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FROM SIR VIVIAN FUCHS, F.R.S.
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ms

Prime Minister
I will send a brief
acknowledgment in your
belief.

PLEASE REPLY TO:
55 HANS PLACE,
LONDON SW1
TELEPHONE: 01-584 6050

21st October 1982

Dear Mrs Thatcher,

A.J.C. 22/10

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I arrived home from the Chilean Antarctic Conference last weekend, and write to you because it has come to my knowledge that it was through your personal good offices that the Foreign Office contacted the British Council, who then very kindly sponsored my trip. I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness over such a small point in the midst of the heavy political burdens you carry. It is difficult to say thank you adequately, but I really am very grateful.

It was a most interesting experience. The Chilean station where the conference was held is really a large Air Force complex, run by Service personnel - often in uniform - and with little pretence at science. The meetings were attended by all the active 'Antarctic' nations except the USSR (who didn't send anybody) and Japan (whose delegate missed his plane). A Canadian representative also appeared.

The government representatives will, of course, report officially; however, may I say that there was a general opinion that the non-Antarctic nations at the United Nations needed to be aware that any possibility of oil production lies in the rather remote future; because of the need for detailed geophysical exploration and the development of special technology. As yet no minerals worth exploiting are known to exist, but should any be found, exploitation could be achieved more rapidly than in the case of oil.

There is some urgency in establishing regulations for the taking of fish and 'Krill' in the Southern Ocean since this would affect the food chain - and already considerable quantities are being caught by the Russians.

Our visit was well organized. We went to three other Chilean bases and the Polish station. At one of the Chilean bases the Major in command rather naively welcomed us to 'this Chilean military station, used for training and meteorological work!' They also maintain effective seismological records.

On our return to Santiago, where I was kindly invited to stay at the Embassy, I was asked to give a few lectures on behalf of the British Council - including two to the English schools. There seemed to be a great deal of pro-British feeling, for I was honoured by a presentation at the University of Chile, and given a Medal by the Chilean Geographical Society. So I hope it all did some good.

May I again thank you for your very kind intervention in my affairs, and please don't even think of answering this, which is really sent only to express my gratitude.

Yours sincerely

V. E. Fuchs

The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Thatcher
10 Downing Street
LONDON S.W.1.

File: Foreign Pol.
British Policy in Antarctica

LONDON

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