

1926.
NEW ZEALAND.

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BOARD.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SIR,—

Department of Lands and Survey, Wellington, 1st June, 1926.

I have the honour to submit to you the report of the Tongariro National Park Board, covering its operations up to the 31st March, 1926.

I have, &c.,

J. B. THOMPSON,

Chairman, Tongariro National Park Board.

The Hon. A. D. McLeod, Minister of Lands.

REPORT.

THE number of visitors to the park during the year under review was 923, which is a considerable increase over the figures for the previous twelve months, consequently the available accommodation at the various huts was taxed to the utmost during the holiday periods.

HOSTEL LEASE.

The question of providing further accommodation to meet the increasing demand is one which has engaged the serious attention of the Board, and as a result it was decided to offer a suitable lease with a view to a hostel being erected by private enterprise. A draft lease, with an explanatory memorandum, has been prepared and approved by the Government, and applications are being invited for the right to erect and conduct a hostel and other services. The lease proposed is for a term of forty-two years, with protection for improvements at the end of the term, subject to certain conditions. The annual rental is £75, and in addition the lessee is required to pay to the Board $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum of the gross receipts during the first five years of the lease, and for the remainder of the term such percentage as the Board may determine, being not less than $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum, but not exceeding $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of such gross receipts. Power is conferred on the Board to resume possession of the land and buildings after a period of twenty-one years upon payment of full compensation.

The areas which it is proposed to lease are as follows : Hostel-site : 60 acres, with an area of about 225 acres for grazing purposes at Sub-Taranaki. Hut-sites : 4 acres at Whakapapa and $\frac{1}{2}$ acre surrounding each of the other huts—viz., Ohakune Hut, Waihohonu Hut, Mangatepopo Huts (two). These areas are, of course, only tentative, and can be increased to suit the needs of the lessee.

It is proposed that the initial hostel building which the successful applicant will be required to erect in terms of the lease shall contain accommodation for at least seventy-five visitors, and shall be equipped with all modern conveniences, including electricity for lighting and heating. The present hut accommodation is to be maintained by the lessee, and increased should the Board consider additional accommodation of this class necessary. The charges for accommodation and other services are to be in conformity with a scale to be approved by the Board from time to time.

The lease stipulates that the lessee shall have the exclusive right of providing the accommodation and other services mentioned in the lease, subject to the condition that should the Board at any time consider that further huts or hostels are necessary for the accommodation of the public, then the lessee is to have the first offer of providing such additional building or buildings. Should the lessee refuse or fail to accept such offer, then the right is reserved to the Board to itself erect such additional buildings, or to grant a further lease or leases to any person or company, with such ancillary easements, powers, and rights as the Board may see fit to grant.

The Board has reserved the right to grant leases for bungalow-sites within the park, but such sites may not be used for letting purposes or for any trade or business. Further, the Board has reserved to itself the right to erect shelter-huts or mountain-houses, or to grant rights therefor, at an altitude exceeding 4,000 ft. This latter provision is to meet the needs of sports clubs and to afford accommodation in the future for the general mountaineer.

The terms and conditions of the lease referred to have been decided upon after very careful deliberation. To arrive at a basis whereby the balance may be evenly held between the interests of the private lessee on the one hand and the public rights on the other has been no light task, but it is considered that the tenancy offered is a fair proposition viewed from both standpoints.

The Board recognizes that a hostel is required to enable the public of New Zealand and overseas tourists to visit the park with a reasonable degree of comfort, but, in view of the very limited financial resources of the Board, it is considered that private enterprise should be afforded an opportunity of supplying the services required, under a reasonable franchise.

DINING-HALL AND SOCIAL ROOM AT WHAKAPAPA.

A social room, 30 ft. by 16 ft., with kitchen, 16 ft. by 10 ft., attached, was erected during the year, the total cost being £334. This building has proved a great convenience to the parties making their headquarters at Whakapapa.

ADDITION TO PARK AREA.

By the passing of section 40 of the Reserves and other Lands Disposal and Public Bodies Empowering Act, 1925, a further area of 4,643 acres, being parts of the Rangataua North Nos. 1 and 3 Blocks, was added to the park. This land was formerly part of a provisional State forest lying to the south of the park, and is traversed by the track leading to the Ohakune Hut. The thanks of the Board are due to the State Forest Service for the ready co-operation with the Board in approaching the Government for the necessary legislation. The area of the park now stands at 149,470 acres.

BRUCE ROAD.

The following is a summary of the work carried out to the 31st March, 1926, under the supervision of the Public Works Department:—

Formation: The work completed to 31st March includes 4 miles 6 chains of 18 ft. formation from Waimarino-Tokaanu Road to Whakapapa Huts; temporary bridge over the Whakapapa River; and 3 miles 12 chains of metalling. Formation is generally through pumice country intersected with swamps, and, where necessary, has been formed with pumice as a foundation for the metal.

Culverting: Concrete culverts have been used throughout, and can be considered permanent; draining has been of a comprehensive nature, and no trouble should be experienced in this connection in the future.

Temporary bridge: This has been constructed of mountain-beech. It is a platform bridge, consisting of two 20 ft. spans, 12 ft. wide.

Metalling: Metalling has been carried out to 3 miles 12 chains, a good class of volcanic stone being laid to the extent of 15 cubic yards per chain; 74 chains of metalling remain to complete the work.

MILLING OPERATIONS.

In accordance with the agreement reached with the Prisons Department, milling operations have been carried out so as to leave intact the bush on the steep face a little to the north-east of Erua. The question of approaching the Government for power to grant other timber by way of exchange for the bush left on the steep face is now under consideration, but it is probable that the Board will arrange with the Prisons Department to discontinue milling operations in the area altogether.

FOREST ADJACENT TO OHAKUNE.

At the last meeting of the Board, held on the 18th December, 1925, a proposal was submitted that the timber should be milled on an area of approximately 62 acres situated adjacent to Ohakune Railway-station. It was, however, decided that consideration of the proposal should be deferred pending an inspection on the ground by members of the Board. The arguments brought forward in support of the proposal were that this block of timber was more or less in an isolated position, with the ever-present danger of fires spreading from the adjoining land and destroying the bush. The estimated quantity of timber is 1,860,000 superficial feet, valued at £4,650. It is probable that the Board will not favourably consider this proposal at the present time.

DEFINITION OF TRACKS.

In December last the routes from the Whakapapa Huts to Waihohonu Hut and thence to Ketetahi Hut were defined by Mr. A. D. Mead, B.E., A.M.I.C.E., poles and cairns being erected at suitable spots by the Prisons Department. The Board desires to record its thanks and appreciation for the honorary and valuable services rendered by Mr. Mead in this connection.

NEW ROAD TO MANGATEPOPO HUTS.

In view of the early completion of the Bruce Road, which extends from the Waimarino-Tokaanu Road to the Whakapapa Huts, the question as to constructing a road to the Mangatepopo Huts is now under consideration. The distance to be covered from the main Waimarino-Tokaanu Road is approximately five miles, but until an engineering survey has been made it is not possible to estimate the cost of the work. The country to be traversed is of pumice formation, and there should be no bush-work or extensive heavy cuttings to cope with or expensive bridges to erect.

OHAKUNE MOUNTAIN TRACK AND HUT.

Owing to the limited funds available only the amount collected as hut fees—viz., £48—was expended, and with this amount it was not possible to carry out any extensive works on the track. The work already effected—viz., corduroying and draining—was kept in repair, and a small amount of new work was carried out.

The Ohakune Mountain Hut is in a good state of repair, and the visitors accommodated therein during the year numbered 295—a large increase over the figures for the previous twelve months.

The hut receipts for the year show a 33½-per-cent. increase; and as the track is improved it is anticipated that the number of visitors will increase, particularly in view of the fact that this track serves Ohakune, Rangataua, and Raetihi, with a local population of over three thousand people.

ALPINE EQUIPMENT.

Twelve pairs of Canadian hickory skis, with five extra sets of harness and twenty-four bamboo ski-poles, were purchased for use at Whakapapa. In addition eight ice-axes were purchased for use at Whakapapa and the Ohakune Huts.

The fees for the hire of skis were reduced by resolution of the Board in July last, and now stand at: For one day, 2s. 6d. per day; for more than one day, 2s. per day; per week, 9s.

BY-LAWS.

The by-laws made by the Board pursuant to the Tongariro National Park Act, 1922, were duly approved by His Excellency the Governor-General on the 31st July, 1925. Copies of the by-laws, printed in large type, are now being exhibited at various points in order that public attention may be drawn thereto.

WARDEN'S REPORT.

Mr. John Cullen, I.S.O., Warden of the park, reports as follows:—

“Owing to the prolonged spells of wet and stormy weather experienced in the park during the past season I was unable to make visits to any of the more remote areas. So unseasonable has the weather been that spring was a month later in coming in than usual, which had a peculiar effect on some of the native plants of the park. The clematis, which is the earliest to come into bloom, produced very few flowers, and the mistletoe, which usually is in bloom between November and the New Year, did not bloom at all—a thing I have not known to happen during the preceding thirty years. Bird-life appeared to be also affected, as I did not see or hear the shining cuckoo, and only heard the long-tailed cuckoo on one occasion. These birds used to be fairly in evidence in previous years. Opossums are now about the park, as I found their tracks last season. Deer have been in evidence during the autumn season, but they are not numerous.

“The Department of Internal Affairs sent 200,000 rainbow-trout fry for liberation in the park streams, which were taken charge of and liberated, as advised by me, by the Waimarino Society.

“In September, 1922, I caused 12,000 rainbow-trout fry to be liberated in the smaller Nga Puna-a-Tama Lakes, where fry had not been previously liberated, and where there now should be some good-sized fish if the fry have done at all well there. Fry were also placed in the Taranaki Stream, above the waterfall, at the same time as the Tama Lake was stocked.

“Large numbers of shags that have their rookeries in the Whakapapa Gorge have been frequenting the park streams and denuding them of fish, so the Ranger for the Waimarino Acclimatization Society and myself started a campaign against these raiders, with the result that we shot a good many of them. Shags are said to consume 7 lb. or 8 lb. of fish per day; therefore the amount consumed by two or three dozen in the year would be enormous.

“The principal matter of interest in the park of late has been the very marked activity displayed by Ngauruhoe.”

FEATURES OF SPECIAL INTEREST.

Mr. T. A. Blyth, of Ohakune, has furnished some interesting notes in regard to the Crater Lake and the discovery of some springs near the source of the Mangaturuturu Stream:—

Crater Lake.—“The Crater Lake is now quite cold on the surface. The loss of temperature may be due to the increasing activity of Ngauruhoe. From observations made it is evident that

the water in the lake has been gradually cooling since January, 1922—the time of its maximum temperature during the past decade.”

Springs near Source of Mangaturuturu Stream.—“The valley of the Mangaturuturu Stream—the most extensive and interesting valley in the park—is becoming more popular. This valley can be reached in one and a half hours from the Ohakune Hut. It is reported that hot springs have been discovered near the source of this stream. It is stated that there are two sets of springs, one with a slimy red deposit, and the other has a sulphur deposit and unpleasant smell. They are situated below the Mangaturuturu Glacier (summer limit), close to the most northerly branch of the stream. I have not had a chance to visit them, but will do so during my spring holidays.”

ERUPTION OF NGAURUHOE.

The first activity in connection with the recent eruptions at Ngauruhoe was marked about the 9th December, 1925, and, although the main disturbance did not occur within the year 1925–26, it is essential that some record of the event should be given with this report as a matter of particular interest. The article appearing in the Appendix has been taken (with the kind permission of the proprietors) from the *New Zealand Free Lance* of the 12th May, 1926.

WINTER SPORTS, AND EXCURSIONS TO PARK.

The following notes furnished by the various clubs are of interest:—

Ruapehu Ski Club.—“Easter, 1925: Two parties, a large one from Wanganui and a smaller from Auckland, spent Easter week in the park. Conditions were not good for ski-ing, although after a heavy fall of snow towards the end of the period the Aucklanders, who were camping at Glacier Hut, had a little practice. Both parties made ascents of Ruapehu, and the larger party also made a trip to Mangatepopo and an ascent of Ngauruhoe.

“August, 1925: The club's winter sports were attended by about twenty-five members, eighteen of whom made an ascent of Ruapehu. Ski-ing conditions were unfortunately not good, there being much less snow than the previous year, and, although the experts of the party were able to practise, the conditions proved unsuitable for the novices. On this account it was deemed inadvisable to hold the sports. It is worthy of remark that a few days after the party had left there were 2½ ft. of snow at Whakapapa.

“Christmas, 1925: A small party of Auckland members spent three weeks in the park, staying at Whakapapa, Glacier Hut, Waihohehu, Ketetahi, and Mangatepopo. The provision of the new recreation-hall was much appreciated from a social point of view. Excellent ski-ing was obtained within twenty minutes' climb of Glacier Hut, and in fact a small patch was available for practice purposes within 100 yards of the hut.”

Tararua Tramping Club.—“During August, 1925, a party of thirty-four members from the Tararua Tramping Club visited the park for the winter sports. Weather conditions were not ideal, but the members made the most of their stay, and visited the majority of the places of interest within a day's journey of Whakapapa. Just prior to their departure conditions cleared sufficiently to enable the majority to make the ascent of Ruapehu to the Crater Lake, and, although the day was bitterly cold, the view from the top was magnificent. A fair amount of ski-ing, glissading, &c., was indulged in as opportunity offered, although the snow conditions were not so good as on previous visits to the park. With such a large party the congestion at meal-times was very noticeable, but now that the Park Board has erected the new dining and recreation hall future parties should be able to arrange their domestic affairs much more comfortably. The club wishes to express its thanks to Mr. A. J. Cowling, who attended to all their requirements during the party's visit.

“During the course of their stay the first motor-car to arrive at Whakapapa was driven in by Sir James Gunson, who was accompanied by Mr. Baildon, the Mayor of Auckland, and the Park Warden, Mr. Cullen.”

FINANCES.

A further subsidy of £500 was received during the year from the Wellington City Corporation, and the Government subsidy of £500 on this contribution was duly obtained. The sum of £1,000, appropriated on the Public Works Fund estimates to assist the Board in construction of the Bruce Road, was also received.

The Board has no permanent or secured source of revenue. As it has previously acknowledged, it was greatly indebted in past years to the Bruce Trustees for their generous vote from the funds of that trust. The votes of £1,000 each from the Wellington City Council and the Auckland City Council were of great value to the Board, for, together with the Bruce grant, they carried a Government subsidy of pound for pound. In that manner, with the assistance of timber royalties, which for the year under review totalled £1,560 15s. 10d., the funds of the Board have been chiefly provided. Considerably increased financial provision will have to be arranged if the further development (particularly by roading) of this magnificent National Park is to keep pace with the times, or if it is to be commensurate with the greatly increased number of visitors which may reasonably be expected with up-to-date hostel accommodation.

Attached are statements setting out the financial position of the Board, comprising Statement of Receipts and Payments, Revenue Account, Capital Account, and Balance-sheet.

APPENDIX.

ERUPTION OF NGAURUHOE.

(Copy of article as appearing in the *New Zealand Free Lance* of the 12th May, 1926.)

MR. JOHN CULLEN, I.S.O., the former Commissioner of Police for the Dominion, has for many years past taken a close interest in that most wonderful of all our travel regions, the Tongariro National Park. He is a member of the National Park Board and honorary Warden of the park. He has a cottage alongside the Waimarino-Tokaanu Road (by the way, Waimarino Railway-station is henceforth to be known officially as "National Park"), and he spends many months of each year in tramping about over that fascinating bit of country and in observing the volcanic phenomena of Ngauruhoe and Tongariro. There is, therefore, special value in his observations contained in the following narrative of the outburst of Ngauruhoe last month, which Mr Cullen has sent to Mr. James Cowan, who is just now completing the writing of a book on that region for the Tongariro National Park Board. Mr. Cullen's account is the most exact description yet written of an eruption in the Tongariro country:—

"A party of us arrived at my camp in the park, about half-way between Waimarino and Ngauruhoe Mountains, on the afternoon of the 14th April. Ngauruhoe was then sending up large bodies of steam from the craters on top, with intervals of quietness. On the night of the 17th the mountain, which was then obscured with clouds, started loud rumblings, with occasional explosions resembling the discharge of heavy guns.

"On Sunday morning (18th), about 6.30, several strong tremors were felt. The rumblings continued all Sunday. The clouds cleared for a short period in the afternoon, when dense black smoke issued from the crater, accompanied by reports. Heavy yellow vapour was lipping over the crater and rolling down the mountain to its base; this vapour was evidently too heavy to rise and float away with the black smoke.

"On the 20th and 21st these conditions continued, except that the view of the mountain was frequently obscured by clouds for long periods. On the 22nd and 23rd activity increased, judging by the sounds.

"On Saturday, the 24th, we were camped on the Tongariro River, due east of Ngauruhoe, when the clouds cleared, giving us a very clear view of the mountain. The whole eastern and north-eastern sides of the cone were covered from top to base with a grey deposit. We could see great bodies of black matter being shot high up from that part of the crater nearest to Tongariro. After each shot reached its fullest height it drifted away slowly, like a black cloud, in a south-easterly direction. Three to four of these black clouds could be seen drifting away one after the other. Steam and vapour ceased to issue from the crater as soon as the shot cleared it. The steam again appeared just before the next shot, and ceased after it. Sometimes the shots were at ten minutes intervals; sometimes hours intervened.

"No fire could be seen during daylight, but on Saturday night (the 24th), the mountain being then clear, every shot that went up gave a great display of fireworks. A smelting-furnace or foundry as seen at night is a good representation in miniature of Ngauruhoe's after-dark discharges. Everything would appear quiet in the crater; then a small puff of steam would rise about the rim of the volcano; next a great body of fiery matter would be hurled high into the heavens, to spread out and fall over and roll down the mountain-sides. Most of the ejecta fell towards the east and south-east, what little wind there was being from the north-west.

"Sunday was just a repetition of the phenomena just described. Some of the shots at night were great fiery displays. One shot in particular sent a large mass of fiery ejecta very high into the sky, far higher than any of the others I have seen; it fell on the south-east side of the mountain. I timed the shots as they just issued from the crater till the sound of the explosion reached us. It took just one minute exactly. We must therefore have been between ten and eleven miles away in a direct line due east from the mountain.

"On Monday, the 26th, the mountain was obscured with clouds, and continued so till I left Waimarino on the 30th, but occasional explosions were heard on the Monday and Tuesday.

"The Red Crater on Tongariro was sending up a great column of black smoke all the time Ngauruhoe was most active, and the Te Mari and Ketetahi, the other active vents (north side of the range), were steaming very strongly. Te Mari sent out occasionally large quantities of yellow or grey steam.

"As there was bright moonlight and a clear sky on the Saturday and Sunday nights we had a splendid view of Ngauruhoe's display. Some of the shots were so powerful that when the sound of them reached us we were struck by a gust of wind, which showed that there must have been great atmospheric disturbance about the mountain-top. We could see no signs of activity on Ruapehu."

To Mr. Cullen's narrative it may be added that the ejecta from the volcano were evidently confined to ash, mud, and stones; most probably the ash and stones, in a greatly heated state, produced the fiery effect described. Careless observers of the mountain some years ago described the stuff ejected as "lava." This, of course, was not correct; molten lava has not been thrown out of Ngauruhoe within modern times.

It is rather remarkable—more than a mere coincidence—that this outbreak of Ngauruhoe should have synchronized exactly with the tremendous eruption of Kilauea Volcano, in Hawaii, the greatest lava-crater in the world. The New Zealand volcanoes and those of the western part of the Friendly Islands and Kilauea are all on the great “line of fault”—or, say, fissure in the earth’s crust—all the way across the Pacific. The vulcanologist whom the New Zealand Government is appointing to keep a watch on our smoking mountains will fill a useful place in linking up with Hawaii scientific observations in this highly important field. The watch is needful, even if such blowing-off of steam as Ngauruhoe has given us is harmless. We never know what may happen yet!

ACCOUNTS.

TONGARIRO NATIONAL PARK BOARD.

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL, 1925, TO 31ST MARCH, 1926.

[illegible]

REVENUE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH, 1926.

<i>Dr.</i>	£	s.	d.	<i>Cr.</i>	£	s.	d.
To Caretaker's salary	270	0	0	By Park fees	306	8	6
Depreciation Account	147	1	4	Government grants and subsidies ..	270	0	0
Expenses of Board meetings	23	10	4	Recovery of park fees previously written			
Fuel	38	0	0	off as irrecoverable		1	7
Horse-feed, shoeing	30	17	2	Sale of maps		0	3
Insurance on huts and dining-hall ..	17	16	8	Interest—			
Maintenance of buildings	36	1	0	Post Office Savings-bank .. 52	5	11	
Miscellaneous expenditure		0	19	Government debentures .. 97	9	7	
Maintenance of telephone		0	7				149 15 6
Postages, telegrams, &c.		11	18				
Printing and stationery		21	7				
Secretary's honorarium		53	4				
Travelling-expenses		31	3				
Treasurer's honorarium		12	0				
Unserviceable and lost equipment written							
off		20	19				
Balance transferred to Capital Account		12	8				
	£727	14	0		£727	14	0

CAPITAL ACCOUNT AND BALANCE-SHEET AS AT THE 31ST MARCH, 1926.

Capital Account.

—	Expenditure to 31st March, 1925.	Expenditure during Year.	Total.	—	Receipts to 31st March, 1925.	Receipts during Year.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Bruce Road	1,491 11 8	2,667 6 4	4,158 18 0	Trustees, Bruce Estate	1,150 0 0	..	1,150 0 0
Ohakune Track improve- ments	264 13 6	50 0 0	314 13 6	Subsidies from local bodies	1,500 0 0	500 0 0	2,000 0 0
Telephone-line construc- tion	250 9 8	..	250 9 8	Government grants and subsidies	2,500 0 0	1,500 0 0	4,000 0 0
Tracks, drains, &c. ..	31 15 3	69 3 0	100 18 3	Miscellaneous receipts	135 8 6	2 3 0	137 11 6
Park buildings	773 2 4	339 8 10	1,112 11 2				
Park equipment	274 15 8	118 17 6	393 13 2				
Surveys .. ..	..	139 19 11	139 19 11				
	3,086 8 1	3,384 15 7	6,471 3 8		5,285 8 6	2,002 3 0	7,287 11 6
Balance carried down	..	..	816 7 10				
			£7,287 11 6				£7,287 11 6

Balance-sheet.

Capital Account—	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
Balance, 1st April, 1925 ..	6,425 10 11		Park buildings taken over from Tourist Department	1,005 0 0
Balance brought down ..	816 7 10		Park equipment taken over from Tourist Depart- ment	18 5 0
Revenue Account—Balance ..	12 8 10	7,254 7 7	Erua milling-timber	3,269 19 2
Depreciation Reserve .. ..	..	270 14 1	Horse	5 0 0
Sundry creditors .. ..	..	442 18 9	Maps	0 16 0
			Sundry debtors	31 4 8
				£ s. d.
			Cash in transit, 31st March, 1926..	21 5 0
			Cash in Bank of New Zealand ..	111 7 4
			Cash in Post Office Savings-bank ..	3,505 3 3
				3,637 15 7
		£7,968 0 5		£7,968 0 5

NOTE.—The buildings are on Crown land, the control and management of which is vested in the Board.

J. B. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Tongariro National Park Board.

H. P. SECKER,
Treasurer, Tongariro National Park Board.

I hereby certify that the Revenue Account, Capital Account, and Balance-sheet have been duly examined and compared with the relative books and documents submitted for audit and correctly state the position as disclosed thereby. The asset "Erua milling timber, £3,269," is overstated, but the actual value is not at present determined.—G. F. C. CAMPBELL, Controller and Auditor-General.

The asset referred to by the Controller and Auditor-General in his certificate was not overstated when the Balance-sheet was prepared and laid before the Board.—H. P. SECKER, Treasurer, Tongariro National Park Board.

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Price 6d.

1951-1952

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1. The first of these is the fact that the Government has not been able to secure the necessary funds to carry out its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries. This is due to the fact that the Government has not been able to secure the necessary funds to carry out its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries.

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