

Memorandum B

The following note deals only with those islands for which the Colonial Office is responsible.

GILBERT AND ELLICE ISLANDS COLONY.

The possibilities of the following islands as air bases in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony have been reported on.

(H.M.S. Leith's report - Capt. Bevir)

A. Ocean Island. (Colony headquarters - a phosphate island). Impossible.

-do-

B. Gilbert Islands.

(District headquarters)

Butaritari. There is an extensive lagoon which is accessible to ships and there is good anchorage for ships. There would be good anchorage for flying boats and sea-planes in the lagoon, and good run ways. The island appears possible as an air base.

(District headquarters)

Tarawa. There is an extensive lagoon accessible to ships and plenty of anchorage. There would be good anchorage for flying boats and seaplanes and good run-ways, probably quite clear of obstructions. At some seasons (November to March) rough seas might be met with within the lagoon. The island appears possible as an air base.

Tabiteuea and Onotoa. There are partial lagoons accessible to boats. Ships can anchor outside. There would probably be fair anchorage for flying boats and seaplanes. Run-ways were not investigated and the islands were not considered to look hopeful.

-do-

C. Ellice Islands.

Funafuti. (District Administrative headquarters) This appears to be the most suitable island in the group

for

for an air base. There is an extensive lagoon accessible to ships and there would be good anchorage for flying boats and seaplanes, and good run-ways with few coral pinnacles.

Nukufetau. The lagoon is large, but smaller and more sheltered than that at Funafuti. A further survey would be required to ascertain whether good run-ways could be found.

Vaitupu. There is a small lagoon, possibly accessible to boats from the eastward. Anchorage for ships is unsafe. Landing is only possible by canoes over a bad reef. There would be good anchorage for seaplanes in the lagoon. *Whether runways would be available is not stated.*

Nui and others. Quite useless and "although I did not visit them I feel sure that the same remark applies to ~~Nukunono~~ <sup>Nukukita</sup>, ~~Nukukita~~, Nukukita, Nukukita, Nukukita and probably Nukukita. Nukukita is also of doubtful value, ~~it~~ <sup>and</sup> is unlikely to have any advantages over the adjacent Funafuti".

NANUMAGA

D. Outlying Islands of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

1. Christmas Island.

(i) American interest. In the report for 1935 of the British Naval Attaché at Washington it was mentioned that Christmas Island had of late received some prominence in the press. Rear Admiral Horné, Commandant of the United States Navy's aircraft base force, had stated that ~~it~~ <sup>Pago Pago, had indicated that</sup> a preliminary survey for an air route from Honolulu to ~~Pa Go~~ <sup>Pago Pago</sup> none of the Howland, Baker, and Jarvis Islands had advantages for a seaplane anchorage equal

(French interest has also been suggested)

equal to Christmas Island. Christmas Island lagoon was stated to be well sheltered and spacious, and easily able to accommodate ~~trans-oceanic~~ seaplanes. It was the most desirable point for an aviation base.

A representative of Imperial Airways Limited was reported by the Foreign Office in March last as having suggested that this <sup>i</sup>Island had ~~also~~ been colonised " on behalf of the United States.

In September, 1936, the Acting High Commissioner for the Western Pacific reported, semi-officially, that Christmas Island had been mentioned as about to become the subject of a claim by the United States.

In November, 1936, the "Daily Express" published an article to the effect that American State Department Officials had said that America did not recognise British sovereignty over Christmas Island. Similar articles have been published in New Zealand and the New Zealand Government have raised the matter with the Dominions Office. <sup>already</sup> The Foreign Office have asked for a report from His Majesty's Consul at Honolulu concerning the activities <sup>and</sup> ~~or~~ intentions of the United States Government <sup>in that region</sup>.

It has <sup>also</sup> been reported that Xmas Island is among others which ~~will~~ are to be visited by U.S. naval flying boats.

(ii) Sovereignty. Christmas Island was <sup>formally</sup> ~~formerly~~ taken possession of on the 17th March, 1888, by Captain Sir William Wiseman in H.M.S. "Caroline" because it lay along the probable route of an intended ~~trans-Pacific~~ cable. Mr. Thomas Williams, an agent of Messrs. Henderson and MacFarlane, of Auckland, was resident on the <sup>i</sup>Island at the time.

Christmas Island was brought within the jurisdiction

jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in 1895 by an Instruction of the Secretary of State under Article 6 of the Pacific Order in Council, 1893.

The <sup>i</sup>Island was included within the boundaries of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony in 1919 by an Order in Council dated 30th July, 1919, under the Colonial Boundaries Act.

Central Pacific Cocoanut Plantations Limited hold a licence under which they have the exclusive right to occupy, cultivate and develop the <sup>i</sup>Island for 87 years from the 1st January, 1914. The licence cannot be assigned without the Secretary of State's permission.

Up till recently the Company have used Tahitian labour. The French authorities have recently prohibited the recruitment of French labour for work in foreign territory. The owner of the company is said to be in touch with Burns Philp & Co, and it is possible that they may take over the concession.

(iii) Suitability for an air base. (Note prepared

in the Air Ministry dated 8th April, 1936). The <sup>i</sup>Island is considerably larger than Fanning and is a little further away from the direct line from Honolulu to Samoa. From the chart, however, the lagoon would appear to be considerably better than that at Fanning Island, as it is larger and would permit of a three mile take off in <sup>almost</sup> any direction. It is not so attractive to shipping as Fanning Island as the lagoon is rather shallow.

(Report by H.M.S. "Wellington", which visited Christmas Island, 2nd to 4th September, 1936). An extremely large atoll, 14 miles by 12 miles, with a tongue 17 miles by 5 miles extending to the East-South East, <sup>There is</sup> with a lagoon on the western side and many lakes. Good open anchorage is available outside the reef for any class of

Landing would  
probably be  
practicable in  
the bay  
on the west side

of ship. Much of the lagoon has only about 2ft. of water but many <sup>lanes</sup> ~~lakes~~ were found about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and 15ft. deep running in several directions. If properly surveyed it is considered that good landing and taking off stretches could be found. ✓ It is thought that a good <sup>shore</sup> landing ground ~~about 2 miles square~~ could be made on the north fringe of the island by cutting down a few cocoanut trees and a little levelling.

Message from H.M.S. Achilles, dated 5th September, 1936. The results of an air survey indicated that Christmas Island afforded good facilities for the construction of <sup>an</sup> adequate flying boat bases with a certain amount of blasting to clear the run-way.

2. Fanning Island.

(i) Sovereignty. The island was taken possession of by Captain Sir William Wiseman of H.M.S. "Caroline" on the 15th March, 1888, (the island was then occupied by a British subject who had been there since 1857, and ~~it~~ <sup>who</sup> ~~is~~ stated that Commander <sup>Pierce</sup> in H.M.S. "Alert" had taken ~~former~~ possession of the island in 1861).

The island was brought within the jurisdiction of the High Commissioner for the Western Pacific in 1895, together with Christmas Island. Fanning (and Washington Island ~~and~~ (See below) <sup>was</sup> ~~were~~ included within the boundaries of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony in 1916 by an Order in Council under the Colonial Boundaries Act.

Cable and Wireless <sup>had</sup> have a station on the island

of ship. Much of the lagoon has only about 2ft. of water but many <sup>lanes</sup> ~~lakes~~ were found about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles long and 15ft. deep running in several directions. If properly surveyed it is considered that good landing and taking off stretches could be found. It is thought that a good <sup>shore</sup> landing ground ~~about 2 miles square~~ could be made on the north fringe of the island by cutting down a few cocoanut trees and a little levelling.

Landing would probably be practicable in the bay on the west side

Message from H.M.S. Achilles, dated 5th September, 1936. The results of an air survey indicated that Christmas Island afforded good facilities for the construction of <sup>an</sup> adequate flying boat bases with a certain amount of blasting to clear the run-way.

## 2. Fanning Island.

(1) Sovereignty. The Island was taken possession of by Captain Sir William Wiseman of H.M.S. Caroline on the 15th March, 1888. (the Island was then occupied by

H.M.S. Achilles Report dated

(~~the~~ Report by from H.M.S. Achilles)

Long leads on the eastern limit of this area could be removed by blasting.

The aerial survey carried out by H.M.S. Achilles indicated that within a radius of 2.5 miles from the centre of Cook Islet <sup>there is</sup> an area within the lagoon entirely free from coral obstructions, except possibly on its extreme eastern side, and having throughout a depth of more than 9 feet and a general depth of 12 feet. This area fulfills specified requirements for length of runways, 40' the depth is, in places, less than the specified 12 feet. No other area is suitable.

It was thought that an aerodrome could be constructed on shore. There are numerous suitable sites for hangars and slipways.

(in Report 1936)

7, and it had

ris-

on

a.


s

and

council

the

nd

  
Island, and Burns, Philp and Company <sup>of Sydney</sup> ~~Admiralty~~ have recently formed a new Company - Fanning Island (Plantations) Limited - to work the coconut concession. An Administrative Officer is now stationed on the Island.

(ii) Suitability as an air base. (Air Ministry

← Memo of 8th April, 1936) The Island has an excellent harbour for shipping. The harbour is somewhat small for take-off of heavily loaded flying boats under tropical conditions. It would be interesting to know whether the sea outside the harbour entrance is sufficiently smooth for take-off.

← (H.M.S. "Wellington's" report): A large low-lying atoll 9 miles by 5 miles planted with coconut trees with a large and mostly shallow lagoon. <sup>There</sup> is good open anchorage for ships of any size off the cable station. Ships up to about 250 ft. <sup>9</sup> drawing less than 12ft. can enter the lagoon and anchor inside. The lagoon is mostly shallow and the only practicable landing <sup>for aircraft would</sup> ~~is~~ be in an East North-East direction from the entrance of the lagoon for a distance of 1 mile, and possibly East South-East for 1 mile. During most of the year it would be quite practicable <sup>for aircraft to come down</sup> ~~to land~~ in the open sea off the anchorage, as the swell does not appear to work round the Island. If the very infrequent Westerly were blowing landing would be possible on the East side but <sup>would be</sup> there ~~is~~ no entrance into the lagoon for shelter.

A shore landing ground ~~about 2 miles long in an East and West direction and about 2 miles broad~~ could probably be made ~~on the Southern side~~, but ~~it~~

would

"H.M.S. Achilles" report states that there is no reliable anchorage for other than small craft. Lighters could normally be loaded from a ship lying under way outside the lagoon.)

would require considerable drainage. // N.P.

3. Washington Island. This <sup>i</sup>Island is leased together with Fanning Island. It is not reported on as an air base.

Message from H.M.S. Achilles: Fanning Island has space for shore construction but much blasting would be required for adequate sea room.

*[Leave Space 5 lines]*

#### THE PHOENIX ISLANDS.

1. Canton <sup>(uninhabited)</sup>. Though never formerly annexed, Canton has been leased since 1894, (the issue by the Crown of such a licence has been held by the Law Officers to make <sup>an</sup> ~~the~~ island part of the British Dominions "so long as H.M.G. shall find it expedient to retain the sovereignty"). The present licence is <sup>held by</sup> ~~in the name of~~ Burns, Philp and Company ~~limited~~ and is for 87 years from the 1st January, 1914. In August, 1936, Captain Bevir, of H.M.S. "Leith", left a Union Jack on the <sup>i</sup>Island and a notice board with the words "This Island belongs to His Britannic Majesty, King Edward VIII; <sup>was</sup> visited by H.M.S. Leith, August, 1936, Signed O. Bevir, Captain, R.N.)." A similar message was left in a sealed tin.

Canton is a coral atoll enclosing a spacious lagoon. The total size <sup>including the lagoon</sup> of this lagoon is about 8 $\frac{1}{4}$  by 4 sea miles. The soil <sup>of the island</sup> is stoney, <sup>but</sup> supports in most parts <sup>also</sup> rank grass and scrub 1ft. high, and eleven coconut trees.

There is fair anchorage for ships in smooth water

B. Prot. declared by  
Comdr W.E. Colles,  
H.M.S. Cormorant  
29 May 1889

(H.M.S. "Leith's"  
report)

B. Prot. declared by  
Comdr H.M.S. "Schiller"  
29 May 1889

would require considerable drainage. // N.P.

[Insert from slip]

3. Washington Island. This island is leased together with Fanning Island. It is not reported on as an air base.

Report from H.M.S.  
'Schiller'

The aerial survey carried out by H.M.S. "Schiller" indicates that an area within 1 mile radius of English Harbour entrance is comparatively free from coral obstructions, and there could be cleared by blasting. On the occasion of the visit the vessel would have endangered a take off through the deep water channel. This channel has an effective width in the direction of the prevailing wind of considerably less than 700 feet. The land area is suitable for the erection of hangars, and slipways would have to be built clear of the deep water channel through which the stream runs strongly.

from the 1st January, 1914. In August, 1936, Captain Bevir, of H.M.S. "Leith", left a Union Jack on the island and a notice board with the words "This Island belongs to His Britannic Majesty, King Edward VIII; was visited by H.M.S. Leith, August, 1936, Signed O. Bevir, Captain, R.N.)." A similar message was left in a sealed tin.

(H.M.S. "Leith's"  
report)

Canton is a coral atoll enclosing a spacious lagoon. The total size of <sup>including the lagoon,</sup> ~~this lagoon~~ is about 8½ by 4 sea miles. The soil <sup>of the island</sup> is stoney, <sup>but</sup> supports in most parts rank grass and scrub 1 ft. high, <sup>also</sup> and eleven coconut trees.

There is fair anchorage for ships in smooth water

water, <sup>(950 ashore)</sup> easy access to the lagoon for small craft, and good anchorage for flying boats. A survey would be required to ascertain whether the lagoon could provide good run-ways for air-craft as parts of ~~the~~ <sup>if</sup> ~~lagoon~~ are studded with coral reefs and pinnacles. 11/5  
~~Message from H.M.S. Achilles, dated 5th September, 1936: "Canton Island considered (? useless) except possibly for the erection of a wireless beacon.~~

*[Insert from slip]*  
2. Hull Island. This Island was taken possession <sup>on 11<sup>th</sup> July,</sup> of ~~in~~ 1889, by Captain Oldham <sup>with H.M.S. "Egeria"</sup> and is leased to Burns, Philp and Company ~~Limited~~. In August, 1936, Captain Bevir left a Union Jack and a notice board <sup>affirming</sup> ~~proclaiming~~ British sovereignty as in the case of Canton Island.

*[Capt. W. S. Leitch's Report]* *[The centre is]* The total area of the atoll <sup>which is rectangular with a</sup> ~~with~~ lagoon ~~is~~ <sup>about 3½ by 2 sea miles.</sup> The south-west corner of the Island has been extensively planted with coconut trees and there is a small settlement at present uninhabited. The rest of the Island is covered with bushes 7ft. to 10 ft. high. There is no boat passage into the lagoon except, perhaps, for small boats at high tide and canoes. There is no anchorage for ships, ~~but~~ There would be good anchorage for flying boats.

*[sent from slip]* *[in]* The lagoon <sup>which</sup> is extensive, <sup>and</sup> would provide run-ways for aircraft. 11/5

~~Message from H.M.S. Achilles, dated 5th September, 1936: Hull Island. Have completed analysis. Result of an aerial survey indicates that Hull Island would offer good facilities for the construction of an adequate flying boat base with a certain amount of~~

~~blasting~~

water, <sup>(750 ashore)</sup> easy access to the lagoon/for small craft, and good anchorage for flying boats. A survey would be required to ascertain whether the lagoon could provide good run-ways for air-craft as parts of ~~the~~ <sup>if</sup> ~~lagoon~~ are studded with coral reefs and pinnacles. N.P.  
~~Message from H.M.S. Achilles, dated 5th September, 1936: "Canton Island considered (? useless) except possibly for the erection of a wireless beacon.~~

~~(at present unusable).~~

2. Hull Island. This Island was taken possession <sup>on 11<sup>th</sup> July,</sup> <sup>in H.M.S. "Egeria"</sup> of ~~in~~ 1889 by Captain Oldham and is leased to Burns,

[Insert from slip]  
Report from H.M.S. Achilles

The aerial survey carried out by H.M.S. Achilles indicates that

Four fifths of the lagoon is honeycombed with coral reefs and heads lying close to the surface. To clear this area would require considerable blasting. The lagoon entrance is blocked by an extensive reef, nearly awash. There is, however, a comparatively clear area about 2.3 (miles) long and <sup>tapering to 0.5</sup> cables wide with a general depth of 3 fathoms in the southern part. The sea outside the lagoon would not be suitable for aircraft. <sup>(H.M.S. Achilles)</sup>  
In a ~~telegram~~ <sup>message dated 5<sup>th</sup> September 1936</sup> ~~report~~ that Canton was considered useless except perhaps for a wireless beacon.

Captain  
forming  
claiming  
Island.  
lagoon is  
er of  
oconut  
nt  
ed with  
passage  
ts at  
for

Report from H.M.S. Achilles

The aerial survey carried out by H.M.S. Achilles indicates that

The few coral heads in the north-east half of the lagoon could be removed by blasting. This would provide a clear area of sufficient dimensions to fulfil <sup>the</sup> requirements for runways. The general depth of water is estimated at more than 2 fathoms. There appear to be numerous suitable hangar sites, but the construction of slipways would involve blasting. It is thought that it would be an easy matter to blast a deep water channel into the <sup>suitable small craft</sup> lagoon. ~~that present~~ <sup>normally</sup> There is no anchorage. Lighters could be landed on the lee side of the island, but could not be beached. It is thought that the island offers good facilities for an air base.

lying  
provide  
ber,  
Result  
would  
an  
t of  
sting

~~blasting to clear the run-ways,~~

(at present uninhabited)

3. Sydney Island. Taken possession of <sup>on the</sup> 26th June, 1889 by Captain Oldham, H.M.S. <sup>"Egeria"</sup> ~~Agera~~. The Island is leased to Burns, Philp and Company.

<sup>The</sup> Suitability of the Island as an air base has not been reported on.

The Island has vegetation and parts have been planted with coconuts <sup>which were</sup> reported to be in good condition in August, 1935. There is understood to be ~~a~~ anchorage for ships.

4. McKean, Enderbury, Phoenix and Burnie Islands (uninhabited)

Phoenix and Burnie Islands were taken <sup>on the 29<sup>th</sup> June, & 10<sup>th</sup> July respectively in</sup> possession of <sup>in H.M.S. "Egeria"</sup> in 1889 by Captain Oldham and are leased to Burns, Philp and Company. McKean and Enderbury Islands have been worked by British Companies in the past but are not ~~now~~ leased by H.M.G. Captain Bevir <sup>may be said to have</sup> ~~proclaimed~~ <sup>affirmed</sup> British sovereignty (previously non-existent) over McKean Island in August, 1936, by leaving a notice board and message to the effect that the Island belonged to His Majesty.

These four Islands are desolate and dip towards the centre. Landing by boat must <sup>often</sup> ~~even~~ be dangerous. The lagoons are <sup>of</sup> ~~no~~ size and the Islands appear useless, <sup>as</sup> probably even for helicopters.

5. Gardner Island. Taken possession of by Captain Gibson, H.M.S. <sup>on the 28<sup>th</sup> May,</sup> "Curacoa" in 1892, and leased to Burns, Philp and Company. The Island is uninhabited and uncultivated. Landing is practically impossible except in native boats at high tide and <sup>in</sup> ~~with~~ calm water. <sup>The</sup> Suitability of the Island as an air base has not been reported

(Many)  
Phoenix Group

reported on, but it would <sup>probably</sup> presumably be useless.

[Spaced 2 lines] → To sum up regarding the Phoenix Islands, it appears that, apart from Sydney <sup>which has not been</sup> ~~it was not~~ reported on by ~~Captain Bevir~~, <sup>Only</sup> Canton and Hull Islands would be of any use for air bases. Captain Bevir considered that Hull could be used at once, provided personnel and stores could be conveyed by air and landed in native canoes. To improve <sup>the</sup> facilities it would be necessary to cut a <sup>boat</sup> ~~passage~~ passage into the lagoon and to lay down sea moorings as at Ocean Island. He considered that if the lagoon at Canton would provide run-ways for aircraft, the <sup>i</sup> island would provide better facilities than Hull without much expenditure.

The result of H.M.S. Achilles' aerial survey, however, indicates that Hull would offer good facilities, but that Canton would be useless, except possibly for the erection of a wireless beacon.

Although Sydney, Hull, Canton, Phoenix, Birnie and Gardner Islands are leased to Burns, Philp and Company for the cultivation of coconuts, only Sydney and Hull have been <sup>& these have not been worked for some years.</sup> planted. The Company reported recently to the High Commissioner that the question of indenting labour from the <sup>l</sup> Tokeau Islands to re-open and work the group was being considered, but that everything would depend upon what conditions of labour could be obtained. Even at the present (improved) price of copra they feared that there would be nothing in it for them.

The Acting High Commissioner has raised the question of using these <sup>i</sup> Islands to accommodate some of the

the surplus population of the Gilbert Islands, or the Banabans from Ocean Island, but these proposals are very much 'in the air' at present.

The geographical position of the Phoenix group <sup>makes</sup> ~~renders~~ <sup>potentially</sup> them important, and while our claim to sovereignty over the six Islands leased to Burns, Philp and Company would appear ~~very~~ strong. There would seem <sup>no reason</sup> why the group should not be included within the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony. They lie within the rectangle formed by the Gilbert Islands, Washington Island, Christmas Island and the Ellice Islands, and are comparatively close to the Ellice group. ~~(it would be necessary to obtain Treasury concurrence).~~

It may not be unascertainable, as there is no effective occupation in fact

(Leave space 5 lines)

(Line Islands)

#### GROUP OF ISLANDS LYING WEST OF THE FRENCH MARQUESAS ISLANDS.

(1) Islands leased to Maxwell and Company Limited, of Auckland, New Zealand. These are Flint, Caroline and Vostock. Caroline is said to have been taken possession of by Commander Nares, H.M.S. "Encounter", in 1868. The other two do not appear to have been annexed. H.M.S. "Wellington" left a formal record of her recent visit to Caroline Island. A Union Jack was flying on the Island, then inhabited by four Tahitians, when H.M.S. "Wellington" arrived. <sup>in the company of Maxwell's ~~Wagoner~~</sup> <sup>"called there"</sup>

(H.M.S. "Wellington's" Report)

Flint and Caroline Islands are normally visited every three months by a schooner from Tahiti. <sup>N</sup> Flint is said to be a low Island  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles by  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, covered with coconut trees. There is no anchorage and landing by boat is difficult in any swell. The Island is thought quite unsuitable for an air base.

Caroline is said to be a low atoll 7 miles by



1 mile in the shape of a crescent, fairly well covered with coconut trees. There is no anchorage and boat landing is bad. The lagoon is very shallow and many coral sand shoals render it useless for aircraft. Landing in the open sea on the west coast is thought feasible in the prevailing winds, but there is no shelter. No shore landing ground could be made.

<sup>(uninhabited)</sup>  
Vostock is said to be a small, low <sup>guano</sup> Island, thickly wooded. It is thought that it would be quite useless as an air base except possibly for a D/F Station. Anchorage is probably possible from the Western point, but would be very exposed. Boat landing is possible in calm weather.

- (11) <sup>(uninhabited)</sup> Starbuck Island. Taken possession of in December, <sup>1866</sup>~~1866~~ by Commander Swinburne in H.M.S. "Mutine". This Island, together with Jarvis (recently annexed by America), was formerly leased by H.M.G. The licence was surrendered by indenture <sup>dated</sup> on the 12th May, 1921.

Starbuck is said to be a very low <sup>guano</sup> Island, 5½ miles by about 1 mile, with no trees or scrub. There is no anchorage and landing would be impossible in any sea or swell. Neither the lagoon nor the open sea would permit aircraft to land, but it might be possible to make a landing ground in the centre of the Island which is <sup>generally</sup> ~~chiefly~~ flat.

- (iii) <sup>(uninhabited)</sup> Malden Island. Discovered by Lord Byron in 1825, but never (so far as is known) annexed. Leased by H.M.G. as a <sup>guano</sup> Island till 1928. H.M.S. "Wellington" found a complete set of flags <sup>on the island</sup> when she visited it this year. She left a message nailed to the flag staff to the effect that the Island belonged to His

Majesty

(HMS Wellington's Report)

(Filippo Reef, 240 miles east of Starbuck, is not mentioned.)

(H.M.S. "Wellington's"  
Report)

(Summary)  
Space

[Space 2 lines] →

<sup>was visited by H.M. ship</sup>  
Majesty on the 27th August, 1936. <sup>Malden</sup> The ~~Island~~ is said  
to be a very low <sup>guano</sup> Island, 4 miles by 3 miles, without  
any trees or scrub, with a brackish lake in the centre.  
Anchorage might be possible at the western end, but would  
be dangerous owing to currents. Boat landing is  
possible, but difficult in a swell. Landing would be  
impossible ~~by~~ <sup>for</sup> seaplanes and it would be extremely  
difficult to make a shore landing ground.

To sum up regarding the <sup>outlying islands west</sup> ~~rest~~ of the Marquesas:  
judging by H.M.S. "Wellington's" report it would not seem  
that any of the ~~above-mentioned islands~~ <sup>these</sup> are likely to be  
of value <sup>as</sup> for ~~an~~ air bases. Our ownership of Flint,  
Caroline and Vostock is on fairly sure foundation  
should they be required. H.M.S. "Wellington's" action in  
leaving a formal record of her visit at Malden may have  
strengthened our claim to that <sup>i</sup>Island.

As for Starbuck we could not dispute the  
ownership were <sup>this island</sup> ~~it~~ occupied by another power.

[Leave space 5 lines]

#### ISLANDS IN THE EASTERN PACIFIC.

It is possible that the following <sup>i</sup>islands  
may become important:

- (1) Pitcairn Island, The refuge of the "Bounty" mutineers  
in 1789, has been regarded as British since the visit  
of Captain Elliot in H.M.S. "Fly" in 1838. The <sup>" "</sup>Island  
was first brought within the jurisdiction of the High  
Commissioner for the Western Pacific in 1898 by an  
Instruction of the Secretary of State under Articles  
4 and 6 of the Pacific Order in Council, 1893. It is  
contemplated that an Administrative Officer should pay

Captain Hall of H.M.S.  
"Wellington" drew attention  
to the frequent visits  
of so-called  
American yachts  
to many of these  
remote islands in  
the Pacific, ostensibly  
for scientific reasons.  
He also  
suggested that the  
French might have  
designs on some of  
them.



a visit to Pitcairn next year and report on the

possibility of developing the island, and on the *possibility*  
*of making any changes in its policy.*

(ii) Oeno, Henderson and Ducie Islands. The Union Jack was

hoisted on these islands with a notice declaring them

to be dependencies of Pitcairn and the property of the

British Government by Mr. J.R. <sup>McCoy</sup> ~~Meol~~, President of

Pitcairn Island, at <sup>the</sup> request of H.M. Consul at Tahiti

on the following dates:

Henderson - 6th July, 1902.

Oeno - 10th July, 1902.

Ducie - 19th <sup>December</sup> ~~September~~, 1902.

The Consul had feared that the French

intended taking the islands, and <sup>the action taken</sup> his ~~action~~ was approved

by H.M.G. || It is <sup>hoped</sup> intended that the <sup>Administrative Officer who</sup> proposed mission

<sup>will visit</sup> to Pitcairn <sup>next year will be able to</sup> should investigate the possibilities of

these three islands, ~~next year.~~

Colonial Office  
Dec, 1936.

[ R. W. A.  
18<sup>th</sup> Dec, 1936 ]