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DUPLICATE

WESTERN PACIFIC.

OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC,
SUVA, FIJI.

SECRET.

gc

30th October, 1936.

Sir,

(99)

In continuation of my secret despatch of the 7th October, covering reports on the suitability as aircraft bases of the various islands visited by H.M.S. "Wellington" during her recent cruise in the Pacific, I have the honour to transmit a copy of a report by the Commodore Commanding New Zealand Station to the Secretary to the Admiralty, upon air bases in the Pacific, together with a copy of a report by H.M.S. "Achilles" on the same subject.

2. It will be seen that the views which I have expressed in various despatches upon the commercial and strategic importance of Fiji to aviation in the Pacific, and concerning the Phoenix, and Union Group of Islands, are borne out by the Naval Authorities.

3. I have recently had the opportunity of conversations on the subject with Mr. Bertram, Deputy Director of Aviation, England,

The Right Honourable
THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES.

England, with whom I came in contact during the African Air Route negotiations.

4. I should be glad to know whether, see my secret telegrams of the ⁽²⁵⁾ 5rd and ⁽⁵⁷⁾ 89th of July, the newspaper reports that Great Britain has now formally laid claim to the Phoenix Group are correct. I attach photographs of Canton Island taken by Captain O. Bevir, Commanding H.M.S. "Leith", in August, 1936, as documentary evidence of the claim to that island of the Phoenix Group. I regret no similar photographs of the other claimed islands are available.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient,

humble servant,

(Signed) Juxon Barton,

Acting High Commissioner.