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THE MAP OF COMPARATIVE COVERAGE OF US-USSR ACTIVITIES1955-1964

The activities shown on this map of US and USSR activities in Antarctica constitute the tangible public record of accomplishments -- with its corresponding political implications. The map does not provide, of course, any measure either of the sophistication of research activity or of accomplishments in such fields as the atmospheric sciences.

While US glaciological, geological, and surveying and mapping activities have been more intensively and more uniformly concentrated in West Antarctica, Soviet efforts, with their much smaller expeditions, have been generally dispersed more widely over the much larger area of East Antarctica. Thus, Soviet surveying for mapping purposes and for geological reconnaissance covers the more important and more accessible coastal periphery over 117 longitudinal degrees in extent. As a consequence of their heavy emphasis on the non-IGY topics of mapping and geologic exploration in the pre-IGY period (1955-57), the Soviets were quickly able to establish an impressive record of their presence on the Antarctic landscape. An illustration of this record is represented in part by the Russian place names shown on this map of comparative coverage. The record of Soviet activity was

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impressively exemplified by the larger scale Soviet map coverage east and west of Mirnyy. Soviet coverage of this area consists of 8 sheets at 1:50,000, 23 sheets at 1:100,000, and 29 sheets at 1:200,000. Such range in large-scale coverage, unequalled by any other country, lends emphasis to Soviet achievements through the portrayal of features in greater detail, many of which are identified with new Russian name forms. On the whole, the Soviets have respected previous names of features and are not reluctant to include them on their maps. These Soviet maps supersede in date and detail the US 1:500,000 map sheets of the Mirnyy region that were rushed to completion in 1956 before the Soviets could publish their maps.

Intensive Soviet research on the continent has been concentrated first in the Mirnyy area and to the interior, to Vostok and Sovetskaya. Since late 1960, activities have been intensified at Novolazaryevskaya, especially in surveying and mapping, and in geological exploration. Presently, the shift of Soviet expedition headquarters to Molodezhnaya, and the intensive mapping and geological activity of the past two seasons, points to a developing Soviet emphasis in the "Least Studied Area" to fill the coverage gap between Mirnyy-Vostok-Sovetskaya on the east and Novolazaryevskaya to the west. A forerunner of this interest has been the Soviet completion of the second longest tractor traverse in Antarctica -- over 2,000 statute miles -- from Vostok to Molodezhnaya.

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