

BUREAU OF OCEANS AND INTERNATIONAL
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS

State Dept. review completed

October 21, 1981

MEMORANDUM TO Members of the Antarctic Policy Group (APG)
Working Group on U.S. Interests in Antarctica

SUBJECT: Revised Decade Study

There is enclosed a revised version of the study of U.S. interests in Antarctica in the decade ahead. This revision has been prepared based on the comments received on the previous draft. It includes revisions to the main body of the study and to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4. For this reason only these sections of the original package are being circulated.

It has become clear the decisions regarding the FY 1983 budget for the U.S. Antarctic program are imminent. In consequence I believe it important that we transmit a final version of the paper to the NSC on an urgent basis. Therefore, agency clearances on the paper are requested by C.O.B. Wednesday, October 28. There will be a meeting of the Working Group on Thursday, October 29, at 10:00 AM in room 1410 at the Department of State to complete a memorandum which would transmit the study to the NSC. A draft of this cover memorandum will be circulated as soon as possible.

R. Tucker Scully

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Chairman

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With Attachment

and our commitment of the resources necessary to provide an unparalleled mobility and flexibility of operations throughout the continent.

-- The U.S. effort in Antarctica has suffered real decline since 1979 by reduced flight hours and flexibility, temporary closure of one inland station, halting operations of the Eltanin and slightly curtailed scientific field effort. This decline is the consequence of major unbudgeted increases in the cost of fuel and of military personnel compensation, exacerbated by rising costs of aircraft maintenance and the special expenses associated with maintaining a self-contained infrastructure in Antarctica.

-- The U.S. effort in Antarctica is experiencing a relative decline as new nations become active in Antarctica and as other nations, especially the U.S.S.R., are increasing their levels of effort in Antarctica.

-- Repeated U.S. deferral of major investments for procurement of parts, equipment and replacements, in order to sustain as high a level of activity as possible, places in jeopardy the continuation of a U.S. presence through this decade.

-- Continuing decline of the U.S. presence and level of effort in Antarctica could force the abandonment of the prestigious South Pole Station to probable occupation by the U.S.S.R., or others, will weaken the Antarctic Treaty system and the U.S. role therein, and will seriously erode the U.S.

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