriores del Senado y de la Cámara de Diputados, a fin de darles a conocer la consulta formulada por el Gobierno de Estados Unidos de Norteamérica.

Los miembros de ambas comisiones estuvieron de acuerdo en la participación de Chile en el programa propuesto.

Asistieron a la reunión, convocada por el Ministro, señor don Alberto Sepúlveda C., los senadores y diputados miembros de las Comisiones de Relaciones Exteriores de ambas ramas del Parlamento, el Subsecretario de Relaciones Exteriores, Sr. Alvaro Drogue; Director Político, Sr. Hernán Cuevas, y el jefe del Departamento de Límites, Sr. Guillermo Lagos".

24 abril 1958

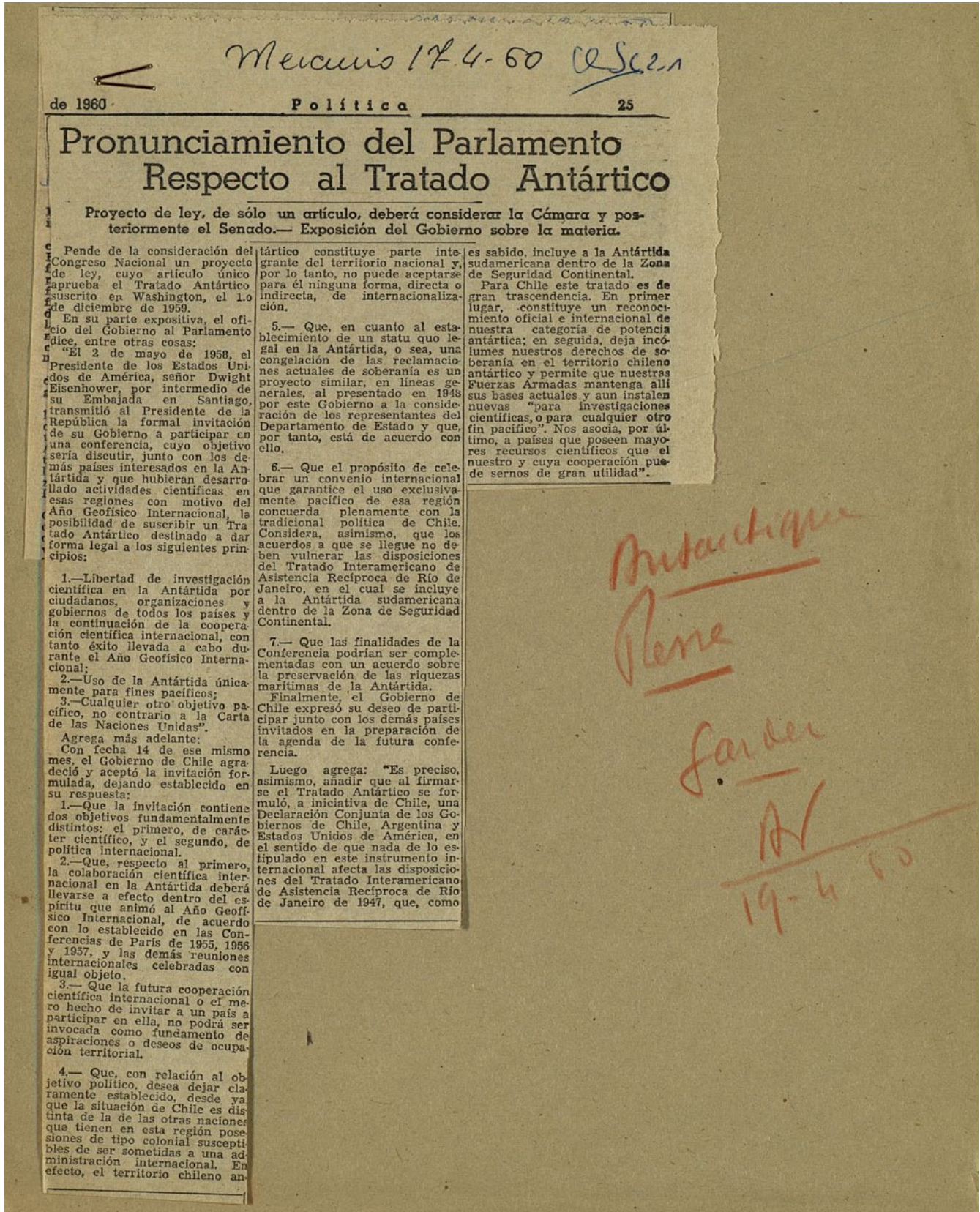
Chile Rechazó Nuevamente el Control Internacional de su Zona Antártica

NUEVA DELHI, 20. (AP).—La Embajada de Chile reafirmó la reclamación chilena a parte del territorio antártico, durante la visita del Primer Ministro de Nueva Zelanda, Walter Nash, quien partió hoy de esta ciudad.

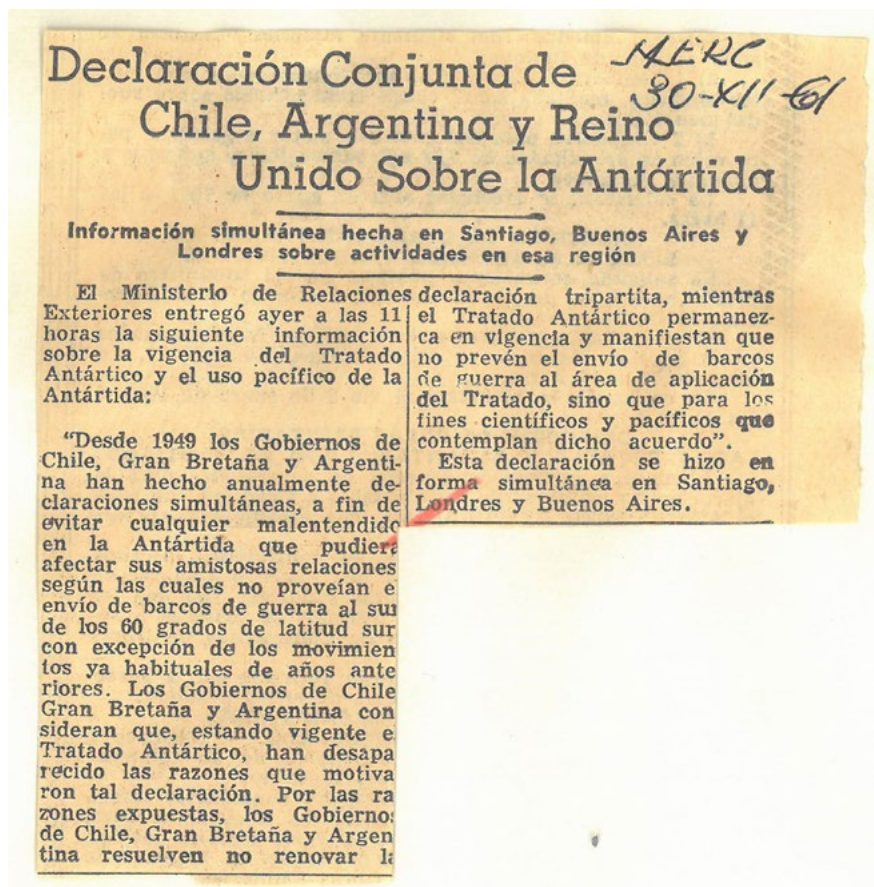
Nash sugirió que la Antártida fuera internacionalizada, al discutir este asunto con el Primer Ministro Jawaharlal Nehru, en sus dos días de visita oficial a la India.

Un portavoz del Gobierno declaró que no se había llegado a una conclusión sobre este tema.

La Embajada chilena emitió una declaración observando que el Primer Ministro británico, Harold MacMillan, había sugerido también el control internacional de la Antártida. "Esto es inaceptable para Chile", dice la declaración. Añade que el sector antártico situado entre los 53 y los 90 grados de longitud oeste pertenece a Chile y que este país no permite interferencia en su jurisdicción.



Doc. e. Article du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio*, le 30 décembre 1961



Doc. f. Article du quotidien chilien *El Mercurio*, le 10 septembre 1962

