

Map Room Files.

91

BOX 162

6. A4-3 AIR BASE - CLIPPERTON ISLAND.

AH-3/Clipperton

~~TOP SECRET~~

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19 April 1945

File: SWNCC 106/1

MEMORANDUM FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT

The suggestion contained in the memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air, enclosed with SWNCC 106 of 13 April 1945, namely, that the Secretary of State initiate action to acquire ownership of Clipperton Island for the United States as part payment for French Lend-Lease obligations, has been given careful consideration and suggests the following observations:

1. On numerous occasions, the United States Government has publicly taken the position that it recognizes the sovereign jurisdiction of the people of France not only over the territory of France but also over French possessions overseas, and has expressed the hope that it will see the reestablishment of the integrity of French territory.
2. In his speech of 12 August 1944 at Seattle, President Roosevelt referred to the islands in the Pacific in the possession of the British and French. He said: "We have no desire to ask for any possessions of the United Nations. But the United Nations who are working so well with us in the winning of the war will, I am confident, be glad to join us in protection against aggression and in machinery to prevent aggressions. With them and with their help I am sure that we can agree completely so that Central and South America will be as safe against attack -- attack from the South Pacific -- as North America is going to be very soon from the North Pacific as well."
3. It is understood that the Joint Chiefs of Staff are at present engaged in studying the post-war needs of the United States, in so far as the acquisition of base rights are concerned.
4. The State Department has held the view that the question of acquiring bases on French territory should not be taken up piecemeal, but should be made the subject of a single approach to the French Government at an appropriate time. The Department has not felt that such time had arrived.
5. In view of the fact that Clipperton Island is normally uninhabited, it would appear that from the point of view of our military security, base rights obtained under a long lease would present substantially the same advantage as would be obtained by outright annexation.

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6. In view of the unusual sensitivity of the French Government and people, fostered by the collapse of 1940 and the four years of German occupation, with respect to questions affecting their sovereignty it is likely that any French Government would find it easier to lease base rights to the United States than to relinquish sovereignty over any French territory.

7. Although Mexico has officially accepted the international award of 1931 under which French claims to Clipperton Island were confirmed, there has been a disposition in certain Mexican quarters to reopen the question. It is highly probable that annexation of the Island by the United States would have undesirable ramifications not only in connection with our relations with Mexico but with all the American Republics. In any decision that is reached, this aspect of the matter should receive the most careful consideration.

8. In view of the considerations outlined briefly above, it is recommended by the State Department that decision in the matter be deferred, at least until such time as the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff regarding our post-war security needs in French territory are set forth in detail.

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4199

Carbon in- led "E.R.S. Jr. OK F.D.R." and turned to the Secretary of State, 3/16/45.

elb

TOP SECRET

A4-3/Clipperton

Adm. Post for file

File

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON
March 15, 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Clipperton Island

The Department telegraphed Mr. Caffery on February 3 the text of a note to present to the French Foreign Minister in reply to his communication on the subject of security measures taken by the United States Navy on Clipperton Island. Our note, the text of which is enclosed, was drafted in conformity with your telegram of January 28 and contained no commitment with respect to the eventual sovereignty of Clipperton Island-- a subject which you indicated you wished to discuss upon your return.

During your absence we also arranged through the United States Navy at the request of Admiral Fenard, Transportation for a French Officer, Lieutenant Louis Jampierre, to visit Clipperton Island. He returned about two weeks ago. While there are various indications that the French are still unhappy over this situation, we have thus far heard nothing further from them.

We have given further study to the question of the eventual sovereignty of Clipperton Island and I cannot urge too strongly that we handle the question of obtaining the right to establish a post-war military base on the Island solely with the French, and leave the Mexican Authorities out of the picture entirely.

As indicated in my memorandum to you of January 15, Mexico has not contested the French claim to Clipperton Island since the Island was awarded to France by the King of Italy on January 28, 1931. In this connection

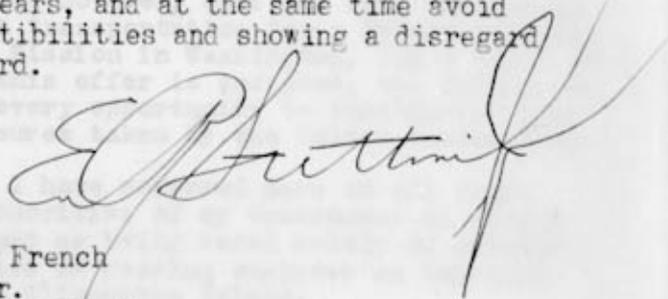
of Mexican Constitution.
3. Excerpts from Communication
of Minister for Foreign Affairs
to the Senate.

I am

I am enclosing two brief memoranda, one showing the changes made in Article 42 of the Mexican Constitution in order to exclude "La Pasion" (Clipperton Island) from the national territory of Mexico, and the other excerpts from a note from the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Senate on this subject. It is of interest to note that the legislative action taken was in large part due to the firm stand of the Minister for Foreign Affairs who urged acceptance of the Award on the ground that it involved the good faith of Mexico which had agreed in submitting the matter to arbitration to accept the decision without appeal. For us at this late date to take a different view would, in my opinion, show an unfortunate disregard of an international award. Furthermore, I feel that we should bear in mind that while the Mexican authorities have shown a cooperative attitude during the course of this war, in which they are a co-belligerent, it has not been possible for them for political reasons to go so far as even to discuss our having bases in Mexican territory.

From the purely practical side, it is my belief that we can successfully negotiate an agreement with the French for the post-war military base on Clipperton Island, recommended by the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, and that by restricting ourselves to dealing solely with the French we can obtain an agreement which will provide the necessary safety to the Panama Canal over a long period of years, and at the same time avoid offending French susceptibilities and showing a disregard of an international award.

Do you agree?



Enclosures:

1. Text of note to French Foreign Minister.
2. Amendments to Article 42 of Mexican Constitution.
3. Excerpts from Communication of Minister for Foreign Affairs to Mexican Senate.

Department of State

FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER TELEGRAPHED TO
DOR CAFFERY, FEBRUARY 3, 1945

OFFICE | EUR
DIVISION |

ENCLOSURE

TO

LETTER DRAFTED 3-9-45

ADDRESSED TO

THE PRESIDENT

GPO 16-33307-1

Instructions from my Government, I have referred to the note which you handed to me on January 22, 1945 on the subject of the measures taken by the United States Navy on Clipperton Island.

It is hoped that the following observations will correct any misunderstanding which may exist in the minds of the French authorities concerning the purpose of the measures taken by the United States Navy.

In 1944, an increase in the Japanese operations of the Western Sea Frontier suggested the necessity of establishing a weather reporting station on Clipperton Island. This is regarded as a purely military matter and was uninhabited, the necessary action was taken by the United States Navy without prior consultation with the French agency of my Government. Information concerning this matter was, however, conveyed in great confidence to the Chief of the French Naval Mission in Washington.

As a precaution, the United States Navy took the position that no one should visit Clipperton Island without obtaining the consent of the Commander, Western Sea Frontier. This order, which remains in effect, is necessary for reasons of military security and for the purpose of avoiding any incident which might arise through mistaken identity. In view of the military situation, the American Naval authorities are unwilling to have civilians approach or land on the island and it was for this reason that permission could not be granted for the visit of the vessel which was chartered by the French authorities in Mexico for a shark fishing expedition. The Chief of the French Naval Mission has been informed, however, that the Navy Department will be happy to furnish transportation for a French officer, designated by the Naval Mission in Washington, for a visit to Clipperton Island. If this offer is accepted, the French officer will be afforded every opportunity to familiarize himself fully with the measures taken by the United States Navy.

"The steps to which I have referred have at all times been regarded by the authorities of my Government as having an emergency character and as being based solely on military considerations. They have no bearing whatever on the question of sovereignty over Clipperton Island.

"It is hoped that the above statement will serve to place this entire question in its proper perspective."

TEXT OF NOTE TO FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER TELEGRAPHED TO
AMBASSADOR CAFFERY, FEBRUARY 3, 1945

"Pursuant to instructions from my Government, I have the honor to refer to the note which you handed to me on the afternoon of January 22, 1945 on the subject of the security measures taken by the United States Navy on Clipperton Island. It is hoped that the following observations will help to correct any misunderstanding which may have arisen in the minds of the French authorities concerning the scope and purpose of the measures taken by the American Naval authorities.

"In December 1944, an increase in the Japanese operations in the waters of the Western Sea Frontier suggested the desirability of establishing a weather reporting station and armed observation party on Clipperton Island. In as much as this was regarded as a purely military matter and since the island was uninhabited, the necessary action was taken by the United States Navy without prior consultation with any civilian agency of my Government. Information regarding the matter was, however, conveyed in great confidence by the Navy Department to the Chief of the French Naval Mission in Washington.

"As a natural precaution, the United States Navy took the position that no one should visit Clipperton Island without obtaining the consent of the Commander, Western Sea Frontier. This order, which remains in effect, is necessary for reasons of military security and for the purpose of avoiding any incident which might arise through mistaken identity. In view of the military situation, the American Naval authorities are unwilling to have civilians approach or land on the island and it was for this reason that permission could not be granted for the visit of the vessel which was chartered by the French authorities in Mexico for a shark fishing expedition. The Chief of the French Naval Mission has been informed, however, that the Navy Department will be happy to furnish transportation for a French officer, designated by the Naval Mission in Washington, for a visit to Clipperton Island. If this offer is accepted, the French officer will be afforded every opportunity to familiarize himself fully with the measures taken by the United States Navy.

"The steps to which I have referred have at all times been regarded by the authorities of my Government as having an emergency character and as being based solely on military considerations. They have no bearing whatever on the question of sovereignty over Clipperton Island.

"It is hoped that the above statement will serve to place this entire question in its proper perspective."

CHANGES MADE IN ARTICLE 42 OF THE MEXICAN CONSTITUTION

TITLE II, Section II, Art. 42 of the Constitution of Mexico of 1857 read as follows:

"Art. 42. The national territory comprises the integral parts of the Federation and the adjacent islands in both oceans."

In the Constitution of 1917 it was amended to read:

"Art. 42. The national territory comprises the integral parts of the Federation and the adjacent islands in both oceans. It likewise comprises the Island of Guadalupe, those of Revillagigedo, and that of 'La Pasión,' situated in the Pacific Ocean."

Following the award of the Island known as La Pasión, also known as Clipperton Island, to France by the King of Italy on January 28, 1931, the Constitution of 1917 was amended by a decree signed January 10, 1934, to read as follows:

"Art. 42. The national territory comprises the integral parts of the Federation and the adjacent islands in both oceans. It likewise comprises the Island of Guadalupe and the Islands of Revillagigedo, situated in the Pacific Ocean."

EXCERPTS FROM COMMUNICATION SENT BY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS TO MEXICAN SENATE

Dated October 14, 1932

"From the moment that the decision was received by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the latter believed it to be its duty to have it examined by persons who, because of their official character or knowledge of International Law, would render an opinion upon which the Government might base its criterion regarding the course which should be followed in the matter."

* * * *

"Most of the persons designated rendered their reports, which it is not necessary to give in detail, it being sufficient merely to say that most of the advisers, while pointing out certain defects in the decision, advise that it be complied with, since, as has been stated, Mexico pledged its honor to comply with it in article three of the Agreement signed in regard thereto and taking into account, also, that outside of this particular case it has always maintained that arbitral decisions should be respected and faithfully carried out when they have no defects which render them null and void according to International Law.

"These defects are the following: if the arbiter exceeds his authority; if it can be proved that he made false statements; if proofs appear which could not have been known before the decision by either of the contracting parties or by the arbiter himself. None of these three defects appears in the decision under consideration, and the criticisms made refer only to the failure to examine carefully the arguments advanced by Mexico, declaring them unfounded, without stating the reasons for so doing."

* * * *

(Article 42 of the Constitution of 1857 referred in a general way to "the adjacent islands in both oceans." However, in 1917 the drafters of the Constitution believed it opportune to enumerate the islands comprising the national territory "and specifically listed or mentioned La Pasión (Clipperton Island) in spite of the fact that it was involved in a case submitted to arbitration, which means that Mexico had only a litigious right which it was not the place of the drafters of the Constitution to define.")

"Be that as it may, Article 42 of the present Constitution considers that Island an integral part of the national territory and therefore, in order to comply with the arbitral award of His Majesty, the King of Italy, which, as has already been said, cannot fail to be complied with from the international point of view, it is necessary to make the constitutional amendment suggested herein.

"I therefore leave this important matter with the Honorable Senate, in order that, following the procedure that the case requires, Mexico may be able to honor the international obligation which it assumed."

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMWESSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		COMINCH	PRIORITY 2
DATE 3 MARCH 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 032026		CNO	DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY GREENE		<i>WAR</i> <i>W</i>	BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY GREENE	CHECKED BY <i>Schmick</i>		PRIORITY 9
ROUTED BY	DITTOED BY		ROUTINE 10
			DEFERRED 12
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			BASEGRAM 13
031721 NCR 6746			14
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 15
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Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

CLIPPING

THIS TOP SECRET REFERS YOUR 012120 LIEUTENANT JAMPIERRE CONDUCTED ON TOUR OF ISLAND SEEMED PRIMARILY INTERESTED IN LOCATING FRENCH MARKER ALSO IN SEAPLANE POSSIBILITIES OF LAGOON AND WEATHER, SEA, AND SURF CONDITIONS GENERALLY. NOT INTERESTED IN EQUIPMENT OR CONSTRUCTION. NO CEREMONY. NO PLAQUE OR MARKER KNOWN TO EXIST.

COMINCH - COPIES 1-8 INCL
SCR HAS NOT DELIVERED TO CNO.

ACTION: F-33

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations.

COPY NO.

OPNAV 19-78

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A4/Clipperton

F-10
WR

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

27 February 1945

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Admiral Brown

Subject: Clipperton Island.

1. The attached summary has been prepared in response to a request by Admiral Edwards that you be informed of events concerning Clipperton Island which have occurred since your departure.

Very respectfully,

George M. Elsey
GEORGE M. ELSEY,

Government informed by CLIPPERTON ISLAND
(15 January -- 28 February)

The United States had no relations with Great Britain concerning Clipperton Island; all British activity apparently having ceased in accordance with the Prime Minister's promise to the President.

Relations with the Mexicans remained cordial. Ambassador Messersmith informed the Mexican Government of the U.S. weather station on Clipperton Island, the U.S. Navy's wish that no ship approach the Island without its consent, and our particular desire that a coaster with French military personnel, allegedly "shark fishing," not sail for Clipperton from Acapulco. Ambassador Messersmith reported that the Mexican Minister of Foreign Relations "saw all the implications," and that the Mexican Government viewed with disfavor the belated and completely new interest of the French in Clipperton as shown by this allegedly shark fishing venture. The Mexican Government agreed to prevent the sailing of any ship for Clipperton until the U.S. Navy approved.

While relations with Mexicans were satisfactory, our relations with France deteriorated very rapidly, reaching a low point on 22 January with a sharp formal note of protest from the French Government.

The French in Mexico were very aggressive about their "shark fishing" expedition on which the French Minister wished to send his military attaché. He was exceedingly irritated when the Mexican

Government informed him that the PEZ DE PLATA could not sail until the U.S. Navy cleared it and he was even more distressed when the Mexican immigration authorities (on American instigation) arrested the leader of his expedition for lack of proper citizenship papers. Local Mexican authorities in Acapulco refused clearance papers on the PEZ DE PLATA because she had no "competent navigator" and when the French "shark fishers" shifted to another small vessel and gave a false destination to port authorities in their attempt to get to Clipperton, the Mexican Navy intervened.

These actions served only to irritate everybody and achieved nothing, but on 22 January the French Government entered the picture. Foreign Minister Bidault handed Ambassador Caffery a strongly worded formal note of protest on our actions with respect to Clipperton. The note raised the issue of American infringement of French Sovereignty and asked assurance that we would not molest the ship about to sail for Clipperton.

The French got results at once. The State Department was alarmed at a formal protest and feared that the "basic weakness of our position could seriously and needlessly impair our relations with France." The Department hoped to ease tension by offering to send a French officer on a U.S. ship to visit Clipperton.

The U.S. Navy had no objections to an official French visitor and, on 28 January, Rear Admiral Davidson informed Vice Admiral Fenard that an observer would be taken to Clipperton on the first available transportation. At the same time, he explained to Fenard why we had objected to the French-sponsored shark fishers in Mexico. We

could not agree, he said, "to a French sponsored fishing expedition carried out by a group of civilians of doubtful nationality assembled on a Mexican waterfront, inasmuch as alleged fishing activities have in the past been a favorite method employed by the enemy in their surveillance of Pacific waters."

The State Department then made a soothing reply to the French note on 3 February, assuring France of our good intentions and informing the French Government of the offer to take an observer to Clipperton. This reply apparently satisfied the French Foreign Office and the French Naval Mission accepted the offer with alacrity.

On 9 February Lieutenant Jampierre from Fenard's Staff left for Clipperton. He returned on the 23rd having had what seems to be a satisfactory inspection trip; at least his report to Cominch Headquarters was couched in friendly terms.

The diplomatic aspects of the Clipperton question have been settled and only two minor problems remain. First is the perennial headache of the press. The NEW YORK TIMES correspondent in Mexico City approached the Naval Attaché on 24 January for more facts on his story of our difficulties with France about Clipperton and he had information which we thought could have come only from the French in Mexico. Action on the part of the U.S. Navy was two-fold: it refused clearance of the story on grounds of security, and Admiral Davidson informed Fenard he was concerned over this breach of military security which, he told Fenard he "hoped is not the yardstick by which the U.S. Navy is to measure the proffered French

cooperation in the Pacific campaign."

The magazine NEWSWEEK also wanted to break the Clipperton story but again the Navy intervened on grounds of security.

The other problem with respect to our occupation of the Island is entirely Naval. Surf and landing conditions are so bad that one LST and several small craft have been lost and there is great difficulty in supplying the garrison.

There have been only three documents of interest on Clipperton since 15 January and they are attached.

The Provisional Government of the Republic has recently learned at the Clipperton Station, of Clipperton, of a meteorological station of the United States Navy.

Enclosures:

1. French note of 22 January.
2. U.S. reply to French note, 3 February.
3. Report of French Observer to Cominch Headquarters, 23 February.

TOP SECRET

Paris

Dated January 22, 1945

Rec'd 11:40 p.m. 23rd

Secretary of State,

Washington.

304, January 22, 8 p.m.

Bidault handed to me this afternoon an undated note
a translation of which reads as follows.

"The Provisional Government of the Republic has
recently learned of the installation, at Clipperton,
of a meteorological station of the United States Navy.
From information furnished by the French Ambassador at
Washington, it appears that notification of this install-
ation was amply made, on December 22 last, by the American
Navy Department, to the chief of the French Naval Mission
in the United States, no previous authorization having
been requested of the French Government.

On the other hand, having been advised of the
departure from a Mexican port, for Clipperton, of the
French Military Attache at Mexico, the American Ambassador
replied, on the 13th of this month, to the French
representative in that capital, that in view of the
objections raised by the American Navy, the Mexican
Government

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-2-#304, January 22, 8 p.m. from Paris

Government had been invited to refuse an exit permit for the vessel which had been chartered for the purpose.

The French Government finds itself compelled to protest against such methods so contrary to international usage and to which it is all the more sensitive since they are employed by a friendly nation.

It is, of course, understood that the French Government reserves the right to send to Clipperton, by the means at its disposal, such personnel as it may appear useful to it to send and maintain there.

The Government of the United States is aware of the extent to which the French Government is desirous to cooperate, in all domains, to the success of the Allied Armies, in Europe as well as in the Pacific. It will understand, however, its concern that French sovereignty be not disregarded in any part of the empire.

In the circumstances, the military interest of the Allies is entirely reconcilable with the respect of French sovereignty.

The French Navy is, as a matter of fact, capable of organizing in the island, in liaison with the United States Navy, the meteorological services necessary to the war effort. It would be all the more happy to cooperate in this region with the American Navy because

TOP SECRET

France

-3-#22, January 22, 1941. from Paris

Embassy

France has the strongest desire to take, at the side of the United States, its part in the defense of French possessions in the Pacific and to contribute to the struggle against Japan to the full measure of its possibilities."

Bidault remarked: "This is very humiliating to us. We are so anxious to cooperate with you, but sometimes you do not make it easy."

CAPFERY

WSB

As a natural precaution, the United States Navy took the position that no one should visit Clipperton Island without obtaining the consent of the Commander, Western Sea Frontier. This order, which remains in effect, is necessary for reasons of military security and for the purpose of avoiding any incident which might arise through mistaken identity. In view of the military situation, the American Naval authorities are unwilling to have civilian approach or land on the island and it was for this reason that permission could not be granted for the visit of the vessel which was chartered by the French authorities in Mexico for a shark fishing expedition. The Chief of the French Naval Mission has been informed, however, that the Navy Department will be happy to furnish transportation for a French officer, designated by the Naval Mission in Washington, for a visit to Clipperton Island. If this offer is accepted, the French officer will be afforded every opportunity to familiarize himself fully with the measures taken by the United States Navy.

TOP SECRET

The steps to which I have referred have at all times been regarded by the authorities of my Government as having an emergency character and as being based solely on military

military

Via Embassy
George Bidault,
Minister of Foreign Affairs.

3 February 1945

Excellency:

Pursuant to instructions from my Government, I have the honor to refer to the note which you handed to me on the afternoon of January 22, 1945 on the subject of the security measures taken by the United States Navy on Clipperton Island. It is hoped that the following observations will help to correct any misunderstanding which may have arisen in the minds of the French authorities concerning the scope and purpose of the measures taken by the American Naval authorities.

In December 1944, an increase in the Japanese operations in the waters of the Western Sea Frontier suggested the desirability of establishing a weather reporting station and armed observation party on Clipperton Island. In as much as this was regarded as a purely military matter and since the island was uninhabited, the necessary action was taken by the United States Navy without prior consultation with any civilian agency of my Government. Information regarding the matter was, however, conveyed in great confidence by the Navy Department to the Chief of the French Naval Mission in Washington.

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The steps to which I have referred have at all times been regarded by the authorities of my Government as having an emergency character and as being based solely on

military

His Excellency
Georges Bidault,
Minister of Foreign Affairs.

SECRET

UNITED STATES FLEET

-2-

military considerations. They have no bearing whatever on the question of sovereignty over Clipperton Island.

It is hoped that the above statement will serve to place this entire question in its proper perspective.

Please accept, Excellency, etc.

Caffery

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S E C R E T

UNITED STATES FLEET
 HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
 NAVY DEPARTMENT
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



23 February 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL EDWARDS:

Subject: Visit of French Naval Officer to Clipperton Island.

1. Lieutenant Louis Etienne Jampierre, representative of the French Naval Mission, returned today from a trip to Clipperton Island. He visited my office with Lieutenant-Commander Thatcher (USN liaison officer) and gave a brief narrative of his trip. Lieutenant Jampierre is about 25 years old, tall, very pleasant, and speaks English very well.

2. He boarded a frigate in San Diego.

They arrived at Clipperton 4 days later, had very good weather and smooth seas throughout the trip.

The frigate tied up to the buoy on the southwest side of the island.

Supplies were put ashore by means of a dory operated on a hauling line between the buoy and the beach.

Surf was heavy despite the fact that there was no wind and they were landing on the leeward side of the island.

The landing was further complicated by having to cross a reef on which the punt would ground at times.

Lieutenant Jampierre landed in the morning, looked over the camp, and made a circuit of the island in a jeep.

Lieutenant Jampierre reported the temperature was very high, and his peeling, sunburned nose confirmed this.

The PF removed about 80 men of the crew of the LST which was ashore at Clipperton. Approximately 30 men were left behind.

They have a Quonset hut camp which seemed quite comfortable to Lieutenant Jampierre.

He was informed by Lieutenant Severe, the officer in charge, that conditions were very healthy on the island, that they would not mind this detail for 4 months or so.

Lieutenant Jampierre stated there were very few fish in the lagoon but that there were many fish in the water around the island.

They re-embarked in the late afternoon and sailed the next morning.

3. Lieutenant Jampierre said the frigate was very comfortable and that he had been well received on both the ship and the island and enjoyed his trip.

4. Evidently there were no patriotic or heroic displays of the French flag. The impression was received that he did not think much of the possibilities of developing Clipperton as a base of any kind.

Respectfully,

Wallace M. Beakley.

Copy to: Op-13

C O P Y

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER F-33	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH AND CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE OP	PRIORITY 1
RELEASED BY R S EDWARDS		COMWESTSEAFRON	PRIORITY 2
DATE 8 FEBRUARY 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 192146			DEFERRED 5
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 6
PARAPHRASED BY SCHMICK	CHECKED BY LONROE	COMSOCALIFSECTOR OF WESTSEAFRON	OP PRIORITY 8
ROUTED BY	DITTOED BY SCHMICK		PRIORITY 9
			ROUTINE 10
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			DEFERRED 11
091946 NCR 40351			BASEGRAM 12
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW <input type="checkbox"/> 13
			14
Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP			(Use G. C. T.) 15
			16

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

FRENCH OBSERVER LT LOUIS ETIENNE JAMPIERRE DEPARTING WASHINGTON TODAY WITH DIRECTIONS TO REPORT COM 11 FOR TRIP TO CLIPPERTON AND RETURN IN PF REFERRED UR 072108. DESIRE SHIP'S DEPARTURE BE DELAYED IF NECESSARY TO AWAIT ARRIVAL ABOVE OFFICER. LT LOUIS JAMPIERRE TO BE PERMITTED TO LAND CLIPPERTON TO INSPECT ISLAND AND US NAVY ESTABLISHMENT THERE. IF HE SO REQUESTS, A MESSAGE MAY BE SENT VIA THE ISLAND RADIO THROUGH REGULAR NAVY CHANNELS AND CODE TO ADDRESSEE HE SELECTS. THIS MESSAGE TO BE FORWARDED TO COMINCH AND CNO WITHOUT OTHER ADELS FOR FURTHER TRANSMITTAL TO FRENCH ADDRESSEE.

POSSIBLE LT LOUIS JAMPIERRE MAY ENGAGE IN PATRIOTIC HEROICS INCLUDING SHOW OF FRENCH COLORS ON CLIPPERTON AND DEMAND TO REMAIN ON THE ISLAND. THE LATTER CAN NOT BE APPROVED. HE IS TO BE RETURNED WHEN THE SHIP RETURNS. CARE SHALL BE EXERCISED THAT OFFENSE CAN NOT BE TAKEN REGARDING HIS TREATMENT WHILE EMBARKED OR ON THE ISLAND. COMINCH; COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

PIA

SECRET
(Classification)

2-57
1343
RECEIVED ONI
SECRET
ENCLOSURES
COPY No. 196 FEB 17 PM 12 30
(For Record Section use)

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION W. D. G. S.

MILITARY ATTACHE REPORT MEXICO

Subject **BRITISH CATALINA FLYING BOATS' ACTIVITIES** (Chief descriptive title)
MEX. No. 2902.0202

From M. A. Mexico City Report No. R-161-45 Date 8 February 1945

Source and degree of reliability:

Evaluation: A-1

SUMMARY.— Here enter careful summary of report, containing substance concisely stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.

1. Reference is made to Report M.A. Mexico #5012-44, dated 17 November 1944, the above subject, IG 5940, ex ref 9200.

2. The undersigned has just received information, from an unimpeachable source, to the effect that the presence in Mexico of the two planes mentioned in the reference was for the purpose of surveying a commercial airline route from Belize, British Honduras to New Zealand.

M.A. COMMENT: The semi-official story circulated in connection with the activities of these aircraft was that they were organizing a program for operational flights of military aircraft when the European phase of the war was ended and Great Britain would wish to send more aircraft to the Pacific Theater against the Japanese.

1078 CANTWELL C. BROWN
Lt Colonel, G.S.C.
Asst Military Attaché

Approved and forwarded by:

A. R. HARRIS
Brig. General, A.U.S.
Military Attaché

mm
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AGF	AAF	ASF	AC of S G-2	Chief IG	Eur. Afr.	Far East	N. Amer.	Air	Discom.	AID	PLOR	OSG
MA Sec.	DIG	Rec. Sec.	ONI	BEW	OWS	ENG.	OPD	ORD	Sig.	State	QMG	

Enclosures:

none

SECRET
(Classification)

Regraded Unclassified

*President's
Aide.*

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MIS 115436

*Pol 2
Route
Lib
Dir. Info 1
SQAF 2
OMX 3

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMWESSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE COMINCH	PPPPPP
RELEASED BY	7 FEB 1945	FOR ACTION	PRIORITY
DATE			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM	2115		DEFERRED
DECODED BY	HAMILTON	FOR INFORMATION	PRIORITY PPPPPP
TYPED BY	BACH / Lyon		ROUTINE
BY	KLAFF		DEFERRED
ROUTED BY		CNO COMSOCALIFSECTOR OF COMWESSEAFRON	
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
	072008	NCR 3488	<input type="checkbox"/>

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

OK
UR 021649 PLAN SAIL PF SAN DIEGO TO CLIPPERTON ISLAND
ON 11TH FOR RETURN LST PERSONNEL.

ACTION	
	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
	25
F-05	26
F-07	27
	28
F-1	29
F-2	30
	31
F-20	32
	33
F-3	34
	35
F-30	36
	37
F-31	38
F-32	39
	40
F-33	41
F-34	42
	43
F-4	44
	45
FX01	46
	47
FX30	48
	49
FX37	50
	51
FX40	52
IG-00	
VCNO	

COMINCH...ACT
13.....

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-57

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	
FROM <u>COMINCH & CNO</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1	
RELEASED BY <u>R. S. EDWARDS</u>		COMWESTSEAFRON	2	
DATE <u>31 JANUARY 1945</u>	FOR ACTION		PRIORITY	3
TOR CODEROOM _____	INFORMATION		R ROUTINE R	4
DECODED BY _____			DEFERRED	5
TYPED _____			6	
BY _____			7	
ROUTED BY _____			8	
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			9	
			PRIORITY	
			10	
			ROUTINE	
			11	
			DEFERRED	
			12	
			13	
			14	
			15	
			IF OPERATIONAL	
			CHECK BELOW	
			16	
			17	
			18	
			19	
			20	
			21	

Ø21649

February

NCR 4Ø228

ORIGINATOR	DATE	TIME	GCT
FILL IN DATE AND TIME:			

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

OK YOUR 292316 AND MY 242147 X STATE DEPARTMENT CONSIDERS
 EARLY VISIT OF FRENCH OFFICER DESIRABLE X ADVANCE
 INFORMATION DESIRED WHEN SUITABLE TRANSPORTATION IS
 AVAILABLE FOR DEPARTURE.

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42
	43
	44
	45
	46
	47
	48
	49
	50
	51
	52

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)
OPNAV 19-67

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY _____		CNO	PRIORITY 2
DATE 7 FEB 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 07/ 1812			DEFERRED 4
			BASEGRAM 5
DECODED BY _____		<i>passed to Western Sea Frontier 8 Feb by direction RS Edwards</i>	PRIORITY 9
PARAPHRASED BY PIPP	CHECKED BY PIPP		ROUTINE 11
ROUTED BY PIPP	DITTOED BY PIPP		DEFERRED 12
			BASEGRAM 13
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
012230			<input type="checkbox"/>
NCR 15660			

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

A-I-R-M-A-I-L-G-R-A-M

REFERENCE MY TOP SECRET AIRGRAM 311530, JANUARY 1945, REPORTS FROM ACAPULCO INDICATE THAT THE LUCIA SEGUNDO IS PLANNING TO LEAVE THAT PORT BETWEEN THE 15TH AND 20TH OF FEBRUARY. DE LA VEGA IS INSISTING UPON ABSOLUTE COMMAND OF THE VESSEL DURING THE VOYAGE. IT IS REPORTED THAT 10,000 PESOS RENTAL PLUS ALL EXPENSES, ARE BEING CHARGED.

ORIGINAL NCR DISTRIBUTION:
16(#1).....ACT

COMINCH(#2-9).....

ACTION: F-33

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations.

COPY 05

OPNAV 19-78

012230

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	ALUSNA MEXICO CITY	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION CNO	PRIORITY 2
DATE	6 FEB 1945		ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM	1510		DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 6
PARAPHRASED BY	CHECKED BY FISHER	FOR INFORMATION	7
ROUTED BY	DITTOED BY FISHER		PRIORITY 9
			ROUTINE 10
			DEFERRED 12
			BASEGRAM 13

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

311530 NCR 15281

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

A I R M A I L G R A M

REFERENCE MY TOP SECRET DESPATCH ^{NY}280530 COMMODORE
COELLO MEXICAN NAVAL ZONE COMMANDER AT ACAPULCO HAS
STATED THAT HE HAS ORDERED THE PORT AUTHORITIES AT
ACAPULCO NOT TO PERMIT THE DEPARTURE OF THE LUCIA
SEGUNDO NOR OF THE FRENCH GROUP ON EXTENDED VOYAGES.

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:
16(#1).....ACT
COMINCH(#2-9).....

ACTION: F-33

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

311530

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>COMWESSEAFRON</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION PD NEW YORK BUSHIPS SUPERVISOR OF SALVAGE NEW YORK	OP OP OP 2
DATE <u>30 JAN 1945</u>			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM <u>2221</u>			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY <u>HAMILTON</u>		FOR INFORMATION COMINCH	5
TYPED BY <u>BACH</u>			DEFERRED 6
ROUTED BY <u>VOSBURGH</u>			OP OP OP 7
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			8
PAGE 1 OF 2	302125	NCR 4316	9
			OP OP OP 10
			PRIORITY 11
			ROUTINE 12
			DEFERRED 13
			14
			15
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 16
			<input type="checkbox"/> 17
			18
			19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

PD NEW YORK PASS ACTION SUPERVISOR OF SALVAGE NY.
COMWESSEAFRON PASSES 301740 FROM THE TENINO ORIGINALLY
ADDRESSED ACTION COMWESSEAFRON INFO COMSOCALSEC.

Clipperton

" SEA ACTION CAUSED COMPLETE LOSS 2 OF OUR 3 BEACH GEAR
PRACTICALLY ALL BITTS AND CHOCKS CARRIED AWAY. LST
HAS WASHED UP HIGH ON BEACH. TENINO CARRIED AWAY SIDE
TOWING BITTS. SITUATION BAD. NO EQUIPMENT AVAILABLE
TO CONTINUE OPERATIONS. REQUEST PERMISSION VIKING AND
TENINO RETURN TO SANDIEGO TO REFIT.
CAPT OF LST REQUESTS 4 OFFICERS AN 60 MEN BE RETURNED
VIA TENINO AND VIKING LEAVING CO , ENGINEER, COMMUNICATION
OFFICER, AND 50 MEN TO STANDBY VESSEL. THEY CAN SUBSIST
FOR 3 WEEKS. HULL/YP MOORING TUESDAY. GENERAUX"

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-07	27
F-07	28
F-07	29
F-2	30
F-20	31
F-20	32
F-20	33
F-30	34
F-30	35
F-30	36
F-31	37
F-31	38
F-32	39
F-33	40
F-33	41
F-34	42
F-34	43
F-4	44
F-4	45
FX01	46
FX30	47
FX30	48
FX37	49
FX40	50
IG-00	51
VCNO	52

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM _____	FOR ACTION	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY 1
RELEASED BY _____			ROUTINE 2
DATE _____			DEFERRED 3
TOR CODEROOM _____	INFORMATION		4
DECODED BY _____			PRIORITY 5
TYPED BY _____			ROUTINE 6
ROUTED BY _____			DEFERRED 7

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

PAGE 2 OF 2

302125

NCR 4316

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

COMWESSEAFRON RECOMMENDS APPROVAL.

ACTION	
F-0	21
F-01	22
F-02	23
F-05	24
F-07	25
F-1	26
F-2	27
F-20	28
F-3	29
F-30	30
F-31	31
F-32	32
F-33	33
F-34	34
F-4	35
FX01	36
FX30	37
FX37	38
FX40	39
IG-00	40
VCNO	41
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BUSHIPS...ACT

COMINCH...23...20M...0P05...39....

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch 302125 son. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	COMWESTSEAFRON	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	30 JAN 1945	BUSHIPS	PRIORITY
DATE	2247		ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM	GREENE		DEFERRED
DECODED BY	LYON / <i>Stearns</i>		PRIORITY
TYPED BY	KLAFF		ROUTINE
ROUTED BY			DEFERRED

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

302035 NCR 4336

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ATTN CODE 819.

FOR SOME DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

NAVY UNABLE TO SERVICE PERSONNEL ON CLIPPERTON ISLAND BECAUSE OF CORAL AND HEAVY SURF. LANDING CRAFT HAVE BEEN DAMAGED AND UNABLE TO HANDLE PROBLEM. REQUEST ISSUANCE OF 2 OBSOLETE LVT-1 AVAILABLE FROM NLFED ALBANY ^{California} ADVISE TODAY. REPLY CODE 331.

ACTION		
F-0		21
F-01		22
F-02		23
F-05		24
F-07		25
F-1		26
F-2		27
F-20		28
F-3		29
F-30		30
F-31		31
F-32		32
F-33		33
F-34		34
F-4		35
FX01		36
FX30		37
FX37		38
FX40		39
IG-00		40
VCNO		41
		42
		43
		44
		45
		46
		47
		48
		49
		50
		51
		52

BUSHIPS....ACT

23....13...16...COMINCH...

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

302035

Com West Sea from to Cominch

Jan 292316

Your 242147. YP with supplies now
enroute. Plan monthly ~~trips~~ trips but
dependent on as yet unresolved unloading
difficulties. Will advise.

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	COMWESSEAFRON	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
RELEASED BY		USS TENINO WEATHER BASE CLIPPERTON	PRIORITY 1
DATE	30 JAN 1945		ROUTINE 2
TOR CODEROOM	301236		DEFERRED 3
DECODED BY	SLUTZ		BASEGRAM 4
PARAPHRASED BY	BALDWIN	COMINCH CNO	5
CHECKED BY	BALDWIN		PRIORITY 6
DITTOED BY	BALDWIN		ROUTINE 7
ROUTED BY	BALDWIN		DEFERRED 8
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			BASEGRAM 9
292314		NCR 3362	
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 10
			<input type="checkbox"/> 11

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

(USS TENINO GETS ACTION FOR SOPA)

REFERRING MY 030002 AND TOPSECRET 041908
DO NOT PERMIT CIVILIAN VISITORS LAND CLIPPER-
TON. CIVILIAN PARTY IN MOTOR SAILOR LUPE
SEGUNDO MAY ATTEMPT LANDING. ACKNOWLEDGE.

NOTE: RECEIVED SECRET, RAISED TO TOPSECRET ACCORDING TO CONTENT.

acknowledged by USS Tenino at 300715

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:

16(#1).....COG

COMINCH(#2-9).....

ACTION: F-33

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER F-33	EXT. 4939	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH & CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
RELEASED BY R S EDWARDS		COMINCH STSEAFRON	PRIORITY
DATE 28 JAN 1945			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM 2013			DEFERRED
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM
PARAPHRASED BY WOODWARD	CHECKED BY <i>[Signature]</i>	FOR ACTION	PRIORITY
ROUTED BY WOODWARD	DITFOED BY WOODWARD		ROUTINE
			DEFERRED
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			BASEGRAM
281936 NCR 42162			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
			<input type="checkbox"/>

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

REFER ALUSNA MEXICO 28⁰⁴33⁰ PASSED TO YOU. NO OFFICIAL NOTIFICATION RECEIVED REGARDING INTENTION VESSEL REFERRED TO VISITING CLIPPERTON AND NO CLEARANCE FOR SUCH VISIT HAS BEEN GIVEN. PARA. CHIEF FRENCH NAVAL MISSION INFORMED TODAY THAT IN THE INTEREST OF SECURITY NAVY DEPARTMENT WILL NOT PERMIT CIVILIAN VISITORS TO CLIPPERTON. OFFER MADE TO TRANSPORT A FRENCH MILITARY OR NAVAL OBSERVER TO CLIPPERTON AND RETURN AT SOME CONVENIENT DATE. REFER MY AIRMAILGRAM 242147. PARA. LETTER REFERRED MY 091612 HAS NOT BEEN FORWARDED AS YET.

COMINCH COPIES #1 TO #8 INCL.

COMINCH PASSED TO NCR FOR FURTHER DISTRIBUTION TO

OP13(#9).....

The dispatch was recommended by RADM Jurdson & Captain Beasley to V. Adm Edwards, who approved & released it.

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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OPNAV 19-78

281936
information passed by Dispatch Nav Aide

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER F-33	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH & CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	OP OP OP 1
RELEASED BY R S EDWARDS	FOR ACTION	CODE ROOM	PRIORITY 2
DATE 28 JAN 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 2048	INFORMATION		DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY WOODWARD	CHECKED BY <i>[Signature]</i>		BASEGRAM 6
ROUTED BY			DITTOED BY WOODWARD
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			ROUTINE 10
281935	NCR 40164		DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 12
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 13
			<input type="checkbox"/> 14

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

JK
PASS ALUSNA MEXICO CITY 280530 NCR 1656 TO COMWESTSEAFRON FOR INFO.

REF: 280530.....REPORTED FRENCH WILL DEPART FOR CLIPPERTON
28 JAN.....

SCR HAS DELIVERED TO NAVCOM FOR TRANSMISSION TO COMWESTSEAFRON
FOR INFO AS 281935. NAVCOM TOR: 2110.

COMINCH COPIES #1 TO #8 INCL.

*This action was taken by John Edwards upon
recommendation from Capt Bailey.*

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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281935

COPY NO. 3

OPNAV 19-78

Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	ALUSNA MEXICO CITY	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY		CNO	PRIORITY 2
DATE	28 JAN 1945		ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM	1944	FOR ACTION	DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY	SCHMICK		BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY	SCHMICK CHECKED MONROE	INFORMATION	BASEGRAM 6
ROUTED BY	FISHER DITTOED BY SCHMICK		PRIORITY 9
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			ROUTINE 10
280530 NCR 1656			DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 12
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
			<input type="checkbox"/>

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

TOPSECRET.

REPORTED FRENCH WILL DEPART FOR CLIPPERTON 28 JAN ON MOTOR
 SAILER LUPE SEGUNDO MEXICAN REGISTRY AND OWNERSHIP STATED
 FALSE DESTINATION TO BE GIVEN PORT AUTHORITIES. BY DIRECTION
 AMBASSADOR HAVE ORDERED ALUSLO ACAPULCO REQUEST MEXICAN NAVY
 PREVENT DEPARTURE.

*Note - sent by dispatch to President
 28 1400 Z*

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION.

16(#1)....ACT

COMINCH(#2-9).....

ACTION: F-33

Novak

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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280530

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

WASHINGTON

TOP SECRET

TOP-SECRET

January 26, 1945.

Memorandum for Rear Admiral L. A. Davidson

In compliance with your request during our telephone conversation this afternoon I enclose a copy of the memorandum of conversation between M. Lacoste and Mr. Bonbright on January 25 as well as a copy of the memorandum of their conversation today on the subject of Clipperton Island.

Enclosure:
Two memoranda.

COPY

January 25, 1945.

TOP SECRET

TOP-SECRET

26 January 1945

Subject: MEMORANDUM FOR ACTING SECRETARY

Participants: Mr. Lacoste, Counselor of the French Embassy, and
Mr. Doehring

Subject: Clipperton Island.

The Counselor of the French Embassy, Monsieur Lacoste, called at the Department this morning and, acting on instructions from his Government, informed us that orders have been issued for the vessel, which has been chartered by the French in Mexico, to leave for Clipperton Island tomorrow, January 26. He also requested assurances from this Government that the vessel would not be fired on or otherwise molested. He was told that the matter would be taken up immediately with the appropriate authorities.

The French have also sent us a note on the subject of Clipperton Island, the text of which is contained in telegram No. 304, of January 22 from Paris.
(Copy attached).

...was very friendly throughout. He said he perceived that he was now disappointed when he learned that his Government had written us a formal note on the subject. He felt that a note was unnecessary and that in any event it might have been worded somewhat differently. He took the line that the whole matter was a result of excessive zeal on the part of the military, and that he did not for a moment believe we had ulterior motives or any designs on French territory.

COPY

COPY

Department of State

Memorandum of Conversation

TOP SECRET

TOP-SECRET

26 January 1945.

Subject: Clipperton Island

Participants: Mr. Lacoste, Counselor of the French Embassy, and
Mr. Bonbright

Copies to: EUR - Mr. Hickerson A-D - Mr. Dunn.

Mr. Lacoste, Counselor of the French Embassy, called this afternoon at my request.

I told him that since he had impressed on me yesterday the urgency with which his Government viewed the Clipperton Island problem, I had been asked to give him an interim report. I said that as he knew, we had received a formal note from his Government on the subject and that this note and their specific request for a vessel to proceed to Clipperton Island from Mexico had to be considered together. I told him that the whole question was under review and that I hoped that we would be in a position to give him something more definite within the next few days. I expressed the hope that in the meantime he would keep the lid on his own people so that we would not be faced with an incident. He fully agreed, and assured me that this would be done.

Lacoste was very friendly throughout. He told me personally that he had been disappointed when he learned that his Government had written us a formal note on the subject. He felt that a note was unnecessary and that in any event it might have been worded somewhat differently. He took the line that the whole matter was a result of excessive zeal on the part of the military, and that he did not for a moment believe we had ulterior motives or any designs on French territory.

C O P Y

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	
FROM U. S. NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY, MEXICO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1	
RELEASED BY _____		FOR ACTION CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS NAVY DEPARTMENT WASHINGTON, D. C.	PRIORITY 2	
DATE 29 JAN 1945			ROUTINE 3	
TOR CODEROOM 2135			DEFERRED 4	
DECODED BY _____			BASEGRAM 5	
PARAPHRASED BY WOODWARD	CHECKED BY KULKA			6
BY _____	DITTOED BY WOODWARD			7
ROUTED BY _____	BY _____			8
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			PRIORITY 10	
			ROUTINE 11	
			DEFERRED 12	
			BASEGRAM 13	
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 15	
PAGE 1 OF 5	242200	NCR 13229	16	
			<input type="checkbox"/> 17	

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

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AIRMAILGRAM

PART 1

REFERRING TO MY TOP SECRET AIRGRAM 151900, THERE IS NO CHANGE IN THE MOVEMENTS OF THE PEZ DE PLATA. THE LIAISON OFFICER AT ACAPULCO REPORTS THAT MARTIN DURAND WAS RELEASED BY THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES FROM CONFINEMENT AND LEFT ACAPULCO WITH MAJOR DIVES, FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE, ON 22 JANUARY 1945, THEREBY BREAKING DURAND'S PAROLE.

SHIPS SUPPLIES HAVE BEEN UNLOADED FROM THE PEZ DE PLATA.

THE CORRESPONDENT OF THE NEW YORK TIMES IN MEXICO CITY APPROACHED THE NAVAL ATTACHE THIS DATE ASKING FOR INFORMATION CONCERNING CLIPPERTON. HE STATED THAT, 1: A VESSEL WITH A FRENCH CREW HAD ATTEMPTED TO LAND AT CLIPPERTON BUT HAD BEEN FIRED UPON; THAT, 2:

No. 1 ADMIRAL.

No. 2 FILE.

No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM.

No. 4 SPECIAL.

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OPNAV 19-78

242200

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TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
FROM _____		FOR ACTION	PRIORITY 2
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TOR CODEROOM _____			BASEGRAM 5
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PAGE 2 OF 5	242200	NCR 13229	<input type="checkbox"/> 16
			17

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THE FRENCH MINISTER IN MEXICO HAD STATED THAT HE HAD KNOWN NOTHING ABOUT HOW THE OCCUPATION BY FORTY MEMBERS OF THE AMERICAN NAVY HAD COME ABOUT, AS WASHINGTON HAD NOT KEPT HIM INFORMED; THAT, 3: A CAPTAIN HOFFMAN, PRESUMABLY AN AMERICAN CITIZEN ENGAGED IN THE FISHING BUSINESS IN ACAPULCO, HAD STATED THAT A VESSEL WITH FRENCH PERSONNEL HAD LANDED ON THE ISLAND; ALSO THAT, 4: THE BRITISH HAD OCCUPIED THE ISLAND WITH THREE CATALINA BOATS AND THAT THEY HAD WITHDRAWN. THE CORRESPONDENT WAS ANXIOUS TO KNOW HOW THE U. S. AUTHORITIES HAD BEEN ABLE TO INDUCE THE BRITISH TO LEAVE THE ISLAND.

IN THE ABOVE CONNECTION HE MENTIONED COMMODORE POWELL, CHIEF OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE TRANSPORT COMMAND (SEE MY SERIAL L-415-44, DATED 13 DECEMBER 1944) AS AUTHORITY FOR THE STATEMENT THAT GENERAL

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TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
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FROM _____		FOR ACTION	PRIORITY 1
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TOR CODEROOM _____			BASEGRAM 4
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PAGE 3 OF 5		242208 NCR 13229	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

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DE GAULLE HAD AUTHORIZED THE BRITISH TO OCCUPY THIS ISLAND. THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT WISHED TO VERIFY THIS INFORMATION, AS HE SAID THE STORY WAS "ALL READY TO BREAK". HE STATED THAT THE FRENCH MINISTER IN MEXICO TOLD HIM THAT IN ANY EVENT THE STORY WOULD BE GIVEN PUBLICITY FROM PARIS AND THAT HE WOULD NOTIFY HIS PAPER THAT HE KNEW ABOUT CLIPPERTON. HE GAVE THE NAVAL ATTACHE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WOULD NOT SEND THE STORY UNTIL HE COULD VERIFY IT, PRESUMABLY THROUGH THIS EMBASSY.

IN REPLY TO THE VARIOUS QUESTIONS OF THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT, THE NAVAL ATTACHE STATED THAT HE KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THIS MATTER. THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT ALSO STATED THAT THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES KNEW ABOUT THIS AFFAIR AND HE WAS SURPRISED THAT THE NAVAL ATTACHE DIDN'T.

PART 11

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TOP SECRET DISPATCH

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		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE _____	1
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TOR CODEROOM _____			BASEGRAM 5
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PARAPHRASED BY _____	INFORMATION		PRIORITY 9
CHECKED BY _____			ROUTINE 10
DITTOED BY _____			DEFERRED 11
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THE TIMES CORRESPONDENT'S SOURCE OF INFORMATION IS NOT KNOWN. PRESUMABLY THE FRENCH MINISTER GAVE HIM MOST OF IT. THE INACCURATE PART OF HIS INFORMATION WAS OBTAINED ELSEWHERE, POSSIBLY THROUGH CAPTAIN HOFFMAN IN ACAPULCO WHO WAS PASSING ON RUMORS. THE PERSONNEL ON BOARD THE PEZ DE PLATA WAS COMPOSED OF MAJOR DIVES, JACQUES SCHOELLER, MARTIN DURAND, MARTIN CORREAGA, RODNEY SADLEIR AND THREE MEMBERS OF THE CREW, FORMERLY HIRED BY CARLOS BARNARD IN ACAPULCO. WHEN THE NAVAL ATTACHE WAS IN TAMPICO RECENTLY, HE WAS INFORMED BY THE LIAISON OFFICER AND THE VICE CONSUL THAT THE PEZ DE PLATA WAS FORMERLY THE "LUCKY LADY", OF U. S. REGISTRATION. SHE WAS SOLD TO A MR. CARLOS BARNARD, A MEXICAN CITIZEN. THE AMERICAN REGISTRATION PAPERS WERE CANCELLED BY THE CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES IN

No. 1 ADMIRAL.

No. 2 FILE.

No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM.

No. 4 SPECIAL.

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FROM _____		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY _____		FOR ACTION	PRIORITY 2
DATE _____			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM _____			DEFERRED 4
			BASEGRAM 5
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DECODED BY _____		INFORMATION	PRIORITY 9
PARAPHRASED BY _____	CHECKED BY _____		ROUTINE 10
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			14
PAGE 5 OF 5	242200	NCR 13229	15
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 16
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CALIFORNIA. THE NEW OWNER APPLIED FOR MEXICAN REGISTRY BUT AS OF THE 15TH OF JANUARY HAD NOT YET RECEIVED THEM.

MARTIN DURAND, ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED AS CAPTAIN, WAS REPLACED BY MR. RODNEY SADLEIR, WHICH WAS APPROVED BY THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES. MR SADLEIR INFORMED THE NAVAL ATTACHE THAT HE WAS AN IRISHMAN, WHEN THE MEXICAN AUTHORITIES IN ACAPULCO DISCOVERED THAT THE PEZ DE PLATA WAS GOING BEYOND THE USUAL FISHING GROUNDS, THEY CONSIDERED THIS A HIGH-SEA VOYAGE AND REFUSED TO PERMIT HER TO SAIL WITHOUT A COMPETENT NAVIGATOR. NEITHER MR. DURAND NOR MR. SADLEIR WERE CONSIDERED SUCH BY THE MEXICANS.

THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN PART 1 AND PART 11 HAS BEEN FURNISHED THE AMBASSADOR OF THIS EMBASSY.

COMINCH COPIES #1 TO #8 INCL.

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242200

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER F-33	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH & CNO	<i>Touch</i>	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY R S EDWARDS		COMWESTSEAFRON	PRIORITY 2
DATE 24 JANUARY 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 2334			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY	BASEGRAM 6		
PARAPHRASED DIEBEL CHECKED HARTIGAN	FOR ACTION	<i>LS</i>	7
BY			PRIORITY 9
ROUTED BY			ROUTINE 10
	INFORMATION		DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 13
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
242147		NCR 40085	<input type="checkbox"/>

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A I R M A I L G R A M

REFERENCE NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO AIRMAILGRAM 151243 PASSED TO YOU.
 CONTEMPLATE EVENTUALLY HAVING TO GRANT PERMISSION FOR A FRENCH
 MILITARY OR NAVAL REPRESENTATIVE TO MAKE A VISIT TO CLIPPERTON.
 WHAT IS TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF ROUTINE SAILINGS FOR CLIPPERTON ON
 WHICH A FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE COULD BE ACCOMMODATED.

COMINCH: COPIES #1 TO #8 INCLUSIVE.

PMA

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Clipperton

242147

TOP SECRET



DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 15, 1945

TOP SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Clipperton Island

I refer to your letter of January 1, 1945 in regard to the establishment on December 11, 1944 of a United States Naval armed observation party and a weather reporting station at Clipperton Island.

Immediately upon receipt of your letter on January 2nd, we asked the British Ambassador to send an officer to the Department and we conveyed orally to him the information which you directed us to give to the British Ambassador. This information was confirmed in a memorandum which was sent to the British Embassy on January 3rd.

On January 2nd, a telegram was sent to our Ambassador in Mexico City instructing him to convey to the Mexican authorities the information which your letter directed us to give to the authorities of that Government.

On January 11th, we had a telephone inquiry about the United States Naval establishment on Clipperton Island from Mr. Baudet of the French Embassy. We gave him, in response to his inquiry, the same general information which we had given the British and the Mexican Governments, adding that the United States Navy had notified Vice Admiral Fenard, Head of the French Naval Mission in Washington, of the establishment of this station. Mr. Baudet inquired whether the French flag was still flying over Clipperton Island. We told him frankly that we did not know here whether or not the French flag is flying over Clipperton Island but that if one was flying when our forces arrived, he could be sure it was still there. Mr. Baudet appeared to be satisfied with this and although he had spoken of a note to us, we have heard nothing further from the French Embassy on the subject.

In your

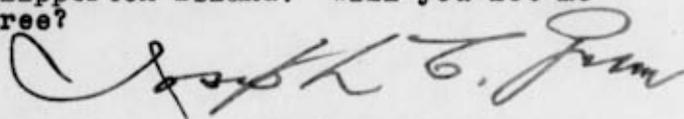


- 2 -

In your letter of January 1st you refer to the fact that Mexico has long contested the claim of France to this island. Our information is that Mexico did for a great many years contest the French claim but has not done so since the award of the King of Italy on January 28, 1931, giving the island to France. At that time the Mexican Government indicated that it wished to study the opinion underlying the decision but the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs urged its acceptance on the ground that it involved the good faith of Mexico which had agreed, in the convention submitting the matter to arbitration, to accept the decision without appeal. Later the award was accepted by Mexico. Evidence of such acceptance lies in a decree dated January 10, 1934, published in the Diario Oficial of January 18, 1934 stating that "the Congress of the Mexican States, and with the approval of the majority of the State Legislatures, declares amended Article 42 of the Political Constitution" by excluding Clipperton Island from that document, which specifies the territory comprised within the Republic of Mexico.

You will recall that the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff have recommended that the United States obtain rights to establish a post-war military base on Clipperton Island and that in a letter dated January 7, 1944 to the Secretary of State you approved this and certain other similar recommendations of the Chiefs of Staff. It is our view that it would be much easier for the United States to obtain military base rights on Clipperton Island from the French Government than it would be for us to obtain such rights from the Mexican Government. This view is strengthened by the attitude which the Mexican Government has taken during the present war in which Mexico is, of course, a co-belligerent, in respect to similar questions.

In these circumstances we feel that it would be better for us to stand on Mexico's recognition of the award of Clipperton Island to France and not to bring the Mexican Government into the post-war military base situation at all in respect to Clipperton Island. Will you let me know whether you agree?



Acting Secretary

SECRET

from C W S F to Com So Cal Sector

info Connick

Jan 20 1928

YP 419 assigned Southern California sector for special duty involving servicing weather station Clipperton Island. When loaded in all respects ready for sea sail YP 419 about 28 January 1945 to Clipperton. Thereafter maintain service schedules as required.

↓

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

CLIPPER

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		CNO *	PRIORITY
DATE 24 JANUARY 1945			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM 1040			DEFERRED
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM
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191500 **NCR 11868**

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AIRMAILGRAM

REFERRING TO MY TOP SECRET AIRGRAM 1840 OF 15 JANUARY THE NAVAL LIAISON OFFICER ACAPULCO HAS REFUSED TO ISSUE RECIGS FOR PEZ DE PLATA. THIS IS IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY DIRECTIONS. THE LIAISON OFFICER REPORTS THAT THE MEXICAN IMMIGRATION AUTHORITIES ACAPULCO HAVE DETAINED MARTIN DURAND BECAUSE OF LACK OF CITIZENSHIP PAPERS. MAJOR DIVES, FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE NOW ACAPULCO, STATES HE IS UNWILLING SAIL WITHOUT DURAND. THE NAVAL ATTACHE WAS IN ACAPULCO BETWEEN THE NINTH AND FOURTEENTH JANUARY AND LEARNED THAT DURAND WAS KNOWN TO HAVE CLAIMED MEXICAN, PERUVIAN, FRENCH AND AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP AT VARIOUS TIMES. IN MY DESPATCH 011500 IT WAS STATED THAT MARTIN DURAND WAS A MEXICAN CITIZEN. THE NAVAL ATTACHE BELIEVED THAT DURAND'S CITIZENSHIP SHOULD BE CLARIFIED AND ACCORDINGLY ASKED THE AMERICAN CONSUL WHO KNEW DURAND PREVIOUSLY TO CHECK HIS CITIZENSHIP, APPARENTLY WITH THE RESULT STATED IN THE ABOVE. THE PEZ DE PLATA IS STILL ANCHORED IN THE HARBOR AT ACAPULCO.

*** HAS NOT BEEN DELIVERED TO CNO.**

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

COMINCH:
COPIES 1 - 8,
INCL.

TOP SECRET

Naval

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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

19 January 1945

TOP-SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL BROWN

Subject: Clipperton Island.

The attached report is an account of the development of British, French and American interest in Clipperton Island from 1942 to the present. The report has been compiled from all Army, Navy and JCS documents which I was able to locate. Copies of these papers are now in your files. There are three appendices to the report:

- I. Sovereignty of Clipperton Island.
- II. Excerpts from Admiral Byrd's report concerning Clipperton Island.
- III. Biographical note on P. G. Taylor, "promotor" of the trans-Pacific route through Clipperton Island.

Very respectfully,

George M. Elsey
GEORGE M. ELSEY

TOP-SECRET

CLIPPERTON ISLAND

There has been active British and Australian interest in the development of French-owned Clipperton Island as a base for a trans-Pacific air route since early in the war. In November 1942, the Australian Minister to the United States and Captain P. G. Taylor, an Australian long connected with commercial aviation, proposed to the Navy Department's Bureau of Aeronautics that Clipperton be developed as an air base. The Australians were informed at that time that the United States Navy had no interest in the development of Clipperton for air route purposes. The Australian Minister then approached the State Department on the same subject, and on 9 December 1942 he presented a memorandum to the President (which, it should be noted, was prepared by Captain P. G. Taylor) urging that Clipperton Island be developed immediately as a base so that a second trans-Pacific air route could be established south of the existing route through Hawaii. The memorandum attempted to justify this proposal on grounds of the military necessity of an alternate route which would not be subject to Japanese attack as the Hawaii-Palmyra-Canton-Fiji route was alleged to be.²

Admiral King was aware that the British had made many attempts to get the United States to build an air route between Great Britain and Australia which would by-pass the United States (i.e. England -- Bermuda -- British Honduras -- Clipperton -- Marquesas -- Society) and when the President referred the Australian memorandum to Admiral King for his comment, the Admiral regarded it as another such attempt. He wrote:

"The use of the air route involving Clipperton has been thoroughly explored and found infeasible by the Navy Department as a result of several studies. There is serious doubt as to the feasibility of constructing any kind of an air base on Clipperton Island."

Admiral King recommended that "it is deemed best to decline the Australian offer to share the responsibility with them and with other governments for the survey and preparation of their proposed trans-Pacific air route via Clipperton Island and the Marquesas." ³ The President accepted Admiral King's recommendation.

Admiral King had reason to believe that the British continued their efforts to have this route adopted and he felt compelled to remind the White House several months later of the Navy Department's attitude to forestall any acceptance of British plans. He wrote to Admiral Leahy on 3 April 1943 that he still believed a route through Clipperton would be of no aid to the war effort. ⁴

The British apparently marked time until January 1944 when the British Air Attaché in Washington, Air Commodore Lydford, spoke informally to representatives of the United States Army and Navy about a flight by an R.A.F. plane over U.S. Air Transport Command routes in the Pacific. ⁵ He did not pursue the matter however, and no other British interest was in evidence until the U.S. Naval Attaché in Mexico City reported on 3 May 1944 that a Canadian Transport plane bearing an R.A.F. Air Commodore and a small party had arrived on an unannounced mission late in April, without prior notification to Mexican or U.S. authorities. While in Mexico this group had flown to Acapulco on the West Coast. The British did not inform the Mexican Government of their mission, but the U.S. Naval Attaché believed that "this flight was made for the purpose of investigating the possibility of using the Acapulco Airport as a site for initiating trans-Pacific flights from the North American continent to Clipperton Island and on to the westward." ⁶

On 23 May, an officer of the R.A.F. Delegation in Washington reported briefly to the War and Navy Departments the details of a proposed survey of a route from Acapulco, Mexico to Australia via Clipperton Island and the Marquesas. The

planes for the survey, stated Wing Commander Young, were already en route to Mexico and it was proposed that the flight take place at once.⁷ The British itinerary for this survey, it must be emphasized, bore no relation to the trip over existing Air Transport Command routes which the British Air Attaché had mentioned in January and U.S. authorities had no prior information on this survey until it was underway!

Admiral King replied on 25 May to Air Marshal Welsh that more formal notification was necessary than given in the letter of 23 May, that the proposed flight seemed unnecessary, and that development of air transport service over the proposed route would be "unnecessary duplication not in the interest of the war effort."⁸

This brought to an abrupt halt the British survey flight and Air Marshal Welsh replied on 7 June that he would obtain instructions from the Air Ministry before proceeding further.⁹

Before the question was raised again several sources of information reported that British interests in this route were far more than strictly military. The Naval Attaché in Mexico City wrote on 29 May that there were many indications that the British proposal "while possibly for immediate war purpose is actually being considered for post-war commercial use."¹⁰ The State Department confirmed the British interest in post-war commercial aviation in this area. Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. A. A. Berle, informed the Navy Department of developments with respect to proposed extensions of the British Overseas Aircraft Corporation to South America. Mr. Berle said that the State Department presumed a connection was planned between this service and the South Pacific about to be surveyed by the R.A.F.; "In substance the British move represented the first major move for commercial air expansion since the beginning of the war."¹¹

The British official explanation of their proposed flight to the South Pacific was a far cry from the unofficial interpretations in Washington. The avowed purpose was purely military but commercial implications were clearly evident. When Air Marshal Welsh received details from London, he wrote to Admiral King on 30 June that "the object of the flight is to survey the most direct route between the U.K. and British Dominions and British-owned islands in the Pacific, with a view to developing it as a strategical air route" for transfer of planes to the Pacific after the close of war with Germany. The flight would involve two Catalina flying boats, wrote Welsh, and he asked that British and American staff officers meet to discuss details.¹²

Admiral King again replied in the negative to this proposal; he informed Air Marshal Welsh on 6 July that the establishment of a trans-Pacific route through Clipperton would require materials urgently needed elsewhere and he was unable to agree to the need for a survey flight.¹³ This refusal stopped Air Marshal Welsh for one month, but on 4 August he raised the question again with Admiral King¹⁴ and then followed his conversation with a letter on the 7th. He explained in detail the route and assistance required and he re-stated the purpose of the mission: "I should like again to make it clear that this flight is only a preliminary survey to ascertain whether or not it is possible to establish a reinforcing air route over the South Pacific. If the report of the survey is favorable, the actual preparation and establishment of the necessary bases will, of course, have to be discussed in greater detail later."¹⁵

The proposal simmered. On 13 August Admiral King wrote to the Naval Aide to the President explaining the British proposal, reminding him that an Australian suggestion in 1942 for a trans-Pacific route through Clipperton was disapproved on the ground that the effort necessary to develop the route was not

warranted by the over-all strategic situation. The Admiral said "there is no possibility of developing this route in time for it to be of use during the war.... Since the proposal of Air Marshal Welsh is for British exploration of a route that would be of value only in connection with post-war aviation, it relates to questions of national policy concerning which it appeared desirable to have the guidance of the President. Please ascertain the view of the President as to what action should be taken on the proposal put forward by Air Marshal Welsh."¹⁶

The President was not in Washington at this time and he was not consulted immediately. On 1 September Admiral King felt that a reply should be made to Air Marshal Welsh without further delay and he explained to the Naval Aide that, as the only help the British wanted was 3,000 gallons of fuel and 100 gallons of oil at Borabora, he did not feel that we should refuse it to them as the war effort depended on cooperation and mutual assistance in many theatres.¹⁷ Admiral Brown wired the President at Hyde Park requesting permission for the Navy to provide assistance for the British flight and he explained to the President that "refusal to provide the fuel requested might be misinterpreted."¹⁸

The President approved this request immediately; Admiral King gave the green light to Air Marshal Welsh,¹⁹ and the long-delayed flight for which the British had been planning since May went off according to schedule. The officer-in-charge was Captain P. G. Taylor, the Australian interested in commercial aviation development for many years who had been pushing for this survey since 1942. A British reconnaissance plane surveyed Clipperton Island on 9, 10 and 11 September and then proceeded to the Marquesas.²⁰

There was no further action in Washington until the U.S. Military Attaché in Mexico City reported on 3 October that a British officer had informed the Mexican War Department that the British intended to make a formal application for

permission to establish a trans-Mexican air route. The purpose of the route, the Mexicans were told, was to "move military planes and personnel only from Europe to Australia." The Mexican Secretary of War, before replying to the British, wanted to know what the American attitude on this British project was.¹²

Before the Staff Planners of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to whom this question was referred for recommendation, had reported their conclusions to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Air Vice Marshal Willock (successor to Air Marshal Welsh) wrote to Admiral King. On 16 October Willock said that the preliminary survey of Clipperton had been completed and there were satisfactory prospects for constructing a landplane and seaplane base there. A further survey of the Island was necessary and Willock intended therefore to send a small working party to the Island for approximately one month.

"It is proposed therefore," Willock continued, "to approach the Mexican authorities in order to obtain their consent for two Dakotas to be based at Acapulco, and to operate from there to the Island, moving over such equipment and stores as may be required. Before approaching the Mexican authorities I am writing to you... to request U.S. Navy agreement to this proposal. It will, however, be appreciated that the South Pacific route survey will not be complete nor will it be possible to prepare a satisfactory working report until the capacity of Clipperton Island is more fully established. ... I shall be grateful for an early notification of the concurrence of the Navy Department. ... There is no intention of going beyond the detailed survey of Clipperton Island until the final return of the reconnaissance aircraft from Australia and preparation of the report on the operation."¹³

This letter met with an extremely unfavorable reception in the Navy Department. Assistance had been given with reluctance for the flight of one plane; now the R.A.F. proposed to establish a force on Clipperton and presumably intended to build a landing field, since Willock stated that two landplanes would be used to move supplies and equipment to Clipperton from Mexico. Admiral King explained to Admiral Leahy that "this air route from Mexico to the South-

west Pacific is obviously a post-war commercial venture involving policies of our government," and he therefore refused Willock's request for U.S. Navy concurrence in the R.A.F. proposals.¹⁴ On 24 October Admiral King replied to Willock:

"I consider that this route via Clipperton Island to the Southwest Pacific as of no military value in connection with the war against Japan. However, Air Vice Marshal Willock's letter proposes enterprises by your government within an area in which the United States as well as Mexico and France are concerned. I consider that these activities are a matter for discussion and decision between your government and those of the United States and Mexico and the French authorities."¹⁵

While the United States Navy was expressing stern disapproval of the British survey, the Naval Attaché in Mexico City reported that British Catalinas were continuing their operations but that no information was available on their activities. The planes were using U.S. Army gasoline to such an extent that any further use would be detrimental to our own military activities in Mexico. The Attaché reported that the operation was so "cloudy" that he could offer no information about it.¹⁶

Air Vice Marshal Willock was not easily put off by Admiral King's letter of 24 October and on 1 November he asked for an interview with the Admiral. He explained that there was no intention of building a airstrip on Clipperton since there was sufficient level ground for the Dakotas to land and the survey party would not undertake any construction. Willock's letter is the most complete statement of British intentions to reach U.S. authorities:

"The sole object of the proposal is to make a complete survey of the Island, so that we can get the facts upon which to evaluate the possibility of establishing facilities for sea and land-based aircraft for the development of the reinforcing route to the Pacific Theatre. There is, however, no intention of the survey party carrying out any construction work.

"The desirability of surveying the Island has already been agreed and I am sure you will agree that it is highly desirable to follow up the favourable report from the reconnaissance party by a thorough survey to establish the fact that the potentialities

of a base exist.

"It is not suggested that any decision should be taken at this stage as to the military value of the route, which can only be decided when the exact deployment of air forces required to implement the agreed strategy for the prosecution of the war against Japan has been worked out by our respective staffs.

"Without a complete survey it will be impossible to assess the military value of the route in the light of the capacity available on alternative routes when future deployment figures have been worked out." ¹⁷

Admiral King most definitely did not agree with the "desirability of surveying the Island" and he refused Willock an interview. The Air Vice Marshal did, however, see Vice Admiral Edwards on 4 November to discuss Clipperton. He brought forth no new facts but he stressed the "urgency" of the British survey with more vehemence than his letters had shown and explained that the survey party was in Mexico awaiting our approval. ¹⁸

The next day Admiral King replied to Willock's letter of 1 November:

"I consider that there is little to be gained from further discussion. As stated in my letter of 24 October 1944 I consider that further activity of the British at Clipperton Island is a matter to be decided between your government and those of the United States, Mexico and France. I shall await instructions from my government before taking further action." ¹⁹

This statement was so forceful that Willock did not again approach the Navy Department which had now successfully washed its hands of the matter. The issue now became a political matter for the governments concerned and the Joint Chiefs of Staff informed the Secretary of State of their views on Clipperton Island.

General Marshall wrote to the Secretary of State for the Joint Chiefs of Staff on 4 November. He explained that the Mexican War Department had requested views on the anticipated British request for an air route across Mexico, and General Marshall now explained to the Secretary of State the implications of this request and the reply which the Joint Chiefs of Staff intended to make to

the Mexican Government. General Marshall wrote:

"The development of a military air route from Great Britain to the Pacific areas via the British West Indies, Mexico, and the French possessions of Clipperton and Borabora, is not essential to the war effort against Japan;

"The establishment of military air base facilities in Mexico in connection therewith is likewise not essential to the war effort, and might create a far reaching precedent;

"Other routes for the stated purpose are available and adequate;

"The development of this route during the period of hostilities, for whatever purpose intended, would detract from rather than enhance the war effort, owing to the diversion of shipping, construction materials and personnel it would entail.

"Although it is felt that the British proposal should not be carried out during the present war, they may suggest it for execution in the post-war period. Its consideration on that basis should be postponed until after the war to be reconsidered then in the light of then existing circumstances and as an integral part of the post-war aviation arrangements." ³⁰

There was now a lull in the Clipperton discussions during which no information reached the United States Government regarding British actions. On 21 November the British Ambassador asked the Acting Secretary of State about the status of Clipperton and Mr. Stettinius repeated for him briefly the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as contained in General Marshall's letter. Lord Halifax, however, offered no comments on British intentions. ³¹ There was no further word from Air Vice Marshal Willock and the last report from U.S. officers in Mexico was very vague. There existed the suspicion that the British might be proceeding with operations in Mexico and Clipperton. With this in mind, the President then directed Admiral Brown to "find out what the British are doing at Clipperton" ³² but there was no practicable way of doing this short of sending U.S. planes or troops to the Island, and so when Admiral Brown recommended on 27 November that a weather station be established at Clipperton, pending future

discussions with the British, French and Mexicans, the President ordered it done.³³ At the same time, to exert maximum pressure on the British, the President cabled to the Prime Minister:

"Having in mind the Monroe Doctrine, air agreements now in discussion, and American public opinion I suggest that any plan of development of military bases on Clipperton or any other territory in or near American waters be discussed by the governments concerned rather than by the Armed Forces. I request that you cancel any instructions by your people about a further survey of Clipperton until you and I can discuss it. King is sure he can work out a schedule of your planes through Hawaii to meet military requirements."³⁴

The President's message to the Prime Minister stated frankly some of the political reasons why the United States did not approve of British initiative in the Clipperton area; heretofore only military objections had been advanced. The establishment of a new military base by a non-American nation in Mexico or on Clipperton, within striking distance of the Panama Canal, is a matter of far-reaching significance which raises grave issues of military security, the Monroe Doctrine and Hemisphere solidarity. Furthermore, the establishment of the British route would surrender present U.S. control of air routes through Hawaii. The belief held by the U.S. Army and Navy that, despite protestations that their route was for military use only, the British intended it for post-war commercial aviation was confirmed by members of the British survey party itself on 7 December. In unguarded conversation, two R.A.F. men spoke freely with a U.S. Navy petty officer on duty with our Naval Attaché in Mexico City. The Naval Attaché reported as follows:

"These men also stated that the British were interested in establishing a trans-Pacific route from Acapulco via Clipperton Island and to the South Sea Islands to Australia, not as has been claimed for military purposes but as a commercial route to be used after the war. Should this route be put into operation before the termination of the war, it will be used largely as a means of ferrying aircraft from Europe to the Pacific War Theatre. These men also made it known that the British planned to obtain the large four-engine Douglas airplanes from U.S. manufacturers to be used on this commer-

cial air route." ³⁵

Nor was the appearance of Captain P. G. Taylor on the scene as the leader of the survey expedition calculated to lessen U.S. concern over British motives.

Our alarm which reached its peak in late November was lessened, and the President was re-assured, when the Prime Minister replied on 28 November that all action would be suspended until he and the President had the opportunity to talk the affair over, ³⁶ and by reports from U.S. Naval reconnaissance planes on 3 December that no personnel were on Clipperton. ³⁷ Fears that the British might actually have taken possession were therefore unfounded. Since that time British personnel are reported to have left Mexico ³⁸ and there has been no further discussion with the British about Clipperton other than a follow-up report from the Prime Minister on 10 January 1945. The Prime Minister stated:

"I have now looked into the matter of Clipperton Island Survey and am relieved to find that the Air Ministry here did not issue any instructions in this matter until our delegation in Washington had received full approval in writing from the Navy Department for this survey to be carried out. The Navy Department, furthermore, provided facilities in the form of gasoline and oil at Borabora. The survey was then carried out, and its results communicated to the Navy Department.

"The question of a further flight to complete the survey was being discussed with the Navy Department and the State Department at the time your telegram was sent. I mention this to correct any impression which may be in your mind that the Air Ministry acted high-handedly.

"I entirely agree that we should leave the whole matter till we meet." ³⁹

The Prime Minister's dispatch is not completely accurate. What the President had objected to, and asked the Prime Minister to cancel, was the plan for an extensive survey of Clipperton; the Prime Minister confuses the issue by referring to the U.S. Navy's approval of the first reconnaissance flight. Nor is it true that "the further flight to complete the survey" was under discussion when the

President's message was sent; the Navy had disposed of it three weeks before by Admiral King's letter of 5 November and Secretary Stettinius had told Lord Halifax on 21 November that the question must wait until after the war. Despite these inaccuracies the Prime Minister's message was warmly welcomed for his agreement to settle the matter when he meets the President.

After the President raised the issue with the Prime Minister but before the matter went further in diplomatic channels, the U.S. Navy established a weather station on Clipperton Island. On 11 December an armed observation party and a weather reporting station were landed, a small patrol vessel stood by, and preparations were under way for sending construction materials to the Island.⁴⁰ A permanent weather base with a radio station was completed on 2 January.⁴¹

The State Department supported whole-heartedly the decisions of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as forwarded in General Marshall's letter. After Mr. Stettinius had informed Lord Halifax of them, the Ambassador to Mexico was instructed (on 7 December) to inform the Mexican Foreign Minister that the position taken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff had the full concurrence and support of the State Department.⁴² Ambassador Messersmith reported on 13 December that his conferences with the Foreign Minister and the President of Mexico were entirely satisfactory, and that "the manner in which the Ministry of National Defense has handled this matter so far ... has been highly cooperative with us and understanding of the principles of inter-American defense and the undesirability of setting any precedent through an outside power coming in." The Ambassador concluded, "I think, therefore, the Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff may take it for granted that if any formal request by the British should be made for the establishment or the facilitating of such a route over Mexico, the attitude in the Ministry of National Defense, in the Ministry of Foreign Relations, and in the Presidency will be

definitely unfavorable." ⁴³

Whereas relations with Great Britain and Mexico went well after December 7th there were difficulties with the French authorities when they were apprised of U.S. action at Clipperton. The President directed on 19 December that a representative of the Navy Department notify Admiral Fenard, Head of the French Naval Mission in Washington, (Note: The French Ambassador had not yet presented his credentials) of the U.S. Naval weather station on Clipperton. ⁴⁴ Admiral Fenard was informed the same day that U.S. Armed Forces had landed on Clipperton "as a necessary war measure." This was the first information the French had of the U.S. action and it apparently came as a shock. The British had not informed the French, to the best of our knowledge, of the proposed survey in May, ⁴⁵ but several months later, just before the September flight, British authorities in London informed the French representatives there of it. When the U.S. went ahead without consulting the French in the same manner, they were extremely annoyed. It implied to them, especially suspicious and jealous of their reputation at this time, that the U.S. was flaunting French Sovereignty over Clipperton and it aroused a fear that the U.S. was supporting or promoting Mexican claims to the Island. ^{(c) The French representatives in Washington are demanding in-}

As a test case, to re-assert French Sovereignty and to discover the scope of U.S. activities, the French representative in Mexico City, Garreau Dombasle, supported an expedition of Mexicans and Americans who planned to leave Acapulco for Clipperton on 5 January to investigate "shark fishing". Dombasle planned to send the French Military Attache as an observer and on 4 January he informed the U.S. Naval Attache that this undertaking would be a "French Government expedition." ⁴⁶ Here, however, he ran afoul to the U.S. Navy's ban on "all personnel except from a regularly commissioned French Man-of-War" visiting Clipperton. The expedition,

which is under the command of an English citizen, still has not sailed from Acapulco and Admiral King has issued orders that "security of military information precludes close inspection by civilian visitors." #7

While Dombasle's "shark fishing" expedition awaits clearance, the French Embassy in Washington is pressing the State Department and Admiral Fenard is requesting information from the Navy Department about U.S. activities at Clipperton Island. No replies to their queries have been made.

At present, the status of the Clipperton question is as follows:

(a) The British Government has been informed of the U.S. Forces at Clipperton and has suspended all action on its "survey" of the Island. The Prime Minister has promised to discuss Clipperton with the President at their next meeting.

(b) The Mexican Government has also been informed of the U.S. weather station, and Mexican authorities have been cooperating wholeheartedly with the U.S. in all matters concerning air routes through Mexico and Clipperton.

(c) The French representatives in Washington are demanding information on our activities and intentions. The manner of answering their queries is under consideration.

NOTES

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- III. Biographical note on P. G. Taylor 19

Government has officially recognized that we have no right to all rights of sovereignty over Clipperton. The evidence of the existence of the United States is a decree dated January 30, 1941, published in the *Alaska Journal* of January 23, 1941, stating that "the Congress of the United States, and with the approval of the majority of the State Legislatures, hereby declares that the United States is the sole and exclusive owner of the island of Clipperton, which specifies the location, boundaries and title of the island."

The United States has never made an explicit statement of recognition that Clipperton island belongs to France, but we have not seen any representation to France in regard to the award of January 23, 1941, nor have we ever asked directly or indirectly any question about French sovereignty. In other words, United States recognition of French sovereignty is implied by our lack of action at any time since 1941.

The source of this information is a letter from Mr. John H. Brown of the Department of State to Rear Admiral G. A. Davidson, 104-157, dated 1 January 1941.

I. SOVEREIGNTY OF CLIPPERTON ISLAND

Conflicting claims of France and Mexico to Clipperton Island were settled by arbitration when the arbitrator, the King of Italy, awarded the Island to France on 28 January 1931. The Mexican Government has officially recognized this award and has renounced all claims of sovereignty over Clipperton. The evidence of the acceptance of the decision lies in a decree dated January 10, 1934, published in the Diario Oficial of January 18, 1934, stating that "the Congress of the Mexican States, and with the approval of the majority of the State Legislatures declares amended Article 42 of the Political Constitution" by excluding Clipperton Island from that document, which specifies the territory comprised within the Republic of Mexico.

The United States has never made an outright statement of recognition that Clipperton Island belongs to France, but we have not made representations to France in regard to the award of January 28, 1931 nor have we ever raised formally or informally any question about French ownership. In other words, United States recognition of French sovereignty is implied by our lack of action at any time since 1931.

The source of this information is a letter from Mr. John Hickerson of the Department of State to Rear Admiral L. A. Davidson, (Op-13), dated 8 January 1945.

Clipperton Island

General Description

1. The French-owned island of CLIPPERTON lies about 670 miles southwest of ACAPULCO Harbor, Mexico, at Latitude 10° 17' N., Longitude 109° 13' W., on the great circle course between Southern Australia and Central Florida.

2. It consists of a low coral ring, from 50 to 400 yards in width, completely enclosing a lagoon about two miles by one and one-half miles. The rim of the island, which averages about ten feet above mean sea level, is barren except for a few clumps of coconut trees and some scrub brush. At several places the seas have from time to time broken over the coral rim. The island is almost entirely fringed by a coral reef with rocks on the shallow portion inshore that uncover at low tide. In places, notably on the north-east point where landings were made, the coral shelf is covered by sand, which forms a gently sloping beach. See Photos #1 to 16, Book IV.

3. The lagoon varies in depth from a few feet to more than 15 fathoms. Shallow areas, which occur throughout the lagoon, are shown on the mosaic map - Exhibit "D", Sheet 2. Samples of rock taken in shallow water indicate the lagoon bottom is composed principally of hard coral. The water in the lagoon was brackish at the time of our visit (70 grains of salt per gallon compared to 15 grains for good drinking water and 2500 grains for sea water).

Inspection by Board

4. The Board spent three days on aerial and ground surveys at this location. Ground control for the mosaic map, Exhibit "D" was established by triangulation. Cross sectional levels were taken over a portion of the land area, and the lagoon was sounded on four separate ranges.

Winds and Tides

5. The prevailing wind direction is northeasterly from the middle of November to the end of May. During the remaining part of the year the prevailing direction is southwesterly at 12 knots. The spring rise is $4\frac{1}{4}$ feet, and the neap rise $2\frac{2}{3}$ feet.

6. CLIPPERTON lies within the intertropical front from July to November, during which period low ceilings, poor visibility and turbulence may be expected - Addendum "A". Flight experience elsewhere in the Pacific has shown that scheduled operations are entirely feasible in areas similarly affected by intertropical frontal weather. The area in the vicinity of CLIPPERTON is also subject to an occasional intense tropical storm or hurricane. It has been reported that CLIPPERTON is entirely awash from high seas accompanying these storms, although coconut palms and brush found on the island at the time of our visit indicated that the greater part of the island had not been awash for considerable time.

Landplane Possibilities

7. Landplane runways along the narrow rim of the island must be built on fill made with dredged material from the lagoon. Three runways can be constructed; one prevailing wind runway, 5300 feet long by 300 feet wide, along an approximate NE-SW bearing, could be located in the northwestern part; a second prevailing wind runway in the southeastern part of the island, 7,000 x 500', azimuth 50°; and a "no-wind" runway, 9,600 feet long by 300 feet wide, at approximately a 110° bearing, could be located on the northerly shore. It is not possible to construct a 10,000-foot runway in the direction of the prevailing winds.

8. By filling the entire area between the first runway and the outer edge of the island, an additional 500-foot wide surface could be provided for a 4,900-foot length. The 9,500-foot runway is limited to a 300-foot width to keep the fill to reasonable quantities.

9. The quantities of fill material required for these runways are as follows:

- Runway No. 1 (5300' x 300'), 1,700,000 cu. yds.
- Runway No. 2 (9600' x 300'), 2,500,000 cu. yds.
- Runway No. 3 (7000' x 500'), 4,500,000 cu. yds.

Seaplane Possibilities

10. The lagoon affords good shelter for seaplane operations, and is sufficiently large to allow for development of one runway approximately 8,000 feet long by 1,000 feet wide, along a NE-SW axis, and another approximately 10,500 feet long by 1,000 feet wide, along an E-W axis-Exhibit "D". Considerable dredging will be necessary to provide a 10-foot depth over the entire 1,000-foot width, but the materials so obtained can be used as fill for landplane runways.

Harbors and Anchorages

11. Since there is no pass into the lagoon, a pilot channel should be cut through the rim of the island in order to move the dredge and other floating equipment into the lagoon. There are several places where this channel could be cut, but the best location should be determined at the time of construction. By deepening and widening this pilot channel to accommodate supply ships and tankers, discharging may be done in the quiet water of the lagoon.

Construction and Costs

12. The construction of a combined landplane and seaplane base at CLIPPERTON Island would be a major undertaking. In order to develop the island to its maximum uses, it would be desirable to construct Runways No. 2 and 3, which require dredging and handling 7,000,000 cubic yards of coral rock. The dredged materials from the seaplane runway areas are estimated

to furnish 900,000 cubic yards of fill. The remaining 6,100,000 cubic yards would be dredged from selected areas of the lagoon. It is assumed that all of the lagoon areas to be dredged would require "shooting," and that 85 per cent of the quantity of broken coral would be recovered for fill.

[Costs are estimated in detail at this point. Totals are:

Seaplane Base only:	\$3,700,000
Combined Land & Seaplane Base:	22,000,000.]

13. A suggested construction schedule, Appendix "E", shows that, with the equipment and personnel indicated, construction of a combined seaplane and landplane base would require three years.

Summary and Conclusions

14. Subject to certain limitations on landplane operations set forth below, the indications are that weather conditions would permit the use of CLIPPERTON Island for scheduled air transport operations through this area, and that sufficient radio navigational and communications facilities could be installed to permit instrument landings when required. The two seaplane runways discussed above would provide a good operating base. With the development of two landplane runways, one 7,000 feet by 500 feet, in the direction of the prevailing winds, and one 9,600 feet by 300 feet for use as a "no-wind" runway, a landplane base would be provided.

15. The next intermediate stop on a westward trip across the southern Pacific would be about 2,200 or 2,300 miles distant. Accordingly, planes taking off on westward trips would be loaded to their maximum allowable gross weights. Conservative operating practices would require the use of the 9,600-foot runway under cross-wind conditions up to 10 miles per hour, and the use of the 7,000-foot runway, under "on runway" wind conditions of 20 miles per hour or more. Accordingly, use of the base by fully loaded landplanes would be restricted during northeast or southwest winds (prevailing direction) of velocities between 10 and 20 miles per hour. The seriousness of this restriction on scheduled operation cannot now be determined in view of the lack of meteorological data.

WHO'S WHO IN AUSTRALIA

1941 Edition

TAYLOR, Capt. Patrick Gordon, M.C., E.G.M., eminent Australian air pilot and navigator; wartime service with Royal Flying Corps; was engaged in Australian civil aviation in immediate post-war years; has extensive business interests, but comes into forefront of civil flying when occasion requires; most notable achievements in recent years include Pacific flight in Lockheed Altair Lady Southern Cross as navigator and co-pilot with the late Sir Charles Kingsford Smith in November 1934, several extraordinarily accurate long-range solo press flights, and the heroic action which saved the monoplane Southern Cross and entire crew during an attempted Australia-New Zealand flight in May, 1935, for which he was awarded Medal of the Order of the British Empire for Gallantry; in flying boat Guba made 1st air-crossing of Indian Ocean, June 1939, and survey of air-route for Brit. and Aus. Govts.; publications, Pacific Flight, VH-UXX, Call To The Winds;

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

17 January 1945

TOP-SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL BROWN

Subject: Clipperton Island.

In compliance with your directive, I have assembled a file of papers and written a report on the development of United States and British interest in Clipperton Island. The following conclusions are submitted for your consideration. Throughout the report I have proceeded on the premise that the French claim of sovereignty over Clipperton is incontestible.

The decision to establish U.S. Armed Forces on French-owned Clipperton Island in December 1944 was precipitated only by our fear of high-handed British action and our uncertainty of British intentions and activities with respect to that Island. The United States had had no previous interest in establishing forces there and we had since the beginning of the war consistently opposed all projects of utilizing Clipperton.

In late November, when several items caused us to suspect that the British might occupy Clipperton, time seemed to be short and the establishment of a U.S. weather station was ordered even before reconnaissance showing whether our suspicions were justified that the British had moved in. Because of a sense of urgency, and to prevent our intention being known to the British before we were in possession, the French were not informed of our action until our forces were ashore. Then, informally through Naval Channels, the French were told that we had established a weather station at Clipperton "as a necessary war measure". This was a particularly unfortunate approach and it has been exceedingly irritating to French authorities at a time when the French are especially sensitive of their "honor" and "national prestige". It has resulted in French insistence that they be told the full facts of our occupation of Clipperton and be allowed to assert their sovereignty by sending observers there.

The Mexican Government has cooperated completely in all U.S. diplomatic and military requests concerning British interests or intentions to establish a trans-Mexican air route involving Clipperton.

Our objective has been achieved. Our only purpose in occupying Clipperton was to forestall British occupation. The British have since acquiesced in our request to suspend active interest in Clipperton until the President and the Prime Minister can discuss the subject. It would seem advisable that the French be told all they wish to know about the facts of our occupation (although not the reason therefor) and that French observers be allowed to visit the Island. To hold off the French any longer will cause needless irritation and jeopardize our relations with French authorities. Should we refuse to meet French requests and if the French choose to make an issue of our occupation of Clipperton, it

would raise suspicions as to U.S. post-war intentions in other places where we now have troops and would open the U.S. to the grave charge of violating our pledge in the Atlantic Charter that we seek no territorial aggrandizement.

When the future of Clipperton Island is considered, it seems even more essential to come to an understanding with French authorities now. It seems certain that Clipperton is destined to play a large role in post-war Pacific Aviation if for no other reason than that the British are determined to develop an all-British trans-Pacific air route with Clipperton as a key point. Admiral Byrd's survey has shown that the development of Clipperton is feasible and his description of the Island is more favorable than any report this Government had previously had. We cannot maintain permanently an occupying force on Clipperton unless we can come to an understanding with the French, for we will have to withdraw when the pretext of military necessity is gone. If we continue to antagonize the French over Clipperton, they may let Great Britain have the Island on a long-term lease or develop it themselves as a post-war commercial air base. It would be contrary to our national interests for any European power to develop a new base within striking distance of the Panama Canal. Since the Island is almost certain to be developed as a base, we must be the Nation to control it. We stand our best chance of obtaining this control by friendly means if we come to an amicable understanding now with the French authorities and meet their reasonable demands.

With respect to the forthcoming conference of the President and the Prime Minister, it would seem advisable for the President to reiterate to the Prime Minister the fact that the development of a trans-Pacific route through Clipperton is not justified during the war and that all British needs for movement of planes and personnel to the Pacific can be met by existing U.S. air routes. The views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, (which are set forth in JCS 1100/1), fully concurred in by the State Department, should be re-stated by the President to Mr. Churchill. All the British have actually asked for is permission to carry out a thorough survey of Clipperton. After expressing the American position that the development of this Island is not feasible now, the President might agree to a thorough survey of Clipperton immediately after the war. This would be a concession of sorts to the British and would give the appearance of a compromise whereas in reality we would be yielding nothing.

Very respectfully,

George M. Elsey
GEORGE M. ELSEY

TOP-SECRET

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET
SECRET

January 17, 1945.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

Lieutenant Elsey (for Clipperton file).

This morning I talked with Admiral King, Admiral Edwards and Admiral Davidson on the subject of Clipperton Island and what should be told the French in response to their insistent demands to know what we were doing at Clipperton and why they had not been consulted.

I stressed the fact that the President's action in regard to Clipperton was limited to his approval of a request of the Navy Department to establish an air observation station on that island and that he should not be brought into any discussions about why the station was established or what future designs, if any, we may have on Clipperton.

Admiral King said that he is quite willing to accept the responsibility: that the weather station was established as a necessary war measure in the same manner as other stations had been established in the Pacific in the prosecution of the war and that he had no explanation or apology to make of it to either French or British enquirers. This conversation was repeated by me to Admiral Edwards and Admiral Davidson with the repeated statement that I felt it very necessary that the President should not be quoted to anybody in view of the debates that may occur in the future.


WILSON BROWN,

Vice Admiral, U.S.N.,
Naval Aide to the President.

SECRET

TOP SECRET DISPATCH *Clifferton*

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY 1
RELEASED BY		OPNAV *	PRIORITY 2
DATE 16 JANUARY 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 1617		COMMESTSEAFRON	DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY KERNAN/SOWERS			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY KERNAN CHECKED BY BENNETT			6
ROUTED BY KERNAN DITTOED BY KERNAN			7
			PRIORITY 8
			PRIORITY 9
			ROUTINE 10
			DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 12
			13
			14

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE. IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

151900 NCR 8076

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

(INFO COMMESTSEAFRON ACTION OPNAV.)

THIS IS TOP SECRET.

PEZ DE PLATA FORMERLY LUCKY LADY HELD BY MEXICAN NAVAL AUTHORITIES ACAPULCO UNTIL SATISFACTORY HIGH SEA NAVIGATOR EMPLOYED. DURAND ON BOARD BUT REPLACED AS CAPTAIN BY RODNEY SATLIER AN ENGLISH CITIZEN. RECOGNITION SIGNALS REQUESTED FOR VOYAGE REFUSED BY ALUSLO ACAPULCO BY MY AUTHORITY URDIS ^{attached} 091610.

*NOT DELIVERED TO CNO. REFERENCE IS COMINCH OUTGOING NCR 49731.

COMINCH COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

550 Clifferton

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DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM US NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY MEXICO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION	PRIORITY
DATE 23 JAN 1945			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM 0309			DEFERRED
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Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

AIRMAILGRAM

WITH FURTHER REFERENCE TO MY DESPATCH 151900, THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS GIVEN TO THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR BY A MEMORANDUM THIS AFTERNOON:

"THIS AFTERNOON, ABOUT 5:30 P.M., A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE FRENCH MINISTER, COMTE JEAN DE CARAMAN CALLED ON THE NAVAL ATTACHE AND STATED THAT THE MINISTER HAD COMMUNICATED WITH HIS GOVERNMENT IN PARIS AND NOW DESIRED TO KNOW WHETHER COMMANDANT DIVES, THE FRENCH MILITARY ATTACHE AND HIS ASSISTANT, A FRENCH ENLISTED MAN OF THE RANK OF CORPORAL, COULD LAND AT CLIPPERTON.

I INFORMED HIM THAT IT HAD ALREADY BEEN TAKEN UP WITH THE MINISTER BY THE ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE, LIEUTENANT DONALD W. NOBLE WHO HAD INFORMED THE MINISTER THAT IN VIEW OF THE MILITARY MEASURES WHICH WE HAD BEEN OBLIGED TO TAKE AT CLIPPERTON ISLAND, IN VIEW

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-4 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET *F-33*

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM US NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY MEXICO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY _____	FOR ACTION		PRIORITY 2
DATE _____			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM _____			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY _____			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY _____	INFORMATION		6
CHECKED BY _____			PRIORITY 9
DITTOED BY _____			ROUTINE 10
ROUTED BY _____			DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 12
			13
			14

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE. IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

PAGE 2 OF 3 **151840** **NCR 11663**

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

OF THE MILITARY EXIGENCIES WHICH HAD ARISEN AND IN VIEW OF THE DISPOSITIONS WHICH HAD BEEN NECESSARY TO TAKE AND WHICH IT WAS NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN, THE COMMANDER OF THE WESTERN SEA FRONTIER DID NOT WISH SUCH A VISIT AS THAT PLANNED BY THE "PEZ-DE PLATA" TO TAKE PLACE AT THIS TIME. I TOLD HIM THAT THERE WAS NOTHING FURTHER THAT I COULD DO IN THIS MATTER AND I SUGGESTED TO HIM THAT HE COMMUNICATE WITH THE FRENCH EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON ON THIS MATTER. COMTE DE CARAMAN THEN ASKED ME WHETHER OR NOT IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE ONE OF OUR VESSELS TAKE COMMANDANT DIVES ON BOARD ON A POSSIBLE VOYAGE TO CLIPPERTON. I EXPLAINED THAT I HAD NO CONTROL OVER NAVAL SHIPS IN THIS AREA, NOR DID I HAVE, AS HE SUGGESTED I MIGHT HAVE, A LIAISON WITH CLIPPERTON ISLAND. I AGAIN INFORMED HIM THAT I BELIEVED THAT THE ONLY SATISFACTORY WAY TO FIND AN ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION WOULD BE THROUGH HIS CONTACT WITH THE FRENCH EMBASSY

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

RAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM US NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY MEXICO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	FOR ACTION		PRIORITY 2
DATE			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY	INFORMATION		PRIORITY 9
CHECKED BY			ROUTINE 10
BY			DEFERRED 11
ROUTED BY			BASEGRAM 12
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE. IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

PAGE 3 OF 3 151847 NCR 11683

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

IN WASHINGTON.

COMTE DE CARAMAN SAID THAT HE HAD VISITED THE MEXICAN MINISTRY OF MARINE AND HAD SEEN ADMIRAL BLANCO WHO TOLD HIM THAT HE DID NOT WISH TO GIVE PERMISSION FOR THE VESSEL TO SAIL UNTIL HE WAS ASSURED THAT THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES WOULD PERMIT A LANDING TO BE MADE AT CLIPPERTON, OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT. COMTE DE CARAMAN INSISTED THAT THERE WAS A COMPETENT CREW ON THE SHIP AND THAT MR. DURAND WAS FAMILIAR WITH SHARK FISHING.

IT OCCURRED TO ME THAT THERE MUST BE SOME OTHER REASON, OTHER THAN SHARK FISHING, FOR VISITING THIS ISLAND IN VIEW OF THE DESIRE OF THE FRENCH MINISTER TO OBTAIN PERMISSION FOR HIS MILITARY ATTACHE TO VISIT THAT ISLAND ON BOARD AN AMERICAN MAN-OF-WAR.

COMINCH: COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO. 151847

OPNAV 19-78

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

Hickerson inquired of Admiral
Hickerson intended to withdraw from
and that it was inappropriate to proceed.

12 January 1945

SECRET

MEMORANDUM BY REAR ADMIRAL DAVIDSON (OP 13)

An officer from the French Embassy called on Mr. John Hickerson of the State Department on Friday, 12 January, to inquire:

1. Why Clipperton Island was occupied without previous notification.

Answer: Military necessity.

The French Officer likened the U.S. to Hitler in method.

2. Whether the French Flag was hauled down.

Answer: If the French Flag was flying, it was not hauled down.

3. Why the French should have to ask permission to visit the French possession.

Answer: There is no requirement that permission be asked; merely a notification. And there is no objection to visits of an Ally except that civilians could not be permitted close inspection of military establishments.

4. Admiral Fenard also wishes answers to the following questions:

- (a) When was the Island occupied?
- (b) How many people are there?
- (c) What are they doing?
- (d) How long do they plan to remain?
- (e) Any other pertinent data.

The State Department made no reply and if a reply is made, it will be that this information must be obtained from the U.S. Navy.

SECRET

Mr. Hickerson inquired of Admiral Davidson when U.S. Naval Forces intended to withdraw from the Island. Admiral Davidson replied that it was impracticable to foretell.

h. h. s. l. g.

TOP-SECRET

COPY

TOP SECRET
PRIORITY

10 JANUARY 1945

FROM: OPNAV
TO : ALUSNA, LONDON

NUMBER 697. TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL FROM THE PRESIDENT FOR
THE PRIME MINISTER.

Thank you for your 883. I feel sure that we will be able to
work out a solution that will be satisfactory to all concerned.

ROOSEVELT

Released 101629Z

- 1 -

COPY

TOP-SECRET

Regraded Unclassified

TOP-SECRET

COPY

FROM: THE PRIME MINISTER
TO : THE PRESIDENT
NO : 883, 10 JANUARY 1945

Your number 659.

1. I have now looked into the matter of the Clipperton Island survey and am relieved to find that the Air Ministry here did not issue any instructions in this matter until our delegation in Washington had received full approval in writing from the Navy Department for this survey to be carried out. The Navy Department, furthermore, provided facilities in the form of gasoline and oil at Bora Bora. The survey was then carried out, and its results communicated to the Navy Department.

2. The question of a further flight to complete the survey was being discussed with the Navy Department and the State Department at the time your telegram was sent. I mention this to correct any impression which may be in your mind that the Air Ministry acted high-handedly.

3. I entirely agree that we should leave the whole matter till we meet.

PRIME

Answered by Pres. # 697.

COPY

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

OR 43/WJ	EXT. 2812	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH AND CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY ADM E J KING		COMWESTSEAFRON	PRIORITY
DATE 9 JAN 45			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROM 1717			DEFERRED
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM
PARAPHRASED BY DORSEY	CHECKED BY SONNICK	FOR ACTION	8
BY	DITTO BY DORSEY		9
ROUTED BY			10
		INFORMATION	11
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

091612 **NCR 49724**

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

YOUR DISPATCH TO ALUSNA MEXICO CITY REFER BY 091612 SHOULD BE DELAYED PENDING RECEIPT OF LETTER.

COMINCH: COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.

Note: In 132132 CWSF asked if the letter referred to above had been sent. Capt Beasley informed CWSF orally that no letter would be written.

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" regulations contained in Article 75, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

Chipperton Island.

091612

DRAFTER OP 13/14	EXT. 2612	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH AND CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY ADM KING		ALUSMA MEXICO CITY	PRIORITY 2
DATE 9 JANUARY 1945			ROUTINE 3
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091610			<input type="checkbox"/>
NCR 49731			

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

YOUR ~~051850~~ VISIT OF PEZ DEPLATA HAS BEEN REFERRED TO AND WILL BE SUBJECT OF DESPATCH DIRECT FROM COMWESTSEAFRON. SECURITY OF MILITARY INFORMATION PRECLUDES CLOSE INSPECTION BY CIVILIAN VISITORS.

COMINCH: COPIES 1 TO 8 INCLUSIVE.

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO. 3

Clipperton Island File

091610

TOP SECRET

México, D.F., January 9, 1945.

No. 22,402

ESTRICTAMENTE CONFIDENCIAL
SUBJECT: Mexican Government Has Given Appropriate Instructions With
Regard to the Departure of Vessels and Planes from Mexican
Territory for Clipperton Island.

4 de enero de 1945.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's secret telegram No. 12 of January 2, 7 p.m., requesting that I inform the President of Mexico and the Foreign Minister that in view of certain circumstances vessels and planes leaving Mexican territory for Clipperton Island should give previous notice before leaving for that destination, such notice to be given to the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier of the United States Navy at San Francisco. I also have to refer in this connection to my top secret despatch No. 22,503 of January 3, 1945, with which I transmitted a copy of a letter of that same date which I left with the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Padilla, based on the above-mentioned telegram. I also have to refer to my top secret despatch No. 22,339 of January 5, 1945, in which I informed the Department that the President of Mexico had informed the Foreign Minister that the appropriate instructions were being given to the Mexican authorities.

I now have to transmit herewith a copy of a strictly confidential letter, dated January 4, from the Minister of Foreign Relations with which he sends a copy of a strictly confidential letter addressed by the Ministry to the Minister of Marine of the Mexican Government, in which the appropriate instructions which we requested are set forth.

It will appear from the enclosures to this letter that the Mexican Government has taken the appropriate steps which we have indicated we believe are desirable.

Respectfully yours,

G. S. Messersmith

To Department in
Triplicate
GSM:NA
Enclosure:
As stated.

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

ENCLOSURE NO. 1 TO DESPATCH NO. 22,402, DATED JANUARY 9, 1945 FROM
THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, MEXICO, D.F.

SUBSECRETARIA.

ESTRICTAMENTE CONFIDENCIAL

SEAL
Secretario de
Relaciones Exteriores
Mexico

ESTRICTAMENTE CONFIDENCIAL

4 de enero de 1945.

Excmo. Sr. George S. Messersmith,
Embajador de los Estados Unidos,
P r e s e n t e.

Muy estimado señor Embajador:

En contestación a su muy atenta carte del 3 del actual, me es grato manifestar a usted que ya he comunicado al señor Secretario de la Marina Nacional, la necesidad de que los propietarios encargados de los buques o aeroplanos que salgan de aguas de la República para la isla de Clipperton o sus inmediaciones, se pongan en contacto con el Commander of the Western Sea Frontier of the United States Navy.

Le he indicado asimismo, que el Agregado Naval de la Embajada Norteamericana, gustoso colaborará con las autoridades mexicanas en todo lo relativo al arribo de embarcaciones y aeroplanos en la Isla de Clipperton.

Me repito de usted afectísimo amigo y atento seguro servidor.

E. Padilla

Al suplicar a usted que este asunto se trate con una suma
señalamiento reservada, aprovecho la oportunidad para reiterarle las
seguridades de mi muy atenta y distinguida consideración.

SUBRUBIO EJECUTIVO DE ADMINISTRACION
Mexico, 4 de enero de 1945.
EL SECRETARIO.

Esquivel Padilla.

COPY

SUBSECRETARIA.

0203

ESTRICTAMENTE CONFIDENCIAL.

C. Secretario de la Marina Nacional,
P r e s e n t e.

La Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores ha recibido informes de que el Gobierno de los Estados Unidos de América, con conocimiento de las autoridades francesas, ha instalado un puesto de observación en la Isla de Clipperton. Debido a las actividades submarinas japonesas, esa estación se halla fuertemente defendida.

En consecuencia de lo anterior y para evitar accidentes lamentables, resulta indispensable que en el caso de que navegaciones de cualquier índole o aeroplanos que desean trasladarse, de puertos mexicanos a la referida Isla o a sus inmediaciones, se indique a los propietarios o encargados de los mismos, que antes de emprender el viaje se pongan en contacto con el Comandante de la Frontera Marítima Occidental de la Armada Norteamericana, en San Francisco, a fin de que éste pueda tomar las precauciones necesarias para que no se registre un incidente por falta de una oportuna identificación.

Por último, agradeceré a usted tomar nota de que el Agregado Naval de la Embajada Norteamericana en México, se encuentra en la mejor disposición de colaborar con las autoridades navales mexicanas en todo lo relativo al arribo de embarcaciones y aeroplanos a la Isla de Clipperton procedentes de México.

Al suplicar a usted que este asunto se trate en una forma estrictamente reservada, aprovecho la oportunidad para reiterarle las seguridades de mi muy atenta y distinguida consideración.

SUPRAGIO EFECTIVO NO REELECTION
México, 4 de enero de 1945.
EL SECRETARIO.

Ezequiel Padilla.

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

Mexico, D. F., January 8 1945.

TOP SECRET - FIRST PRIORITY
No. 22,341

6-8 ?

Subject: With further Reference to the Establishment by Our Navy of a Weather Reporting Station and an Armed Observation Party on Clipperton Island, and with Particular Reference to the Activity of the French Government in Establishing an Alleged Shark Fishing Industry on the Island.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's Secret telegram No. 12 of January 2, 7:00 p.m. and to my top secret despatch No. 22,303 of January 3, 1945, and to my top secret despatch No. 22,339 of January 5, 1945, all with reference to the establishment by our Navy of a weather reporting station and an armed observation party on Clipperton Island. Reference is also made in this correspondence to the presence in Mexico at Acapulco of several British hydroplanes said to be interested in a survey of an alleged military route over Mexico through Clipperton Island to the Pacific war theatre. Reference has also been made in the above-mentioned correspondence to the interest of the French Legation in Mexico in the establishment of a shark fishing industry on Clipperton Island.

I now have to transmit herewith a memorandum marked top secret from the Naval Attache of this Embassy dated January 4, and covering a conversation which the Naval Attache had with the French Minister here on the occasion of a call which the French Minister made on him on the evening of January 4. As the memorandum is self-explanatory I will not go into detail in this despatch.

There is also transmitted herewith a further memorandum from the Naval Attache marked top secret dated January 5, in which he quotes the paraphrase of a telegram which was sent by the Naval Attache to the Chief of Naval Operations and to the Commander in Chief of the United States Fleet with regard to the call of the French Minister above mentioned and asking for authorization for this vessel to proceed to Clipperton to make preliminary investigations with respect to a shark fishing industry to be established on Clipperton Island allegedly under the auspices of the French Government.

This Embassy has no recommendations whatever to make in this matter as it believes it is within the discretion solely of our Naval authorities to determine whether this permission for this vessel to proceed to Clipperton shall be granted. I have small faith in the real desire of the French Government to promote a shark fishing industry on Clipperton Island. I have no doubt that there are interests in Mexico which would eventually be interested in getting such a shark fishing concession on Clipperton. I fail to see what food the sharks in the vicinity of Clipperton feed upon so that they have livers twice the size of those on the Pacific Coast and in the Gulf of California. It would seem that the French Government and the French Legation in Mexico are showing a strange interest in Clipperton after a complete lack of interest for so many years. This is a factor that the appropriate authorities of our Government may wish to take into account with respect to this particular expedition.

Respectfully yours, Signed: G. S. Messersmith

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

Excerpt from State Department letter signed by Mr. John Hickerson, Deputy Director, Office of European Affairs and addressed to Admiral Davidson under date of 8 January 1945

From these memoranda you will observe that the following facts emerge:

1. Mexico has recognized the award of Clipperton Island to France.
2. The United States Government has not made an outright statement of recognition that Clipperton Island belongs to France, but we have not made any representations to France in regard to the award of January 28, 1931, nor have we formally or informally raised any question about French sovereignty over this island; indeed United States recognition of French sovereignty over Clipperton Island might well be implied from the facts set forth in the three memoranda mentioned above.

Letter and memoranda referred to available in Admiral Davidson's file.

1 memorandum attached

SECRET

From RAdm Davidson, @p 13

11 Jan 45

hmc

Department of State
Division of European Affairs

March 16, 1944

Mr. Hickerson:

Attached is the file in regard to Clipperton Island. You asked me to look up the answers to two questions:

1. Has Mexico recognized the award to France?
2. Have we recognized Clipperton Island as French territory?

The answer to the first question is Yes. The decision of the King of Italy was rendered January 28, 1931. At first the Mexican Government said they wanted to study the opinion underlying the decision but the Mexican Minister of Foreign Affairs urged its acceptance on the ground that it involved the good faith of Mexico which had agreed, in the convention submitting the matter to arbitration, to accept the decision without appeal. The evidence of the acceptance of the decision lies in a decree dated January 10, 1934, published in the Diario Oficial of January 18, 1934, stating that "the Congress of the Mexican States, and with the approval of the majority of the State Legislatures, declares amended Article 42 of the Political Constitution" by excluding Clipperton Island from that document, which specifies the territory comprised within the Republic of Mexico.

The answer to the second question cannot be given as clearly. The Secretary of State wrote to Senator Perkins, of California, on January 27, 1898, that the French Ambassador informed the Department on January 6th that his Government claimed this island "not only on the ground of discovery by a French captain in 1709, but also on that of the taking of formal possession by a French naval officer sent out for the purpose in 1858." This statement has been repeated in subsequent letters written by the Department. Furthermore, the Department did not support an American citizen who took formal possession of the Island for the United States in 1892 because he had failed to comply with the provisions of the Guano Islands law. This Government also refused to interfere when the American flag was hauled down on orders of a French naval captain in 1897 and when the Mexican Govern-

ment

ment ordered the representatives of the Oceanic Phosphate Company to leave the island in 1898.

By decree of June 12, 1936, printed in the Journal Officiel of June 16, 1936, the French Government announced the re-attachment of the Island to the Government of the French Establishments in Oceania. According to the same decree the Captain of the French cruiser Jeanne d'Arc took formal possession of the Island on January 26, 1935.

C.L.B.

[C. L. Borjes]

TOP SECRET AIRMAILGRAM

From: U. S. Naval Attache
Mexico City, Mexico

6 January 1945
Mailed at: Mexico City, Mexico.

Time: 061830

ACTION: CNO

TOP-SECRET

061830 The following is a memorandum of a conversation with the French Minister to Mexico held in the office of the Naval Attache at 6:00 p.m. on 4 Jan. 1945. The Minister asked for this conference, which he stated was urgent. It concerned Clipperton Island.

"The Minister stated that under his auspices the French Government had organized an expedition to proceed to Clipperton Island to investigate the possibilities of shark fishing in the neighborhood of the island. He stated that no concession had yet been given to a commercial company but that a request for such a concession had been made to the French Government by a French-Mexican commercial organization.

The Minister stated that the expedition would proceed on a small sailboat, the property of a Mr. Spratling, an American Citizen, and would consist of eight people, one of whom, a representative of the French Legation, would be the French Military Attache at that Legation. The boat would sail from Acapulco on or about the 7th or 8th of January under the charge of Mr. Martin Durand.

The Minister requested that I notify the proper Naval authorities of the United States, informing them of the proposed expedition and requesting that the Naval authorities on Clipperton Island be notified so the expedition would not be mistaken for an enemy (he said, for Japanese).

The Minister further stated that the granting of this concession had been put up to him by the French Government and that he was using as an example a concession for guano previously given in 1925 to a Mexican company. He also stated that the British had approached the French Government for a concession to land at Clipperton Island enroute from Canada to Australia, but that the British had informed him they were not interested any longer as they had not been able to land at Bora-Bora, an island of British sovereignty but now occupied as an airbase by the United States, as the United States refused to let them land there.

The Minister stated that the party was taking with them a chemical apparatus to test the type of liver extract. He had been informed by Mr. Durand, whom he stated was an advisor and experienced in shark fishing to American companies, that the shark livers at Clipperton were twice the size of the livers elsewhere. He stated that the concession would contain a reservation providing for an option of first call by the French Government on any livers which were produced from that concession."

The above information was given to the Ambassador personally by the Naval Attache immediately after this conversation.

TOP-SECRET

Authenticated

/s/ A.S.Hickey

A.S.HICKEY, CAPTAIN, USN (RET.)
U.S. NAVAL ATTACHE AND NAVAL
ATTACHE FOR AIR

Copy

Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET

México, D.F., January 5, 1945.

No. 22,339

SUBJECT: With Further Reference to the Establishment By Our Navy of a Weather Reporting Station and an Armed Observation Party on Clipperton Island.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

✓ I have the honor to refer to the Department's secret telegram No. 12 of January 2, 7 p.m. and to my top secret despatch No. 22,303 of January 3, 1945, with reference to our establishment of a weather reporting station and an armed observation party on Clipperton Island. It will be recalled that the Department requested me to take up certain aspects of this matter with the President of Mexico and the Foreign Minister.

✓ In my despatch No. 22,303, it will be noted that I informed the Foreign Minister that it was our desire that before any vessel or plane left Mexico for Clipperton Island previous notice should be given to the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier at San Francisco in order to avoid any unhappy incidents. With my despatch under reference I sent the Department a copy of my secret letter to the Minister of Foreign Relations, dated January 3, 1945, in which I gave him the necessary information with regard to the procedures in this respect.

I saw the Minister of Foreign Relations today and he informs me that during a conversation with the President yesterday he took up this matter with him and the President indicated that he was immediately taking the necessary steps to see that the appropriate instructions are given to Mexican officials that no vessel or plane shall leave Mexican territory for Clipperton Island without clearing in the manner indicated in my letter of January 3 to the Minister of Foreign Relations.

Respectfully yours,

G. S. Messersmith

To Department in
Triplicate
GSM:NA
File No. 879.6

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY _____	<i>[Signature]</i>	COMINCH & CNO	P P P P PRIORITY 2
DATE JAN 5 1945			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 052112			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY RISHIN		<i>[Handwritten marks]</i>	BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY W MONTGOMERY	CHECKED BY _____		6
ROUTED BY MONTGOMERY	DISTOFF BY MONTGOMERY		7
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ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

TOP SECRET

FOR CNO AND COMINCH X

AT SUGGESTION FRENCH MINISTER MEXICO CONFERENCE MY OFFICE LATE EVENING JANUARY 4TH. URDIS 031919. FRENCH MINISTER STATED FRENCH

GOVT EXPEDITION UNDER HIS AUSPICES WILL PROCEED CLIPPERTON INVESTIGATE POSSIBILITIES SHARK FISHING. LEAVE ACAPULCO ON OR ABOUT JAN 7

OR 8. MINISTER REQUESTED NAVY DEPT BE NOTIFIED SO NAVY ON CLIPPERTON WOULD NOT MISTAKE THIS VESSEL FOR ENEMY, FISHING KETCH "PEZ DEPLATA"

CARRYING EXPEDITION 8 ALL TOLD. FURTHER STATED BRITISH NO LONGER INTERESTED AND WERE RETURNING TO CANADA. OTHERWISE MINISTERS

CONVERSATION CONFIRMED MY 011500 (attached)

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:

COMINCH (#1 TO #4) ACT
 SDC (#8) 13 (#9) 16 (#10) ADD NAVAIDE (#11)

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

550 Clipperton 051850

11

UNITED STATES FLEET

Headquarters of the Commander in Chief

FOI/

Serial: 0025

TOP SECRET

4 January 1945

From: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet.

To : Commander, Western Sea Frontier.

Subj: Clipperton Island - Additional information in regard to.

1. The following paraphrase of a dispatch from the Secretary of State to the Ambassador to Mexico, dated 2 January 1945, is forward as additional information in connection with recent dispatches on this same subject:

"An armed observation party and weather reporting station was established at Clipperton Island by the Commander, Western Sea Frontier, United States Navy, during the month of December 1944. Concurrently with an increase in Japanese operations in waters of the Western Sea Frontier, this action was taken as a matter of military urgency. The French Naval Mission in Washington was informally notified of the establishment of this station by the United States Navy.

"It is requested that you get in touch with the Mexican authorities, preferably with President Camacho and inform them of the establishment of this station at the earliest possible moment. The Mexican authorities should be informed by you that in view of possible Japanese raids this aerological station has been provided with armament and that in order that there may be no possibility of incidents resulting from mistaken identity, any proposed visits of vessels or aircraft to the island should be taken up in advance of departure with the Commander, Western Sea Frontier, United States Navy, San Francisco.

"We think it might be desirable, in view of the fact that a British plane has been at Acapulco for some time in connection with a survey which was at one time contemplated by the British authorities of a possible air route via Clipperton, for you to suggest to President Camacho or to whatever Mexican you discuss the matter with that it might be well for a special notification in this regard to be sent at an early date to the Mexican authorities in Acapulco. Vessels or planes departing for Clipperton would then be cleared by Mexican authorities."

C. M. COOKE, JR.
Chief of Staff.

EMBASSY OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TOP SECRET

FIRST PRIORITY POUCH

Mexico, D. F., January 3, 1945.

No. 22,303

SUBJECT: With Reference to Our Establishment of a Weather
Reporting Station and an Armed Observation Party
on Clipperton Island.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the Department's secret telegram No. 12 of January 2, 7 p.m. to the effect that an armed observation party as well as a weather reporting station have been established by the United States Navy through the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier on Clipperton Island in December 1944. The Department instructs me to convey certain information to the Mexican Government with regard to this matter, particularly to the effect that vessels and aircraft leaving for Clipperton should take up proposed visits through Clipperton Island with the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier of the United States Navy at San Francisco before proceeding.

In this connection I have to refer to the Department's top secret instruction No. 6677 of December 7, 1944, with regard to certain efforts by the British to establish an alleged military air route through Mexico and Clipperton Island to the Pacific. I also have to refer to my top secret despatches No. 21,933 of December 12, 1944, in which I covered by conversations with the Mexican Government on this matter very fully. I also have to refer to my top secret despatch No. 21,954 of December 13, 1944, supplementing the above-mentioned despatch.

The Department will see from my despatches above-mentioned that I have given adequate background to the Mexican Government already with regard to Clipperton Island and with particular reference to the activities of the British with respect thereto.

Immediately on the receipt of the Department's telegram No. 12 of January 2, 7 p.m., under reference, I called on the Minister of Foreign Relations and gave him the substance thereof. I told him that in view of increased Japanese activity in that theater and the possibility of attempting Japanese occupation of Clipperton, our Navy as a measure of defense and precaution and military urgency had established this weather station on Clipperton in December 1944, together with an armed observation party. I said that in view of this my Government very much wished the Mexican Government to inform the appropriate authorities that any vessels or aircraft leaving Mexican territory or waters for Clipperton should seek preliminary approval from the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier of the United States Navy at San Francisco. I said that we would be glad to facilitate any communication through our Naval Attache

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

in this Embassy who would be glad to send any communications which might be necessary to the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier at San Francisco.

The Minister keeping in mind our previous conversation, as reported in the above-mentioned despatches, without my going into detail got all the implications of this matter and he said that he would immediately take up the matter with the President in order that the necessary instructions would be given.

Leahman?
1/26/51

I brought to the Minister's attention that we had learned that there is some interest on the part of a naturalized Mexican citizen of French origin to go into the shark fishing business on Clipperton and that it had already been indicated to us that a ship would leave about December 5 for preliminary work in this connection for Clipperton. I said that it was curious to note that our information was that the French Naval Attache in Mexico City was to go on this trip. I said it was also curious to note that we had learned that this Mexican of French Origin had informed us that two English hydroplanes were expected at Clipperton at the same time that his ship would arrive there. I said to the Minister that there was plenty of shark fishing in the Pacific and Gulf of California waters carried on by Mexican and American interests and that we were getting all the shark livers presently needed for the manufacture of vitamins. It was interesting to note that this man who showed this interest in this project did not have any previous experience in this shark fishing industry and that it had been indicated that the French Legation in Mexico might be giving financial assistance to the so-called "shark fishing" project.

I said to the Minister that there seemed to be a strange and unusual increase of interest by the French in Clipperton Island and this seemed to coincide with this increased interest or rather new interest and recent interest by the British in a so-called military route which would pass over Clipperton. Without going into any details and spelling the matter out the Minister saw all the implications.

He asked me to give him a letter giving such data as I felt I could put in a letter so that the data therein could be conveyed to the appropriate Mexican authorities to the end that no vessels would leave here and no airplanes would leave Mexico without this previous communication with the Commander of the Western Sea Frontier of the United States Navy at San Francisco.

As indicated in my top secret despatches No. 21,933 of December 12 and 21,954 of December 13, the President of Mexico and the Foreign Minister as well as the Ministry of National Defense are not at all favorable to this idea of the British establishing a military route over Mexico and through Clipperton as they know that this is a poorly concealed pretext for the establishment later of a commercial route. The Mexican Government also will not view with any sympathy this belated and completely new interest of the French in Clipperton Island as shown by this alleged shark fishing venture. I cannot escape myself the conclusion which I think can readily be drawn and properly that there is some connection between this British and this French interest.

In any event, the Department may be assured that the Mexican Government will be prepared to work with us closely in this matter.

I am informing the Naval Attache of the Embassy of this matter as he has worked very closely with us in matters connected with Clipperton Island and has kept us informed of developments from the point of view of our Navy which would otherwise not have come to our attention.

I shall be glad to have any further instructions or information from the Department with respect to developments in this matter and I shall keep the Department currently informed of any developments.

Respectfully yours,

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>COMINCH AND CNO</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY <u>ADM KING</u>		COMWESTSEAFRON	PRIORITY 3
DATE <u>3 JANUARY 1945</u>	FOR ACTION		ROUTINE 4
TOR CODEROOM			DEFERRED 6
DECODED BY		ALUSNA MEXICO CITY COMPANAMASEAFRON	9
TYPED BY	INFORMATION		PRIORITY 10
ROUTED BY			ROUTINE RRRRRRR 12
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			DEFERRED 13
031919 NCR 49604			14
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW <input type="checkbox"/> 15
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ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

IN EVENT UNANNOUNCED VISITS, BRITISH, FRENCH OR MEXICAN PERSONNEL SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO LAND BUT ONLY FOR A STAY OF TEMPORARY DURATION X YOUR ^{get line} 030006 AND ALUSNA MEXICO CITY DESPATCH ^{attach} 014500 REFER X ADDITIONAL INFORMATION SAME SUBJECT X MEXICANS AND BRITISH HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF EXISTENCE WEATHER STATION THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS AND ADVISED TO SEEK CLEARANCE FROM NAVY DEPT OR FROM YOU BUT THIS MAY NOT SUFFICE TO STOP DURAND-PARTY X FRENCH NAVAL MISSION HAS BEEN NOTIFIED INFORMALLY OF EXISTENCE STATION X PARA X PRESENT POLICY IS THAT MILITARY SITUATION DEMANDS OCCUPATION, NOTIFICATION OF APPROACH AND THE EXCLUSION OF COMMERCIAL VENTURES X

ACTION		
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FX37		39
FX40		40
IG-00		41
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SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-07

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
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TOR CODEROOM 1737			ROUTINE
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ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

COMINCH GETS ACTION CNO GETS INFO.

PERMANENT WEATHER BASE WITH TEMPORARY RADIO STATION
USING CALL SIGN NPGO ESTABLISHED ON CLIPPERTON JANUARY
2ND SOUTH WEST PORTION ISLAND AT PALM GROVE.

COMINCH...ACT

30...OP05...OP05G...12...23...200P...BUDOCKS...20P4...

BUPERS...BUMED...BUSANDA...20M...19...19C...20B...20F...

34...

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

550 Clipperton 031656

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FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

COPY NO. 18

J.C.S. 1100/3

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION)

2 January 1945

Pages 37 - 51, incl.

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Reference: J.C.S. 1100 Series

Letter from the Secretary of State
(Circulated by the Secretaries for information)

In reply refer to
MA 812.79600/12-1244

December 29, 1944

My dear General Marshall:

With further reference to your letter of November 4, 1944 (J.C.S. 1100/1 and Decision Amending J.C.S. 1100/1, 6 November 1944), and to my letter of December 7, 1944 (J.C.S. 1100/2), concerning a possible request which might be made by the British Government of the Mexican Government for permission to establish a military air route between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico, and base facilities for this air route at Acapulco, further reports on this subject have been received from the American Ambassador at Mexico City in his despatches no. 21,933 and 21,954 of December 12 and 13, 1944, respectively.

As I believe they will be of interest to you, I am enclosing copies for your information.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. R. STETTINIUS, JR.

Enclosures:

Copies of despatches of
December 12 and 13, 1944.

<u>DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>COPY NO.</u>	<u>DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>COPY NO.</u>
Adm. Leahy	1	Adm. Duncan	8
Gen. Marshall	2 & 15	Capt. Campbell	9
Adm. King	3	Col. Lincoln	10
Gen. Arnold	4	Secy, JCS	11
Adm. Edwards	5	Secy, JSSC	12
Gen. Handy	6	Secy, JPS	13
Gen. Lindsay	7	Secy, JWPC	14

Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET

ENCLOSURE "A"

DISPATCH FROM AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AT MEXICO CITY

Mexico, D.F.,
December 12, 1944.

No. 21, 933

SUBJECT: With Reference to the Desire of the British to
Establish an Alleged Army Transport Service from the
British Isles to the Pacific Islands.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

Sir:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the department's top secret instruction No. 6677 of December 7, 1944, enclosing for my information a copy of a letter dated November 4, from General George C. Marshall, Chief of Staff of the United States Army, concerning an official request made by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, on behalf of the Mexican Minister for War, for the attitude of the War Department of the United States of America concerning a possible request which might be made by the British Government to the Mexican Government for permission to establish a military air route between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico, and base facilities for this air route at Acapulco.

The letter of General Marshall states four specific reasons on the basis of which the Joint Chiefs of Staff desire to advise the Department of State of their views in this matter in the event that it is made the subject of further consideration through diplomatic channels. The four points raised by the Joint Chiefs of Staff are all to the effect that it would be undesirable that such a route be established and specifically give the reasons why it is undesirable.

Regraded Unclassified

TOP SECRET

The department in its instruction under reply states that it is in accord with the recommendations of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and requests me in my discretion to discuss this matter informally and in confidence with the Foreign Minister, Dr. Padilla. The department instructs me that I may say that it concurs in the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as expressed in General Marshall's letter and fully supports them.

The military attache in Mexico City has been currently informing the department with regard to these operations of the British. The naval attache has been sending in some information also. The embassy has been transmitting to the department the information which it has received on this matter from the military and naval attaches, as the correspondence of the department will show.

Immediately after the receipt of this instruction under reply, I had a conference with the military and naval attaches, General Harris and Captain Hickey, and I asked them to have prepared a very brief memorandum covering what we know concerning the operations of the British with respect to this proposed and alleged military air route. A copy of this memorandum, dated December 11, marked "top secret" which has been furnished me by the military and naval attaches is transmitted herewith and is self-explanatory.

Briefly, I may state that the circumstances are as follows. On April 17 Air Commodore Powell, Chief of the Royal Air Force Command, arrived in Mexico City in a U.S. built plane and while the party was here for only a few days it was rather difficult to determine at the time what the real object of the trip was. Commodore Powell at the time stated that it was purely a courtesy visit. In view of the following developments, however, there seems to be no doubt that this was the preliminary step to those which followed later and which are recited in the secret memorandum transmitted herewith.

TOP SECRET

The naval attache of the British Embassy in Mexico City, Lieutenant Smithers, presented a letter several months ago to the Chief of Staff, of the Mexican Army, in which he indicated that in view of the British desires to collaborate in the war in the Pacific, they wished to make certain surveys which would involve facilities being granted them for the survey at Acapulco and he asked that such facilities be given by the Mexican authorities. The Mexican authorities agreed that such preliminary courtesy should be extended to a survey party and as the War Department and the Navy Department are aware from the reports of the military and naval attaches of this embassy, a survey party has been here but at present is inactive.

On October 26, 1944, Lieutenant Smithers, the naval attache of the British Embassy, presented himself in the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army and said that he was leaving the next day for Washington to consult with his superiors there, and stating that he was appreciative of the cooperation which had been given by the Mexican authorities to the English hydroplanes which had arrived at Acapulco. He repeated the desires which his government had to establish a military transport route from the British Isles to the Pacific Islands, as well as the possibilities of anchoring a repair ship with a supply of gasoline and lubricants for the hydroplanes which would cross Mexican national territory at Acapulco. He said that the hydroplanes would transport troops and war materials to the Pacific war areas. He said that on his return from Washington he would bring with him the formal request of his government.

The Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army suggested that the preliminary arrangements would have to be made through the British Embassy in Mexico City with the Ministry of Foreign Relations as this is the normal channel with which to treat matters affecting national defense.

TOP SECRET

It will be recalled that when the first real approach was made to the Mexican Chief of Staff by the British naval attache here for such facilities for British war transport planes, the Chief of Staff took up the matter informally with the military attache of this embassy, General Harris, who informed the War Department. The Mexican Chief of Staff in taking up the matter with General Harris indicated very clearly that he thought the request of the British was somewhat strange and made it clear that the Mexican military authorities did not wish to entertain it in any sense before consulting with us. The Mexican Chief of Staff made it clear that while Mexico had her treaty and other obligations with us for the protection of this hemisphere they had no such arrangements with the British and he also made it clear that they did not see the necessity for any such special arrangements with the British. The Mexican Chief of Staff made it clear that the Mexican Ministry of National Defense saw in any favorable reception to the British request an undesirable precedent.

The Mexican Chief of Staff asked the military attache, General Harris, to take up the matter with the War Department to get its reaction which as it will be noted, the military attache of this embassy did promptly.

In the meantime it will be noted also that the Mexican Chief of Staff made it clear to Lieutenant Smithers, the British naval attache, from the statement already made in this despatch, that the Ministry of National Defense had no jurisdiction except in an advisory character and that any approaches by the British Government to the Mexican Government on this matter would have to be made through the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

TOP SECRET

The military attache of the embassy, General Harris, has just informed me that he has received from the War Department a letter setting forth the four points on which grounds the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States consider the development of a British military air route via Mexico, etc. is not necessary and indicating very definitely their disapproval thereof. The letter from the War Department to the military attache requests him to informally inform the Mexican Chief of Staff of the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of our Government. The military attache, General Harris, informs me that he has already informed General Guzman Cardenas, the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, orally of the four reasons why we consider such a route undesirable.

General Harris informs me that on giving this information to General Guzman Cardenas, the latter replied "that settles that" and it was obvious from his conversation with General Harris that the Mexican Government was pleased to have this reaction of our Joint Chiefs of Staff as it was not favorably disposed towards the British request.

In accord with the department's instruction, and after having discussed the matter with the military and naval attaches, I yesterday saw the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Padilla, and discussed this matter confidentially and informally with him. I found that he had no knowledge whatever of these British approaches through the British naval attache to the Ministry of National Defense. I gave him in substance what had been going on. I read to him the four reasons why our Joint Chiefs of Staff did not look favorably on this matter. I said the Department of State was in full accord with the Joint Chiefs of Staff on this matter. I emphasized particularly that if the British Government wished to collaborate in the Pacific war in a more full measure other routes were available for the stated purpose of the British in establishing this route crossing Mexico.

TOP SECRET

The Minister said he was fully understanding of the situation. He said that he could see that such a procedure for the establishment of a military air route might be merely the precursor of steps towards the establishment of a commercial route. He said that perhaps those who had this route in mind for military purposes were thinking more particularly of the long range commercial route.

The Minister said that he had had no information concerning all this but that he appreciated very much the information which I had given him. He said that no formal approach had been made by the British Government to the Ministry of Foreign Relations. I told him that the military attache of this embassy, General Harris, had already informed General Guzman Cardenas, the Mexican Chief of Staff, that our Joint Chiefs of Staff did not look with favor on the establishment of such a route and did not see any necessity therefor. I added that the Department of State was completely in agreement with this point of view. I also added to the Foreign Minister that I gathered that the attitude of the Ministry of National Defense was definitely against the establishment of such a route by the British and that the information which General Harris had given to the Mexican Chief of Staff was very welcome as a reinforcement of the position of the Ministry of National Defense.

The Minister said that all this information would be most helpful to him in case any formal approach was made by the British authorities to the Ministry of Foreign Relations. He said that, of course, any real approach to the Mexican Government would have to be made through the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

I think, therefore, from the foregoing the Department will note that if any formal approach is made by the British Government to the Mexican Government with respect to the establishment of such a route that the attitude of the Ministry of Foreign Relations and of the Ministry of National Defense will be identic and that such a request by the British will not receive a favorable reception from the Mexican authorities.

The Mexican authorities, I think, will clearly see that this is a maneuver by the British which is more likely designed to lay the groundwork for a commercial route from Great Britain to the Pacific islands after the war.

With respect to the fourth paragraph of the department's instruction under reply in which it expresses some surprise that the request of another government should have been even entertained by the Mexican Government, I think it should be noted that the British naval attache took up this matter directly and informally with the Ministry of National Defense, which handled the matter very correctly. The Ministry of National Defense could not well do any more than to at least listen to the naval attache of Great Britain and the record shows that immediately after this approach had been made the Mexican Chief of Staff, after consultation with General Cardenas, the Minister of National Defense, took up the matter informally with our military attache here in order to determine the reaction of our Chiefs of Staff. In other words, it is clear that the Ministry of National Defense from the outset was unfavorably disposed towards the British request and merely made this approach to us in order to be able to keep its attitude in accord with our own. I would add that in the manner in which the Ministry of National Defense has handled this matter so far it has been highly cooperative with us and understanding of the principles of inter-American defense and the undesirability of setting any precedent through an outside power coming in.

TOP SECRET

With respect to the last paragraph of the department's instruction, I can only state that very little is known in military and naval circles here about this British initiative as it has been kept very quiet by the British. In Mexican circles, however, it is assumed and believed that this alleged military air route which the British are interested in is really intended as a forerunner of steps in the direction of the establishment of a commercial air route.

In conclusion I may say that I think that there is no doubt that any formal request which the British Government might make to the Mexican Government in this respect would get an unfavorable response. I wish also to add that the letter of General Marshall of November 4, to the department, is most helpful as it is direct and unequivocal and so well founded. The four points raised by the Joint Chiefs of Staff will be thoroughly appreciated and understood by the Mexican military authorities as well as in the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

I shall from time to time keep in contact with the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Padilla, on this matter to determine whether any official approach is actually made by the British. I shall be seeing the President of Mexico this afternoon prior to making a short trip to Washington and I shall not fail to take that opportunity also to mention this matter to the President whose attitude, I am sure, will be equally understanding as that which has been shown so far by the Ministry of National Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Relations.

Respectfully yours,

/s/ G. S. MESSERSMITH

Enclosure:
Copy of Memorandum (Appendix)

TOP SECRET

APPENDIX TO ENCLOSURE "A"

ENCLOSURE TO DESPATCH NO. 21,933, DATED DECEMBER 12, 1944
FROM THE AMERICAN EMBASSY, MEXICO, D.F.

TOP SECRET

11 December 1944

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: British Trans-Pacific Air Route.
TO: The Ambassador.

1. On 17 April 1944 Air Commodore Powell, Chief of the Royal Air Force Transport Command, arrived in Mexico City in a U.S. - built C-47 airplane. He was accompanied by

Flight Lieutenant E. N. Townsend, RCAF

Flight Lieutenant M. Andrews, RCAF

Flight Lieutenant J. R. Burton, RCAF

Flight Sergeant K. G. Shey, RCAF

The party was in Mexico for a period of only three or four days during which they took General Alberto Salinas (then Chief of Civil Aeronautics) on a trip to Acapulco. No Mexican civilian or Army personnel senior to General Alberto Salinas was met by the party as far as can be determined.

2. Practically nothing concerning the purpose of Air Commodore Powell's visit was known at the time, but the British military attache informed Major Battles that the purpose of the trip was to begin negotiations for a survey of a British trans-Pacific air route involving Acapulco and Clipperton Island. The British military attache saw Air Commodore Powell for only a half-hour period during the latter's visit and later informed Major Battles that the only information he was able to give was that any subsequent visit of British personnel involved in the same mission might be taken as indicating that the project would be activated.

TOP SECRET

3. This visit was reported by the military attache and naval attache with the observation that the project appeared to have a commercial flavor.

4. Nothing further was heard regarding this mission until 29 August 1944. The British air attache for Central America in the meantime had been ordered to Mexico for the purpose of meeting certain unnamed representatives of the Royal Air Force in this city. The British air attache had no information as to the nature of the visit of this Royal Air Force personnel. After waiting for a period of approximately ten days, during which the British personnel did not arrive, the Air Attache returned to his headquarters in Central America, having in the meantime been given no further information.

5. On 29 August 1944 a PBV-5A arrived in Mexico City from Montreal, Canada. This ship was piloted by Squadron Leader Johns (RAF) and Squadron Leader Torres (RAF), and carried a crew consisting of an Australian navigator, two British aerial engineers, one Canadian gunner, and a civilian radio operator. The Mexican Ambassador to Canada, del Rio, arrived as a passenger on the ship.

6. A few days after the arrival of the above-mentioned ship, another British Catalina flying boat arrived in Acapulco. Reconnaissance flights were conducted to Clipperton Island and supplies of gasoline were ferried to that point. The two ships were both based at that time in the Cayuca Laguna, near Pie de la Cuesta, about ten miles west of Acapulco. (This location is the one which the British hope to make their permanent base.)

7. It is understood that a further survey flight with the following itinerary has been made:

TOP SECRET

Clipperton to Bora Bora (Society Islands), 12 Sept.

Bora Bora to Aitutaki (Cooke Island), 17 Sept.

Aitutaki to Tonga, 18 Sept.

Tonga to Aukland, 19 Sept.

In connection with this flight it is known that the British assistant naval attache in Mexico sent a telegram, through U.S. facilities, to the commander of one of the British airplanes stating that the U.S. Navy had ordered gasoline delivered to Bora Bora on 15 September.

8. Group Captain Powell, RAF, arrived from Montreal on 15 September in a U.S.-manufactured C-87 airplane. He departed two days later after having settled certain problems which the British assistant naval attache states were incurred by the reconnaissance crews. It is believed that Group Captain Powell is not the same person as Air Commodore Powell.

9. In addition to personnel mentioned elsewhere, the British group also includes a Lieut. Spink and a Lieut. Murray.

10. The British personnel have been inactive during the month of November and so far during the month of December. The amphibious Catalina airplane is at present in Mexico City. The Catalina flying boat is not in Mexico, but is believed to be somewhere along the Pacific route. The group has acquired locally two station wagons, one of which is stationed in Mexico City and the other in Acapulco.

11. Statements regarding British plans which have been given to members of the military and naval attache offices include the following:

a. British hope to establish a permanent base at Laguna Cayuca.

b. British intend to build landing strip on Clipperton Island and believe the Clipperton lagoon can be cleared of coral reefs to make it serviceable for seaplane landings.

c. It is possible that the Marquesas Islands may be used as an intermediate stop between Clipperton and Bora Bora.

d. British personnel believe that their present period of inactivity is due to the U.S. blocking of Mexican approval for development and use of the Cayuca Lagoon and other bases.

e. Certain crew members have stated that the purpose of the route was for post-war commercial use, but that it may actually be used in the development of the Pacific war theater.

f. Crew members have stated that four-engine Douglas equipment is planned for commercial use on the line.

12. General Guzman Cardenas, Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, on behalf of General Lazaro Cardenas, has informed the office of the military attache regarding the British activities and has requested that the viewpoint of the Secretary of War in this matter be secured. This request was submitted through channels, to the Joint Chiefs of Staff who have replied in substance (under the classification "Top Secret") to the effect that such a route is not essential to the war effort, and furthermore that the development of the route would entail a diversion of shipping, materials and personnel which would detract from the war effort. This opinion was conveyed to General Guzman Cardenas as instructed.

TOP SECRET

ENCLOSURE "B"

DISPATCH FROM AMERICAN AMBASSADOR AT MEXICO CITY

MEXICO, D. F.
December 13, 1944.

No. 21,954

SUBJECT: With Further Reference to the Desire of the British to Establish an Alleged Army Transport Service from the British Isles to the Pacific Islands.

The Honorable
Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to my top secret dispatch No. 21,933 of December 12, 1944, in which I report fully with reference to the desire of the British to establish an alleged army transport service from the British Isles to the Pacific islands. I now wish to supplement the information given in that dispatch by saying that yesterday afternoon I had a long conversation with the President of Mexico prior to my departure on December 15 for a brief stay in Washington. While I was confident that the Minister of National Defense, General Cardenas, and the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Padilla, would bring this matter to his attention in view of the conversation which the military attache, General Harris, had with General Guzman Cardenas, the Chief of Staff, and which I had with the Minister of Foreign Relations, Dr. Padilla, in which conversations we conveyed the four basic reasons why the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States and the Department of State were in accord that such a route was not necessary, I deemed it advisable in an altogether informal and confidential manner to bring this matter to the attention of the President. I gave him the background on the matter and I stated

TOP SECRET

to him in Spanish textually the four basic reasons set forth by the Joint Chiefs of Staff why we did not consider this route necessary. The President said that he had not heard of this proposed operation of the British probably because their explorations up to this time had been entirely informal with the Ministry of National Defense and as the matter had not been raised in any way in a formal manner. He expressed appreciation of my having brought the matter to his attention and he indicated that in his opinion the establishment of such a route by the British would create a very undesirable precedent. He was particularly interested in the reaction of our Joint Chiefs of Staff to the effect that such a route was not considered necessary from the point of view of military operations in the Pacific.

The President I could see, without my going into any details, was very appreciative of all the implications in such a proposed route.

I think, therefore, the Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff may take it for granted that if any formal request by the British should be made for the establishment or the facilitating of such a route passing over Mexico, the attitude in the Ministry of National Defense, in the Ministry of Foreign Relations and in the Presidency will be definitely unfavorable.

Respectfully yours,

G. S. MESSERSMITH

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

W/AFTR	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY _____		CNO (ONI)	PRIORITY
DATE 3 JANUARY 1945			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM 0430			DEFERRED
			BASEGRAM
DECODED BY BOWMAN		<i>LA</i>	9 PRIORITY
PARAPHRASED BY _____	CHECKED BY _____		10 ROUTINE
BY FISHER	BY FISHER		11 DEFERRED
ROUTED BY GLUNT	DITTOED BY FISHER		12 BASEGRAM
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			13
011500	NCR 3433	IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW	14
		<input type="checkbox"/>	15

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

ALUSNA MEXICO CITY REENCIPHERED HIS 011500 AS 021940:
TOP SECRET. FOR ONI.

EXPEDITION HEADED BY MARTIN DURAND MEXICAN CITIZEN
PREPARING LEAVE MEXICO 5 JANUARY FOR CLIPPERTON ISLAND
IN SMALL MOTOR SAILING VESSEL. (REF CNO TOP SECRET 191805 DEC. 1944)
EVALUATION A1.) DURAND CLAIMS SHARK FISHING CONCESSION FROM
FRENCH GOVERNMENT SAYS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY FRENCH MILITARY
ATTACHE ALSO BRITISH FLIERS WILL ARRIVE CLIPPERTON ABOUT
SAME TIME.

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION *In connection with British fliers,*
 16(#1).....ACT *all Jan 051850.*
 COMINCH(#2-9)..... **ACTION F-2** *PIA*

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO. **8**
550 Clipperton **011500**
 OPNAV 19-7B

Adm. Franklin
file

F. D. R.
W.S.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

January 1, 1945

My dear Mr. Secretary:

On December 11, 1944, the Commander, Western Sea Frontier established an armed observation party and a weather reporting station at Clipperton Island. This action was taken as a matter of military urgency concurrently with an increase in Japanese operations in the waters of the Western Sea Frontier. The Navy has notified the head of the French Naval Mission, Vice Admiral Fenard, orally, of the establishment of this station on the above date.

Please inform the British Ambassador of the establishment of this station and of the fact that Admiral Fenard has been notified. Also please let the Mexican Government know of the action we have taken. It should be brought to the attention of the British and Mexican Governments that the aerological station has been provided with armament in view of possible Japanese raids, and that proposed visits by British and Mexican vessels or aircraft should be cleared with the U.S. Navy Department in order that there may be no incidents resulting from mistaken identity.

My message to the Prime Minister dated 27 November requested him to cancel any instructions to the Royal Air Force about a further survey at Clipperton until the matter can be discussed between us. This he has agreed to. The ownership and development of Clipperton Island are matters which I regard of significance to the United States because of the strategic location with respect to the Panama Canal. Mexico has long contested the claim of France to this island and the Mexican argument has not been without substance. It would be to our advantage that the United States, in the absence of direct ownership, should obtain base rights on Clipperton Island on long-term lease through Mexican ownership.

Sincerely yours,

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.

(Copy to: The Secretary of War
The Secretary of the Navy)
The Joint Chiefs of Staff)

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

30 DEC 1944

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
UNITED STATES FLEET

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM

TOP

TOP-SECRET

Date 30 Dec 1944.

My d

From: Deputy Cominch-Deputy CNO.

From
weat
tic
1

To: Vice Admiral Wilson Brown, White House.

1. Attached is draft letter which you may care to submit to the President.
2. Admiral King has not seen the draft, but I have discuss-ed the matter with him and I believe he concurs in the ideas expressed in the draft.
3. Secretary Forrestal, after a hasty reading, says he concurs in the draft.

R.S. Edwards
R.S. Edwards

DRAFT LETTER

TOP-SECRET

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

My dear Mr. Secretary:

On December 11th the Commander, Western Sea Frontier established an armed observation party and a weather reporting station at CLIPPERTON ISLAND. This action was taken as a matter of military urgency concurrently with an increase in Japanese operations in the waters of the Western Sea Frontier. The Navy has notified the head of the French Naval Mission, Vice Admiral Fenard, orally, of the establishment of this station on the above date.

Please inform the British Ambassador of the establishment of this station and of the fact that Admiral Fenard has been notified. Also please let the Mexican Government know of the action we have taken. It should be brought to the attention of the British and Mexican Governments that the aerological station has been provided with armament in view of possible Japanese raids, and that proposed visits by British and Mexican vessels or aircraft should be cleared with the U.S. Navy Department in order that there may be no incidents resulting from mistaken identity.

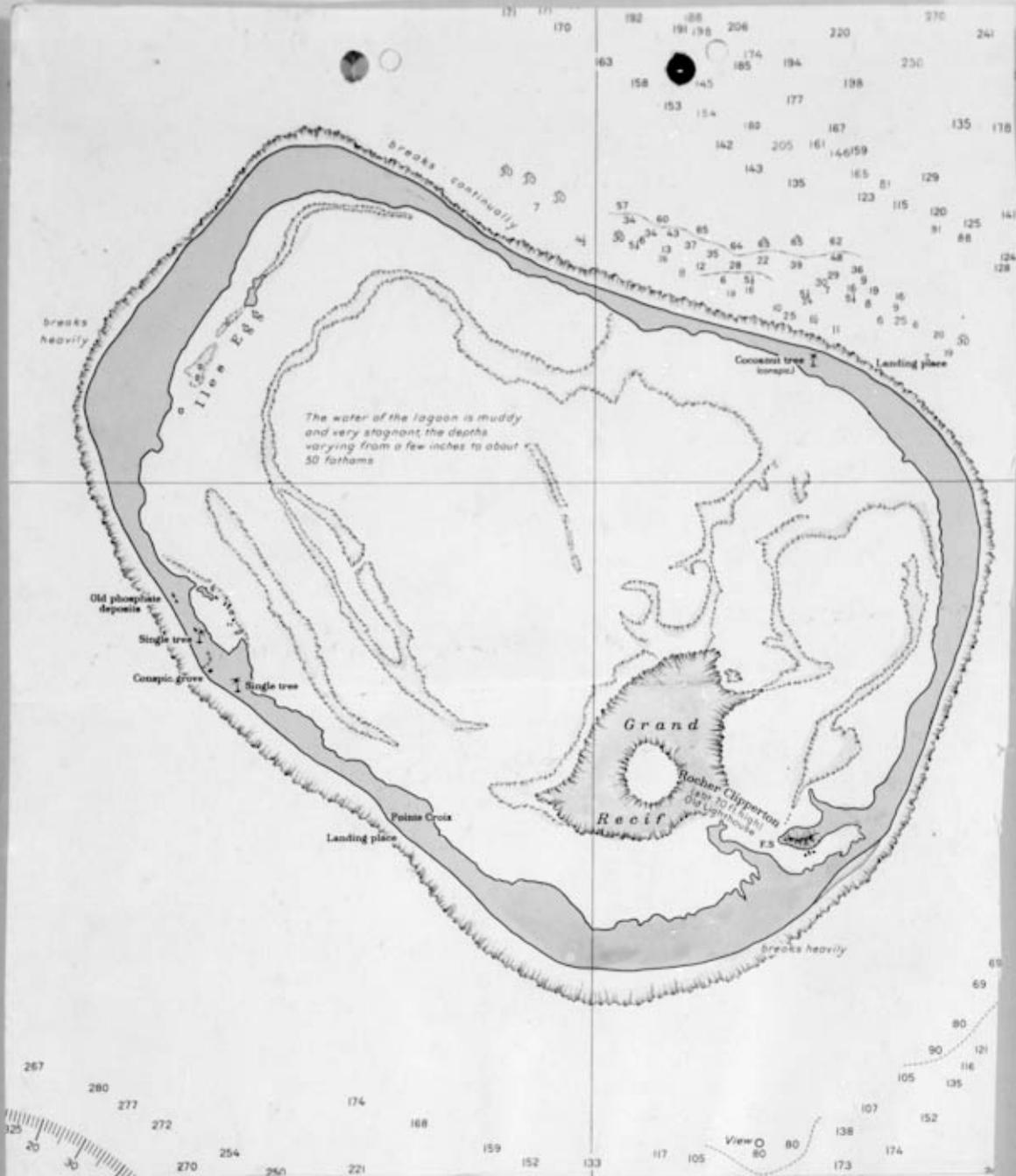
My message to the Prime Minister dated 27 November requested him to cancel any instructions to the Royal Air Force about a further survey at Clipperton until the matter can be discussed between us. This he has agreed to. The ownership and development of CLIPPERTON ISLAND are matters which I regard of significance to the UNITED STATES because of the strategic location with respect to the PANAMA CANAL. MEXICO has long contested the claim of FRANCE to this island and the Mexican argument has not been without substance. It would be to our advantage that the UNITED STATES, in the absence of direct ownership, should obtain base rights on CLIPPERTON ISLAND on long-term lease through Mexican ownership.

Sincerely yours,

Copy to:

The Secretary of War
The Secretary of the Navy

The Honorable,
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D.C.



View of Rocher Clipperton from the southward
Nautical Miles

From a French survey in 1935
Rocher Clipperton, Lat. 10° 17' 10" N. Long. 109° 12' 32" W.

SOUNDINGS IN FATHOMS - HEIGHTS IN FEET
Natural Scale 1:20,000

Regraded Unclassified

NAVY MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	
FROM COMWESSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE		
RELEASED BY		ATA 180 <i>W</i>	OP OP OP OP	
DATE 24 DEC 44			ROUTINE	
TOR CODEROOM 2306/23		FOR ACTION	DEFERRED	
DECODED BY YORK			COMINCH USS ARGUS	OP OP OP OP
TYPED BY KIRK			CINCPAC	ROUTINE
ROUTED BY THOMPSON			LST DIV 14	DEFERRED
		USS SEIZE		
		LST 563 COMSERVPAC		

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

232114

NCR 3180

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

WHEN IN ALL RESPECTS READY FOR SEA PROCEED FROM SALINA CRUZ TO CLIPPERTON ISLAND. REPORT TO SOPA TEMPORARY SALVAGE DUTY. REPORT DEPARTURE SALINA CRUZ. ETA. DESTINATION. PRESERVE UTMOST SECRECY THIS MISSION. ACTION ADEE ACKNOWLEDGE

ACTION

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F-01		24
F-02		25
F-05		26
F-07		27
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F-32		34
F-33		35
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F-4		37
FX01		38
FX37		39
FX40		40
IG-00		41
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COMINCH....COG

19....19C...

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

550 Clipperton
OPNAV 19-07

232114

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMWESTSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		COMINCH	PRIORITY 2
DATE 23 DECEMBER 1944			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 1921			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY PETERSON			RRRRRRRRRRR 5
TYPED BY PETERSON		CINCPAC COMPHIBTRAPAC	6
ROUTED BY			PRIORITY 7
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			8
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			PRIORITY 10
			ROUTINE 11
			DEFERRED 12
			RRRRRRRRRRR 13
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ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20
231720 NCR 3030			

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

LST 563 BROACHED NORTHEAST SIDE CLIPPERTON ISLAND.
 REPORTS OIL AND FRESH WATER TANKS SPRUNG. ARGUS
 STANDING BY. SEIZE (ARS-26) DEPARTED SAN DIEGO 0800Z
 23RD ETA 27TH.

ACTION		
F-0		22
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F-02		25
F-03		26
F-04		27
F-05		28
F-06		29
F-07		30
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F-22		52

SECRET

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OPRAVTS 5503 Clipperton 231720

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER CAPT BALTAZZI	EXT. 2652	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY ADM HEWLETT THEBAUD		ALUSNA MEXICO CITY	PRIORITY 2
DATE 19 DECEMBER 1944			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROM 192207			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASED BY BALDWIN	CHECKED BY BALDWIN	FOR ACTION	6
ROUTED BY COOK	DITTOED BY BALDWIN		FOR INFORMATION
			8
			PRIORITY 9
			ROUTINE 10
			DEFERRED 11
			BASEGRAM 12
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
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	191805	NCR 434	16
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Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP (Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

DIPLOMATIC ASPECTS REGARDING CLIPPERTON CLASSIFIED
TOP SECRET. YOUR MGM ¹³¹⁹⁰⁰ RECLASSIFIED ACCORDINGLY.

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:

16(#1)....ORIG

ADD: COMINCH(#2-#9).....(PER F341)

No. 1 ADMIRAL.

No. 2 FILE.

No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM.

No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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550 Clipperton

COPY NO 5

OPNAV 19-78

191805

12
AH/air

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 19, 1944.

SECRET

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR:

VICE ADMIRAL EDWARDS.

Subject: Weather Station at
Clipperton Island -
Notification of French.

1. The President thinks it would be well if a representative of the Navy Department could inform Admiral Fenard orally that we have established a weather station at Clipperton as a necessary war measure.

WILSON BROWN,
Vice Admiral, USN.,
Naval Aide to the President.

Capt Gony (op 13) notified French Naval Mission orally of this matter on 19 Dec, in compliance with this memorandum.
W.M.S.

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

FF1/A8

Serial: 003633

SECRET
SECRET

19 DEC 1944

PUB
FileMEMORANDUM FOR THE NAVAL AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT

Subject: Reconnaissance of Clipperton Island.

Enclosure: (A) Photographs of Clipperton Island.

1. Acting under orders from Commander in Chief, United States Fleet, and Chief of Naval Operations, aircraft from the USS DETROIT and the USS NEVADA made aerial reconnaissance of Clipperton Island on 2 December 1944 and 4 December 1944, respectively. No personnel were observed on the island, although the NEVADA aircraft found a tuna boat fishing off the northwest side of the island. Photographs were made on each of these reconnaissance flights. A representative set of the photographs taken are enclosed.

2. Signs of the recent activities of the British were present. A small camp was observed as well as a line of markings about 600 yards long in the northwest corner of the island. Evidently, the British considered this as a possible landing ground.

3. Commander, Western Sea Frontier, reports that he established a small weather station on Clipperton on 11 December 1944. This party was to consist of 1 officer and 6 men. Commander, Western Sea Frontier, has directed this party to exclude all personnel from Clipperton Island except any who might be landed from a regular commissioned French man-of-war.

4. I believe the above will bring you up to date regarding activity at Clipperton Island.

R. S. EDWARDS,
Deputy CominCh - Deputy CNO.

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMWESTSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION COMINCH	PRIORITY 2
DATE 15 DEC 1944			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 2023			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY ROBERTS		INFORMATION	5
TYPED BY DORSEY/ Johnson			PRIORITY 6
ROUTED BY			DEFERRED 7
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			8
151826 NCR 4768			9
			PRIORITY 10
			ROUTINE 11
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ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

ARGUS REPORTS SURVEY CLIPPERTON SHOWS SMALL AMOUNT FOOD SUPPLIES. DYNAMITE. EMERGENCY EQUIPMENT INCLUDING RCAF FISHING PACK INDICATION FAIRLY RECENT OCCUPATION. CONSIDER PROBABLY LEFT BY SURVEY YOUR ^{attached} 021705 SEPTEMBER. HAVE DIRECTED EXCLUSION OF ALL PERSONNEL EXCEPT FROM REGULARLY COMMISSIONED FRENCH MAN OF WAR.

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-00	23
F-01	24
F-02	25
F-05	26
F-07	27
F-1	28
F-2	29
F-20	30
F-3	31
F-30	32
F-31	33
F-32	34
F-33	35
F-34	36
F-4	37
FX01	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
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SECRET

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550 Clipperton

151826

OPNAV 19-07

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	US NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICOCITY	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	<i>[Signature]</i>	CNO	PRIORITY 2
DATE	19 DECEMBER 1944	<i>[Signature]</i>	ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROM	Ø134/18		DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY			BASEGRAM 5
PARAPHRASE BY	BECKMAN		6
CHECKED BY			PRIORITY 8
DITTOED BY	MORRIS		ROUTINE 10
ROUTED BY			DEFERRED 11
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			BASEGRAM 12
PAGE 1 OF 2 PAGES			13
131900 NCR 13034			14
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ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT
A I R M A I L G R A M

131900 THE MATTER CONTAINED IN REFERENCES (A) AND (B) WAS THE SUBJECT OF A CONFERENCE CALLED BY THE AMBASSADOR OF THIS EMBASSY, AT WHICH THE NAVAL AND MILITARY ATTACHES WERE THE ONLY OTHERS PRESENT. THE AMBASSADOR HAS RECEIVED CERTAIN SECRET INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE STATE DEPARTMENT WHICH WERE READ TO THE MILITARY AND THE NAVAL ATTACHE. THE NAVAL ATTACHE AND THE MILITARY ATTACHE, AT THE REQUEST OF THE AMBASSADOR, PREPARED A JOINT MEMORANDUM WHICH COVERED THE SITUATION PREVIOUSLY REPORTED FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT TO THE PRESENT DATE. THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND THE REPORTED CONDITIONS OF THIS ALLEGED DESIRE OF THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT FOR A TRANS-PACIFIC AIR ROUTE WERE THE SUBJECT OF A CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF MEXICO ON ONE HAND, AND SHORTLY THEREAFTER, OF A CONFERENCE BETWEEN THE AMBASSADOR AND THE PRESIDENT OF MEXICO. AT BOTH THESE CONFERENCES THE REPORTS OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF IN WASHINGTON WERE BROUGHT UP. FULL INFORMATION FROM THIS EMBASSY IS BEING FORWARDED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT IN

*in JCS
1100/13
11046-49*

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 9 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET **ACTION F-2**

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550 Clipperton 131900

OPNAV 19-78

5

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	US NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY	CITY		ROUTINE
DATE			DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM			BASEGRAM
DECODED BY			
PARAPHRASED BY	CHECKED BY		PRIORITY
ROUTED BY	DITTOED BY		ROUTINE
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			BASEGRAM

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

PAGE 2 OF 2

131900

NCR 13634

Originator fill in DATE AND TIME GROUP

(Use G. C. T.)

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

2 LETTERS OF THE AMBASSADOR ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE, 1 DATED 12 DECEMBER AND THE OTHER DATED 13 DECEMBER 1944, NO. 21,933 AND NO. 21, 954 RESPECTIVELY. *These references are quoted in SES 1100/3, pp. 38-51.*

REFERENCES: (A) ALUSMA, MEXICO, SEC AIRGRAM 241000 ^{attached} DATED 23 OCT 1944
 (B) ALUSMA, MEXICO, SECRET REPORT (ONI) 14-3-44 ^{attached}
 MEXICO CITY, 1000/103-400, 9 DEC 1944

REC'D SECRET - RECLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO CONTENT PER OP-16

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:

16(#1).....ACTION

COMINCH(#2-#9).....NAVAIDE(#10,#11).....13(#12).....206(#13).....

No. 1 ADMIRAL.

No. 2 FILE.

No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM.

No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

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COPY NO.

OPNAV 19-78

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMNESSEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		COMINCH	2
DATE 12 DEC 44			3
TOR CODEROOM 215B			4
DECODED BY KULKA		CINCPAC	5
TYPED BY KULKA/SJOSTEN			6
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121830

NCR 1470

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

Clipperton

①

WEATHER STATION CLIPPERTON ESTABLISHED 11 DECEMBER.
 ARGUS (PY 14) SUPPORTING. LST 563 LEAVING SAN DIEGO
 12 DECEMBER WITH CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS AND
 CREW.

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FX40	
IG-00	
VCN0	

SECRET

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550
OPNAV 19-07

121830

009

SECRET

SECRET

REF-96 Report Serial 14-6-44, M.A. Mexico

-2-

9 December 1944

It is planned that the BMY-5, which is currently at the Central Airport, will be flown to the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi for maintenance purposes. This work it is believed, will only consume a matter of about four or five days.

Construction of the airfield at Isla de la Cuesta by the Mexican Government is progressing, but rather slowly. Possibilities for the establishment of a combination land and sea airport at this site are practically unlimited, as the Laguna Coyuca is large enough to handle the largest sea planes and there is sufficient clear land for the building of a landing strip several miles long. Location of the lagoon and the landing strip is such that facilities for maintenance of both land and sea planes could be handled under the same roof.

COMMENT:- It has also been rumored that another reason for the inactivity of this survey group was that the British were running into difficulties in getting permissions from the French Government to use Clipperton Island. It is obvious that the British are having trouble in carrying out this mission. At present it is difficult to ascertain whether the delay is due to one or all of the above mentioned factors.

SECRET

Regarded as Classified **SECRET**

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

COPY NO. 17

J.C.S. 1100/2

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION)

8 December 1944

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

<u>DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>Copy No.</u>	<u>DISTRIBUTION</u>	<u>Copy No.</u>
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Gen. Arnold	4	Secy, JCS	11
Adm. Edwards	5	Secy, JSSC	12
Gen. Handy	6	Secy, JPS	13
Gen. Lindsay	7	Secy, JWPC	14

TOP SECRETCOPY NO. 17J.C.S. 1100/2

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION)

8 December 1944Pages 35 - 36, incl.JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFFESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Reference: J.C.S. 1100 Series

Letter from the Secretary of State(Circulated by the Secretaries for information)In reply refer to
MA

December 7, 1944

My dear General Marshall:

The Department has received your letter of November 4, 1944 (J.C.S. 1100/1 and Decision Amending), with respect to the position taken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff concerning a request made by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army with respect to the attitude of the War Department on a possible request by the British Government of the Mexican Government for permission to establish a military air route between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico, and base facilities therefor at Acapulco. The Department has noted that the Joint Chiefs of Staff have reached the conclusion that the development of such an air route is not essential to the war effort; might create a far-reaching precedent; and is undesirable.

The Department of State concurs fully with the views of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and has instructed the American Ambassador in Mexico City, should he in his discretion desire to discuss this matter informally and in confidence with the Foreign Minister, Licenciado Ezequiel Padilla, to state that the position taken by the Joint Chiefs of Staff has the full concurrence and support of the Department of State.

Regaded Unclassified

TOP SECRET

The Department has also instructed the Ambassador, in his discretion and should he discuss this matter with the Foreign Minister, to indicate that the Department views with some surprise the apparent entertainment of this possible request by the British as evidenced by the inquiry made of the War Department. It will be recalled that, at a time when the Department understands from a strategic point of view a military air base in Mexico would have been of especial importance to the war effort, the Mexican reception of proposals regarding such bases on the part of this Government was far from favorable.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. R. Stettinius, Jr.

General George C. Marshall,
Chief of Staff,
War Department,
Pentagon Building,
Washington, D.C.

NA. MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>DETROIT</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
RELEASED BY _____	<i>[Signature]</i>	CINCPAC COMWESSEAFRON NYD MARE ISLAND	PRIORITY
DATE <u>6 DEC 1944</u>			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM <u>060241</u>	<i>[Signature]</i>	COMINCH COMCRUPAC COMSERVPAC COMSERVRON SIX	ROUTINE
DECODED BY <u>SANDBERG</u>			DEFERRED
TYPED BY <u>KOHOUTEK</u>			
ROUTED BY <u>PARMENTER</u>			

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

060100

NCR 4458

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

PASS ACTION CINCPAC COMWESSEAFRON NYD MARE ISLAND. DETROIT SPEAKS. PASS FOR INFO COMINCH COMCRUPAC COMSERVPAC COMSERVRON SIX.

PROCEEDING SAN FRAN DIRECT. ETA MARE ISLAND STRAITS 0100Z/8TH. REQUEST CUSTOMS INSPECTION.

Clipperton message

COMINCH PASSED TO NCR FOR FURTHER DISTRIBUTION

TOR NCR 0633

19...19C...INFO

20M...CNO...FX37...NAVALDE 200P

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

550 Clipperton

060100

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FI01	
FI37	
FI40	
IG-00	
YCNO	

NAVY MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM	COMNCSLAFRON	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY		COMINCH	ROUTINE
DATE	2 DEC 1944		RRRRRRR
TOR CODEROOM	0301	CINCPAC COMFAIRWEST COMPASEAFRON COMNORCALSEC WEGSEAFRON	DEFERRED
DECODED BY	ELY		PRIORITY
TYPED BY	TURLEY / <i>[Signature]</i>		ROUTINE
ROUTED BY			RRRRRRR
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			DEFERRED
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
			<input type="checkbox"/>
022250 NCR 1310			

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

(ACTION COMINCH)

YOUR ^{marked} 011900 PLAN SAIL ARGUS FROM SAN FRAN 4TH FOR CLIPPERTON WITH AEROLOGICAL PERSONNEL FOR MAINTAINENCE WEATHER STATION UNTIL ARRIVAL HEAVY EQUIPMENT ON LST ABOUT 20TH.

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
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F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FXO 1	
FX37	
FX40	
IO-00	
VCND	

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM USS DETROIT		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		COMINCH	PRIORITY 2
DATE 3 DEC 44			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 0626			ROUTINE 4
DECODED BY ROBERTS			DEFERRED 5
TYPED BY DORSEY/Johnson		COMSOPAC CINCPAC	6
ROUTED BY			PRIORITY 7
			ROUTINE 8
			DEFERRED 9
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			10
			PRIORITY 11
			ROUTINE 12
			DEFERRED 13
			14
			15
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 16
			<input type="checkbox"/> 17
			18
			19
			20

022057

NCR 1431

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

RADIO BALBOA PASS TO ALL ADEES. DETROIT SPEAKS TO COMINCH. INFO COMSOPAC CINCPAC. RDO BALBOA PASSED TO COMINCH AND CINCPAC AS 030338. AIRCRAFT RECONNAISSANCE AND PHOTOGRAPHS DISCLOSED BROKEN WHITE LINE ABOUT 600 YARDS LONG ON CENTER OF NORTHWEST SIDE CLIPPERTON ISLAND.

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	1
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IO-00	
VCNO	

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

022057

13
Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	1
FROM <u>USS DETROIT</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PPRRRRPP	2
RELEASED BY		CINCPAC	ROUTINE	3
DATE <u>2 DECEMBER 1944</u>			DEFERRED	4
TOR CODEROOM <u>022046</u>		COMSERVPAC COMSERVRON 6 COMINCH AND CNO COMWESTSEAFRON COMALSEAFRON	PRIORITY	5
DECODED BY <u>FRUIN</u>			ROUTINE	6
TYPED BY <u>FRUIN/Imrie</u>			DEFERRED	7
ROUTED BY				8
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW	9
			<input type="checkbox"/>	10
				11
				12
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				14
				15
				16
				17
				18
				19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: <u>021630</u>	DATE	<u>NCR 1061</u>	TIME	20
				21

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

RADIO BALBOA PASS TO ALL ADEES. ACTION CINCPAC. DETROIT SENDS. INFO COMSERVPAC COMSERVRON 6 COMINCH AND CNO COMWESTSEAFRON COMALASSEAFRON.

RADIO BALBOA HAS PASSED TO ALL ADEES AS 021850.

AIRCRAFT RECONNAISSANCE CLIPERTON COMPLETED. NO PERSONNEL PRESENT. REPORT FOR DUTY ACCORDANCE COMPANSEAFRON 011558. PROCEEDING TOWARDS CALIFORNIA 12 KNOTS AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS. PRESENT SICK BAY WILL REQUIRE RECONVERSION TO FLAG QUARTERS FOR SERVICE AS FLAGSHIP.

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

1PRAY 10-07

021630

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRYTER F-23	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	
FROM COMINCH AND CNO	FOR ACTION	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE COMWESSEAFRON	PRIORITY RRRR ROUTINE DEFERRED	1
RELEASED BY E.J.KING				2
DATE 2 DECEMBER 1944				3
TOR CODEROOM 0312/2				4
DECODED BY	INFORMATION	CINCPAC COMPAEAFRON ALUSNA MEXICO COMFAIRWESTCOAST	PRIORITY RRRR ROUTINE DEFERRED	5
TYPED BY DOERR				6
ROUTED BY THOMPSON				7

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

PAGE 1 OF 2 011900 NCR 49086

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

ESTABLISH AT EARLIEST PRACTICABLE DATE EXPEDITIONARY AEROLOGICAL STATION ON CLIPPERTON ISLAND. PERSONNEL TO CONSIST OF ONE LIEUTENANT USNR AEROLOGIST OINC AND 6 MEN. CLASS (D) AEROLOGICAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED FOR FURNISHING SURFACE AND PILOT BALLOON OBSERVATIONS. FURNISH TRANSPORTATION FOR CONSTRUCTION PARTY, STATION PERSONNEL, EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES INCLUDING GASOLINE IN DRUMS, FUEL PUMP, AND LINES TO HANDLE REFUELING FOR 1 SEAPLANE BY VESSEL UNDER YOUR COMMAND. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO RECOMMISSION 1 YP REFERRED BY 271922 TO SUPPORT THIS PROJECT. SPECIAL CONSIDERATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO FOLLOWING PROBLEMS.

PARA A. OCCASIONAL TROPICAL STORMS WILL REQUIRE CONSTRUCTION OF HURRICANE SHELTER.

PARA B. ISLAND ONLY 5 TO 14 FEET ABOVE SEA LEVEL. PRESERVE

ACTION		
F-0		21
F-00		22
F-01		23
F-02		24
F-05		25
F-07		26
F-1		27
F-2		28
F-20		29
F-3		30
F-30		31
F-31		32
F-32		33
F-33		34
F-34		35
F-4		36
FX01		37
FX37		38
FX40		39
IG-00		40
VCNO		41
		42
		43
		44
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		52

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

011900

Regraded Unclassified

MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
FROM	FOR ACTION	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY		ROUTINE
DATE		DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM		
DECODED BY	INFORMATION	PRIORITY
TYPED BY		ROUTINE
ROUTED BY		DEFERRED

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

PAGE 2 OF 2

011900

NCR 49086

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

SECRETY THIS PROJECT.

MODIFY COMNAVSPACE FOR 20130 COMPLETION AIRCRAFT
 RECOMMISSANCE CLIPPERTON REPORT CINCPAC FOR DUTY IN
 CRUISE Y AS FLAGSHIP COMNAVRON 6. REF COMINCH CNO
 301335* NOT TO ALL
 NAVRON 6 PARTLY ESTABLISHED EFFECTIVE WITH DIRECT
 CINCPAC ABOUT 5 DEC. FLEET UNITS TO BE ASSIGNED BY
 CINCPAC. DETROIT (CNS) TO CRUISE Y, FLAGSHIP COMNAV
 DETROIT REPORT TO CINCPAC FOR DUTY.

* PROBABLY USS DETROIT

COMINCH & CNO...ORIG

OP01...OP03...12...19...19C...23...28...30...34...

ARMY(CGAAF-COF)...20Y...20R...16...20Z...

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

011900

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMPASEAFRON		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY		CALL GARBLED *	PRIORITY 2
DATE 2 DEC 44			RRRRR 3
TOR CODEROOM 2127			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY TURLEY		COMALASEAFRON COMWESTSEAFRON CNO; CINCPAC COMSERVRON 6 COMINCH; COMSERVPAC	5
TYPED BY HALVORSON <i>Goodnight</i>			PRIORITY 6
ROUTED BY MORRIS			RRRRR 7
			DEFERRED 8
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			9
011558		NCR 9814	PRIORITY 10
			RRRRR 11
			DEFERRED 12
			13
			14
			15
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 16
			<input type="checkbox"/> 17
			18
			19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

MAKE AIRCRAFT RECONNAISSANCE AT EARLIEST DATE OF CLIPPING

MODIFY COMSOW^{E A}ESPACFOR 281438 COMPLETION AIRCRAFT
 RECONNAISSANCE CLIPPERTON REPORT CINCPAC FOR DUTY IN
 CRUDIV 1 AS FLAGSHIP COMSERVRON 6. REF COMINCH CNO
 301835* NOT TO ALL

*SERVRON 6 PACFLT ESTABLISHED EFFECTIVE WHEN DIRECTED BY
 CINCPAC ABOUT 5 DEC. FLEET UNITS TO BE ASSIGNED BY
 CINCPAC. DETROIT (CL8) TO CRUDIV 1, FLAGSHIP COMSERVRON 6.
 DETROIT REPORT TO CINCPAC FOR DUTY.

* PROBABLY USS DETROIT

COMINCH & CNO...COG

OP05G...12...19...19C...20M...23...28...30...39...

BUSHIPS...BUORD...BUSANDA...BUPERS...BUMED...BUDOCKS

NAVAIDE... **SECRET**

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

1PRAY 19-07

011558

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
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F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VQND	

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH AND CNO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
RELEASED BY ADM. E.J.KING		FOR ACTION COMPASEAFRON	PRIORITY
DATE 27 NOVEMBER 1944			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM 1848/27			DEFERRED
DECODED BY		FOR INFORMATION CFW 3 COMGENPANAMA DEFENSE COMMAND ALUSNA MEXICO CINCPAC CTU 12.9.9 COMWESTSEAFRON	PRIORITY
TYPED BY THOMSON/			ROUTINE
ROUTED BY			DEFERRED
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
271657 NCR 48089			<input type="checkbox"/>

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: _____ DATE _____ TIME _____ GCT _____

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

MAKE AIRCRAFT RECONNAISSANCE AT EARLIEST DATE OF CLIPPERTON ISLAND. REPORT BY DESPATCH ANY PERSONNEL ON ISLAND AND BRIEF OF THEIR ACTIVITY. TAKE PHOTOS AND FORWARD NEGATIVES AIRMAIL TO COMINCH. LANDING AT CLIPPERTON OR IN MEXICO TO BE MADE ONLY IF ESSENTIAL TO CARRYING OUT MISSION. PRESERVE UTMOST SECRECY. KEEP COMINCH AND ALUSNA MEXICO INFORMED OF DATES OF FLIGHT.

ACTION		
F-0		21
F-00		22
F-01		23
F-02		24
F-05		25
F-07		26
F-1		27
F-2		28
F-20		29
F-3		30
F-30		31
F-31		32
F-32		33
F-33		34
F-34		35
F-4		36
FX01		37
FX37		38
FX40		39
IO-00		40
VONO		41
		42
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		52

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room **271657** Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFT 33	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM COMINCH AND CNO	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE		1
RELEASED BY ADM E J KING	FOR ACTION	CINCPAC	2
DATE 27 NOV 44			PRIORITY
TOR CODEROOM 1804	FOR INFORMATION	CTU 12.9.9 USS NEW YORK USS NEVADA USS YUSC&LOOSA COMPASEAFRON COMFAIRWING 3	3
DECODED BY			ROUTINE
TYPED BY SAMSON/ROWLAND			ROUTINE
ROUTED BY			4
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			5
271654			6
NCR 48090			7
			8
			9
			10
			11
			12
			13
			14
			15
			16
			17
			18
			19
			20

PRIORITY
ROUTINE
ROUTINE
DEFERRED

PRIORITY
ROUTINE
ROUTINE
DEFERRED

IF OPERATIONAL
CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

DIRECT CTU 12.9.9 MAKE AIRCRAFT PERCONNAISSANCE INCLUDING PHOTOGRAPHS OF CLIPPERTON ISLAND IF PRACTICABLE WHILE ENROUTE. REPORT BY RADIO WHETHER ANY PERSONNEL ON ISLAND AND BRIEF OF THEIR ACTIVITY AS OBSERVED. FORWARD NEGATIVES AIRMAIL TO COMINCH ON ARRIVAL. PRESERVE UTMOST SECRECY.

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
F-07	
F-1	
F-2	
F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
I0-00	
VCNO	

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

277654

OPNAV 10-07

Regraded Unclassified

TOP-SECRET

COPY

FROM: THE PRIME MINISTER

TO : THE PRESIDENT

NO : 838, 28 NOVEMBER 1944

Your 659. I had not heard of this, but of course all action will now be suspended till you and I have discussed the matter.

PRIME

No reply.

TOP-SECRET

COPY

COPY

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

November 28, 1944.

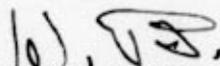
TOP SECRET
PRIORITY

FROM: OP.
TO : AL

MEMORANDUM FOR FILE:

In accordance with instructions from the President, I informed Admiral Edwards this date that the President wished a plane sent to Clipperton at an early date to investigate whether or not any survey operations ~~are~~ underway and also directed that a weather reporting group be established on Clipperton as soon as practicable.

Admiral Edwards asked whether we were to consult the French about this establishment there and I informed him that we were not, as these steps are being taken as necessary war measures and the question of ownership would be discussed later.


WILSON BROWN.

COPY

TOP-SECRET

TOP SECRET
PRIORITY

27 NOVEMBER 1944

FROM: OPNAV
TO : ALUSNA, LONDON

NUMBER 659. TOP SECRET AND PERSONAL FROM THE PRESIDENT FOR THE
PRIME MINISTER.

In mid October Air Vice Marshal Willock informed our Navy Department of his intention to survey Clipperton Island in compliance with instructions from British Air Ministry and we understand that a survey party is now at Acapulco, Mexico. Having in mind the Monroe Doctrine, air agreements now under discussion and American public opinion, I suggest that any plan of development of military bases on Clipperton or any other territory in or near American waters be discussed by the Governments concerned rather than by the Armed forces. I request that you cancel any instructions by your people about a further survey of Clipperton until you and I can discuss it. King is sure he can work out a schedule of your planes through Hawaii to meet military requirements. I have personally visited Clipperton twice.

ROOSEVELT

COPY

Released 271722Z.

*Copy to Sec State, Sec War,
Sec Navy, + Joint Chiefs of
Staff for information and
guidance.*

Answered by PM # 838 and # 883. - 1 - TOP-SECRET

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

Ca 25 Nov 44

File
[Signature]

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: British Activities at Clipperton Island.

1. Since you authorized the Navy Department (on 1 September 1944) to provide gas and lubricating oil at Bora Bora for a Royal Air Force seaplane for a survey flight from Mexico to Australia via Clipperton Island and Bora Bora, the flight has been made and in a letter dated 16 October 1944 Air Vice Marshal Willock informed Vice Admiral Edwards ~~in writing~~ that "The preliminary survey of Clipperton Island has now been completed and the reconnaissance of the South Pacific route is continuing." Willock further states that "The prospects at Clipperton for both a small seaplane base and suitable land strips for two runways would appear reasonably good. Further and more detailed survey of the island is, however, necessary to ascertain the amount of dredging, filling and other work necessary to render the island suitable as a refueling base. It is anticipated that this additional survey will take approximately one month and will require a small working party with engineering and survey gear."

"It is proposed, therefore to approach the Mexican authorities in order to obtain their consent for two Dakotas to be based at Acapulco, and to operate from their to the Islands, moving over such equipment and stores as may be required. Before approaching the Mexican authorities, I am writing to you in the light of the last paragraph of Air Marshal Welsh's letter to Admiral King dated 7 August, to request U.S. Navy's agreement to this proposal."

The letter goes on to say that the Air Ministry have asked that the report be completed and submitted as soon as practicable.

SECRET

On 24 October Admiral King informed the Head of the British Royal Air Force Delegation in Washington that "I am not prepared at present to give United States agreement to the proposals presented by Air Vice Marshal Willock in his letter." A copy of this letter is attached, marked enclosure (A).

In a memorandum to Admiral Leahy, dated 23 October - enclosure (B), Admiral King reports the Royal Air Force's intention to proceed and informs Admiral Leahy of the nature of his intended reply.

All of the exchanges of ~~communications~~ on the subject of Clipperton Island have been made the subject of a special report to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I have discussed the subject frequently with Admiral Leahy, Vice Admiral Edwards and with the Director of O.N.I. in pursuance of your instructions about two weeks ago to "find out what the British are doing at Clipperton".

It appears to all of us that the Clipperton Island question may become a serious one if the British should actually take possession of Clipperton because of the precedent it would establish in permitting European powers to establish air bases within striking distance of the Panama Canal, because it would be a violation of the Monroe Doctrine, and because it would surrender our present control of Pacific Air routes through Honolulu.

Our present information is not clear whether the British are delaying further moves until we have given our approval or whether they are in fact going ahead without our approval. Our State Department might make a formal enquiry or we could send a plane to investigate and, if the British are not already in possession, establish a weather

SECRET

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

take
observation party to ~~establish~~ possession pending future discussion
with the British, the French and the Mexicans. Some recent reports
from Mexico indicate that the Mexican Government is going ahead with
an air field at Acapulco - possibly as a result of British influence.

Very respectfully,

WILSON BROWN.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

November 23, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR FILE:

It is my recollection that about September 1st Admiral King informed me that as the only help the British wanted from us was fuel at Bora Bora he did not feel that we should refuse as the war effort depended upon cooperative effort in many theatres and mutual assistance. The President accordingly reluctantly approved the request as indicated above.

W.B.
WILSON BROWN.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SECRET

Memorandum of Conversation

November 21, 1944

COPY

SUBJECT: British Aerial Survey in the Pacific
Participants: Mr. Stettinius - Lord Halifax

I saw Lord Halifax at the British Embassy this afternoon and he inquired about the Clipperton matter.

I informed him that the Joint Chiefs of Staff in a letter from General Marshall to the Secretary recently stated that the British aerial survey, as contemplated, would not be in the interest of the war effort against Japan and would divert men and materials. I told the Ambassador that the Joint Chiefs also felt that the post-war aspects of the matter might be considered at a later date, when presumably the men and materials would be available.

*Copies obtained from R Adm Davidson, ep 13 11 Jan 45
b.m.g.*

TOP SECRET

COPY NO. 26

6 November 1944

(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION)

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

DECISION AMENDING J.C.S. 1100/1

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Note by the Secretaries

1. The Joint Chiefs of Staff approved the recommendations in J.C.S. 1100/1 subject to the insertion of an additional paragraph before the last paragraph of the draft letter to the Secretary of State.

2. Page 9 of J.C.S. 1100/1 as amended by decision of 4
November 1944 is attached.

A. J. McFARLAND,
E. D. GRAVES, JR.,
Joint Secretariat.

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Secy, JWPC	14

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(SPECIAL DISTRIBUTION)

27 October 1944Pages 5 - 34, incl.JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFFESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Reference: J.C.S. 1100

Note by the Secretaries

1. J.C.S. 1100 was referred to the Joint Staff Planners as a matter of priority for study and recommendation.
2. The enclosed report of the Joint Staff Planners is submitted for consideration by the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A. J. McFARLAND,
E. D. GRAVES, JR.,
Joint Secretariat.

DISTRIBUTIONCopy No.

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Gen. Roberts	7
Gen. Lindsay	8
Adm. Duncan	9
Capt. Fife	10
Secy, JCS	11
Secy, JSSC	12
Secy, JPS	13
Secy, JWPC	14

*Note:- This report was accepted, with
amendments, on 4 Nov.*

(hand)

JCS 1100/1

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E N C L O S U R E

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH GOVERNMENT
AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Report by the Joint Staff Planners

THE PROBLEM

1. To submit recommendations on J.C.S. 1100, which contains a request by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army for the United States views on a possible request by the British Government to the Mexican Government for permission to establish an air route for military purposes between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico.

FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

2. An official request has been made by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, on behalf of the Mexican Minister of War, through the U.S. Military Attache at Mexico City, for the War Department's attitude toward an anticipated request from the British Government, to the Mexican Government, for military air route privileges between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico, and for military air base facilities at the latter point.

3. For additional facts bearing on the problem, see Appendix "C" (page 11).

DISCUSSION

4. Development of the proposed route under the guise of military necessity is probably desired in the interest of post-war commercial aviation, as indicated in the Memorandum of Conversation between the Assistant Secretary of State and the Counselor of the British Embassy (Annex "K" to Appendix "C", page 30). Since, however, it is represented as a military project, and War Department opinion has been requested by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, on behalf of the Minister of War, it should be considered on that basis.

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5. The establishment of a new military base, however small, by a non-American nation, albeit friendly, on the mainland of North America, and in proximity to the Panama Canal, is a matter of more far-reaching import than a single survey of an air route. Acquiescence by the Mexican Government to such a request from a non-American nation might create a precedent, a fact which the Mexican Chief of Staff himself has pointed out, and might raise issues of the gravest significance involving the Monroe Doctrine and the matter of hemisphere defense and solidarity.

CONCLUSIONS

6. The proposed air route, which involves the establishment of base facilities at Acapulco, is not essential to prosecution of the war effort, either at present or in the future, for redeployment and support of British military aircraft in the Pacific areas.

7. Because of the importance of this matter to both the United States Army and Navy, the Joint Chiefs of Staff should advise the Department of State of the military viewpoint.

RECOMMENDATIONS

8. It is recommended that:

a. The attached letter (Appendix "A", page 7) be sent to the Department of State.

b. The War Department be requested to reply to the U.S. Military Attache, Mexico City, substantially along the lines of the attached memorandum (Appendix "B", page 10).

TOP SECRET

APPENDIX "A"

D R A F T

LETTER TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE

*This letter was signed
by General Marshall on
4 Nov for the S.C.S.*

An official request has been made by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, on behalf of the Mexican Minister of War, for the U.S. War Department's attitude on a possible request by the British to the Mexican Government for permission to establish a military air route between Belize, British Honduras, and Acapulco, Mexico, and base facilities therefor at Acapulco. The letter from the United States Military Attache at Mexico City, transmitting this request, which has been referred to the United States Chiefs of Staff for consideration, was likewise furnished by the War Department on 14 October 1944 to the Department of State, for the attention of Mr. Norman Armour, Acting Director of American Republics Affairs.

(Lt Smithers)
It is understood that the British naval attache from Mexico City, who is conducting the negotiations with the Mexican authorities, is now in Washington for conference with his superiors as to submission to the Mexican authorities of a formal request for permission to establish the route and facilities referred to for military purposes.

The route referred to is a link in a projected British air route to Australia, a survey of certain Pacific portions of which, namely from Acapulco to Clipperton Island, is now in progress. While it is represented by the British that the route is for military purposes only, its future commercial implications are indicated in a Memorandum of Conversation, 3 June 1944, between the Assistant Secretary of State, Mr. Adolph Berle, Jr., and the Counselor of the British Embassy, Mr. Michael Wright.

TOP SECRET

A formal request by the British Government to the Mexican Government for the establishment of military air base facilities at Acapulco would raise a distinct issue regarding hemisphere defense. From a military point of view, an extension of any form of control by a non-American nation over any territory in the Western Hemisphere, particularly when it involves establishment of a new military base in proximity to the Panama Canal, is a matter of concern to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Agreement by the Mexican Government to such a request by the British might create a dangerous precedent, a fact which the Mexican Chief of Staff himself has pointed out.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff desire to advise the State Department of their views in this matter, in the event that it is made the subject of further consideration through diplomatic channels. The Joint Chiefs of Staff are of the opinion that, from the military point of view:

The development of a military air route from Great Britain to the Pacific areas via the British West Indies, Mexico, and the French possessions of Clipperton and Bora Bora, is not essential to the war effort against Japan;

The establishment of military air base facilities in Mexico in connection therewith is likewise not essential to the war effort, and might create a far reaching precedent;

Other routes for the stated purpose are available and adequate;

The development of this route during the period of hostilities, for whatever purpose intended, would detract from rather than enhance the war effort, owing to the diversion of shipping, construction materials and personnel it would entail.

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Although it is felt that the British proposal should not be carried out during the present war, they may suggest it for execution in the post-war period. Its consideration on that basis should be postponed until after the war to be reconsidered then in the light of then existing circumstances and as an integral part of post-war aviation arrangements.

The War Department is advising the Military Attache in Mexico City of the above opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff by letter along the lines of the attached memorandum.*

o/ George C. Marshall

for the J.C.S.

* Same as Appendix "B", page 10.

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APPENDIX "B"

D R A F T

LETTER BY THE WAR DEPARTMENT TO THE UNITED STATES
MILITARY ATTACHE, MEXICO CITY

1. The subject of your letter of 4 October 1944 has been referred to the United States Chiefs of Staff in order that the opinion of both the Army and the Navy might be presented to the Department of State and that you might be advised of a suitable reply for transmittal to the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army for the Minister of War.

2. The Joint Chiefs of Staff have given the following opinion:
 - a. The development of a military air route from Great Britain to the Pacific areas via the British West Indies, Mexico, Clipperton and other islands in the Pacific, is not essential to the war effort against Japan.
 - b. The establishment of military air base facilities in Mexico in connection therewith is likewise not essential to the war effort, and might create a far reaching precedent.
 - c. Other routes for the stated purpose are available and adequate.
 - d. The development of this route during the period of hostilities, for whatever purpose intended, would detract from rather than enhance the war effort, owing to the diversion of shipping, construction materials and personnel it would entail.

3. The State Department has been advised of this opinion by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in the event that formal request is made of the Mexican Government through diplomatic channels for the rights referred to.

4. It is desired that you advise the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army verbally of the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

APPENDIX "C"

ADDITIONAL FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

1. In January, 1944, at a social gathering, the matter of a flight by a Royal Air Force Transport Command airplane and personnel over existing Air Transport Command (U.S.) routes to the Pacific, was informally discussed between Air Commodore Lydford, British Air Attache, and representatives of the United States Army and Navy.

2. In April, 1944, a Canadian transport airplane carrying British, Canadian and Australian officers arrived in Mexico City without prior notification of Mexican or U.S. authorities. This plane later proceeded to Acapulco and surveyed land and seaplane facilities there (Report of U.S. Naval Attache, Mexico City, 3 May 1944).

3. On 23 May 1944, nearly identical letters were dispatched to the Commanding General, Air Transport Command, Army Air Forces, and to the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) by the Royal Air Force Delegation, Washington, referring to the informal conversations in January, and giving itinerary and dates of a proposed survey of a route from Acapulco, Mexico, to New Zealand and Australia, via Clipperton Island, Bora Bora (both French possessions), Aitutaki and Tonga (both British) (Annexes "A" and "B" to Appendix "C", pages 14 and 16). It should be noted that this itinerary has no relation to the trip over existing A.T.C. routes mentioned in January.

4. Accomplishment of this survey was deferred because of objections by the U.S. Navy, as evidenced in the correspondence in Annexes "B" through "J" (pages 16 through 29).

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5. From this correspondence it appears that the avowed purpose of the survey was purely military, though, from the Memorandum of Conversation between Mr. Adolph Berle, Jr., Assistant Secretary of State, and Mr. Michael Wright, Counselor of the British Embassy, 3 June 1944, its commercial implications are clearly evident (Annex "K" to Appendix "C", page 30).

6. Authorization for U.S. Navy cooperation in the survey to the extent of providing fuel at Bora Bora was eventually given, and two Royal Canadian Air Force flying boats have proceeded to Clipperton Island (Annex "J" to Appendix "C", page 29).

7. A letter from Air Vice Marshal Willock to Vice Admiral R. S. Edwards, 16 October 1944 (Annex "L" to Appendix "C", page 33) indicates the immediate intention of the British to approach the Mexican authorities on the matter of facilities at Acapulco, and at the same time points out that the key to the proposed route lies in the development and use of Clipperton Island (which is of strategic importance in relation to the Panama Canal).

8. The route is suitable only for flying boats, because of lack of landplane facilities at key points. It cannot be converted to landplane operation except by construction of land air bases at Clipperton Island and elsewhere, at great cost, and with much expenditure of time and effort. It should be further noted that the payload capabilities of flying boats on this route would be so reduced by the fuel requirements for the long flight from Clipperton Island to Bora Bora (2992 nautical miles), as to render it of small importance logistically.

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9. The existing military air routes via Hawaii are capable of supporting such additional British land aircraft redeployment as is currently envisaged. As a result of the northward shift of operations in the Pacific, the alternate air routes southwest from Hawaii are capable of supporting additional air traffic "to the British owned islands of the Pacific", the objective mentioned in the letter from Air Marshal Welsh to Admiral King, 30 June 1944 (Annex "D" to Appendix "C", page 19).

10. A new issue is raised, however, distinct from any decision as to the original survey flight, by the anticipated request for a British air route across Mexico, an integral link in the over-all route now under survey, and for the base facilities at Acapulco.

ANNEX "A"

ROYAL AIR FORCE DELEGATION
Box 772, Ben Franklin
Station
Washington, D. C.

23rd May 1944

Commanding General
Air Transport Command
Room 1842, No. 1 Gravelly Point
Virginia

Attention: Colonel Robert M. Love

In January last, in a conversation between General George and Air Commodore Lydford of this Delegation, notice was given of a proposal by the Royal Air Force Transport Command to carry out certain flights in the South Pacific.

2. It is now possible to give the following details and provisional time-table for these flights:

Catalina Amphibian FP. 532

May 22. Montreal to Nassau.
23 Nassau to Belize.
24 Belize to Mexico City.
27 Mexico City to Acapulco.
June 8. Return to Montreal.

Catalina JX. 275

May 27. Bermuda to Nassau.
28 Nassau to Belize.
30 Belize to Acapulco.
June 1 Acapulco to Clipperton.
3 Clipperton to Acapulco.
5 Acapulco to Clipperton.
6 Depart Clipperton overnight for Bora Bora.
7-11 Local flights in Society Islands and Marquesas group.
12 Bora Bora to Aitutaki.
13 Aitutaki to Tonga.
15 Tonga to Auckland.
16 Auckland to Sydney.

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Liberator AL 504

- June 3 Depart San Diego for Honolulu.
- 6 Honolulu to Christmas Island.
- 7 Christmas Island to Bora Bora.
- 8 & 9 Local flights in conjunction with JX. 275.
- 10 Bora Bora to Samoa.
- 11 Samoa to Tonga.
- 12 Tonga to Auckland.
- 14 Auckland to Sydney.
- 18 Sydney to Fiji.
- 19 Fiji to Canton.
- 20 Canton to Honolulu.
- 21 Honolulu to San Francisco.

3. Catalina FP. 532 will act in the capacity of Ground W/T Station at Acapulco for the flight of JX. 275 to Bora Bora.

/s/ N. YOUNG
Wing Commander

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ANNEX "B"

Box 772
Benjamin Franklin Station
Washington, D.C.

ROYAL AIR FORCE DELEGATION

Ref: A.25,953/44.

23 May 1944

Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air),
Navy Department,
Washington 25, D.C.

ATTENTION: Commander Frank Turner.

1. In January last, in a conversation between the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) and Air Commodore Lydford of this Delegation notice was given of a proposal by the Royal Air Force Transport Command to carry out certain flights in the South Pacific.

2. It is now possible to give the following details and provisional timetable for these flights.

(Remainder of this letter identical to letter to Commanding General, Air Transport Command, dated 23 May 1944 (See Annex "A" to Appendix "C")).

* * * * *

TOP SECRET

ANNEX "C"

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D.C.

FF1/A4-3

25 May 1944

Serial: 001579

Air Marshal, Sir William L. Welsh
Royal Air Force Delegation
Washington, D. C.

Dear Air Marshal Welsh:

The enclosed letter is the first information regarding the flight scheduled therein that has been received by the Navy Department. Vice Admiral McCain, who is at present out of the city on duty, did not make known his conversations with your representatives regarding these flights, but it is extremely doubtful that any such conversation could have been interpreted as notification of such extensive operations as are scheduled in the enclosure.

These flights are indicated as taking place in the sea frontiers of the United States and over areas in which the United States exercises naval control, and since facilities provided by the United States will be made use of, more advanced formal notification than that provided by the enclosed letter is necessary. Prior to the initiation of the proposed trans-Pacific flight, information is requested regarding the extent and type of services to be provided at Clipperton Island, and in the islands of French Oceania and of the flight guard facilities to be provided. In particular, information is requested regarding arrangements for the movement of any vessels in this area in the event of casualty.

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At the present time, the Army Transport Command provides air transport service to the South and Southwest Pacific area for all services except the U.S. Navy which is provided for by the Naval Air Transport Service. The necessity for the proposed flights is not apparent. The establishment of an air transport service over the route of the proposed Catalina flight would be an unnecessary duplication not in the interest of the war effort and would involve expenditures of materials required for the war effort.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. J. KING,

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

Encl. (A) RAFD Sec. Ltr. A.25,953/44.

Copy to: ComGen AAF (With Encl. (A)).

ANNEX "D"

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
OFFICES OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

AIR STAFF

30 June 1944.

My dear Admiral,

missing
I refer to your letter FF1/A4-3 of the 25th May, and my reply thereto, regarding the proposed survey flight of the South Pacific.

I have now discussed this with the Air Ministry and am able to give you fuller information of our intentions.

The object of the flight is to survey the most direct route between the U.K. and British Dominions and British owned islands in the Pacific, with a view if possible to developing it as a strategical air reinforcement route.

The close of the war with Germany will release large numbers of squadrons and aircraft both from U.S. Forces, U.K. and Canada for use against Japan and I feel sure you will agree that every possible route will be needed if these reinforcements are to be transferred to that theater expeditiously. The present situation in the Indian Ocean precludes the development of an adequate route across it, and even if this were otherwise we should still require the Pacific Route in addition. As it is, however, we are now left with the only alternative and in view of the congestion which will inevitably occur on the one existing route across the Pacific it is imperative that the alternative should be examined for our mutual benefit without delay.

No extensive operations are contemplated at present. The survey flight will be carried out by one flying boat and the route to be followed is Bermuda, Bahamas, Belize, Acapulco (Mexico), Clipperton, Marquesas, Bora Bora, Cook Islands, New Zealand.

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In addition to this flying boat another flying boat acting as a W/T safety guard will proceed as far as Clipperton and return to Belize, when the survey aircraft has arrived at Marquesas. Concurrently with the flying boat flight along the route we propose to send one Liberator via Honolulu to meet it at Bora Bora. The composition of the whole flight will therefore be only two flying boats and one Liberator.

It is not anticipated that on this survey we will require any facilities beyond those which already exist in the Pacific for transient aircraft.

I will not bother you personally with details of the flight at this stage, but I will be obliged if you will agree that our respective staffs should meet to discuss the itineraries and the nature and extent of any facilities or services which may be required from the U.S. Navy.

When these discussions have taken place I will send you formal notification and full details of the proposed flights.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ W. L. Welsh.

W. L. Welsh,
Air Marshal.

TOP SECRET

ANNEX "E"

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT
Washington 25, D.C.

FF1/A4-3
Serial: 001945

6 July 1944

Air Marshal, Sir William L. Welsh
Royal Air Force Delegation
Washington, D.C.

Dear Air Marshal Welsh:

I have given much thought to your letter of 30 June 1944 and to Wing Commander Young's letter of 23 May 1944 in regard to the proposed survey flight in the South Pacific. Careful studies have been made of the routes and bases which you propose to use. I am impressed by the effort which will be required to make this a useable air route from Great Britain to British possessions in the South Pacific.

From the above study, I am required to repeat that establishment of this route would involve the expenditure of materials which are more urgently required elsewhere in the war effort.

I believe that both your staff and mine have full consideration of the problem involved in the proposed survey. There is very little to be gained by conference since the question is not of arranging for the survey, but rather that of decision to divert men, supplies, and equipment from present employment to a purpose which has as its end diversion of war materials to a use which I do not consider justified.

I believe that the war air traffic can be accommodated through Hawaii and, since this is the dividing point of traffic for Central Pacific and for Southwest Pacific, facilities from

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that point will be adequate to carry the load. I do not agree, therefore, that it is imperative that the route via Clipperton Island be surveyed without delay, but rather, that this survey and the construction of suitable bases along this route can properly wait until after our war requirements are fulfilled. I am not prepared to divert U.S. Navy facilities, ships or personnel to this project.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. J. KING,

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

ANNEX "F"

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
OFFICES OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

AIR STAFF

7 August 1944

My dear Admiral,

When you agreed Friday ^{4 August} afternoon to the Air Ministry's proposed survey flight of the South Pacific, I promised to let you have a brief note showing the itinerary and the assistance we required from you before you gave the "all clear".

I would like to repeat that I entirely agree with you that Wing Commander Young's letter, dated 22nd May 1944, which I only saw when it recoiled from your office, was a most unsatisfactory approach.

The proposal is that the flight will be carried out by a single PEY seaplane, and the route to be followed is:

Bermuda, Belize (British Honduras), Acapulco (Mexico), Clipperton Island, Bora Bora. A landing may or may not be made at Marquesas, depending on sea conditions. We know that no facilities exist there. From Bora Bora a flight will be made to the easternmost islands of the Tuamotu Group, returning to Bora Bora and thence to New Zealand, via Aitutaki (Cook Islands) and Tonga. The call at Tonga is not entirely necessary and would only be made if the gas situation at Bora Bora is tight.

The flying boat will be accompanied as far as Clipperton by a second from which she can refuel. The second boat will then return to Bermuda.

The only assistance required is the supply of approximately 3,000 gallons of hundred octane gasoline and not more than 100 gallons of oil at Bora Bora, and possibly a certain

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amount of gas at Tonga, should it be more convenient from the supply point of view.

In addition we should like to use any U.S. Naval radio facilities which may exist on the route, but we do not want any special arrangements made.

I have available at this Delegation full details of the proposed flight, wavelengths, the number of the aircraft, names of crew, etc., which I suggest I should give to your staff. When the "all clear" is given the Air Ministry will issue executive orders for the flight.

I should like again to make it clear that this flight is only a preliminary survey to ascertain whether or not it is possible to establish a reinforcing air route over the South Pacific. If the report of the survey is favourable, the actual preparation and establishment of the necessary bases will, of course, have to be discussed in greater detail later.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ W. L. WELSH,
Air Marshal.

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ANNEX "G"

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT
Washington, D.C.

FF1/H2
Serial: 002360

18 August 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR NAVAL AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Air Ministry's Proposed Survey Flight
to the South Pacific.

1. Enclosed is a copy of letter from Air Marshal Welsh dated 7 August 1944. Briefly, the proposal made by the British in the attached letter is to make a survey flight over the route Bermuda-Belize-Acapulco-Clipperton-Bora Bora with a view to determining if it is possible to develop this route for transfer of combatant British aircraft from the European theater to the Southwest Pacific.
2. The British request certain assistance by the United States Navy, which can be provided.
3. There is no possibility of developing this route in time for it to be of use during the war.
4. The Australian Government made a similar proposal concerning exploration of the Clipperton route in 1942. This proposal was disapproved on the ground that the effort necessary to develop the route was not warranted by the strategic situation (Cominch Memo to the President ser. 001544 of 20 December 1942).
5. Since the proposal of Air Marshal Welsh is for British exploration of a route that would be of value only in connection with post-war aviation, it relates to questions of national policy concerning which it appears desirable to have the guidance

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of the President. Please ascertain the view of the President as to what action should be taken on the proposal put forward by Air Marshal Welsh.

/s/ E. J. King,
E. J. KING,
Admiral, U.S. Navy.

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ANNEX "H"

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT
Washington, D.C.

FF1/A4-3
Serial: 002438

26 August 1944.

Air Marshal, Sir William L. Welsh,
Royal Air Force Delegation,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Air Marshal Welsh:

I wish to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 7 August regarding the Air Ministry's proposed survey flight in the South Pacific. I am also informed of your telephone message to the effect that you were moving planes to Bermuda and possibly to Belize in connection with this survey flight.

The matter of clearing the flight and use of Naval facilities and materials is still under consideration. I will inform you as soon as decision has been reached.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ E. J. KING,

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

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ANNEX "I"

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

September 2, 1944

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Subject: Air Ministry's Proposed Survey Flight
to the South Pacific.

Reference: (a) CominCh's Secret Memorandum to
the Naval Aide to the President,
FF1/H2, Serial 002360,
dated 18 August 1944.

1. As reported orally on 1 September, the President has authorized you to accede to the British request for fuel at Bora Bora in their proposed survey flight through the South Pacific.

/s/ W. Brown.
WILSON BROWN,
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.,
Naval Aide to the President.

TOP SECRET

ANNEX "J"

UNITED STATES FLEET
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
NAVY DEPARTMENT
Washington, D.C.

FF1/A4-3
Serial: 002515

2 September 1944.

Air Marshal, Sir William L. Welsh
Royal Air Force Delegation
Washington, D.C.

Dear Air Marshal Welsh:

The U.S. Navy is now prepared to furnish the facilities and materials you have requested for the proposed Catalina survey flight from Mexico to New Zealand via Clipperton and Bora Bora Islands as outlined in your letter of 7 August, and the Commander in Chief, Pacific Ocean Area, and Commander, Western Sea Frontier, have been informed of your intention to make this survey. Three thousand gallons of aviation gasoline and one hundred gallons of aviation lubricating oil will be made available at Bora Bora.

The Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Air) has been requested to arrange the necessary details regarding this flight with your office.

Sincerely yours,
/s/ E. J. KING,
Admiral, U.S. Navy.

Copy to:
CG, AAF
DCNO (Air)

JCS 1100/1

- 29 -

Annex "J" to
Appendix "C"

Regraded Unclassified

ANNEX "K"

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

3 June 1944.

Subject: Proposed British-South American service; status of United States Air Transport Command service.

Participants: Mr. Michael Wright, Counselor, British Embassy;
Mr. A. A. Berle, Jr.

Copies to: S,U, AD, BC, FE - Mr. Crew, ARA

Mr. Wright came in to see me at my request. I handed him a copy of my letter in answer to his relating to the proposed inauguration of BOAC service to South America. I said that in doing so I wished to make certain observations which I thought he would wish to transmit to his Government.

There has been considerable discussion of the British move toward South America, in the light of the representations made by the British Government, and also in the light of the discussion of this service in the parliamentary debates. It was clear that though the service was nominally "government", it was in effect the institution of commercial service between Britain and South America. We were further on notice that it was desired to extend this service from Rio to Buenos Aires as soon as possible; and that presumably an eventual connection was planned between this service and the South Pacific services which were about to be surveyed by the RAF. In substance, the British move presented the first major move for expansion of commercial air services since the beginning of the war.

I said that the view of our Government was not, in essence, opposed to this, but that there was opposition to any arrangement by which British services could extend their

rations, while American services could not. The BOAC was acting in substance as the British Air Transport Command; yet it would survive the war and be in commercial work, while the United States Air Transport Command was really, as well as nominally, a military service and would not survive the war. Thus the operations of the United States ATC were not the equivalent of the extension of BOAC.

The solution appeared to be an understanding that the Army Air Transport Command services could be converted into semi-commercial services in areas where military considerations permitted, thus permitting the extension of American air services pari passu with the British air services. This did not mean that all Army Air Transport command services would immediately be converted to semi-commercial services; but merely that we could do so as and when such conversion might become appropriate. Immediately we thought only of such conversion along the South littoral of the Mediterranean into Cairo. I noted, however, in this connection that we were on notice that the British Overseas Airways Corporation was proposing to establish a service to Rome as soon as the city was taken and the situation stabilized; and it would be difficult to explain to American public opinion why a similar extension of American service might not equally take place.

I explained that the method of conversion would be simply the use of American companies as contractors for the Air Transport Command, and the right of the ATC to sell "fill-up" tickets just as the BOAC did. This would in all respects put the commercial company, as a contractor for the ATC, on the same basis as the relation which BOAC bore to the British military authorities.

I said I had no doubt that the British Government would appreciate, without difficulty, the trouble we would have if,

TOP SECRET

after American troops had participated in liberating a country, one or more of the Allies found it possible to establish semi-commercial services into the area, while American services were barred. Heretofore, the tacit understanding that commercial services would not be installed had prevented the question from arising; but the inauguration of the British-South American service would break that log jam. The argument that South America was not a military area would hardly serve to distinguish the cases, since at the moment North Africa was not materially more a war area than was the shoulder of Brazil.

This was the background of the letter which I now handed him, and I felt that his Government would recognize that the discussions here, which had gone on in the friendliest spirit, had reached an equitable result.

I added that the military had raised questions based on the most effective use of transport in the North Atlantic and had suggested that these be discussed through military channels. I said that I myself know nothing about the conditions which led to this and suggested that military channels would be quite adequate to handle any questions of that sort.

Mr. Wright said that he had no instructions on this subject but would, of course, inform London and give us the benefit of any views they might have. I thought I detected a certain disappointment in his general attitude, though this may have been due to the hot weather.

A. A. B., Jr.

TOP SECRET

ANNEX "L"

British Joint Staff Mission
Offices of the Combined Chiefs of Staff
Washington

Air Staff
A, 25,953/44.

16 October 1944.

Vice Admiral R. S. Edwards
Room 3502
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Admiral:

I think you may be interested to hear that the preliminary survey of Clipperton Island has now been completed, and the reconnaissance of the South Pacific route is continuing with the departure of the PBV for Bora Bora.

From reports received from Headquarters 45 Group, R.A.F. Transport Command, Montreal, who are responsible for the reconnaissance, the prospects at Clipperton for both a small seaplane base and suitable land strips for two runways would appear reasonably good. Further and more detailed survey of the Island is however necessary to ascertain the amount of dredging, filling and other work necessary to render the island suitable as a refueling base. It is anticipated that this additional survey will take approximately one month and will require a small working party with engineering and survey gear.

It is proposed, therefore, to approach the Mexican authorities, in order to obtain their consent for two Dakotas to be based at Acapulco, and to operate from there to the Island, moving over such equipment and stores as may be required. Before approaching the Mexican authorities, I am writing to you in the light of the last paragraph of Air Marshal Welsh's letter to Admiral King, dated 7th August, to request U.S. Navy agreement to this proposal.

TOP SECRET

It will however be appreciated that the South Pacific route survey will not be complete nor would it be possible to prepare a satisfactory working report until the capacity of Clipperton Island is more fully established. Air Ministry have asked that the report be completed and submitted as early as practicable after the return of the reconnaissance aircraft from Australia, and I shall be grateful for an early notification of the concurrence of the Navy Department. I assume that it will not be necessary again to refer to Admiral Nimitz whose agreement to the route survey has already been obtained. There is no intention of going beyond the detailed survey of Clipperton Island until the final return of the reconnaissance aircraft from Australia and preparation of the report on the operations.

Yours sincerely,

R. P. WILLOCK
Air Vice-Marshal.

UNITED STATES FLEET
 HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
 NAVY DEPARTMENT
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



FF1/Ah-3

Serial: 003217

5 Nov. 1944

SECRETSECRET

My dear Air Vice-Marshal:

I have received your letter of 1 November, A.25.953/44, requesting an interview regarding the matter of British activity at Clipperton Island.

The air route across Mexico via Clipperton Island to the Southwest Pacific has been discussed by the Joint Chiefs of Staff. They are referring this matter to the State Department setting forth their opinions, which coincide with those I have expressed to you in previous correspondence.

I consider that there is little to be gained from further discussion. As stated in my letter of 24 October 1944, I consider that further activity of the British at Clipperton Island is a matter to be decided between your government and those of the United States, Mexico, and France. I shall await instructions from my government before taking further action.

A. F. J. King

Admiral, U. S. Navy.

Air Vice-Marshal R. P. Willock,
 British Joint Staff Mission
 Washington, D. C.

*Chas
 CoS, USA*

UNITED STATES FLEET

Headquarters of the Commander in Chief

4 November 1944.

S E C R E T

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL KING:

1. Air Marshal Willock called on me this morning to discuss the Clipperton Islands survey.
2. He stated that the purpose was to land a party of about 30 on the Island to determine whether or not conditions were suitable for operating sea-planes, and also to determine whether or not it is possible to construct a landing strip. He said the matter was urgent, partly because of the need to develop a second general route for moving aircraft to the Australian area, and also because the survey party (consisting mostly of civil engineers belonging to Canadian railroads) was already to leave and that the railroads were protesting against keeping the surveyors idle.
3. I informed him that the Clipperton Island matter had to be settled on a diplomatic level and that J.C.S. was referring the matter to the State Department. Upon his further insistence as to urgency, I suggested that if the British Government were anxious for a quick decision, it would be appropriate for the Embassy to so inform the State Department. He then asked if I would give him a "green light" to the whole project in case the State Department indicated approval. I told him that I could not do so.
4. He then asked if he could assume that there would be no objection to the survey planes flying across U. S. territory from Canada, in case the project in general were approved. I replied that if the project in general were approved, it could be assumed that details such as this could be considered as included in the general approval, but that we should require advance information as to schedules in order that appropriate military and naval commanders could be informed.

R. S. EDWARDS.

Copy to:
F-01
F-02
F-1
F-3
F-33

SECRET

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
OFFICES OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
Washington

S E C R E T

1 November 1944.

A.25.953/lh

Dear Admiral King,

I have received a signal from Sir Charles Portal commenting on your letter of the 24th October on the subject of the Clipperton survey project. ^{attached}

I understand it is not convenient for you to see me today, but I would be grateful for a short interview at your earliest convenience. I think there must be some misunderstanding which can no doubt be cleared up after a discussion on the project.

As explained in my letter of October 16th to Admiral Edwards, the interim report from the Captain of the Catalina which carried out the reconnaissance showed that the prospects of establishing a seaplane base and air strips at Clipperton are favourable, but it is of course impossible to form any definite conclusion without a detailed survey. It is therefore proposed to fly down a survey party with the necessary equipment and to use two Dakotas for this purpose. The reconnaissance flight established the fact that there is sufficient level ground on the island for the Dakotas to land.

The sole object of the proposal is to make a complete survey of the island, so that we can get the facts upon which to evaluate the possibility of establishing facilities for sea and land-based aircraft for the development of the reinforcing route to the Pacific Theatre. There is, however, no intention of the survey party carrying out any construction work.

The desirability of surveying the island has already been agreed and I am sure you will agree that it is highly desirable to follow up the favourable report from the reconnaissance party by a thorough survey to establish the fact that the potentialities of a base exist.

It is not suggested that any decision should be taken at this stage as to the military value of the route, which can only be decided when the exact deployment of air forces required to implement the agreed strategy for the prosecution of the war against Japan has been worked out by our respective staffs.

Without a complete survey it will be impossible to assess the military value of the route in the light of the capacity available on alternative routes when future deployment figures have been worked out.

If there is any more information you would like, or if you require more detail, please let me know, so that I can bring it with me when I come to see you.

I would be grateful if you would treat the matter as one of urgency, as the survey party has been assembled.

Yours sincerely,

Signed: R. P. Willock.

R. P. Willock,
Air Vice-Marshal.

Copy

Copy obtained from Connick F-33, 11 Jan 45, C. P. Y. B. M. S.

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAYER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>ALUSNA MEXICO CITY</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION CNO <i>70</i>	ROUTINE
DATE <u>29 OCTOBER 1944</u>			DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM <u>0416</u>			
DECODED BY		FOR INFORMATION	PRIORITY
PARAPHRASED BY <u>MCDONOUGH</u> <i>Smith</i>			ROUTINE
ROUTED BY <u>KBAFF</u>			DEFERRED

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

241000

NCR 12905

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

ACTION

AIRMAILGRAM

BRITISH CATALINAS ARE CONTINUING WORK ON SURVEY MENTIONED IN REFERENCE (A) AND THE CREWS OF THESE

PLANES ARE FREQUENTLY SEEN IN MEXICO CITY. NO INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE AND THOSE CONCERNED MOST

UNCOMMUNICATIVE CONCERNING THESE OPERATIONS. PILOT IN CHARGE HAVE REQUESTED GASOLINE FROM U.S. ARMY

SUPPLIES THIS AREA AND HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO DIVERT

~~THIS GASOLINE TO THESE BRITISH PLANES WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO OUR OWN. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT~~

BRITISH MAY CALL THIS TO THE ATTENTION OF EITHER THE WAR DEPARTMENT OR THE NAVY DEPARTMENT. BRITISH

MILITARY ATTACHE STATES THAT GASOLINE IS EXPECTED IN NEAR FUTURE. OWING TO USUAL DELAYS THIS

GASOLINE MAY FOR SOMETIME BE ENROUTE. MEANWHILE U.S. ARMY GASOLINE IS AVAILABLE AT VERACRUZ AND

SECRET

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Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

241000

TOP SECRET DISPATCH

DRAFTER	EXT.	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
CAPTAIN P.G. TAYLOR		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
FROM BRITISH CATALINA SURVEY FLIGHT		FOR ACTION SENIOR AIR STAFF 45 ATLANTIC TRANSPORT GROUP RAF DORVAL CANADA	PRIORITY RRRRRRR ROUTINE
RELEASED BY 25 OCTOBER 1944			DEFERRED
DATE 250141			BASEGRAM
TOR CODEROOM POWLEY			
DECODED BY		FOR INFORMATION COMSOPAC COMSERONSOPAC COMDT SAMOAN DEF GRP CINCPAC	PRIORITY RRRRRRR ROUTINE
PARAPHRASED BY BALDWIN	CHECKED BY BALDWIN		DEFERRED
BY BALDWIN	BY BALDWIN		BASEGRAM
ROUTED BY	DITTOED BY		

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE. IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

241935 NCR 2023

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ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

(COMNAVSTA BORA BORA PASSES FOR CAPTAIN P.G. TAYLOR OF BRITISH CATALINA SURVEY FLIGHT AND ASKS CNO PASS TO SENIOR AIR STAFF OFFICER 45 ATLANTIC TRANSPORT GROUP RAF DORVAL CANADA. INFO COMSOPAC COMSERONSOPAC COMDT SAMOAN DEF GRP CINCPAC)

THIS IS TOP SECRET.

(A) NAVY INVESTIGATED BASES EAST FROM BORA BORA.

(B) RECOMMEND NAUGA ATOLL IMMEDIATELY SUITABLE ALL TYPES FLYING BOATS AND LEVEL LAND ADAPTABLE TO STRIPS FOR ALL TYPES LAND AIRCRAFT DIMENSIONS FIVE BY THREE MILES.

(C) PUKA PUKA AND NUKU HISA SUITABLE EMERGENCY BASES LAND AND SEA AIRCRAFT RESPECTIVELY.

(D) DEPARTING FOR AITUTAKI 24TH.

NCR ORIGINAL DISTRIBUTION:

RAF DELEGATION WASHN(#1).....(FOR PASSING TO ACTION ADEE)

ADD COMINCH(#2-9)....OPO3(#10)....(PER LT COMDR WEINSTOCK)

ADD OP 12(#11) PER COMINCH. **ADD NAVAIDE (#12-13) PER NAVAIDE**

No. 1 ADMIRAL. No. 2 FILE. No. 3F-1 OR CHARTROOM. No. 4 SPECIAL.

TOP SECRET

Handle only in accordance with "Top Secret" instructions contained in Article 76, Navy Regulations. COPY NO.

FF1/A4-3
Serial 003105

United States Fleet
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
Navy Department
Washington 25, D.C.

SECRET

24 October 1944.

From: Commander in Chief, United States Fleet,
and Chief of Naval Operations.
To : The Head of the British Royal Air Force Delegation,
Washington, D.C.

Subject: British Activity at Clipperton Island.

Reference: (a) Air Vice Marshal Willock's Sec. Ltr. A, 25,953/44
of 16 October 1944.

1. Receipt of reference (a) is acknowledged. This letter states that you propose to approach the Mexican authorities to obtain permission to operate two landplane transports between Acapulco, Mexico, and Clipperton Island for a period of approximately one month in support of an engineering working party on that island. There is no landplane field on Clipperton Island.
2. Previous correspondence with your office has concerned the survey flight by Catalina aircraft from Mexico, via Clipperton, to the Southwest Pacific. In connection with this flight, certain Navy facilities and materials were made available at Bora Bora, and the Commander, Western Sea Frontier, was given notification that this flight would stop at Clipperton Island which is within that sea frontier. No further operations were discussed.
3. As stated in previous correspondence to your office regarding the survey flight, I consider that this route via Clipperton Island to the Southwest Pacific has no military value in connection with the war against Japan. However, Air Vice Marshal Willock's letter proposes enterprises by your government within an area in which the United States as well as Mexico and France are concerned. I consider that these activities are a matter for discussion and decision between your government and those of the United States and Mexico and the French authorities.
4. Consequently, I am not prepared at present to give United States Navy agreement to the proposals presented by Air Vice Marshal Willock in his letter.

E. J. KING.

C-O-P-Y

*This reply was approved & sent.
H.M.C.*

United States Fleet
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief
Navy Department
Washington 25, D.C.

FFL/A4-3

Serial 003090

23 October 1944.

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL LEAHY

Subject: British Activities at Clipperton Island.

Enclosures: (A) Copy of Air Vice Marshal Willock's Sec. Ltr.
A,25,953/44 of 16 October 1944.
(B) ComInCh and CNO Proposed Reply to Enclosure (A).

1. At the President's direction, the U.S. Navy recently made available at Bora Bora 3,000 gallons of 100 octane gasoline and 100 gallons of aviation lubricating oil for a Royal Air Force seaplane making a survey flight from Mexico to Australia via Clipperton Island and Bora Bora. No other activities were presented or proposed by the British. They were notified that the U.S. Navy considered such an air route as of no military value in connection with the war against Japan.

2. The Royal Air Force now proposes rather extensive activities at Clipperton Island, which is claimed by the French, including preparation of a landing field for Dakotas (Douglas landplane transports) as outlined in Enclosure (A).

3. Since this air route from Mexico to the Southwest Pacific is obviously a post war commercial venture involving policies of our government, as well as being of interest to Mexico and the French, I propose to answer Air Vice Marshal Willock's letter by Enclosure (B). Your comment on this proposed reply is requested.

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

C-O-P-Y

Note - Adm Leahy informed Adm King by phone on 23 Oct that he approved Adm K's draft reply.

H. H. C.

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
Offices of the Combined Chiefs of Staff
Washington

AIR STAFF

S E C R E T

16 October 1944.

A, 25, 953/44.

SECRET

Vice Admiral R. S. Edwards
Room 3052
Navy Department
Washington, D. C.

Dear Admiral:

I think you may be interested to hear that the preliminary survey of Clipperton Island has now been completed, and the reconnaissance of the South Pacific route is continuing with the departure of the PBV for Bora Bora.

From reports received from Headquarters 45 Group, R.A.F. Transport Command, Montreal, who are responsible for the reconnaissance, the prospects at Clipperton for both a small seaplane base and suitable land strips for two runways would appear reasonably good. Further and more detailed survey of the Island is however necessary to ascertain the amount of dredging, filling and other work necessary to render the island suitable as a refuelling base. It is anticipated that this additional survey will take approximately one month and will require a small working party with engineering and survey gear.

It is proposed, therefore, to approach the Mexican authorities, in order to obtain their consent for two Dakotas to be based at Acapulco, and to operate from there to the Island, moving over such equipment and stores as may be required. Before approaching the Mexican authorities, I am writing to you in the light of the last paragraph of Air Marshal Welsh's letter to Admiral King, dated 7th August, to request U.S. Navy agreement to this proposal.

It will however be appreciated that the South Pacific route survey will not be complete nor would it be possible to prepare a satisfactory working report until the capacity of Clipperton Island is more fully established. Air Ministry have asked that the report be completed and submitted as early as practicable after the return of the reconnaissance aircraft from Australia, and I shall be grateful for an early notification of the concurrence of the Navy Department. I assume that it will not be necessary again to refer to Admiral Nimitz whose agreement to the route survey has already been obtained. There is no intention of going beyond the detailed survey of Clipperton Island until the final return of the reconnaissance aircraft from Australia and preparation of the report on the operation.

Yours sincerely,

Signed: R. P. Willock
R. P. WILLOCK
Air Vice-Marshal.

C O P Y by W D's office.

Regraded Unclassified

S E C R E T

COPY NO. 67

J.C.S. 1100

13 October 1944

Pages 1 - 4, incl.

JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

ESTABLISHMENT OF AIR FACILITIES BY BRITISH
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES IN AND THROUGH MEXICO

Note by the Secretaries

Enclosures "A", "B" and "C" have been referred to the Joint Staff Planners as a matter of priority for study and recommendation to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

A. J. McFARLAND,
E. D. GRAVES, JR.,
Joint Secretariat.

*Note: The recommendations of the Joint Staff
Planners, called for by this paper, were
submitted in JCS 1100/1. of 27 October.*

(H.M.R.)

CONFIDENTIAL

ENCLOSURE "A"

AMERICAN EMBASSY
OFFICE OF THE MILITARY ATTACHE
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

No. 4734 - 44

4 October 1944

SUBJECT: Request of British Government for Aerial Route Across Mexico and Installations at Acapulco.

TO: Chief, Military Intelligence Service, War Department, Washington, D. C.

1. As reported in previous dispatches from this office, the RAF has been surveying an aerial route from the British Isles to the Southwest Pacific. Two Catalina flying boats have been in Mexico for the last three weeks surveying the facilities at Acapulco, and also at Clipperton Island, approximately 600 miles southwest of Acapulco.

2. Yesterday, General Guzman Cardenas, Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army, requested me to come to his office. During our conversation, General Guzman Cardenas stated that a British Naval Attache, Lieutenant Smithers, had explained the purpose of this aerial survey to the Mexican Department of War and had stated that he was going to Washington (where he now is) for the purpose of conferring with his superiors before making a formal application to the Mexican Government for permission to establish an aerial route from Belize to Acapulco and permission to establish in Acapulco the necessary facilities for servicing RAF planes landing at that port and for other necessary arrangements such as weather reports, radio communications, et cetera.

3. Lieutenant Smithers was informed that the matter should be taken up formally through the Mexican Relaciones Exteriores (State Department) who would then, in turn, refer it to Defensa Nacional for action.

CONFIDENTIAL

4. General Guzman Cardenas stated that the Secretary of War, General Lazaro Cardenas, before taking any action on this matter, desired to know what the attitude of the U.S. War Department would be on this subject. General Cardenas stated that this application would be for military planes only as his Department naturally could have nothing to do with commercial aviation which is handled by another Cabinet Officer. General Guzman Cardenas stated further that the application coming from a non-American Nation presented a new problem which had no precedent.

5. I informed General Guzman Cardenas that I would present the matter to the War Department and, accordingly, sent a cable which follows in paraphrase:

"I have been requested officially by the Chief of Staff of the Mexican Army to get the reaction of the War Department to a request by the British Government for an aerial route from Belize to Acapulco across Mexico, involving facilities for servicing, weather, and radio at Acapulco. The purpose of request as stated by British is to move military planes and personnel only from Europe to Australia. Mexicans say approval, if given, will be only for military planes."

A. R. HARRIS,
Brigadier General, A.U.S.,
Military Attache.

CONFIDENTIAL

ENCLOSURE "B"

PARAPHRASE

From: U.S. Military Attache, Mexico City, Mexico
To: War Department
No. 606 3 October 1944

For sole stated purpose of movement from Europe to Australia of military personnel and aircraft the British have requested trans Mexico air route from Belize to Acapulco. At Acapulco they (the British) want radio, servicing and weather facilities. Approval will be given states Mexican Army Chief of Staff only for military aircraft, but he has officially asked me for reaction of War Department.

Harris

S E C R E T

ENCLOSURE "C"

PARAPHRASE

From: War Department
To: Military Attache
Mexico City
Mexico

State that matter is being considered and that an answer will be coming soon if an immediate statement is required of you. Deferment of your reply to Chief of Staff, Mexican Army desired pending further instructions as your 606 of 3 October needs coordination and study at this end.

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM G-2		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	<i>J</i>	ALUONA MEXICO CITY <i>Military Attache, Mexico City (RUS)</i>	PRIORITY 2
DATE 9 OCT 1944			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM			DEFERRED 4
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
WAR 42988	7 OCT 1944	NCR 17440	<input type="checkbox"/>

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

RECEIVED BY TWX FROM ARMY.

SIGNED BISSELL.

MATTER DISCUSSED REURAD 606, 3 OCT REQUIRED STUDY AND FURTHER COORDINATION HERE. IT IS DESIRED YOU DEFER ANSWER TO MEXICAN CHIEF OF STAFF UNTIL FURTHER ADVICE. IF INTERIM STATEMENT NECESSARY SAY SUBJECT UNDER CONSIDERATION AND REPLY WILL BE FORTHCOMING SHORTLY.

16...COG

COMINCH...CNO...NAVAIDE...13...17...OPO3...31...

CM-OUT-42988

ACTION	GCT
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F-01	23
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VCNO	42
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SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

7 OCT 1944

CLIPPERTON FILE

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALBANY MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY
RELEASED BY <i>military attache</i>		WAR DEPT	ROUTINE
DATE 8 OCT 1944			DEFERRED
TO CODE ROOM			PRIORITY
DECODED BY			ROUTINE
PARAPHRASED BY			DEFERRED
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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
NR 606	3 OCT 1944	NCR 17579	<input type="checkbox"/>

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	OCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

(REC'D FROM ARMY BY PRINTER)

TO MILID NBR 606.

THE CHIEF OF STAFF MEXICAN ARMY HAS REQUESTED ME OFFICIALLY TO ASCERTAIN WAR DEPARTMENT'S REACTION TO REQUEST OF BRITISH GOVT FOR AERIAL ROUTE ACROSS MEXICO FROM BELIZE TO ACAPULCO WITH FACILITIES FOR SERVICING WEATHER AND RADIO COMMUNICATIONS AT ACAPULCO. BRITISH STATE REQUEST IS FOR PURPOSE OF MOVING MILITARY PLANES AND PERSONNEL FROM EUROPE TO AUSTRALIA ONLY. CHIEF OF STAFF STATES APPROVAL, IF GIVEN, WILL BE FOR MILITARY PLANES ONLY.

COMINCH.....COG

13....17....31....16....OPO3....CNO....20OP...2OG,,,NAVAIDE

CM-IN-3341

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-30	30
F-31	31
F-32	32
F-33	33
F-34	34
F-4	35
FX01	36
FX30	37
FX37	38
FX40	39
IG-00	40
VCNO	41
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Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Ari. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV-NCR-16

SECRET

(Classification)

71-5 #97
(2043)

COPY NO. _____
(For Record Series only)

MILITARY INTELLIGENCE DIVISION W. D. G. S.

MILITARY ATTACHE REPORT MEXICO

(Country reported on)

Subject **British Catalina Flying Boats' Activities in Mexico.**
(Brief descriptive title)

G. No. 5940

19200

From **M. A. Mexico City** Report No. 4572 Date **19 September 1944**

Source and degree of reliability: Evaluation: **A-1**
Source: **U.S. Assistant Naval Attaché for Air, Mexico City; and British Assistant Naval Attaché, Mexico City.**

SUMMARY.— Here enter careful summary of report, containing substance succinctly stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.

As stated in subject.

NOTE: This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Act, 50 U. S. C. 31 and 32, as amended. Its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. It may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by other than War Dep. Agencies, except by permission of the A. C. of S., G-3, W. D. G. S.

af-3

MIS 58898

Distribution by originator AC-Embassy--Mexico City

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Pol-1
*Econ-1
Lib-1
Dir Inf-1
HQAAF-2
ONI-3
SIA/ML-1

AGF	AAF	ASF	AC of S G-2	Chief IG	Eur. Afr.	Far East	N. Amer.	Air	Dissem.	AIC	FLER	OSD
NA Sec.	CIG	Rec. Sec.	ONI	BEW	CWS	ENG.	OPD	ORD	Sig.	Stads.	QMG	

Enclosures:
None

Copy obtained 18 Jan 45

SECRET

(Classification)

Regraded Unclassified

SECRET

1. Since the forwarding of Report No. 4504, I. G. 5940 X9200, dated 2 September 1944, subject: "Arrival in Mexico City of British Catalina PBV-5A", another British Catalina flying boat has arrived at Acapulco, Mexico, and reconnaissance flights have been conducted to Clipperton Island, and it is believed on into the Pacific Ocean beyond Clipperton Island. One Catalina flying boat is serving as a guard or safety ship, while the other is actually making the reconnaissance flights. The Catalinas are using Laguna Coyuca, ten miles west of Acapulco, as a fueling and landing base. This lagoon is an excellent water base for amphibious type aircraft. It is well protected from the sea, and is reported to have a depth of twenty fathoms in most parts. It is also reported by the Asst. Naval Attaché for Air that the Mexican Government intends to build an airport on the strip of land that separates the lagoon from the sea. This has not been confirmed to the undersigned by any Mexican source as of this date.

2. In addition to the fifty barrels of 100-octane gasoline sent to Acapulco the latter part of last month, another thirty barrels were sent 14 September 1944. It is reported by the Asst. Naval Attaché for Air that the gasoline is being ferried to Clipperton Island. Lieutenant Smithers British Asst. Naval Attaché, requested the U. S. Naval Attaché, Mexico City, to forward a message to Captain Taylor, senior member of the reconnaissance group at Acapulco to the effect that the U. S. Navy has been requested to deliver fuel requirements to Bora Bora, Society Islands, 15 of September 1944.

3. The U. S. Navy requested the approximate itinerary of the proposed flight and was informed as follows:

Bora Bora, Society Islands-----12 September
 Bora Bora to Aitutaki, Cook Islands-----17 September
 Aitutaki to Tonga-----18 September
 Tonga to Auckland, New Zealand-----19 September

4. Group Captain Powell, RAF, arrived from Montreal, Canada in a C-87 type aircraft 15 September 1944, and departed Mexico 17 September 1944 for Montreal, Canada. It was reported to the undersigned by Lt. Smithers, British Asst. Naval Attaché, that some difficulty has been experienced by the reconnaissance crews, and that Group Captain Powell came down to settle the problem. Just what the difficulty was cannot be determined at this time.

GEORGE P. CHAMFION,
 Colonel, Air Corps,
 Military Air Attaché.

Approved and forwarded by:

A. R. HARRIS,
 Brigadier General, A. U. S.,
 Military Attaché.

GPC/llf

NOTE: This document contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the Espionage Laws, Title 18, U. S. C., Sec. 793 and 794, and the transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law. It may not be reproduced in whole or in part, by other than War Dept. agencies, except by permission of the A. C. of R. O., W. D. C. E.

SECRET

SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAWER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE			
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY	EX 100	CNO <i>WJ</i>	PRIORITY 1
RELEASED BY	FOR ACTION		ROUTINE 2
DATE 10 SEP 44			DEFERRED 3
TOR CODEROOM 1549	INFORMATION		DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY		PRIORITY 5	
PARAPHRASED BY SANDERS/KOTEEN/ <i>Sanders</i>		ROUTINE 6	
ROUTED BY OCONNORS			DEFERRED 7
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
PAGE 1 OF 3			<input type="checkbox"/>
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	1317 <i>00</i>	NOR 12, 71	
	DATE	TIME	GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

AIRMAILGRAM

REFERENCE: (A) NA MEXICO SECRET AIRMAILGRAM 2 *attached* 232641,

AUG 14

TWO CATALINAS, ONE AMPHIBIOUS, BEING USED BY BRITISH ON SURVEY OF SOUTH PACIFIC ROUTE, PRESENTLY OPERATING FROM ACAPULCO. PBV 5A REMAINING AT ACAPULCO ACTING AS RADIO GUARD SHIP WHILE OTHER PLANE IS ON RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHT RECON PLANE AT CLIPPERTON ISLAND 9TH, 10TH AND 11TH OF SEPTEMBER. SQUADRON LEADER L L JONES, SENIOR PILOT OF GUARD PLANE STATED THAT GASOLINE WAS BEING FERRIED TO CLIPPERTON IN RECON PLANE.

LIEUT SMITHERS, BRITISH NAVAL ATTACHE, MEXICO CITY, REQUESTED US NAVAL ATTACHE, MEXICO CITY, TO FORWARD FOLLOWING MESSAGE TO CAPTAIN TAYLOR, SENIOR MEMBER OF RECON PLANE. // U S NAVY HAVE PASSED INSTRUCTIONS FOR

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 12-57

1317 *00*

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
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F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42
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MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

NUMBER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
FROM	FOR ACTION		PRIORITY
RELEASED BY			ROUTINE
DATE			DEFERRED
TOR CODEROOM			
DECODED BY	INFORMATION		PRIORITY
PARAPHRASED BY			ROUTINE
ROUTED BY			DEFERRED
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
PAGE 2 OF 3			<input type="checkbox"/>
131734 NC: 12771			

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

FUEL REQUIREMENTS TO BE DELIVERED TO BORA BORA SEPT 15. US NAVY HAVE REQUESTED PROVISIONAL ITINERARY OF FLIGHT. THEY HAVE BEEN INFORMED AS FOLLOWS: CLIPPERTON TO BORA BORA 12TH. BORA BORA TO MATUTAKI 17TH. MATUTAKI TO TONGA 18TH. TONGA TO AUCKLAND 19TH. US NAVY REALIZES THIS ENTIRELY PROVISIONAL. REQUEST CONFIRMATION THAT THESE DATES ROUGHLY CORRECT OR INFO AS TO SUGGESTED ALTERATIONS. REPLY IMMEDIATELY BY SAME METHOD. 33 DRUMS 100 OCTANE PETROL AND 1 DRUM LUBRICATING OIL LEFT TODAY 1000. HAVE LEARNED ABOVE ITINERARY WILL BE 1 DAY BEHIND SCHEDULE. LAGUNA COYUCA LOCATED ABOUT 10 MILES WEST OF ACAPULCO BEING USED AS FUELING BASE BY GROUP. BRITISH REPORT LAGOON HAS 5 MILE UNOBSTRUCTED TAKE-OFF AREA. MEXICAN GOVERNMENT BUILDING AIRPORT PARALLEL TO THIS LAGOON ON

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCND	42
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SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-07

MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

NUMBER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM _____	FOR ACTION	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	PRIORITY 1
RELEASED BY _____			ROUTINE 4
DATE _____			DEFERRED 7
TOR CODEROOM _____	INFORMATION		PRIORITY 10
DECODED BY _____			ROUTINE 12
PARAPHRASED BY _____			DEFERRED 13
ROUTED BY _____			
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW <input type="checkbox"/>
PAGE 2 OF 3 131740 NCR 12771			

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME OCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

STRAND SEPARATING LAGOON FROM OCEAN. NATURAL FORMATION OF LAGOON AND AIRFIELD AND THEIR BEING ADJACENT TO ONE ANOTHER MAKES IT POSSIBLE TO CONSTRUCT COMBINATION SEAPLANE AND LANDPLANE BASE AT RELATIVELY LOW COST.

ADD NAVAIDE... (PER NAVAIDE)

ADD OP34 FOR JOINT ACTION..... (PER CCWO)

16.....ACT.

17.....COMINCH.....OP33.....31.....19.....19C.....

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FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCND	

SECRET

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OPNAV 19-67

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mexico, D. F., September 14, 1944

SECRET
MAXIMUM PRIORITY

No. 20114

SUBJECT: Investigations in Mexico Concerning
Possible British Airline.

The Honorable
The Secretary of State,
Washington, D. C.

Sir:

I have the honor to refer to the Department's instruction no. 6242 dated September 11, 1944 with regard to investigations now being undertaken in Mexico by British Air Force officers, concerning the possibility of a British airline operating from Belize to Veracruz to Acapulco. Reference is made in this connection to the Embassy's despatch no. 19808 of August 30, 1944 and two letters from the undersigned to Mr. Joseph McGurk of the Department dated July 9 and July 24.

Supplementing the information contained in the Embassy's despatch no. 19808, there is transmitted the following paragraph, the substance of a secret airgram sent by the Naval Attache at Mexico City to the Chief of Naval Operations, Navy Department, Washington, on September 13, 1944:

The Two Catalina planes are now operating from Acapulco in connection with the British survey of a South Pacific route. One of these planes, an amphibian, is stationed as radio guard ship at Acapulco, while the second plane, which flew to Acapulco from Belize, is carrying out reconnaissance flights. This reconnaissance plane was at Clipperton Island on September 9, 10 and 11, and Squadron Leader Jones, senior pilot of the guard plane, stated that gasoline was being ferried to Clipperton. The British Naval Attache at Mexico City, Lieutenant Smithers, requested the United States Naval Attache here to forward the following message to Captain Taylor, senior member of the reconnaissance plane: "U.S. Navy have passed instructions for fuel requirements to be delivered to Bora Bora September fifteenth. U.S. Navy have requested provisional itinerary of flight. They have been informed as follows: Clipperton to Bora Bora twelfth. Bora Bora to Aitutaki seventeenth. Aitutaki to Tonga eighteenth. Tonga to Auckland nineteenth. U.S. Navy realizes this entirely provisional. Request confirmation that these dates roughly correct or information as to suggested alterations. Reply immediately by same method. Thirty-three drums hundred octane petrol and one drum lubricating oil left today 1000." It has been ascertained that the above itinerary will be one day behind schedule. Laguna Coyuca is situated about ten miles west of Acapulco, and is being used by the group as a fueling base. It is reported by the British that the lagoon has a five mile unobstructed take-off. The Mexican Government is building an airport parallel to

SECRET

this lagoon on the strand separating it from the ocean. A combination seaplane and landplane base can be constructed at a relatively low cost, due to the natural formation of the lagoon and air field, and to the fact that they are adjacent.

The Embassy has received no information of an official character to the effect that the British Air Force representatives or the British Embassy here have approached the Mexican authorities with a view to obtaining landing rights in this country. It is the opinion, however, of the United States Naval Attache for Air and of an official of the Pan American Airlines in Mexico City that the survey is being conducted for the end purpose of investigating the possibility of establishing a commercial airline between the United Kingdom and New Zealand/Australia via the British West Indies, Belize, Acapulco and the Pacific Islands referred to in this despatch and the Embassy's despatch no. 19808. Lieutenant Smithers, the British Naval Attache, has implied to the United States Naval Attache for Air that the United States Naval authorities in Washington are fully informed of the reconnaissance activity being conducted by Captain Taylor and Squadron Leader Jones. The Embassy, however, is continuing its inquiries with a view to ascertaining from an official Mexican source whether landing rights have actually been extended and, if so, the conditions. As the reconnaissance plane is scheduled to arrive in Auckland on September 20, the Department may consider it advisable to request the American Consul in that City to report his observations of the movements of the airplane.

SECRET

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N. H. I. 10-1940

FI-5791
Copy No. 2 of 15

ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
NAVY DEPARTMENT

SECRET

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Serial 7-5-44 Monograph Index Guide No. 1002-5-50
(Start new entries each year, I, II, III, IV, V, VI) (If correspond with SUBJECT given below, see O. N. I. Index Code. Make separate report for each main title.)

From U. S. Naval Attache at Mexico City, Mex. Date 5 September, 1944
(Ship, Post, unit, district, office, station, or person)

Reference (see below)
(Directive, or response, or previous related report, etc., if applicable)

Source Personal Observation and Interview Evaluation L-2
(If official, present observation, publication, press, conversation with— locally when practicable, etc.) A-1 to SO etc. AN/EN 3-10; SER. 41246-4146-2

Subject BRITISH - Aviation - Proposed Special Air Services
(Title reported on) (Main title or paragraph title) (Subject) (Make separate report for each title)

NOTE—(After careful summary of report, containing substance succinctly stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.)

Amphibious Catalina flying; boat flown to Mexico City from Montreal, Canada. Crew members all attached to R.A.F. Ferry Command. Mexican Ambassador to Canada was passenger. Press reports state British are soliciting Mexican authorization for use of base if access to proposed route from England to Australia. Pilots point out reason for need of route through temperate regions. Additional plane expected. Both planes to be used in reconnaissance work.

- References: (a) MA Mexico Report 213-44 dated 3 May 1944.
 (b) MA Mexico Report 3614 dated 4 May 1944.
 (c) MA Mexico Secret Intelligence dated 27 May 1944, 5 June 1944, Serial L-186-44 dated 9 June 1944 and Serial L-284-44 dated 23 August 1944.

References (a) and (b) contained information concerning the arrival of a group of British officers and men in Mexico City for the purpose of investigating possibilities of the use of the port of Acapulco as a base on a proposed air route from England to Australia. Considerable concern was shown by this embassy and Mexican Governmental officials in Mexico City because no advance information of the proposed trip of this group to Mexico in the above references was available. It had been learned through conversations with a member of a comparable group which arrived in Mexico City on the 29th of August, that advance information of this trip was withheld because Air Commodore Powell of the R.A.F. Ferry Command, whose headquarters are at Montreal, Canada, was desirous that his trip be as little publicized as possible. Consequently Mexican officials were not notified.

The group of R.A.F. men who arrived in Mexico on the 29th of August at 1830 made a flight from Montreal, Canada, to Mexico City with one landing at Brownsville, Texas, on the morning of the 29th. This flight was made in a Catalina amphibious airplane, type MY No. 58532. The crew consisted of a number of men attached to the R.A.F. Ferry Command at Montreal. These men included:

- THEO R. F.
 Distributed By Originator
- Routing spaces below for use with C. N. I.
- | | |
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| A-3-a | Op-03 |
| ASNA | Op-34 |
| Op-21 | Op-36 |
| 16-1-ov | |
| Op-13 | |
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Copy obtained 18 Jan 1953
 Regraded Unclassified
 SECRET

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5 September 1944

Squadron Leader L. L. Jones, Canadian, Senior Pilot, R.C.A.F.
 Alfred Torrey, Co-pilot, Mexican civilian attached to the R.C.A.F.
 Ferrying Command and formerly an officer in the U.S. Army Air Force.
 Navigator Murray, Australian.
 Radio Operator, Ian Marvin, civilian attached to the R.C.A.F. Ferrying
 Command.
 Flight Engineer Crawshaw, British.
 Flight Engineer Kirby, British, and one Air Gunner, Canadian.

Passengers included Dr. Del Rio, Mexican Ambassador to Canada, who took advantage of an opportunity to make this trip in order to be present at the opening session of Congress, September 1, in Mexico City, and one Britisher who is on leave and not part of the group assigned to the plane but who made the trip to Mexico with assurance from Ambassador Del Rio that he would not encounter any trouble in obtaining commercial air travel back to the United States.

According to a press report which appeared in NOV. DALLS of August 31, 1944, the British were soliciting the authorization from the Mexican Government for obtaining use of certain aerial bases to be used on a route from England to the South Pacific. Information coming from high officials of the Ministry of National Defense, informed the press that the trip of this group was for the purpose of investigating possible routes and landing sites which existed on the Pacific coast and that when this route was established, it would be used for transporting personnel and material from the European theatres of war to Australia and the Orient. The press report also stated England and Canada were anxious that provisional bases be established with accompanying facilities for maintenance of personnel and planes in order to facilitate the East-West movement of military forces. According to a Mexican Presidential decree, Allied Nations have been authorized permission to cross Mexican territory, and inasmuch as Mexico is in line with the most direct southern East-to-West route from England to Australia, the British are contemplating the use of a base in Mexico and are desirous that they be authorized to do so.

In a conversation with Jones and Torrey, it was learned that it is of primary importance that Great Britain establish an air route on a course which will follow temperate to equatorial zones. Both pilots have been in the Ferrying Command since the beginning of the war and have had a great deal of experience flying both English and American aircraft on transoceanic flights in the Pacific, as well as the Atlantic. They stated that the British have not seen fit to equip their planes for operating in extremely cold areas, and therefore it is not only impractical, but extremely dangerous to fly British-made aircraft on the North Atlantic run during the winter months. It is quite likely that the movement of troops will commence this fall and continue throughout the winter. Therefore, it behooves the British to establish a route following a more temperate climate. The most direct East-to-West route lies on a line from England to the Azores, Bahamas, Belize, British Honduras, Acapulco, Mexico and on to the westward. The one serious obstacle lies in the long over-water flight from Mexico to the nearest South Sea Islands.

Squadron Leader Jones and his group are primarily recon agents for another group which is due in the near future. It has been learned from information obtained from a local British source, that a British Catalina flying boat is in Belize, British Honduras, awaiting orders to proceed to Acapulco. The British group which has been in Mexico City for the past week is scheduled to depart for Acapulco on 5 September. When facilities for reconnaissance operations are set up, the plane now at Belize will be ordered to Acapulco. The present ship is to be used for reconnaissance purposes on the West Coast, and also as a radio guard ship for the other plane that will be used on long-range reconnaissance. It has been learned that the radio equipment carried in the Catalina is powerful enough for direct communications from the plane in Mexico to Montreal, Canada, if it is operated at night. This group is now awaiting further orders from Montreal.

Comment: As to the possibilities of the British establishing this route for commercial purposes, for the present it least the idea may seem rather absurd, but this possibility must not be overlooked. It is entirely logical that within a

SECRET

WHI-96 Serial 7-8-44

N. - - - - -

5 September 1944

short time the British may need to transport both men, materiel and equipment in the quickest possible manner from the European Theatre to the South Pacific Theatre of operations. However, it is possible that inasmuch as the R.A.F. Ferrying Command in Canada was originally operated by civilians and inasmuch as there are considerable number of civilians attached to the R.A.F. Ferrying Command at the present time, a long-range program for converting a military line into a commercial line might be in the making.

Regraded Unclassified
SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER OP-16

EXTENSION NUMBER

3926

ADDRESSEES

PRECEDENCE

FROM CNO

ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE

RELEASED BY R E SCHUIRMANN

FOR ACTION

ALUSNA MEXICO CITY

PRIORITY
ROUTINE
DEFERRED

DATE 5 SEPT 1944

TOR CODEROOM 1124/05

INFORMATION

DECODED BY BATES *[Signature]*

PRIORITY
ROUTINE
DEFERRED

TYPED BY SORENSEN

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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

142130

NCR 3421

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:

DATE

TIME

GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

SURVEY FLIGHT YOUR ^{attached} 151000 JUNE AND YOUR ^{attached} 191000 JUNE
HAS BEEN APPROVED. DATE UNCERTAIN

16...ORIG...

COMINCH....

ADD NAVAIDE.....(PER NAVAIDE)

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch ¹⁴²¹³⁰ person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 10-87

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F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
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FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER COMINCH & CNO EXTENSION NUMBER ADDRESSEES PRECEDENCE

FROM ADM. KING

RELEASED BY 2 SEPT. 44

DATE 2115

TOR CODEROOM

DECODED BY

TYPED BY SIRIS *St. F. Stone*

BY SORENSE

ROUTED BY

ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE

CINCPAC
COMWESTSEAFRON

COMSOPAC
COMAIRPAC
COMAIRSOPAC

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UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

021705 NCR 46529

IF OPERATIONAL

CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

APPROVAL HAS BEEN GRANTED FOR BRITISH TO MAKE CATALINA SURVEY FLIGHT FROM MEXICO TO NEW ZEALAND VIA CLIPPERTON AND BORA BORA ISLANDS. REQUIREMENTS FOR AV GAS AND LUS OIL AT BORA BORA AS STATED BY ^{attached} 1827 AUGUST TO CINCPAC ONLY. YOU WILL BE KEPT INFORMED OF DATES AND ANY FURTHER SERVICES REQUIRED.

ADD. NAVAIDE (PER NAVAIDE)

COMINCH & CNO...ORIG
OP01...OP03...31...34...12...BUAER....

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-07

021705

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F-20	
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F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX0 1	
FX37	
FX40	
I0-00	
V00	

Aspirants

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

SECRET
SECRET

September 2, 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet.

Subject: Air Ministry's Proposed Survey Flight to the South Pacific.

Reference: (a) COMINCH's Secret Memorandum to the Naval Aide to the President, FFI/H2, Serial 002360, dated 18 August 1944.

1. As reported orally on 1 September, the President has authorized you to accede to the British request for fuel at Bora Bora in their proposed survey flight through the South Pacific.

WILSON BROWN,
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.,
Naval Aide to the President.

2 September 1944

Letter, from ADMIRAL KING
to AIR MARSHAL WELSH

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 29

SECRET

1. A British Catalina PBV-5A arrived in Mexico City 29 August 1944, from Montreal, Canada, by way of Brownsville, Texas, piloted by Squadron Leader Johns (RAF), and Squadron Leader Torres, with a crew consisting of an Australian navigator, two British aerial engineers, one Canadian gunner and a civilian radio operator. The Mexican Ambassador to Canada, Senor DEL RIO, arrived in the plane as a passenger.
2. The plane is to depart for Acapulco within the next few days, pending the arrival of another Catalina flying boat from the Bahamas. It is planned to operate these airplanes from Acapulco on survey flights to Clipperton Island, with the view of determining the suitability of that site for establishment of a ground and, or, water base for aircraft, with the ultimate purpose of establishing a great circle route from England to Australia for the purpose of moving aircraft from the European Theater to the Southwest Pacific Theater when the war situation so demands. Squadron Leader Torres stated that the two flying boats may remain at Acapulco for possibly as long as one month, depending on instructions from Montreal.
3. Approximately 2,500 gallons of 100-octane gasoline was furnished this crew by P.A.A. officials at Mexico City, and was shipped to Acapulco in 53-gallon drums by Mexican Army trucks.
4. No information could be obtained from the crew concerning survey flights beyond Clipperton Island; however, it was learned that the route from England to Mexico would probably be as follows:

England--Azores--Bermuda--Bahamas--Acapulco, Mexico.

It is believed by the undersigned that the route from Acapulco to Australia would be as follows:

Acapulco, Mexico--Clipperton Island--Marquesas Islands--Tahiti--Samoa Islands--Fiji Islands--New Caledonia--Australia.
5. Squadron Leader Torres, co-pilot, is an American citizen and graduated from Kelly Field, Texas, in October 1937, after which he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant Air Corps Reserve. He was employed by the R.A.F. Ferrying Command approximately four years ago, and has served with that organization ever since.
6. Military Air Attaches Comments: In view of the fact that the end of the war in the European Theater may materialize within six months, and the movement of aircraft from the European Theater to the Southwest Pacific and Indo-China Theaters may begin within six to eight months, it appears somewhat doubtful that this proposed route could be put into operation within that time, except possibly for amphibious type aircraft. It is entirely possible that this survey flight has as its ultimate objective the establishment of a postwar British international commercial airway from England to Australia and China.

SECRET

SECRET

Regraded Unclassified

copy obtained 18 Jan 45

TOP-SECRET

COPY

BLUE 130

1 September 1944

FROM: THE PRESIDENT

TO : ADMIRAL BROWN

REFERENCE RED 349. ADMIRAL KING'S REQUEST APPROVED.

RECEIVED 011930Z.

COPY

TOP-SECRET

Regraded Unclassified

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

For information on the background on this despatch from Admiral Brown at Washington to the President at Hyde Park, see Admiral Brown's memorandum of 23 November in this file.

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

TOP-SECRET

COPY

RED 349

1 September 1944

FROM: ADMIRAL BROWN

TO : THE PRESIDENT (HYDE PARK)

ADMIRAL KING REQUESTS YOUR PERMISSION TO ASSIST THE BRITISH IN THEIR PROPOSED SURVEY OF AIR FIELDS IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC. THERE ARE ONLY TWO BRITISH PLANES INVOLVED. THE PLANES ARE NOW AT BELIZE AWAITING INSTRUCTIONS TO PROCEED. THE ONLY ASSISTANCE THEY REQUIRE OF US IS GAS AND FUEL OIL AT BORA BORA WHICH IS AVAILABLE. REFUSAL TO PROVIDE THE FUEL REQUESTED MIGHT BE MISINTERPRETED.

I AGREE WITH KING AND REQUEST YOUR APPROVAL.

Released at White House Map Room

Wilson Brown,
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.,
Naval Aide to the President.

SECRET

TOP-SECRET

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	1
ALUSNA MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE		2
FROM		CNO	PRIORITY	3
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION	ROUTINE	4
DATE 28 AUGUST 1944			DEFERRED	5
281632				6
TOR CODEROOM				7
DECODED BY		INFORMATION	PRIORITY	9
TYPED STANFORD <i>Rogers</i>			ROUTINE	10
BY WHITTINGTON			DEFERRED	11
ROUTED BY				12
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW	13
241000		NCR 16005	<input type="checkbox"/>	14
				15
				16
				17
				18
				19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT	20
ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT				21
A I R M A I L G R A M				22

REFERENCE SECRET AIRMAILGRAM ^{attached} 291000 OF MAY 1944. SECRET
 AIRMAILGRAM ^{attached} 041650 OF JUNE 1944.
 ASSISTANT BRITISH NAVAL ATTACHE HAS INFORMED THIS OFFICE
 THAT SERVICING OF PROJECTED BELIZE-ACAPULCO-CLIPPERTON ISLAND ¹
 ROUTE FOR AMPHIBIAN AIRCRAFT WILL SOON BE MADE. EXACT DATE
 OF ARRIVAL OF BRITISH OFFICERS NOT YET KNOWN

ADD: NAVAIDE.....(PER NAVAIDE)

16.....ACTION

17.....COMINCH.....

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room ²⁴¹⁰⁰⁰ Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

ACTION	
F-0	
F-00	
F-01	
F-02	
F-05	
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F-20	
F-3	
F-30	
F-31	
F-32	
F-33	
F-34	
F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

DATE: 26 August 1944

SUBJECT: Proposed British Survey of the Pacific

26 August 1944

1. Further light of the proposed British survey (flight from Honolulu to Clippington to New York) indicates that this route has possibilities of being used for military purposes within two years, at the earliest. Air Marshal Welsh stated in his letter of 30 June that this route was to be used to transfer military aircraft released for Pacific service upon the defeat of Germany. Captain Clippington (now) is developed as a landing base, on large numbers of aircraft and may be flight from London over this route. Large airplanes only could make the flight, and the British Letter, from ADMIRAL KING

Letter, from ADMIRAL KING

to AIR MARSHAL WELSH

and airplane bases will be required. Captain Clippington estimates that airplanes and related facilities at Clippington would require three years to build at a cost of \$20,000,000. The estimated cost would be \$14,000,000 for a landing field, and \$6,000,000 for a runway. The estimated cost for a large and engine tower, approximately, for each field, is required to complete any of these bases. Costs are quoted as a relative measure of the extent of improvements required.

2. Since the route has an immediate military value, the RAF survey must be for post-war air transport purposes. There have been conversations regarding post-war aviation development between Mr. Berle of the State Department and Mr. Clippington, Commander of the British Survey, particularly in regard to the extension of KLM routes from South America to these investigations, Mr. Berle stated "to substantiate the British move proposed the first major move for expansion in commercial air services during the beginning of the war". Mr. Berle also mentions the proposed RAF survey of the South Pacific. The point Mr. Berle raised was that

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 27.

that would continue in the commercial aspect after the war, while the RAF survey would have no commercial standing but that the British Government's leading their expansion give the British an advantage over U. S. commercial companies at the post-war period.

3. It is not considered that the Navy should offer its facilities and give full clear on a project whose value lies in the development of British post-war air transport. The attached report has been prepared to Air Marshal Welsh in this vein.

Respectfully,

WALTER S. GIBSON

25 August 1944.

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL KING:

Via: F-3, F-02, F-01.

Subject: Proposed British Survey Flight Across the South Pacific.

1. A further study of the proposed British survey flight from Acapulco to Clipperton to Bora Bora indicates that this route has no possibilities of being used for military purposes within two years, at the minimum. Air Marshal Welsh stated in his letter of 30 June that this route was to be used to transfer military aircraft released for Pacific service upon the defeat of Germany. Unless Clipperton Island is developed as a landplane base, no large numbers of aircraft can make the flight from Mexico over this route. Large seaplanes only could make the flight, and the British possess only a total of 633 two and four engine seaplanes. In order to make a route comparable to the San Francisco-Hawaii route, landplane fields and seaplane bases will have to be built at Clipperton and Nukuhiva or Puka Puka, as presented in Admiral Byrd's report. Admiral Byrd estimates that landplane and seaplane facilities at Clipperton Island would require three years to build at a cost of \$22,000,000. His estimate for Nukuhiva is \$34,000,000 for a landplane base, and \$1,000,000 for a seaplane base; for Puka Puka, \$20,000,000 for a land and seaplane base. Approximately two years would be required to complete any of these bases. Costs are quoted as a relative measure of the extent of improvements required.

2. Since the route has no immediate military value, the RAF survey must be for post-war air transport purposes. There have been conversations regarding post-war aviation development between Mr. Berle of the State Department and Mr. Michael Wright, Council for the British Embassy, particularly in regard to the extension of BOAC routes into South America. In these conversations, Mr. Berle stated "in substance the British move presented the first major move for expansion in commercial air services since the beginning of the war". Mr. Berle also mentions the proposed RAF survey of the South Pacific. The point Mr. Berle raised was that BOAC would continue in its commercial capacity after the war, while ATC (and NATS) would have no commercial standing and that the British Government backing BOAC expansion gave the British an advantage over U. S. commercial companies in the post-war picture.

3. It is not considered that the Navy should offer its facilities and give "all clear" on a project whose sole aim is the development of British post-war air transport. The attached reply has been prepared to Air Marshal Welsh in this vein.

Respectfully,

WALLACE M. BEAKLEY.

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



FFL/H2

Serial: 002360

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
MEMBERS OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

18 AUG 1944

AIR STAFF

SECRET
SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR NAVAL AIDE TO THE PRESIDENT:

Subject: Air Ministry's Proposed Survey Flight to the South Pacific.

agreement was to "consider the proposal"

1. Enclosed is a copy of letter from Air Marshal Welsh dated 7 August 1944. Briefly, the proposal made by the British in the attached letter is to make a survey flight over the route Bermuda-Belize-Acapulco-Clipperton-Bora Bora with a view to determining if it is possible to develop this route for transfer of combatant British aircraft from the European theater to the Southwest Pacific.
2. The British request certain assistance by the United States Navy, which can be provided.
3. There is no possibility of developing this route in time for it to be of use during the war.
4. The Australian Government made a similar proposal concerning exploration of the Clipperton route in 1942. This proposal was disapproved on the ground that the effort necessary to develop the route was not warranted by the strategic situation (CominCh memo to the President ser. 001544 of 20 December 1942).
5. Since the proposal of Air Marshal Welsh is for British exploration of a route that would be of value only in connection with post-war aviation, it relates to questions of national policy concerning which it appears desirable to have the guidance of the President. Please ascertain the view of the President as to what action should be taken on the proposal put forward by Air Marshal Welsh.

E. J. King
Admiral, U. S. Navy.

Admiral E. J. King,
Commander-in-Chief U.S. Fleet and
Chief of Naval Operations,
Room 3080,
Navy Department,
Washington, D.C.



C O P Y

SECRET

BRITISH JOINT STAFF MISSION
OFFICES OF THE COMBINED CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON

AIR STAFF

7th August, 1944.

SECRET

My dear Admiral,

When you agreed Friday afternoon to the Air Ministry's proposed survey flight of the South Pacific, I promised to let you have a brief note showing the itinerary and the assistance we required from you before you gave the "all clear".

agreement was to "consider the proposal".

I would like to repeat that I entirely agree with you that Wing Commander Young's letter, dated 22nd May, 1944, which I only saw when it recoiled from your office, was a most unsatisfactory approach.

see I.C.S. 1100/1
p. 14

The proposal is that the flight will be carried out by a single P.B.Y. seaplane, and the route to be followed is:-

Bermuda, Belize (British Honduras), Acapulco (Mexico), Clipperton Island, Bora Bora. A landing may or may not be made at Marquesas, depending on sea conditions. We know that no facilities exist there. From Bora Bora a flight will be made to the easternmost islands of the Tuamotu Group, returning to Bora Bora and thence to New Zealand, via Aitutaki (Cook Islands) and Tonga. The call at Tonga is not entirely necessary and would only be made if the gas situation at Bora Bora is tight.

The flying boat will be accompanied as far as Clipperton by a second from which she can refuel. The second boat will then return to Bermuda.

/ The only

Admiral E. J. King,
Commander-in-Chief U.S. Fleet and
Chief of Naval Operations,
Room 3050,
Navy Department,
WASHINGTON, D.C.

SECRET

COPY

SECRET

- 2 -

The only assistance required is the supply of approximately 3,000 gallons of hundred octane gasoline and not more than 100 gallons of oil at Bora Bora, and possibly a certain amount of gas at Tonga, should it be more convenient from the supply point of view.

In addition we should like to use any U.S. Naval radio facilities which may exist on the route, but we do not want any special arrangements made.

I have available at this Delegation full details of the proposed flight, wavelengths, the number of the aircraft, names of crew, etc., which I suggest I should give to your staff. When the "all clear" is given the Air Ministry will issue executive orders for the flight.

I should like again to make it clear that this flight is only a preliminary survey to ascertain whether or not it is possible to establish a reinforcing air route over the South Pacific. If the report of the survey is favourable, the actual preparation and establishment of the necessary bases will, of course, have to be discussed in greater detail later.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ W. L. Welsh,
Air Marshal.

SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	F33	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM			ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	// COMINCH & CNO	FOR ACTION	CINCPOA	PRIORITY
DATE	10 AUGUST 1944			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM				DEFERRED
DECODED BY				DEFERRED
TYPED BY		INFORMATION		PRIORITY
ROUTED BY			ROUTINE	
			DEFERRED	
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE.				IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW
101827		NCB 46096		<input type="checkbox"/>

ORIGINATOR	FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT
ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT				

BRITISH HAVE PROPOSED CATALINA SURVEY FLIGHT INTO SOUTH PACIFIC VIA CLIPPERTON AND BORA BORA X CAN 3000 GALLONS AVGAS AND 100 GALLONS AVLUB BE MADE READILY AVAILABLE AT ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ AT BORA BORA X

COMSOPAC ANSWERED "AFFIRMATIVE" FOR CINCPOA ON AUGUST 15.
(RESTRICTED DISPATCH COMSOPAC TO COMINCH 150002)

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F-34	
F-4	
FX0 1	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCNO	

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

5 August 1944.

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL KING:

Via: F-02, F-3.

Subject: British Survey Flight to SoPac via Clipperton.

1. In accordance with your pencilled notes on the two despatches attached, close check has been kept on the subject proposed survey flight. Attached hereto is a copy of your last letter to Air Marshal Welsh on this matter.

2. Conversation regarding this flight has been overheard and reported to me indicating that you have approved the subject survey flight informally with Air Marshal Welsh. Confirmation of the above is requested if this report is correct

Respectfully,

WALLACE M. BEAKLEY.

(The following in Adm. King's handwriting)

F-33 via F-3 via B Cos

On 4 Aug --P.M. --I told Air Marshal Welch that if the matter was formally and appropriately presented it would be given all due consideration.

K

6 July 1944

Letter, from ADMIRAL KING
to AIR MARSHAL WELSH

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 21.

LOCAL MESSAGE

TO THE COMMANDER AIR FORCE MEXICO CITY

30 June 1944

13 JUNE 1944

2301/13 JUNE 1944

DECKMAN

HARRINGTON

Letter, from AIR MARSHAL WELSH

to ADMIRAL KING

NCR 19997

AIRMAIL GRAM

REFERENCE N.A. MEXICO SECRET AIRGRAM DATED 3 JUNE 1944 & BRITISH AIR AT See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 19. SUBJECT FOR SURVEY HAS BEEN INDEFINITELY POSTPONED AND THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER THE SURVEY WILL EVER BE MADE.

APPARENTLY BRITISH BELIEVE THAT THE DIFFICULTIES ARE TOO GREAT AT CLIPPERTON AT PRESENT TIME, AND ALSO THE LONG JUMP FROM CLIPPERTON TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC IS AN UNRESOLVED PROBLEM &

THE MATTER BEING WATCHED CAREFULLY AND DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REPORTED PROMPTLY, AS THIS IS IMPORTANT BY

DESPATCH X

10...NOT

CONTINUED... OP-25... PAVANDE... 17... 21...

24...CIV...

SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER ALUSNA MEXICO CITY, MEXICO EXTENSION NUMBER

ADDRESSEES

PRECEDENCE

FROM

ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE

RELEASED BY 13 JUNE 1944

FOR ACTION CNO

PRIORITY 2
ROUTINE 3
DEFERRED 4
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8

DATE 0307/13 JUNE 1944

WS

TOR CODER ROOM

PRIORITY 9
ROUTINE 10
DEFERRED 11
12
13
14

DECODED BY DECKMAN
PARAPHRASED BY HARRINGTON

INFORMATION

ROUTED BY

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

091200

NCR 19997

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:

DATE

TIME

GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

AIRMAILGRAM

ACTION

REFERENCE N.A. MEXICO SECRET AIRGRAM ^{attached} ~~1000~~ OF 5 JUNE 1944 X BRITISH AIR ATTACHE STATES THAT PROJECT FOR SURVEY HAS BEEN INDEFINITELY POSTPONED AND THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW WHETHER THE SURVEY WILL EVER BE MADE.

APPARENTLY BRITISH BELIEVE THAT THE DIFFICULTIES ARE TOO GREAT AT CLIPPERTON AT PRESENT TIME, AND ALSO THE LONG HOP FROM CLIPPERTON TO THE SOUTH PACIFIC IS AN UNSOLVED PROBLEM X

THE MATTER BEING WATCHED CAREFULLY AND DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REPORTED PROMPTLY, ANYTHING IMPORTANT BY

DESPATCH X
16....ACT.

COMINCH....13....36....OP-03...NAVAIDE....17....31....

34....CNO....

SECRET

F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42
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Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV-19-07 550

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM ALUSNA MEXICO CITY MEXICO		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY	FOR ACTION	CNO	PRIORITY 2
DATE 7 JUNE 1944			ROUTINE 3
TOR CODEROOM 1806			DEFERRED 4
DECODED BY	INFORMATION		5
PARAPHRASED BY THOMAS / THOMPSON			PRIORITY 6
ROUTED BY WHITTINGTON			ROUTINE 7
			DEFERRED 8
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			9
	051000	NCR 19195	PRIORITY 10
			ROUTINE 11
			DEFERRED 12
			13
			14
			15
			16
			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW 17
			18
			19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT 20

ON-OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

EVALUATION: A-2 AIRMAILGRAM ^{successful}
 REF. NA MEXICO SECRET DISPATCH 041650* OF JUNE 1944
 AIRCRAFT STILL HAVE NOT ARRIVED.
 BRITISH REPORTED RECONSIDERING PROJECTED SURVEY BECAUSE
 OF LONG OVER WATER HOP FROM CLIPPERTON TO SOUTH PACIFIC
 BASES. HOWEVER BRITISH AIR AND ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHES
 HERE SEEM TO BE IN DARK AS TO REAL PLANS, SAYING ALL
 THEY KNOW IS WHAT COMMODORE POWELL TOLD THEM ON HIS
 VISIT AND THEY HAVE HAD NO SUBSEQUENT INSTRUCTIONS.
FRENCH APPARENTLY HAVE NOT BEEN INFORMED ABOUT PLANS TO
USE CLIPPERTON, WHICH IS A FRENCH POSSESSION, AND
INDICATED THAT BRITISH HAVE NO INTENTION OF DOING SO.
 MATTER OF SURVEY IS NOT SECRET HERE, BECAUSE BOTH
 MEXICAN ARMY AND NAVY KNOW ABOUT IT. HOWEVER IT IS NOT
 PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT SURVEY BEING CONSIDERED.

* BELIEVED TO REFER TO 041655 NCR 8761
 16...ACT
 COMINCH..13..36..OP-03..NAVALDE..17..31..34..CNO..

SECRET

ACTION	
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42
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Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV-NCR-15 051000 550

SECRET

7 June 1944
(Approx.)

Air Marshal Welsh acknowledged receipt of Admiral King's letter of 25 May stating that he would consult the Air Ministry before making detailed reply. (No copy of this letter is available).

(Extracted from Cominch resumé of Clipperton Island papers.)

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington

SECRET

5 June 1944.

SECRET

My dear Mr. Gates:

With further reference to the proposed British - South American service, I enclose the memorandum of conversation I had with Mr. Michael Wright of the British Embassy, further elaborating the matter.

You will see that it lays a foundation for the ATC to convert its strictly military service into service by Air Transport Command contractors in areas where military considerations permit. This does not commit us to do anything, but should make it possible for us to extend when, as and if desirable.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
By L.L.
Adolf A. Berle, Jr.
Assistant Secretary

Enclosure:

Memorandum of conversation,
dated June 3, 1944.

The Honorable
Artemus L. Gates,
Assistant Secretary of the
Navy for air.

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE	
FROM NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1	
RELEASED BY		CNO <i>WB</i>	2	
DATE 4 JUNE 44			PRIORITY	3
TOR CODEROM 2151		FOR ACTION INFORMATION	ROUTINE	4
DECODED BY KURTZ			DEFERRED	5
PARAPHRASED BY KULKA / <i>Kokmulek</i>			6	
ROUTED BY GIBSON			7	
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			8	
			9	
			PRIORITY	10
			ROUTINE	11
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			IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW	16
			<input type="checkbox"/>	17
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			20	
			21	

341650

NCR 8761

ORIGINATOR: FILL IN DATE AND TIME: DATE TIME GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

Re: Survey of Clipperton Island.
 AIRCRAFT NOT ARRIVED CNO ^{attached} 22312. NO DEVELOPMENTS.
 WILL REPORT PROMPTLY WHEN OCCUR.

ACTION	GCT
F-0	22
F-01	23
F-02	24
F-05	25
F-07	26
F-1	27
F-2	28
F-20	29
F-3	30
F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42
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16...ACT

COMINCH...13...36...DP03...NAVAIDE...

17...31...34...CNO...

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV-NCR-12

041655 550

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

SECRET

Memorandum of Conversation

3 June 1944.

SECRET

Subject: Proposed British-South American service; status of United States Air Transport Command service.

Participants: Mr. Michael Wright, Counselor, British Embassy;
Mr. A. A. Berle, Jr.

Copies to: S, U, AD, BC, FE - Mr. Crew, ARA

Mr. Wright came in to see me at my request. I handed him a copy of my letter in answer to his relating to the proposed inauguration of BOAC service to South America. I said that in doing so I wished to make certain observations which I thought he would wish to transmit to his Government.

There has been considerable discussion of the British move toward South America, in the light of the representations made by the British Government, and also in the light of the discussion of this service in the parliamentary debates. It was clear that though the service was nominally "government", it was in effect the institution of commercial service between Britain and South America. We were further on notice that it was desired to extend this service from Rio to Buenos Aires as soon as possible; and that presumably an eventual connection was planned between this service and the South Pacific services which were about to be surveyed by the RAF. In substance, the British move presented the first major move for expansion of commercial air services since the beginning of the war.

I said that the view of our Government was not, in essence, opposed to this, but that there was opposition to any arrangement by which British services could extend their operations, while American services could not. The BOAC was acting in substance as the British Air Transport Command; yet it would survive the war and be in commercial work, while the United States Air Transport Command was really, as well as nominally, a military service and would not survive the war. Thus the operations of the United States ATC were not the equivalent of the extension of BOAC.

The solution appeared to be an understanding that the Army Air Transport Command services could be converted into semi-commercial services in areas where military considerations permitted, thus permitting the extension of American air services pari passu with the British air services. This did not mean that all Army Air Transport Command services would immediately be converted to semi-commercial services; but merely that we could do so as and when such conversion might become appropriate. Immediately we thought only of such conversion along the South littoral of the Mediterranean into Cairo. I noted, however, in this connection that we were on notice that the British Overseas Airways Corporation was proposing to establish a service to Rome as soon as the city was taken and the situation stabilized; and it would be difficult to explain to American public opinion why a similar extension of American service might not equally take place.

I explained that the method of conversion would be simply the use of American companies as contractors for the Air Transport Command, and the right of the ATC to sell "fill-up" tickets just as the BOAC did. This would in all respects put the commercial company, as a contractor for the ATC, on the same basis as the relation which BOAC bore to the British military authorities.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Memorandum of Conversation

SECRET

3 June 1944.

Subject: Proposed British-South American service; status of United States Air Transport Command service.

Continued - -

I said I had no doubt that the British Government would appreciate, without difficulty, the trouble we would have if, after American troops had participated in liberating a country, one or more of the Allies found it possible to establish semi-commercial services into the area, while American services were barred. Heretofore, the tacit understanding that commercial services would not be installed had prevented the question from arising; but the inauguration of the British-South American service would break that log jam. The argument that South America was not a military area would hardly serve to distinguish the cases, since at the moment North Africa was not materially more a war area than was the shoulder of Brazil.

This was the background of the letter which I now handed him, and I felt that his Government would recognize that the discussions here, which had gone on in the friendliest spirit, had reached an equitable result.

I added that the military had raised questions based on the most effective use of transport in the North Atlantic and had suggested that these be discussed through military channels. I said that I myself know nothing about the conditions which led to this and suggested that military channels would be quite adequate to handle any questions of that sort.

Mr. Wright said that he had no instructions on this subject but would, of course, inform London and give us the benefit of any views they might have. I thought I detected a certain disappointment in his general attitude, though this may have been due to the hot weather.

A. A. B., Jr.

COPY

Regraded Unclassified

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>CNO</u>	FOR ACTION	ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY <u>R. E. SCHUIRMANN</u>		ALUSNA MEXICO CITY	2
DATE <u>2 JUNE, 1944</u>			3
TOR CODEROOM <u>2334</u>			4
DECODED BY	INFORMATION		5
TYPED BY <u>BOURKE / Thompson</u>			6
ROUTED BY <u>WHITTINGTON</u>			7
			8
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			9
	<u>22312</u>	<u>NCR 431</u>	10
		IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW	11
		<input type="checkbox"/>	12
			13
			14
			15
			16
			17
			18
			19
ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT
			20

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

MAKE DESPATCH REPORT ANY FURTHER INFORMATION OBTAINABLE ON
 SUBJECT DISCUSSED MY 20^{airfield} 1957* OF MAY AND UR 29^{airfield**} 1958 OF MAY.

*REQUEST FOR INFORMATION RE VISIT AND ACTIVITIES AIR
 COMMODORE POWELL AND OF PROPOSED TRANS-PACIFIC FLIGHT.

**RE: SURVEY OF CLIPPERTON ISLAND BY BRITISH AIRCRAFT TO
 DETERMINE SUITABILITY AS FUELING STATION ON TROOP TRANSPORT
 ROUTES.

ADD: NAVAIDE (PER NAVAIDE)

16....ORIG

COMINCH...13...36...OP-03...NAVAIDE...17...31...34...CNO...

ACTION	
F-0	22
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F-01	24
F-02	25
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F-1	28
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F-20	30
F-3	31
F-30	32
F-31	33
F-32	34
F-33	35
F-34	36
F-4	37
FX01	38
FX27	39
FX40	40
I0-00	41
VCNO	42
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SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV *copy obtained 11 Jan 45 h.w.s.*

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>ALUSNA MEXICO CITY</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	
RELEASED BY		FOR ACTION CNO <i>WB</i>	PRIORITY
DATE <u>1 JUNE 1944</u>			ROUTINE
TOR CODEROOM <u>1339/1</u>			DEFERRED
DECODED BY			PRIORITY
PARAPHRASED BY <u>MORRIS</u>		FOR INFORMATION	ROUTINE
ROUTED BY <u>ROONEY</u>			DEFERRED

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.

PAGE 1 OF 2 *May 27 1944* NCR 17883

IF OPERATIONAL CHECK BELOW

ORIGINATOR	FILL IN DATE AND TIME	DATE	TIME	GCT

ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT

AIRMAILGRAM

REF: CNO SECRET DESPATCH 261857 OF MAY 1944

BRITISH AIR ATTACHE AND BRITISH ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE HAVE IN RECENT DAYS VOLUNTEERED INFORMATION THAT 2

AMPHIBIAN AIRCRAFT EXPECTED TO ARRIVE ACAPULCO SOON FROM BELIZE FOR SURVEY FLIGHTS TO CLIPPERTON ISLAND, THOUGH (10 N-109 W)

CLIPPERTON KNOWN TO BE DANGEROUS FOR SHIPS BRITISH WILL ATTEMPT TO DETERMINE WHETHER INNER LAGOON SUITABLE FOR

LANDING SEA PLANES. BRITISH ATTACHES CLAIM THAT IF SUITABLE CLIPPERTON MIGHT BE FUELING STATION ON NEW

ROUTE FOR TRANSPORTING TROOPS ACROSS PACIFIC FOR WAR USE ONLY. TROOPS TO BE BROUGHT FROM EUROPEAN AREAS TO

BERMUDA THENCE ACAPULCO. ALSO INDICATIONS THAT STOP WOULD BE MADE IN BELIZE.

BRITISH ASSISTANT NAVAL ATTACHE NOW IN ACAPULCO AWAITING SURVEY PLANES WHILE BRITISH AIR ATTACHE ATTEMPTING IN

MEXICO CITY TO ARRANGE GASOLINE SUPPLY WHICH NORMALLY VERY LOW IN ACAPULCO. AIR ATTACHE STATED THAT MEXICAN

ACTION	
F-0	22
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F-02	24
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F-30	31
F-31	32
F-32	33
F-33	34
F-34	35
F-4	36
FX01	37
FX30	38
FX37	39
FX40	40
IG-00	41
VCNO	42

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV-NCR 15
291000 550

GOVERNMENT HAD BEEN NOTIFIED OF BRITISH PLANS THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. MINISTRY OF NATIONAL DEFENSE AWARE

OF GENERAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SURVEY FLIGHTS BUT OFFICIALS APPEAR TO BE WITHOUT DETAILED INFORMATION.

THERE ARE MANY INDICATIONS THAT THIS PROPOSED ROUTE WHILE POSSIBLY FOR IMMEDIATE WAR PURPOSE IS ACTUALLY BEING CONSIDERED FOR POST WAR COMMERCIAL USE. BRITISH AIR ATTACHE PRIVATELY COMMENTED HE DOUBTED WHETHER ANYTHING WOULD COME

OF THIS SURVEY BECAUSE CLIPPERTON KNOWN TO BE DANGEROUS PLACE FOR ANCHORAGE EVEN UNDER MOST FAVORABLE CONDITIONS DUE TO PREVALENCE OF HEAVY SQUALLS.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE REPORTED.

16...ACT

CNO...COMINCH...NAVAIDE...36...OP 3...17...13...

Originator ALUSNA MEXICO CITY D/T Group 291700 NCR 17383 Page 2 Of 2 Pages.

OPNAV-19-51
134100

SECRET

NAVAL MESSAGE

NAVY DEPARTMENT

DRAFTER	EXTENSION NUMBER	ADDRESSEES	PRECEDENCE
FROM <u>CNO</u>		ASTERISK (*) MAILGRAM ADDRESSEE	1
RELEASED BY <u>SCHUIRMANN</u>		FOR ACTION NAVAL ATTACHE MEXICO CITY	PRIORITY DEFERRED ROUTINE
DATE <u>30 MAY 1944</u>			2
TOR CODEROOM <u>202018</u>			3
DECODED BY			4
TYPED BY <u>HALE</u>		FOR INFORMATION	DEFERRED
ROUTED BY <u>WILLIAMS</u>			5
			6
UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED THIS DISPATCH WILL BE TRANSMITTED WITH DEFERRED PRECEDENCE AND AS ADMINISTRATIVE.			7
	<u>261857</u>	<u>NCR 4952</u>	8
			9
			PRIORITY
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ORIGINATOR FILL IN DATE AND TIME:	DATE	TIME	GCT
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ON OUTGOING DISPATCHES PLEASE LEAVE ABOUT ONE INCH CLEAR SPACE BEFORE BEGINNING TEXT			20

REFERENCE YOUR SERIAL ^{attached} 21344R DATED 3 MAY DESIRE ANY FURTHER INFORMATION YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING VISIT AND ACTIVITIES AIR COMMODORE POWELL AND OTHER BRITISH OFFICERS REFERRED TO IN ABOVE REPORT. ALSO DESIRE INFORMATION CONCERNING PROPOSED TRANS-PACIFIC FLIGHT. THIS INFORMATION TO BE OBTAINED WITHOUT BRITISH KNOWLEDGE IF POSSIBLE

ADD: NAVAIDE.....(PER NAVAIDE

16.... RIG

COMINCH.... ADD: 13...(PER 13)

SECRET

Make original only. Deliver to Code Room Watch Officer in person. (See Art. 76 (4) NAVREGS.)

OPNAV 19-67

Dispatch obtained from NCR 11 Jan 45 4 M.S.

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F-4	
FX01	
FX37	
FX40	
IG-00	
VCI0	

25 May 1944

Letter, from ADMIRAL KING
to AIR MARSHAL WELSH

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 17.

23 May 1944

Letter, from WING COMMANDER YOUNG

to C.G., ARMY TRANSPORT COMMAND

to DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF OPERATIONS (AIR)

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 14.

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 14.

23 May 1944.

Letter, from WING COMMANDER YOUNG
to DEPUTY CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS (Air).

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 16.

CONFIDENTIAL

ISSUED BY THE INTELLIGENCE DIVISION
OFFICE OF CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
NAVY DEPARTMENT

INTELLIGENCE REPORT

Serial 213-44-R
(Start new series each year, i. e. 1-4, 2-4)

Monograph Index Guide No. 1002-950
(To correspond with SUBJECT given below. See O. N. I. Index Guide.
Make separate report for each main title.)

From U. S. Naval Attache at Mexico City, Mex. Date 3 May, 1944
(Ship, fleet, unit, district, office, station, or person)

Reference _____
(Directive, correspondence, previous related report, etc., if applicable)

Source As stated Evaluation A-1
(As official, personal observation, publication, press, conversation with—
Identify when practicable, etc.) A-1 to E-0 etc.
AA/EN 3-10; SER. 012413-11-10-42

Subject MEXICO - AVIATION - VISITING CANADIAN AIR OFFICERS
(Main title as per index guide) (Subtitles) (Make separate report for each title)

BRIEF.—(Here enter careful summary of report, containing substance succinctly stated; include important facts, names, places, dates, etc.)
Chief of Mexican Civil Aeronautics only officer unexpectedly on hand to greet visiting Canadian Air Officers. Neither U.S. nor British officials informed in advance of intended arrival by plane of this group. Nature of visit not definitely known. Some indication that Canadians are interested in obtaining facilities at some west coast port for use in extending trans-pacific air routes. Visit made to Acapulco. Need for cooperation on part of agencies dispatching aircraft into Mexico with proper officials in this Republic.

In a recent conversation with General Alberto SALINAS Carranza, Chief of Mexican Civil Aviation, on the afternoon of April 27, the General stated that several days previously he had been having breakfast at the Central Airport when a Canadian plane, a Douglas transport bearing the Canadian Air Force insignia, arrived. As there were apparently no officials on hand to meet this plane, the general presented himself and informed the visitors of his official status. The group then joined the general at his invitation for coffee at the Airport Inn.

Passengers of the Canadian plane included Air Commodore Powell, R.A.F., Commanding Officer of the R.A.F.T.C., Montreal; a British officer, an American officer, an Australian officer, and a Mexican who is presently an officer of the R.A.F. in Canada. (Capt Taylor?)

Information of the intended arrival of this group was first received by the U. S. Naval Attache about five minutes prior to the landing of the above mentioned aircraft. The operations office of the commercial airline, Compania Mexicana de Aviacion, informed this office that a Navy plane was due to land. A check was made and it was learned that the plane was Canadian and therefore no action was taken by the Naval Attache on the arrival of this plane.

Captain P. B. Miller, U.S. Army Aviator and Assistant Military Attache in Mexico, stated that U.S. Army officials in Miami were interested in learning the reason for the Canadian group making this visit to Mexico and other Central American Countries. Captain Miller had contacted General Gustavo Salinas, Chief of the Mexican Military Air Force, in order to learn whether the Canadian group had made an official call on the General. As the Air Force Chief had not re-

Distribution By Originator. CC: M.A.; Embassy

Routing space below for use in O. N. I.

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Use this form for pages 1 (original and copies). Use the 8 by 11 inch plain folder as supplied for additional pages. Forward to ONI on original and a "White Matter" copy. Officers preparing and those forwarding reports sign the last page of original and retained file copy of reports only. Submit copies of clippings, statistics, etc., when practical. If practicable, prepare sketches on "Data Sheets" or in form suitable for black and white reproductions.

CONFIDENTIAL

INI-96 Report Serial 213-11-3, Mex. Mexico

-2-

3 May 1944

ceived the group, it was then ascertained that the purpose of the visit was not of a military nature, and therefore the Chief of Civil Aeronautics was approached as mentioned above.

General SALINAS Carranza was invited to accompany the Canadian representatives on a flight to Acapulco. It is believed that this flight was made for the purpose of investigating the possibility of using the Acapulco airport as a site for initiating Trans-Pacific flights from the North American Continent to Clipperton Island and on to the westward. However, the General stated that he learned nothing from his associations which would bear out the trans-oceanic plan.

It is quite evident that not one of the various interested Mexican officials here in Mexico City was notified of the intended arrival of this Canadian plane sufficiently in advance to make proper preparations for their reception. The British Military Attache informed the U.S. Naval Attache that he was not notified of the expected arrival of the plane until too late to be present at the airport. Too, General SALINAS Carranza appeared somewhat concerned over the fact that his department had not been notified of the proposed flight.

COMMENT:- This procedure is definitely contrary to the existing regulations governing flights of foreign aircraft into Mexico.

CONFIDENTIAL

January 1944

exact date not known.

AIR COMMODORE LYDFORD discussed a proposed RAF flight
to the Pacific with ADMIRAL MC CAIN and
MAJOR GENERAL GEORGE.

See J.C.S. 1100/1, p. 11.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

B.F.
Navy
July 29, 1943.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY *x18*

I have your letter of July twenty-sixth, enclosing another report of the General Board on the subject of island bases between the Americas and the Southwest or Middle Pacific. I note that all of their suggestions are based on the assumption that 2100 sea miles is the longest single leg that can be flown with profitable pay load on board.

That may be and probably is true today but the consideration of these bases must take into account the probability that the development of planes will increase this distance by many hundreds of miles in the reasonably near future. It is probably safe to say that the profitable distance twenty years ago was not much over 500 miles.

Therefore, I do not want the committee of civilians who are to make a study of this route to be

x249 official

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

-2-

bound by existing profitable distances. Also, I do not want them to devote much time to the extreme southern route touching Easter Island. It is worthwhile to make rough surveys but we must remember that commercially this route will have little advantage for very many years to come, and that Easter Island and Juan Fernandez present difficult climatic conditions.

I note also that the northern route is based on a flight from the Canal Zone to Clipperton Island and thence to the Marquesas. This is a round-about flight. It should be based on a flight across Mexico to some place on the west coast of Mexico, and thence to Clipperton Island.

In the same way, the Canal Zone will become commercially a crossroads with much commerce, and the route from there via the Galapagos and the Marquesas to Australia should be studied. It could also pick up passengers and freight from Colombia and Ecuador.

I do not quite know why the General Board takes no interest in the Central and South Pacific Islands from the naval point of view. Two

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

-3-

years ago we took no interest in the
Solomons or Bora-Bora, from a naval
point of view, but I understand we
are now doing it.

F. D. R.

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

WASHINGTON

July 26, 1943

(SC)A14-7
Serial 024100A

SECRET

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR: THE PRESIDENT

My dear Mr. President:

On June 30 you wrote me concerning post war air routes from the Panama Canal and South America to New Zealand and Australia. Immediately upon receipt of your letter I referred this matter to the General Board for study. I am enclosing, herewith, the report made me by the General Board which contains some very interesting material.

x4351
x 87
x48-F

I am also at work on the selection of a committee of civilians to make a study of this route in accordance with your suggestion, and also arranging for a ship on which they can make the trip.

Yours sincerely,

Frank B. Knox

Enclosure

SECRET

G.B.No. 450
(Serial No. 246)
SECRET

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
GENERAL BOARD
WASHINGTON

LDB

JUL 21 1943

From: Chairman General Board;
To: The Secretary of the Navy.

SUBJECT: Post-war Air Routes from the Panama Canal and South
America to New Zealand and Australia.

Reference: (a) SecNav Serial 022400A of 12 July 1943.

1. By reference (a) the General Board is directed to make a study of post-war air routes from the Panama Canal and South America to New Zealand and Australia from the standpoint of the geography and location of individual islands which hold promise of being valuable as commercial airports in the future. In making this study particular attention has been devoted to the Marquesas Islands and to the Tuamotu Archipelago in accordance with the earlier expressed desire of the President of the United States. No military considerations have entered. Under competent professional advice, the Board has assumed that 2100 sea miles is the longest single leg that can be flown with profitable pay load on board. The distances between the principal points which have received consideration are tabulated in Enclosure (1).

2. The study indicates that there are two possible trans-Pacific air routes along which lie islands, within the above limits of endurance of commercial transport planes, satisfying the requirements of suitable location. The northern route, and perhaps the more important under existing commercial trends, utilizes Clipperton Island as an essential stop, with any American continental terminal between Magdalena Bay and Guayaquil, Ecuador, within flying distance. The southern route utilizes Easter Island as an essential stop, with any American continental terminal between Guayaquil and Valparaiso within flying distance. The Marquesas Islands are available to both routes; the Tuamotu Archipelago to the southern route only, unless the Marquesas be made an intermediate stop of the northern route. Beyond the Marquesas and Tuamotu Archipelago the possibilities are well known.

3. The northern route is, in general, as follows:

From Canal Zone to Clipperton (1855), to Marquesas (2171) to Samoa (1889)
or Marquesas to Fakarava (540) to Samoa (1450)
or Marquesas to Tahiti (760) to Samoa (1236)

21 JUL 1943

88008

See Doc 88009

G.B.No. 450 (Serial No. 246)

NOTE: Galapagos to Marquesas (2938) and Galapagos to Fakarava (3350) are beyond the assumed limit of endurance. However, the Galapagos has limited usefulness for terminals south of Guayaquil along the northern route.

4. The southern route is, in general, as follows:

From Valparaiso (Santiago) to Easter Island (1984), to Marquesas (2050), or to Fakarava (2116)

NOTE: Any port between Lima and Valparaiso (Santiago) is within flying distance of Easter Island. The position of Juan Fernandez is such as to satisfy the requirement of location as a stop along the route from Valparaiso to Easter Island, but offers no advantage on the route to Easter from other terminals. Along the route from Easter to Fakarava, and that from Easter to Marquesas, lies the Henderson Group, of possible value from the standpoint of location but of doubtful value otherwise.

5. The present status of Clipperton, with respect to sovereignty, is indicated in Enclosure (2). The importance of its position is manifest; it provides the only point on the northern route from which the Marquesas can be reached in continuous flight, under the assumption as to the limit of endurance of commercial transport planes. The information on Clipperton, Easter Island, Juan Fernandez, and the Henderson Group is meager and there is nothing to indicate that these islands have ever been examined for the purpose of ascertaining their possible value as air bases. With regard to the Marquesas and the Tuamotu Archipelago, the Airport Directory of the Army Intelligence Service lists certain bays and land formations as possible sites.

6. As the result of its study, the Board submits the following as being of possible value as sites for airports or seaplane bases from the standpoint of geography and location:

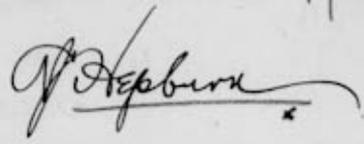
Clipperton Island,
Nukahiva Island, Marquesas,
Hiva Oa Island, Marquesas,
Makatea, Tuamotu,
Fakarava, Tuamotu,
Easter Island,
Juan Fernandez,
Henderson Group.

G.B.No. 450 (Serial No. 246)

7. The Board has taken up with the Commander in Chief, U.S. Fleet, the matter of the availability of a Coast Guard Cutter for the purpose of exploring suggested sites. The decision of that officer will be communicated to the Secretary immediately upon its receipt. ||

Enclosures:

- (1) Table of Distances
- (2) Present status of Clipperton Island



Copies to:

- Cominch
- V.C.N.O.
- BuAer

TABLE OF DISTANCES

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Naut. Miles</u>
Canal Zone	Clipperton	1,855
Canal Zone	Galapagos	863
Clipperton	Marquesas*	2,171
Clipperton	Guayaquil	1,890
Clipperton	Acapulco	660
Clipperton	Galapagos	1,269
Galapagos**	Easter Island	1,883
Galapagos**	Marquesas*	2,938
Galapagos**	Valparaiso	2,229 (direct)
Galapagos**	Valparaiso	2,609 (via Guayaquil)
Galapagos**	Lima	1,050
Easter Island	Marquesas*	2,050
Easter Island	Fakarava	2,116
Easter Island	Valparaiso	1,984
Easter Island	Lima	2,028
Marquesas*	Samoa	1,889
Marquesas*	Tahiti	760
Marquesas*	Fakarava	540
Fakarava	Tahiti	245

* - Comptroller Bay

** - Albemarle Island

PRESENT STATUS OF CLIPPERTON ISLAND

On 17 November 1858 Lieutenant V. LeCoat de Kerziguen of the French Navy, aboard the merchant ship AMIRAL, declared the Island of Clipperton, located in Latitude 10° 19' North and 111° 33' W Longitude from Paris, the property of Napoleon III. Three days later the AMIRAL sailed away and the Island was forgotten until 1897 when it became known that the American flag had been hoisted on Clipperton Island. The Commander of the Naval Forces in the Pacific flying his flag in the DUGUAY-TROUIN was directed to investigate. Lt. Terrier discovered three men collecting guano on November 24th, who identified themselves as employees of the Oceanic Phosphate Company of San Francisco.

Shortly afterwards the Mexican man-of-war DEMOCRATA was directed to visit the Island, expel the inhabitants and hoist the Mexican flag, as Mexico considered Clipperton Island part of the Revilla Gigedo Islands. Mexico further landed a small garrison there which lived on the Island exporting guano until the end of 1917. Throughout the Mexican occupancy France had never renounced her rights to the Island.

In 1909 the French cruiser CATINAT approached the Island and exchanged salutes. It was finally decided to settle the matter of ownership by referring the question to the King of Italy for arbitration. The decision was handed down January 28, 1931 and the sovereignty of France over Clipperton Island was recognized (Report No. 175 France, March, 1935). Both the French Senate and Chamber voted compliance with the King's decision, and all but six of the twenty-eight Mexican States have assented (March, 1933).

By official decree dated June 12, 1936 President LeBrun of France proclaimed Clipperton Island an integral part of French Oceania (NA Paris, Report No. 408 of 6/23/36).

Mr. Charles Michelson via Paul Winkler wrote Secretary of the Navy Knox offering to turn over Michelson's rights to the development of Clipperton Island to a privately owned organization which would be controlled by the United States Navy. Secretary Knox wrote Mr. Michelson March 4, 1942, (Serial No. 018813) thanking him for his generous action in putting the rights of the Island to the disposal of the United States Navy. (Dept. Commerce 4/7/42).

The island is now uninhabited, there are no houses, and practically no vegetation.

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



Serial 00633

SECRET

3 April 1943

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL LEAHY:

It appears that the proposition to develop a British all air route from Great Britain to Australia, which will include stops at Bermuda, Clipperton Island and the Marquesas, is being revived.

If this is the case, your attention is invited to my memorandum to the President of December 20, 1942, on this subject. I know of no circumstances which have changed the situation since that time.

I do not believe the establishment of such a route would contribute to the war effort.

Signed: E. J. King.

E. J. KING.

C O P Y

*Copy furnished by Cominch F-33 on 11 Jan 45
4.m.s.*

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON
December 30, 1942.

MEMORANDUM TO General Deane:

It is desired that the attached correspondence including

- (a) Memorandum to the President from the Australian Legation dated December 9, 1942, regarding Pacific Air Routes;
- (b) Memorandum to the President from Admiral King dated December 20, 1942 on the same subject.
- (c) Memorandum to Admiral Leahy from Captain McCrea dated December 28, 1942, regarding air facilities of "International Police Force",

be considered by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and that the recommendations requested by the President be prepared.

All of the attached papers should be returned with the Joint Chiefs of Staff's recommendations.

WHL

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 28, 1942.

SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR

ADMIRAL LEAHY.

The President directed that I show you the attached correspondence.

In addition the President stated that we must keep in mind the peace negotiations and that he visualizes some sort of international police force will come out of the war. Pursuing this thought further, the President stated he wished you to have a study made by the Joint Chiefs of Staff to the end that when the peace negotiations are upon us we will be decided in our own minds where it is desired that "International Police Force" air facilities be located throughout the world; This plan to be without regard to current sovereignty.

Very respectfully,

J. L. McCrea

John L. McCrea,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Naval Aide to the President.

COMMCH FILE

UNITED STATES FLEET

HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF

NAVY DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, D. C.

001544

~~SECRET~~ SECRET

DEC 20 1942

OFFICE
DELIVERY
NO 10139

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Subject: Air routes across the Pacific.

The memorandum from the Australian Legation concerning air routes across the Pacific was evidently written in the belief that there is now only one series of air bases available for an air route across the Pacific.

The basic contention that we should not rely upon a single air route is sound. However, a duplicate air route has already been developed along the line Hawaii-Christmas-Pennrhyn-Aitutaki-Tonga Tabu-Norfolk-Australia.

The use of the air route involving Clipperton has been thoroughly explored and found infeasible by the Navy Department as a result of several studies. There is serious doubt as to the feasibility of constructing any kind of an air base on Clipperton Island. The time and effort necessary for the construction of the two additional air bases necessary for establishing this route, so far in the rear of our existing alternative route across the Pacific from Hawaii, does not appear to be warranted in view of the improved strategic situation in the Pacific.

I therefore recommend that the Australian Legation be informed that alternative routes based on Hawaii are now in operation to the Southwest Pacific, and, in view of that fact and of the current situation in the Pacific, that it is deemed best to decline the Australian offer to share the responsibility with them and with other Governments, for the survey and preparation of their proposed trans-Pacific air route via Clipperton Island and the Marquesas.

E. J. King

Admiral, U.S. Navy.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

December 12, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF, U.S. FLEET.

The President directed that I refer the attached to the Commander-in-Chief for his consideration.

With the return of the papers, it is requested that I be furnished with a memorandum which can be given to the President.

Very respectfully,

J. L. McCrea

John L. McCrea,
Captain, U.S. Navy,
Naval Aide to the President.

Attachments



AUSTRALIAN LEGATION,
WASHINGTON, D. C.
December 9th, 1942

MEMORANDUM CONCERNING AIR ROUTES ACROSS THE PACIFIC.

At present communication by air with New Zealand and Australia across the Pacific depends upon a single route. It is by way of Hawaii, Palmyra, Canton Island, Fiji, New Caledonia or Auckland, Brisbane or Sydney. Most of the bases on the existing route south from Hawaii are in the vicinity of Japanese occupied territory. Some of them are lightly held and could be damaged by enemy forces. It is true these bases might be difficult for the enemy to hold for the same reason that they are exposed to destruction or capture by him. But their temporary possession or destruction by the enemy would cut the line of air communication between this continent, Australia, New Zealand and the American forces in the South West Pacific area. These forces depend on a regular supply of aircraft flown via the Hawaiian route. If the enemy timed the cutting of the line of communication by capture or destruction of a base so as to coincide with a major offensive in the South West Pacific area, his purpose might be effected before the islands could be recaptured or the base re-established. There is no route, of course, which is completely secure against enemy attack, but the degree of security is greatly increased by distance from enemy occupied territories.

There does exist an alternative route across the Pacific which lies some hundreds of miles south of the present route. The route is, of course, not at present available and work would be needed to complete the bases. It lies from a point to be chosen upon the West Coast of North America (e.g. Acapulco) to Clipperton Island, a French possession some 700 miles off the coast of Mexico. From there the route lies

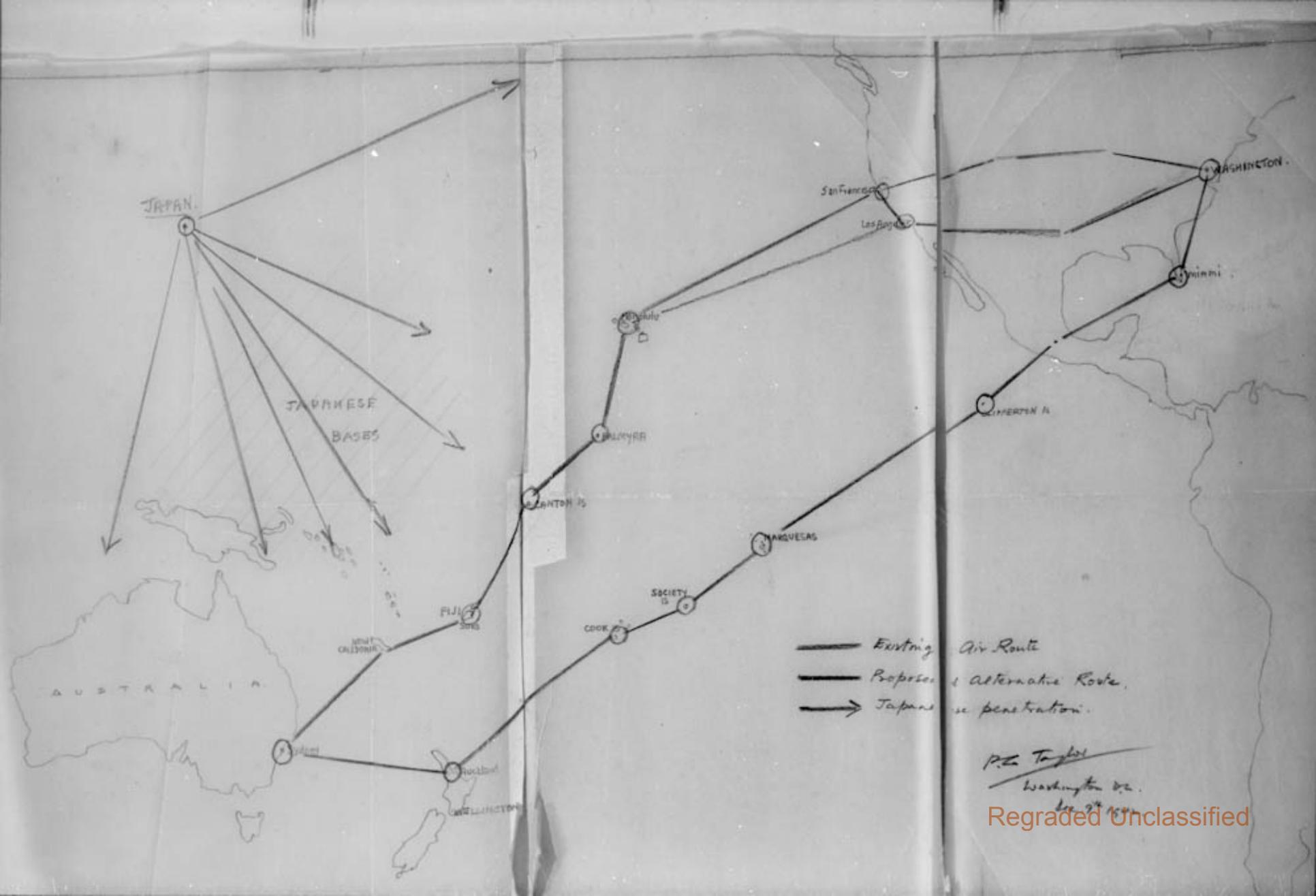
through the Marquesas Islands (2160 miles), thence to Tahiti in the Society Islands (750 miles), thence to Aitutaki Island in the Cook Islands (620 miles). From the Cook Islands the route lies to Auckland (1680 miles) and thence to Sydney (1200 miles). Although by this route the distance across the Pacific is slightly longer than by way of Hawaii, the total distance from Washington by way of Miami and Clipperton is approximately 800 miles less.

A base already exists at Auckland and some facilities exist in the Cook and Society Islands. The Marquesas and Clipperton are the only islands where nothing has been done. Clipperton is a coral atoll of much the same type as Canton Island and by taking advantage of the coral rim landing fields of sufficient length could be made. The lagoon is long enough for flying boats of the size of Catalinas. There is no entrance from the sea for surface vessels, but it is believed that one could be blasted as has been done on several other atolls now being used as air bases in the Pacific. Surveys would be necessary to determine the amount of work necessary in the Marquesas but Nukuhiva Island is believed to be most suitable. There are two inlets from the sea, one of which is always sheltered from the weather.

The existence of this route makes it unnecessary to adopt the course of basing alternative routes on the Hawaiian Islands. Alternative routes so based are exposed to the same danger as the existing route, namely vigorous enemy action across the line south of the Islands aimed at the Line Islands and the Phoenix Islands, apart altogether from the vulnerability of Fiji and adjacent bases. Any such alternatives, therefore, ensure a lesser measure of security and at the same time require greater protection and so a greater expenditure of men, materials and equipment.

The suggested route passes through latitudes of better weather on the long flight stage, a stage inevitable on any Trans-Pacific crossing, whatever the route. Between the main centres of population and administration of the United States, New Zealand and Australia, it is shorter. It does not involve a trans-continental crossing from the main eastern centres of the United States by internal lines, with a change at the Pacific Coast. It has the further advantage that by the construction of aerodromes on the Tonga Islands between Cook Islands and Fiji it would be possible to ferry pursuit planes from the Marquesas to New Caledonia and New Hebrides and to Australia itself. Thus by the establishment of a base in the Marquesas a considerable amount of shipping space might be saved in the movement of pursuit planes.

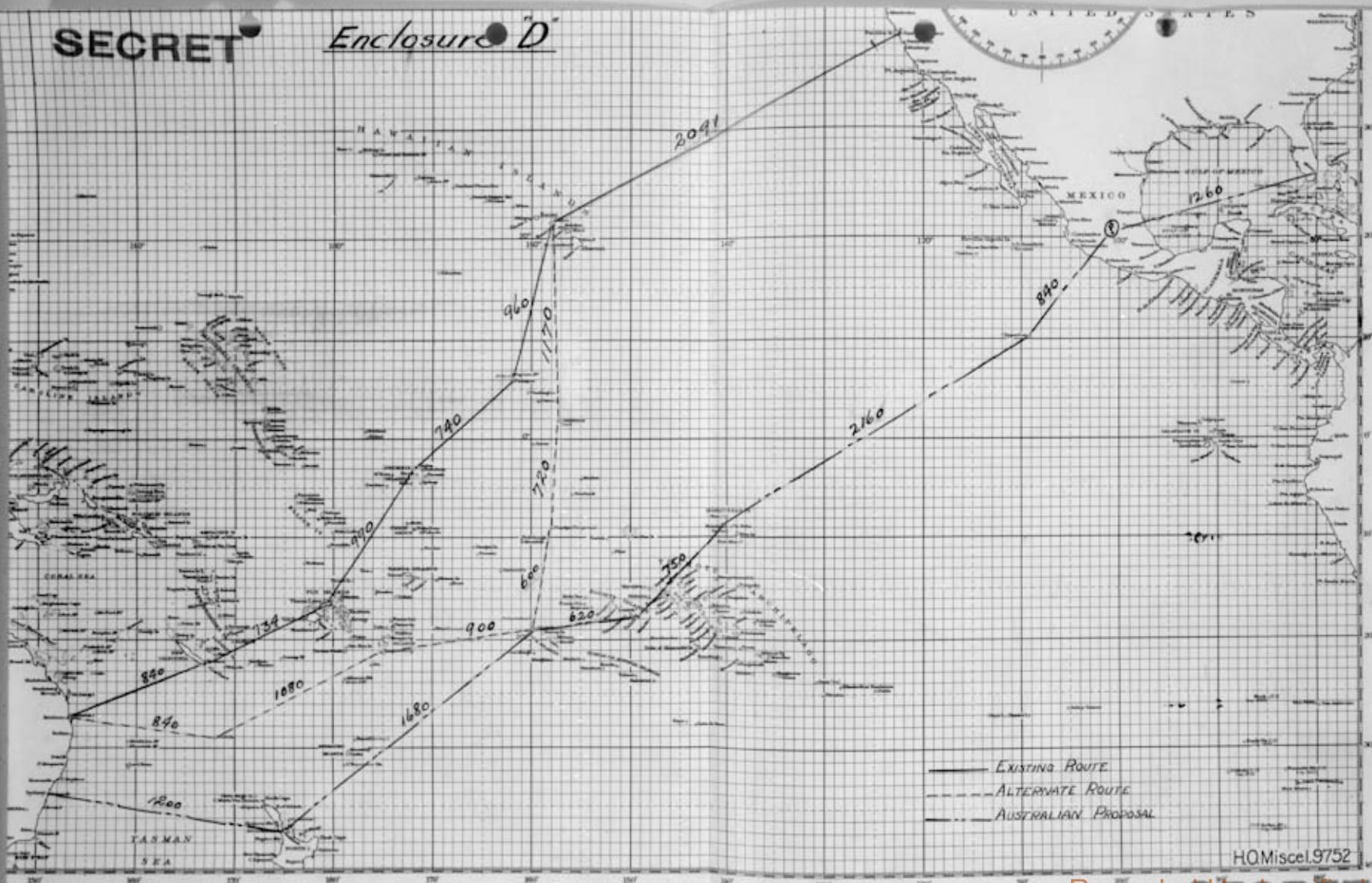
A certain amount of work in survey and preparation would be necessary but that would be a responsibility which might be shared between the governments concerned if the principle were accepted that a second route ought to be established south of the existing route.



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Enclosure D



HQMiscel.9752

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UNITED STATES FLEET
 HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
 NAVY DEPARTMENT
 WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



SECRET

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief of Staff.

18 Dec. 1942.

1. The question as to the establishment of a trans-Pacific air route via Clipperton Island and the Marquesas is not a new one.

(a) It first saw the light of day as a result of a thorough independent study on the part of the Bureau of Aeronautics, who rejected this route as infeasible.

(b) Shortly thereafter, in February, 1942, this route was recommended to Mr. Knox through political channels. It appears that Mr. Charles Michelson has exclusive and exceptional rights on Clipperton which he obtained just prior to the fall of France and which will extend for a period of thirty years after the conclusion of the present war. As a result of an investigation following the offer of Mr. Michelson, the Director of Plans Division (OpNav) recommended against the acquisition or use of Clipperton Island.

(c) On October 2, 1942, the War Department informed the Secretary of State that this project was not justified at this time. In the course of the War Department's investigation, it developed that the project was the proposal of one Captain T. G. Taylor, an Australian long connected with commercial aviation. In a letter from the U.S. Minister in Canberra, Mr. Johnson, it was explained that Captain Taylor stated that he was acting in an independent capacity, but that he had the "blessing" of the Prime Minister and the Commonwealth Government.

(d) On 28 November 1942, the Australian Minister to the U.S., in company with Captain Taylor, presented the project to the Bureau of Aeronautics, and was again informed of the Navy Department's attitude.

(e) About ten days ago, in reply to their query, the State Dept. was informed by the Central Division of OpNav that the Navy Dept. had no interest in the acquisition of Clipperton Island for air route purposes.

(f) Other requests for assistance along these lines have been made, it is believed by the New Zealand Government, but the correspondence at this time has not been located.

2. Clipperton Island is uninhabited. It is too small to build a landing field for large landplanes without making use of the coral reefs to seaward. The lagoon is too small for large seaplanes without dredging. It is much too small for large seaplanes of the transport type. It has no opening to the ocean and the problem of getting a dredge into it looks to be overwhelmingly difficult. Furthermore, our publications show that the seas break all the way across the island during storms.

3. Without wanting to stress the post war air transport question, it can be pointed out that the British have made many attempts to get us to build them an air route between the British Isles and Australia which would by-pass the United States. They have made the same suggestions as the one here presented several times before, using other avenues of approach. I suspect that the basic letter is not entirely ingenuous in this regard.

Copy

UNITED STATES FLEET
HEADQUARTERS OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.



Continued.

18 Dec. 1942.

4. In spite of the advantages of providing a jumping off place other than Hawaii, and of providing better general weather, this project is not at this time of interest to the United States, (particularly in view of the extensive construction of shore establishments that would be involved.) *R.S.E NOTES*

/s/ R. L. Conolly,
R. L. CONOLLY,
Captain, U.S.Navy

* UK-Bermuda-Kingston-Clipperton.

*FJK's
NOTES*

This proposal is superfluous as regards war effort in the Pacific - look into what appears to be a better by-pass route via Galapagos and Easter Isl thence westward.

C O P Y

*This copy obtained from Cominch F-33. 10 Jan 45
h.u.s.*

OFFICE OF THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF
UNITED STATES FLEET

MEMORANDUM

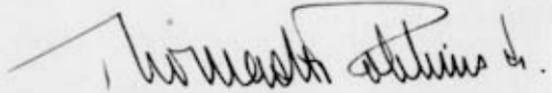
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Date March 11, 1942

From: Commander Robbins, USN

To: Admiral Turner

1. In reply to ^{a question} ~~request~~ by Cominch, the Commander, Panama Sea Frontier, on 25 February, reported that ~~the~~ Cocos Island was sighted daily by a patrol plane, and that no use is now being made of the island except as an occasional watering place.
2. I am informed by ^{Army} War Plans that they have no plans for the air use of the island, and that they have no plans for the installation of a Radar thereon. General Andrews has stated that there is no value in Cocos Island, other than its position, in view of the installations going in for both the Army and Navy at Gallapagos.
3. The Naval Air Pilot states that seaplane operations there are only possible in the open sea and that it is doubtful if land plane fields are possible of construction.
4. The Army does not have any Radar in sight which could be diverted to Cocos Island.



T.H. Robbins, Jr.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
GENERAL BOARD
Washington, D.C.

G.B.No. 404
(Serial No. 1939)
CONFIDENTIAL

22 March 1940.

BY
(OK)

From: Chairman General Board;
To: Secretary of the Navy.

SUBJECT: Sea Approaches to the PANAMA CANAL; COCOS ISLAND as Patrol Plane Base.

References: (a) SecNav end. (SC)A17-25 of 15 March, 1940, on
(b) White House Memo of 8 March, 1940.
(c) Report of Board of Investigation dated 25 Feb., 1940.

Tuscan Board appointed by the President

Enclosures: (A) Sketch: Sea Approaches to Panama Canal.
(B) Extracts from Sailing Directions (1937) and from O.N.I. Monograph (1939) on COCOS ISLAND.

1. The merits of the strategic location of COCOS ISLAND as a patrol plane base can best be evaluated when examined in relation to the general strategic problem of defense of the PANAMA CANAL via its sea approaches as covered by patrol planes operating from available and suitable bases.

2. For the purposes of this study, the premises are:-

(a) A striking radius of 300 miles for carrier aircraft.

(b) A carrier which, at or near dawn, is 300 miles from the CANAL, could be - at 30 knots sustained speed - some 360 miles further away at dark the evening before, or about 660 miles from the CANAL.

(c) The carrier could, at the same sustained speed, be an additional 360 miles away at dawn of the day preceding attack, or 1020 miles from the CANAL.

(d) Patrol plane operations are readily extended to a radius of at least 1,000 miles from a base.

(e) Patrol plane search operations maintained to cover an arc of 1,000 miles radius from the CANAL, expose carriers to detection and to attack during daylight hours of that day which precedes dawn attack of their own planes.

(f) The requirements for take-off of loaded patrol planes are a run of at least one mile into the wind on a water surface preferably free from swell.

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3. Enclosure (A) shows:-

(a) Arcs of radius 300, 660, 1000 miles from the CANAL and the corresponding daylight and darkness zones leading to dawn attack by carrier planes.

(b) The several strategic locations and the corresponding strategic distances.

4. As to the ATLANTIC approaches to the CANAL, it is evident that:-

(a) Approaches via YUCATAN CHANNEL are readily covered by patrol planes operating from KEY WEST and MIAMI; via WINDWARD PASSAGE, from GUANTANAMO; via MONA PASSAGE and ANEGADA PASSAGE, from San Juan.

(b) Approaches via the many passages between CULEBRA and TRINIDAD lie within a radius of about 500 miles from SAN JUAN.

(c) The general excellence of the coverage of the approaches would be enhanced by the availability of patrol plane bases at TRINIDAD (British) or MARGARITA ISLAND (Venezuela), while the availability of CURACAO (Dutch) or of SANTA MARTA (Colombia) would afford additional safeguards.

5. As to the PACIFIC approaches to the CANAL, the situation is in striking contrast to that in the ATLANTIC, both as to strategic geography and as to suitable base locations under United States control:-

(a) The obvious key position lies in the GALAPAGOS ISLANDS which belong to Ecuador. The best harbor is CARTAGO BAY on the east side of ISABELA ISLAND.

(b) Part of the GULF OF FONSECA which lies within the territorial jurisdiction of Nicaragua is under 99-year lease to the United States. It affords excellent natural features for basing patrol planes and is of enough importance strategically to warrant measures for defending it.

(c) The GULF OF NICOYA lies wholly within Costa Rica, as does all of the GULF OF DULCE except some 20 miles of its eastern shore which belongs to Panama and includes a fair patrol plane base in the harbor of GOLFITO.

(d) PARIDA ISLAND ANCHORAGE in Panama is well adapted for use as a patrol plane base and is to be preferred to GOLFITO because of its markedly better communications with the CANAL.

(e) There are other suitable locations in Panama - BAHIA HONDA, MONTIJO BAY, SABOGA ANCHORAGE in the PERLAS ISLANDS - all of them closer to the CANAL than PARIDA ISLAND and so lacking its outpost characteristic.

(f) BUENAVENTURA is the chief port on the west coast of Colombia and is the most suitable location on that coast for the operation of patrol planes.

(g) The GULF of GUAYAQUIL in Ecuador can be made use of for a patrol plane operating base.

(h) COCOS ISLAND belongs to Costa Rica. Its merits as a patrol plane base are dealt with hereinafter.

6. Strategically, the optimum locations available for patrol plane bases to cover the PACIFIC sea approaches to the CANAL are

- (a) GALAPAGOS, FONSECA, GUAYAQUIL - distant,
- (b) PARIDA, BUENAVENTURA - close,
- (c) COCOS ISLAND, which occupies a good central location.

7. The defense of PACIFIC sea approaches to the CANAL is now so weakly provided for, and in such contrast to the coverage of the ATLANTIC approaches, as to warrant and require special attention and consideration. While due recognition must be given to the political aspects of conducting negotiations prior to the opening of hostilities (or their imminence), and although such aspects are accentuated by the number of countries within whose boundaries the optimum base locations are situated, it is noted that

(a) special relations with Panama should make it practicable to count on the availability of PARIDA ISLAND.

(b) the current relations with Colombia and her interest in the integrity of the CANAL are such as should induce favorable consideration of the prospective use not only of BUENAVENTURA but of SANTA MARTA (Atlantic).

(c) the GALAPAGOS ISLANDS are of such great strategic importance for the defense of the CANAL that every effort should be made to occupy and use them and to provide against air and surface attack. If not used by the United States, their use must be denied to a prospective enemy.

G.B.No. 404 (Serial No. 1939)

8. COCOS ISLAND (Costa Rica) lacks those natural features adapted to patrol plane operations - as evaluated from reference (c) and enclosure (B) - except intermittently as weather and sea conditions permit and, even then, warrants its consideration only as a patrol plane tender base. However, because of its valuable strategic location, the General Board concurs with the opinions expressed in reference (c) and the consequent early steps to:-

(a) make a hydrographic survey of the island and adjacent waters,

(b) make mooring and communication plans for tender and patrol planes in (1) CHATHAM BAY and (2) WAFER BAY, and,

(c) provide and store (in the CANAL ZONE) - mooring buoys and communication materiel looking to the use of both bays.

9. After due consideration and deliberation, the General Board recommends:-

(a) that plans be made for the prospective occupation and use, as patrol plane bases for the PACIFIC defense of the PANAMA CANAL, of CARTAGO BAY in the GALAPAGOS ISLANDS (Ecuador), of GUAYAQUIL (Ecuador), of FONSECA (on lease from Nicaragua); of PARIDA ISLAND ANCHORAGE (Panama), of BUENAVENTURA (Colombia) and of COCOS ISLAND (Costa Rica),

(b) that the plans be in such detail as to facilities required as will promote the speedy occupation and use of the several bases,

(c) that essential materiel be procured and stored in readiness for occupation and use of the several bases,

(d) that the plans include the steps to be taken to acquire such occupation and use if and when the need is imminent, and,

(e) that steps similar to (a), (b), (c), (d) be taken as to the ATLANTIC defense of the CANAL in regard to MARGARITA ISLAND (Venezuela) and SANTA MARTA (Colombia), and, as far as may be practicable, TRINIDAD (British) and CURACAO (Dutch).

10. The Board ventures to suggest that, if the international and Pan American situation permits, diplomatic conversations with Colombia, Venezuela, Costa Rica and Ecuador be undertaken, with a view to inducing those countries to improve the facilities in the localities above

Tribalosa
Boards
Conclusion
a/50

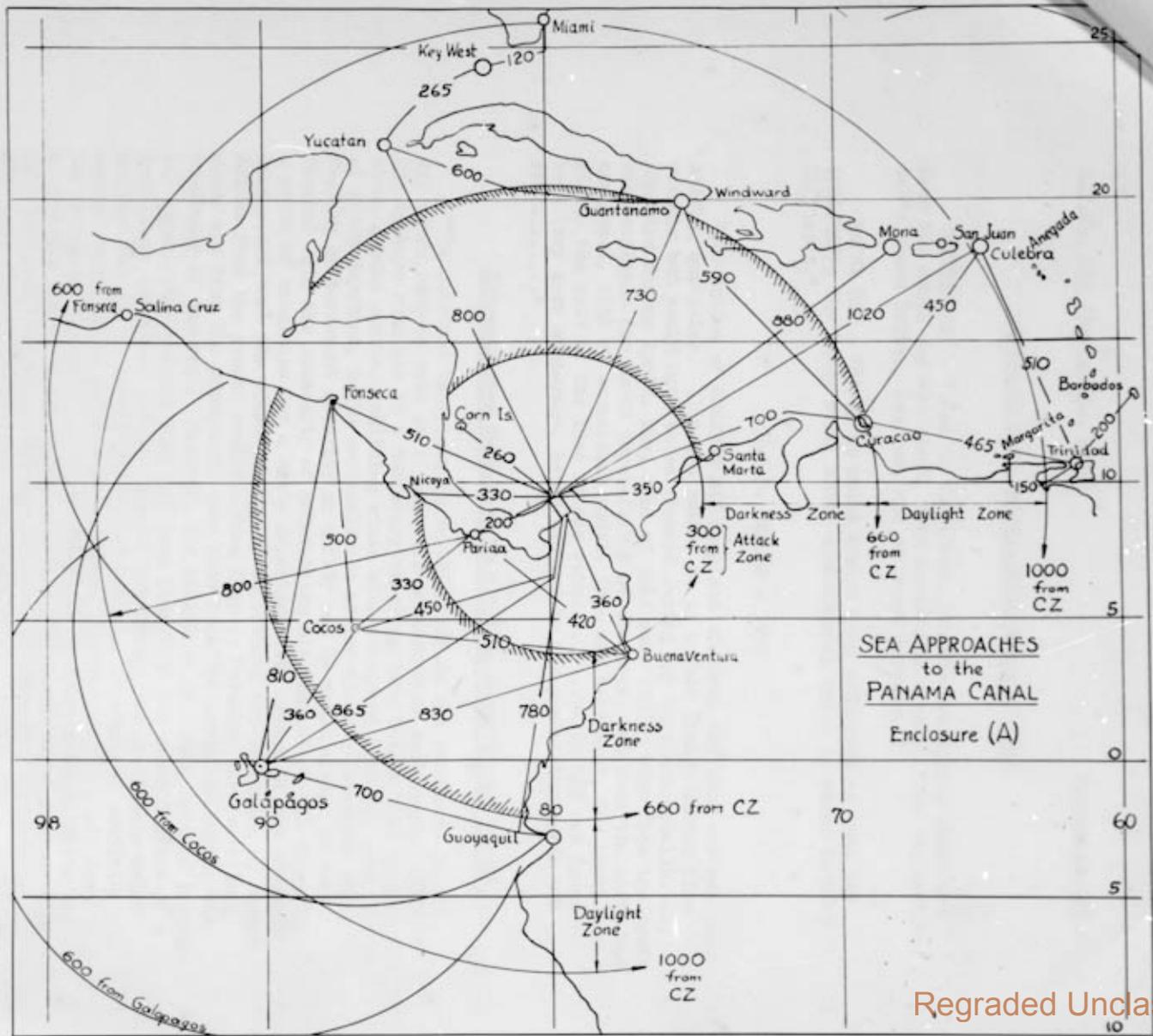
G.B.No. 404 (Serial No. 1939)

mentioned under their jurisdictions, either with their own resources or with loans provided by the United States.

(SGD) W. R. SEXTON

Copy to C.N.O.





SEA APPROACHES
to the
PANAMA CANAL
Enclosure (A)

(C o p y)

G.B.No. 404 (Serial No. 1939)

Enclosure (B)

Extracts from Sailing Directions (1937).

CHATHAM BAY - "open to the north, but the prevailing winds are from the south and southwest, with occasional squalls from the northeast; these latter, however, are of short duration."

WAFER BAY - "is by no means such a good anchorage as that bay (CHATHAM); the heavy swell which occasionally rolls in makes landing difficult."

U.S.S. TAYLOR - 1935

"The bottom of CHATHAM BAY consists of coral and sand and has poor holding qualities. Although small, it is a fair harbor during fine weather but would have to be cleared during any on-shore squalls..... the wind during April, May, June of this year (1935) blew from the south and southwest for about three-fifths of the time, and from the north and northwest, with an occasional squall from the northeast, for about one-fifth; the rest of the time it was calm.....WAFER BAY was found to be a very poor anchorage, being exposed to the prevailing winds and seas....."

Extracts from Monograph (O.N.I.) on COCOS ISLAND (1939).

"The constant heavy swells in WAFER BAY do not recommend it for any other purpose save as a temporary or emergency anchorage...CHATHAM BAY appears suitable as a temporary seaplane base but in view of the constant ground swells...shifting winds with attendant squalls, even though of short duration, would certainly not afford the Air Commander any feeling of permanent security or safety and he would always be confronted with the necessity of maintaining his command at all times in a state of readiness for a hasty departure...It cannot be too strongly emphasized that the principal danger to boating and servicing of planes arises from the ground swells...From June to November the prevailing winds are from the southwest; they blow from the northeast during the remainder of the year. However, the island is in a calm belt of irregular winds...the terrain does not lend itself to the establishment of a land plane operating field...Takeoff conditions are definitely below average because of continuous ground swells. In overload condition modern flying boats would have to ignore the wind and take off down the trough of the swell...During the visit of this squadron there was no occasion during which patrol aircraft (P2Y type) could operate with full load conditions...at no time was a plane permitted to operate with more than 700 gallons of fuel aboard."

Regaded Unclassified

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

March 8, 1942.

MEMORANDUM FOR

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, U. S. FLEET

The President read the attached memorandum on Clipperton Island with interest. He remarked that he could not "wholly go along with it." He stated that he recognized that it probably could not be done at the present time, but that we should keep in mind establishing a PEY patrol from there at such time as the plane situation would permit.

The President further remarked that he trusted that our planners were giving the consideration to the Cocos Islands that "their importance warrants" in connection with defense of the Canal.

Very respectfully,

J. L. McCre

JOHN L. McCREA,
Captain, U. S. Navy,
Naval Aide to the President.

9 mch/42
AGS(P)
via Gant

CONFIDENTIAL

COMMANDER IN CHIEF
UNITED STATES FLEET

February

MEMORANDUM

Date 2/2/42

From: Chief of Staff.

To: Ad. Home

this for your info. on
this subject. C-in-C
concurs. will take
no further RMS
action.

For Info CRO
Home

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ - Memorandum

February 27, 1942.

Subject: Clipperton Island, study in reference to.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~
A. Description

1. Clipperton Island lies off the Mexican Coast, position as follow:-

Acapulco	660 miles.
Puerta Renas	1500 miles.
Panama	1855 miles.
Cocos Islands	1380 miles.
Galapagos Islands	1265 miles.

2. Clipperton Island is a very dangerous low lagoon island about two miles in diameter. The island consists of a low coral ring of sandlike appearance that has a width varying from a few yards to 1/4 mile and a height of five to fourteen feet. The space within the ring is occupied by a large circular lagoon, depths varying from a few inches to fifty-five fathoms or more. There are no entrances from seaward into the lagoon. The island is uninhabited.

3. Anchorage may be obtained on the northeast side of the island in twenty to forty fathoms, shelving coral bottom, good holding ground. The prevalence of heavy squalls from the eastnortheast to north makes it advisable for vessels at anchor to have their cables ready to slip. Chart shows two landing planes - one on the northeast coast and one on the southwest coast. Clipperton Island is described as a dangerous place under even the most favorable conditions, and should always be approached with great caution.

4. In the past the Guano deposits on the island have been worked at various times. In ^{Jan. 1931 (6,405)} February, 1930, the King of Italy acting as an arbiter of the claims of Mexico and France awarded the sovereignty of the island to France.

B. Strategic Considerations.

1. Clipperton Island is strategically placed to cover trade routes along the coast of Mexico and Central America. Its physical characteristics, however, are so poor that no facilities could be

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CONFIDENTIAL - MEMORANDUM

CONTINUED

constructed for the operation of more than most limited patrol aircraft. The island might form a lee for the fueling of sea raiding vessels, or submarines.

C. Conclusions.

1. Physical characteristics of Clipperton Island render it unsuitable for any naval purpose of the United States.

* 2. The island should be visited periodically at irregular intervals by United States vessels for observation.

see note