

Zealand party will have come over a route never before explored. We might even have to abandon the tracked vehicles and ski the rest of the way, taking the stores on the dog sledges."

"Our base hut," Dr. Fuchs said, "will have normal electric lighting from two six kilowatt generators, solid fuel heating, with auxiliary electric fires and liquid fuel stoves. Radio communication will be maintained with the Falkland Islands and possibly with Cape Town, and it is also hoped that we shall be able to speak direct to London from the base.

This, of course, is if everything goes according to plan. In an expedition of this kind, spread over such a long period, there are always so many things you have to take into account—illness, loss of stores or equipment, accident to men, the aircraft, the tractors, the dogs."

Airplanes for Reconnaissance

Airplanes will do reconnaissance and route-finding, Dr. Fuchs explained, "Aircraft are useless for exploration without ground control. From the air you quite definitely cannot do our work. You cannot, for instance, map satisfactorily without ground parties, or study the habits of the ice. A geologist could not study the composition of rocks from the air."

In November of this year, the main party under Dr. Fuchs will sail from the United Kingdom for the Weddell Sea, this time in the Magga Dan, an ice-going vessel now under construction in a Danish shipyard. About the same time Sir Edmund's party will set off from New Zealand for McMurdo Sound in the Ross Sea.

The general plan is for the two parties to set up bases on either side of the continent and for each to work toward the pole. The base on the Weddell Sea has already been established earlier this year, and named by Dr. Fuchs "Shackleton" in memory of the great explorer who planned to cross the continent as long ago as 1914.

Base Camp Prepared

A winter party of eight was left behind to build the base camp and to haul to safety further inland the 350 tons of stores landed on the ice from the Theron. They will also carry out such reconnaissance as is possible in the intense cold and round-the-clock darkness of the Antarctic winter, and generally prepare the way for the arrival of the main party in January, 1957.

"The season in the south is so short that you cannot just arrive and put down a base and go straight on across," Dr. Fuchs explained. "You need to have the kicking-off base ready for you.

"In the second season, that is the Antarctic summer of 1956-57, we shall establish a depot approximately 300 miles inland from Shackleton. The actual crossing, which will take four months, counting the delays for scientific observations and other work, will be made between November, 1957, and March, 1958. For we must

all be clear away from the Ross Sea by then, before the ice closes in again."

Sir Edmund's party will meanwhile have the important task of setting up depots to replenish the supplies of the main party along the stormy plateau 10,000 feet above sea level. Sir Edmund intends to call his base in the Ross Sea "Scott."

From there it will be his responsibility to reconnoiter the Koettlitz and Ferrar Glaciers and select the route down which his party will eventually guide Dr. Fuchs and his companions at the end of their long and arduous journey.

They will also establish a depot about 150 miles inland from Scott, and another near Mount Albert Markham, about 500 miles from the Pole, where they will expect to meet the crossing party at the end of January, 1958.

It will be a momentous occasion. Both parties will then travel back together along the route pioneered by the New Zealand party. The following month should see the withdrawal of the whole Trans-Antarctic Expedition to New Zealand, which has been the point of departure and return for many another expedition to the unknown continent.

Science News Letter, August 18, 1956

PSYCHOLOGY

U. S. Polar Airmen Will "Thaw" in Sydney

► U. S. AIR FORCE men flying over the Antarctic with Operation Deepfreeze will spend their furlough in Sydney to "thaw."

Globemaster transport planes will pick up about 15 men each week from the Little America base on the shores of McMurdo Sound. Capt. H. C. Allen, liaison officer for the U. S. expedition, is on his way to Christchurch, New Zealand, to make arrangements for a base maintenance camp for the expedition aircraft.

Eight Globemasters would be used to fly materials from Christchurch to McMurdo Sound base where 93 men were stationed the year round.

The first Globemaster would reach Christchurch in September. Smaller planes would be dismantled and flown over to Antarctica in pieces. The Globemasters would drop supplies and sections of prefabricated buildings to sites picked out by the U. S. Navy.

The normal term of service in Antarctica is one or two years with no leave.

Science News Letter, August 18, 1956

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—VICTOR W. KILLICK, In Charge of Astronomical Observatory, Sacramento Junior College, Calif.

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