

Leadership and Business

(Leadership at the Edge®)

**A Summary of a Presentation Given by
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and
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Organizational Psychologists LLC**

**International Strategic Leadership
Conference**

18-21 April 1999

The "Heroic Era" of Antarctic Exploration

The Race to the South Pole

- ❑ **Scott's *Discovery* Expedition (1901-1904)**
 - Lt. Ernest Shackleton's first voyage to Antarctica
 - Scott, Shackleton and Wilson dog-team and then man-haul to within 417 nm of South Pole
- ❑ **Shackleton's *Nimrod* Expedition (1907-1909)**
 - First ascent of Mt. Erebus - 13,370 ft
 - First to reach Southern Magnetic Pole
 - Shackleton, Wild and two others man-haul to within 97 nm of geographic South Pole
- ❑ **Roald Amundsen of Norway (1910-1912)**
 - Amundsen reaches Pole by dog-team on 14 Dec 1911
- ❑ **Scott's Last Expedition (1910-1912)**
 - Scott reaches Pole by man-hauling on 18 Jan 1912
 - Scott and team of three perish during return to ship
- ❑ **Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition (1914-1917)**

Sir Ernest Shackleton

- ❑ Born: 15 Feb 1874 in Ireland he potato famine
- ❑ Educated by Governess and attended Prep School
- ❑ Signed-on a sailing ship in 1890 age 16
- ❑ Certified as Master 1898 Age 24
- ❑ Scott Expedition in 1901
- ❑ Led Expeditions in 1907-1909 and 1914-1917
- ❑ Died: 5 Jan 1922 at 47

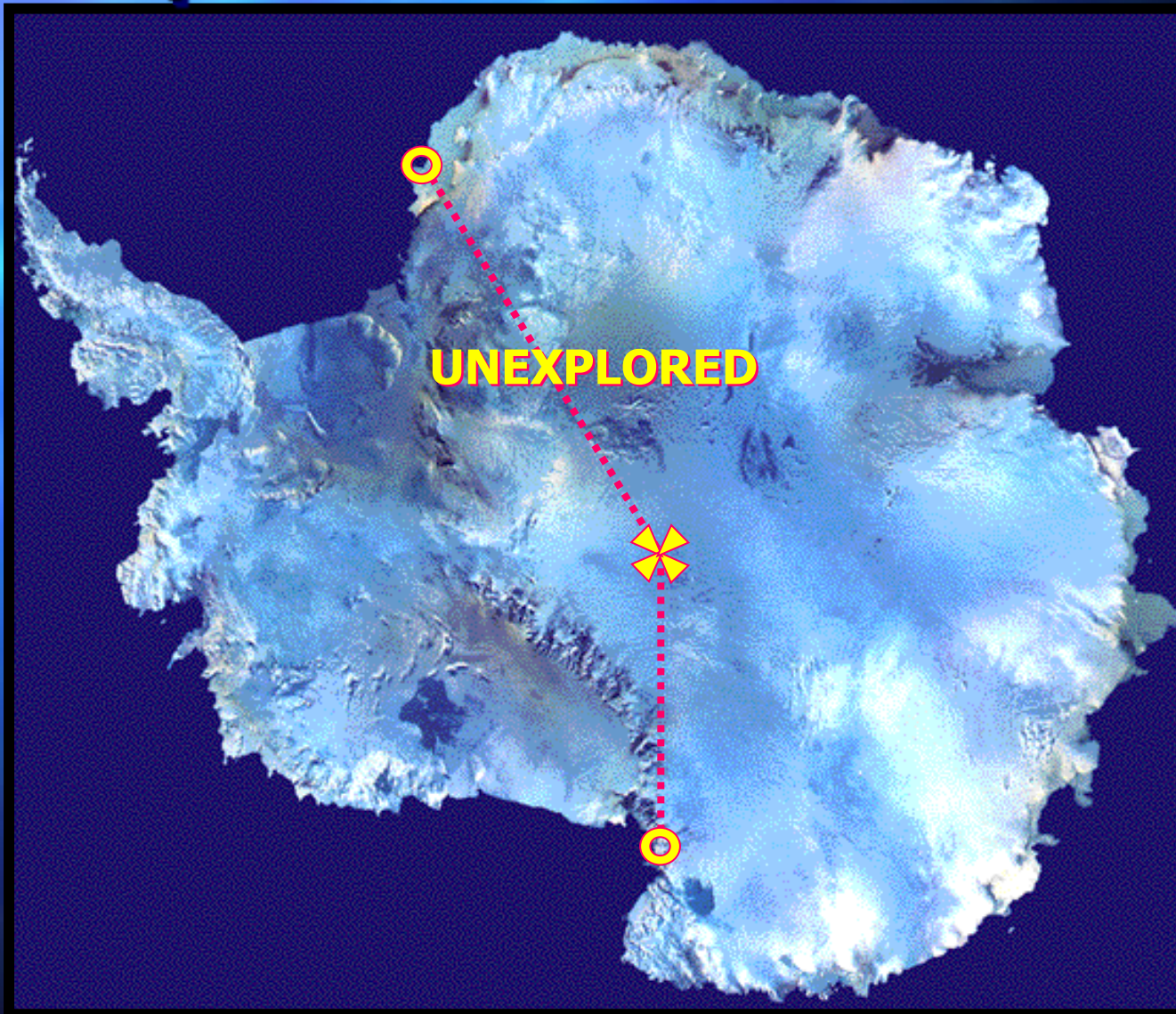


The Mission

“After the conquest of the South Pole by Amundsen . . . by a narrow margin of days . . . there remained but one great main object of Antarctic journeyings . . .”

“The first crossing of the Antarctic continent, from sea to sea via the Pole . . . a journey of great scientific importance . . . roughly 1800 miles . . .”

The Proposed Route . . .



... compared to North America



The Challenge

“Men Wanted for Hazardous Journey. Small wages, bitter cold, long months of complete darkness, constant danger, safe return doubtful. Honour and recognition in case of success.”

Decision Point #1

Situation:

You have received 5,000 requests to join as a result of your advertisement.

Decision to be made:

What characteristics do you want in the men you select for the Expedition?

Members of the Expedition

Ernest Shackleton	“The Boss”	G. Marston	Artist
Frank Wild	Second-in-Command	F. Hurley	Photographer
Frank Worsley	Captain of <i>Endurance</i>	T. Orde-Lees	Motor Expert
H. Hudson	Navigating Officer	W. McNeish	Carpenter
L. Greenstreet	First Officer	T. Green	Cook
T. Crean	Second Officer	A. Blackborrow	Steward
A. Cheetham	Third Officer	J. Vincent	AB
L. Rickenson	Chief Engineer	T. Macarty	AB
A. Kerr	Second Engineer	A. How	AB
J. A. McIlroy	Surgeon	A. Bakewell	AB
A. H. Macklin	Surgeon	T. McLeod	AB
R. S. Clark	Scientist	H. Stephenson	Fireman
L. D. A. Hussey	Scientist	A. Holness	Fireman
J. M. Wordie	Scientist		
R. W. James	Scientist		
		Total: 28 Men	





HMS Endurance

- ❑ Barquentine with a coal-fired steam boiler and single propeller
- ❑ Constructed in Norway of pine, oak and greenheart
- ❑ Displacement: 350 tons
- ❑ Speed: 9-10 kts



SOUTH
GEORGIA

ELEPHANT
ISLAND

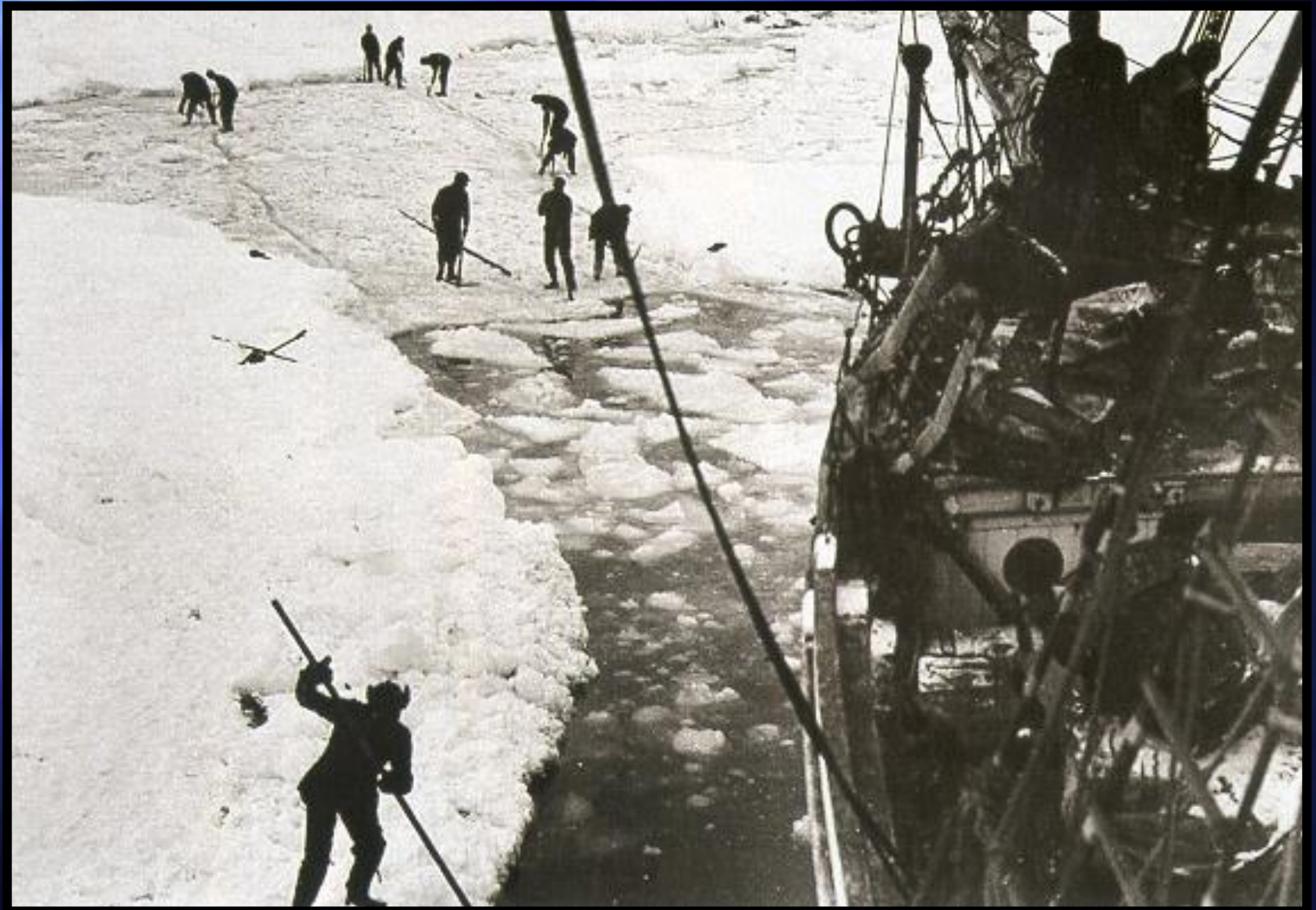
Ship departs
5 December 1914

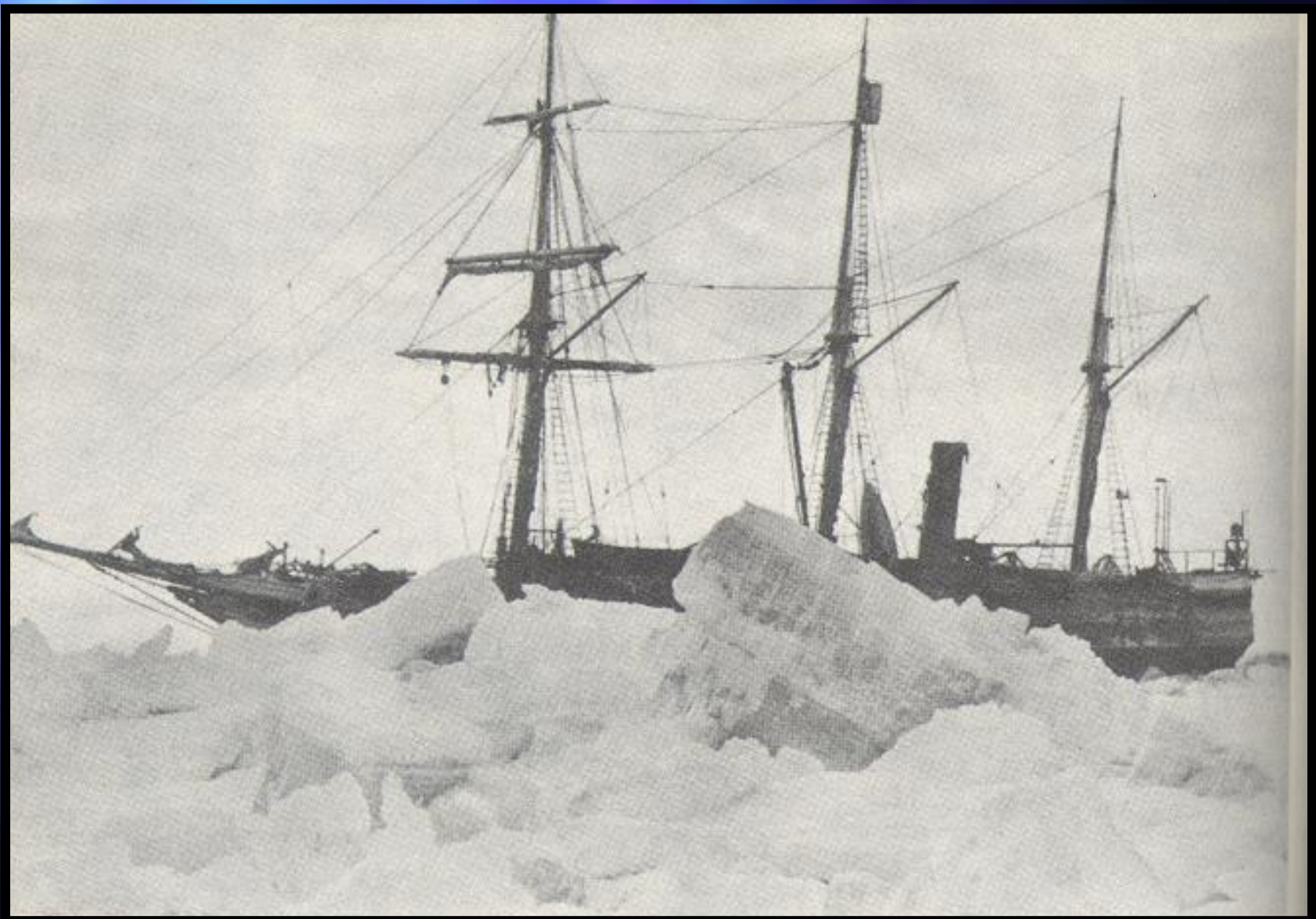
ICE
SHELF

A N T A R C T I C A











Decision Point #2

Situation:

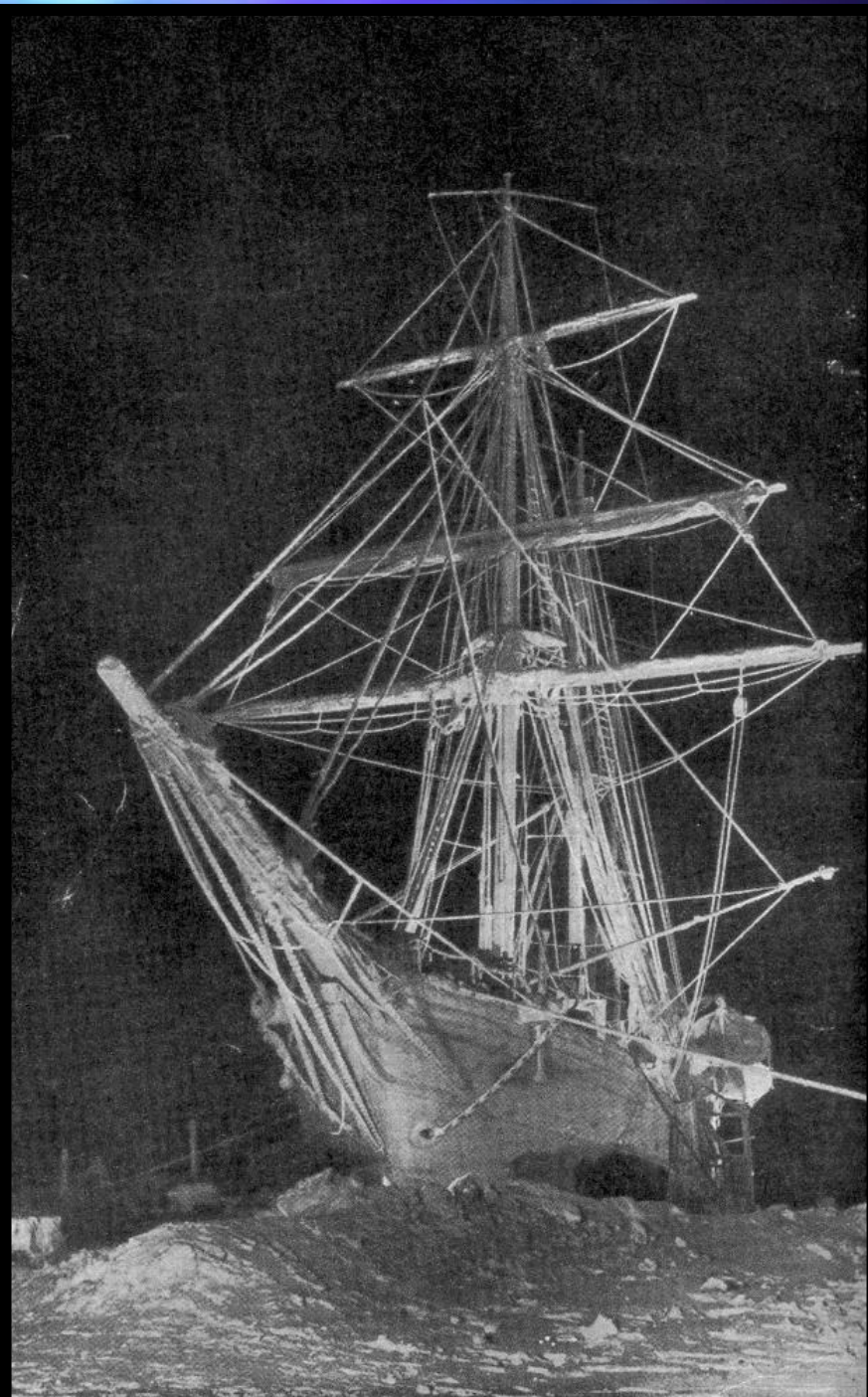
The *Endurance* is beset by ice.

Alternatives:

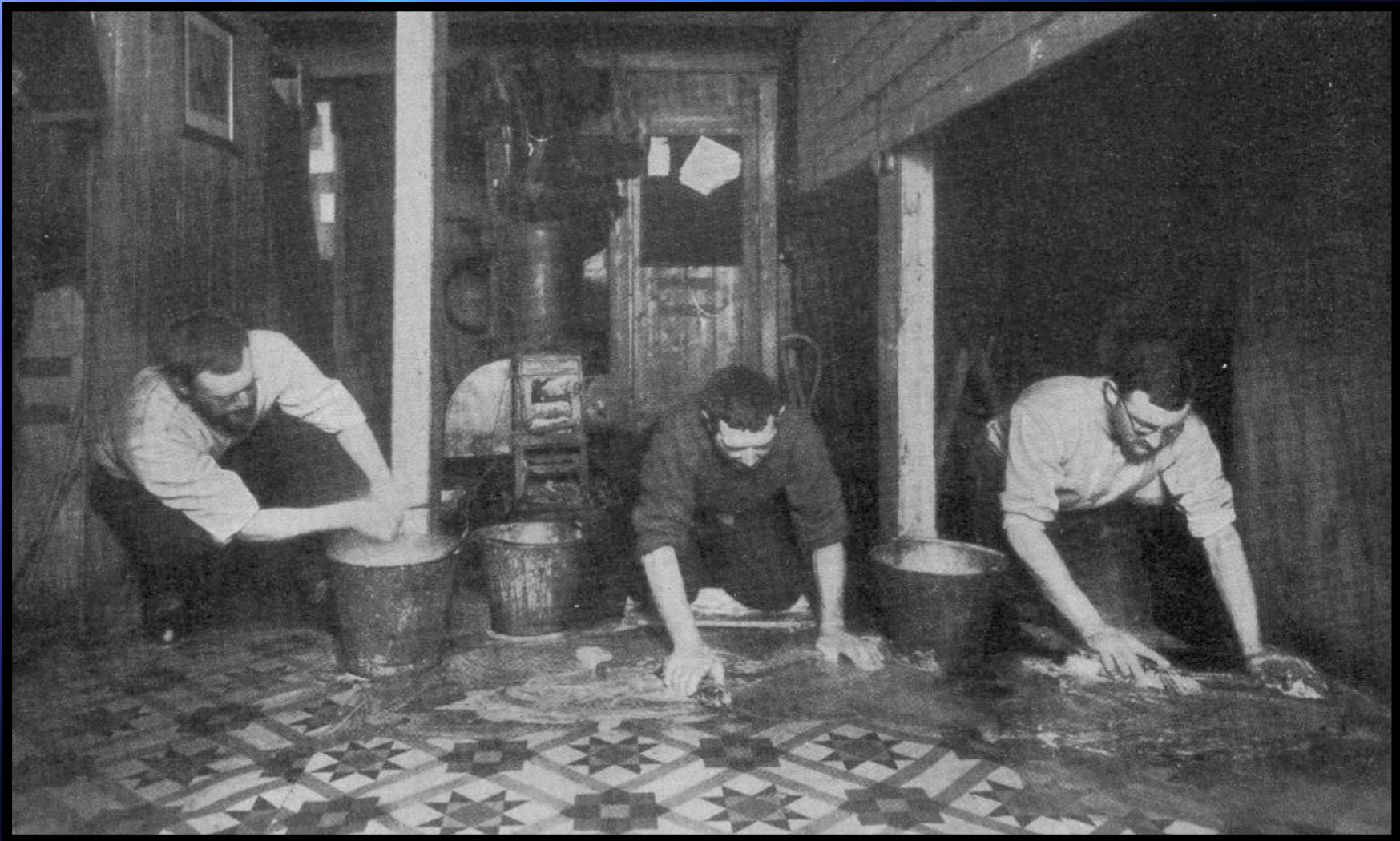
- 1) Remain on-board the *Endurance*.
- 2) Sledge required equipment and all men but the crew to the continent.

Decision to be made:

Which alternative would you select?





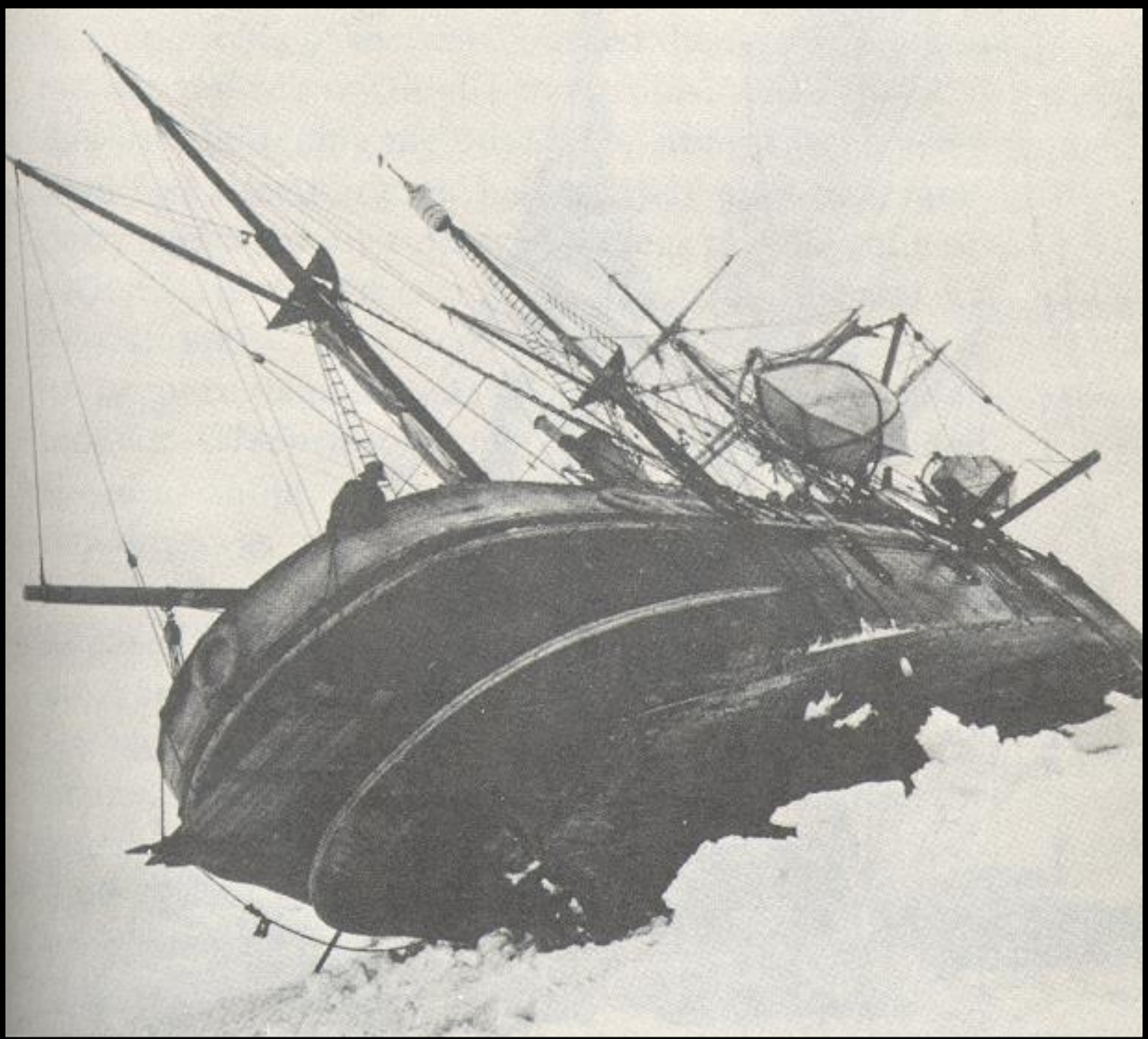
















Decision Point #3

Situation:

The *Endurance* is being crushed by the ice.

Alternatives:

- 1) Man-haul lifeboats/supplies to continent.
- 2) Camp on the ice and wait for the Spring breakup.

Decision to be made:

Which alternative would you select?





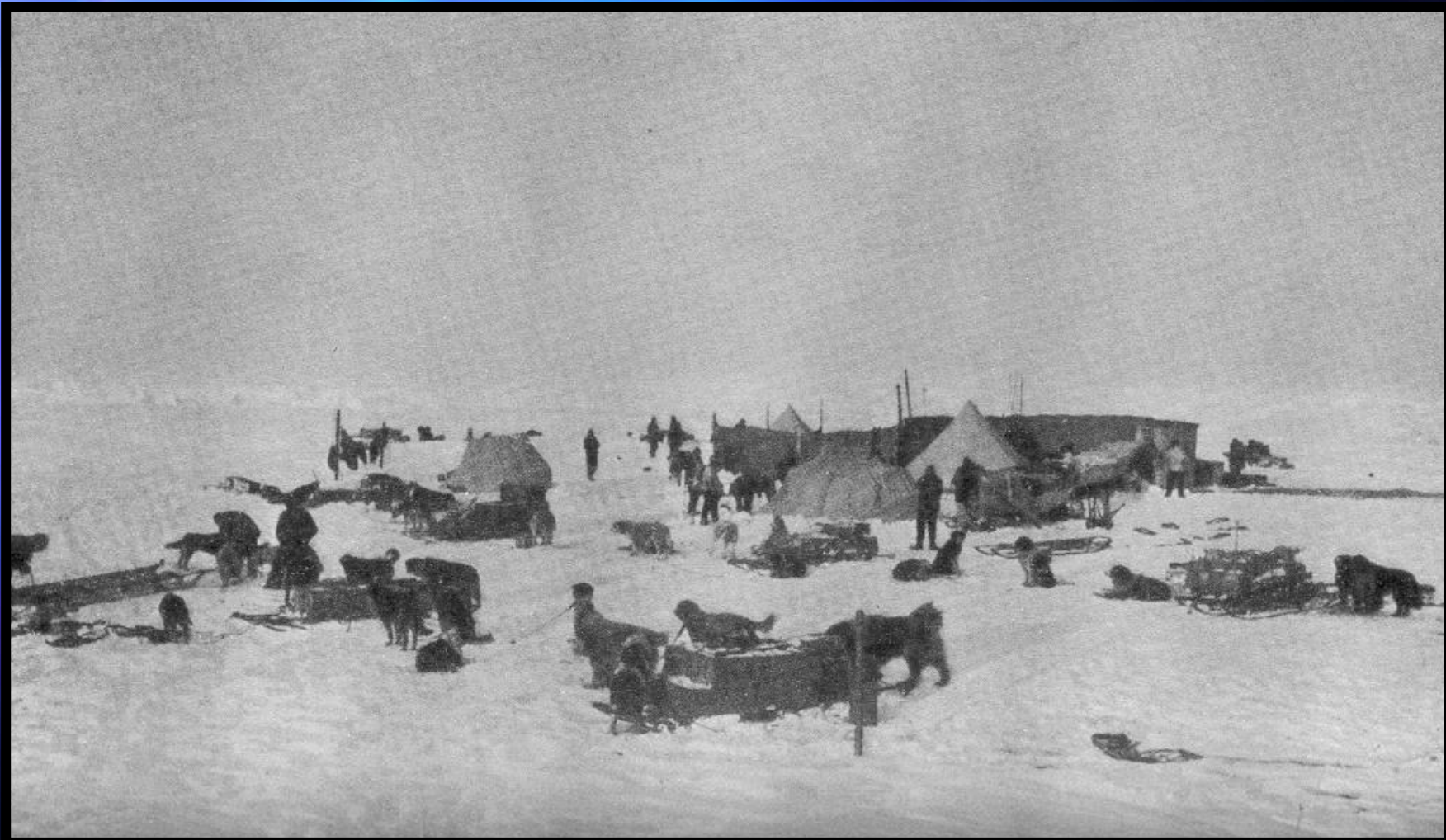
Decision Point #4

Situation:

One member of the Expedition states he is no longer under the obligation of his contract and refuses to take further orders.

Decision to be made:

What would you do and why?



Decision Point #5

Situation:

The ice flow's shrinkage forces you to take to the boats.

Alternatives:

- 1) The Deception Island station (220 nm)
- 2) Clarence or Elephant Island (50 nm)

Decision to be made:

What is your destination?





Decision Point #6

Situation:

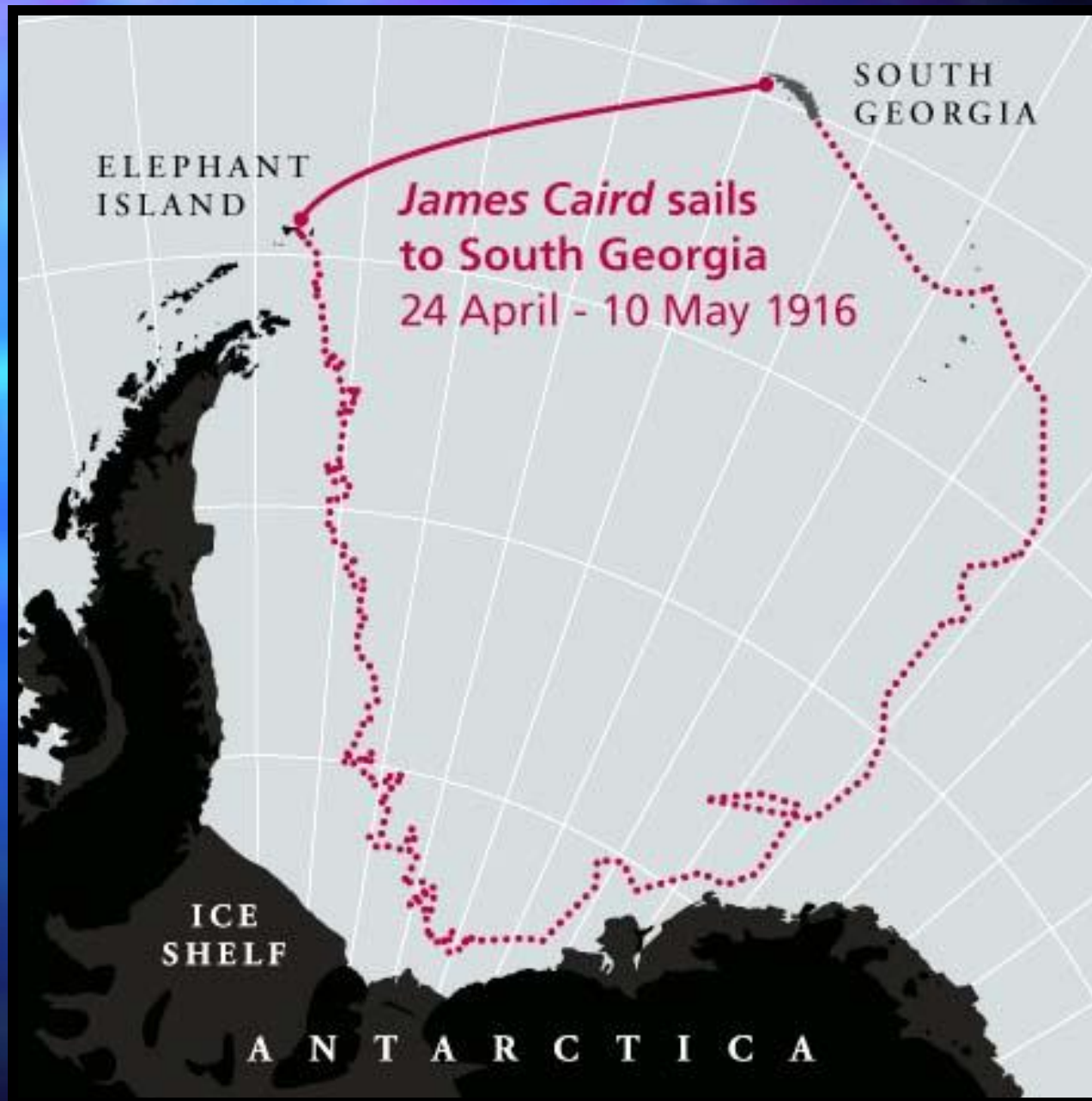
You must sail from Elephant Island in a 22 ½ foot boat to seek rescue.

Alternatives:

- 1) Cape Horn shipping lanes (400 nm)
- 2) Falkland Islands (540 nm)
- 3) South Georgia Island (800 nm)

Decision to be made:

What is your destination?



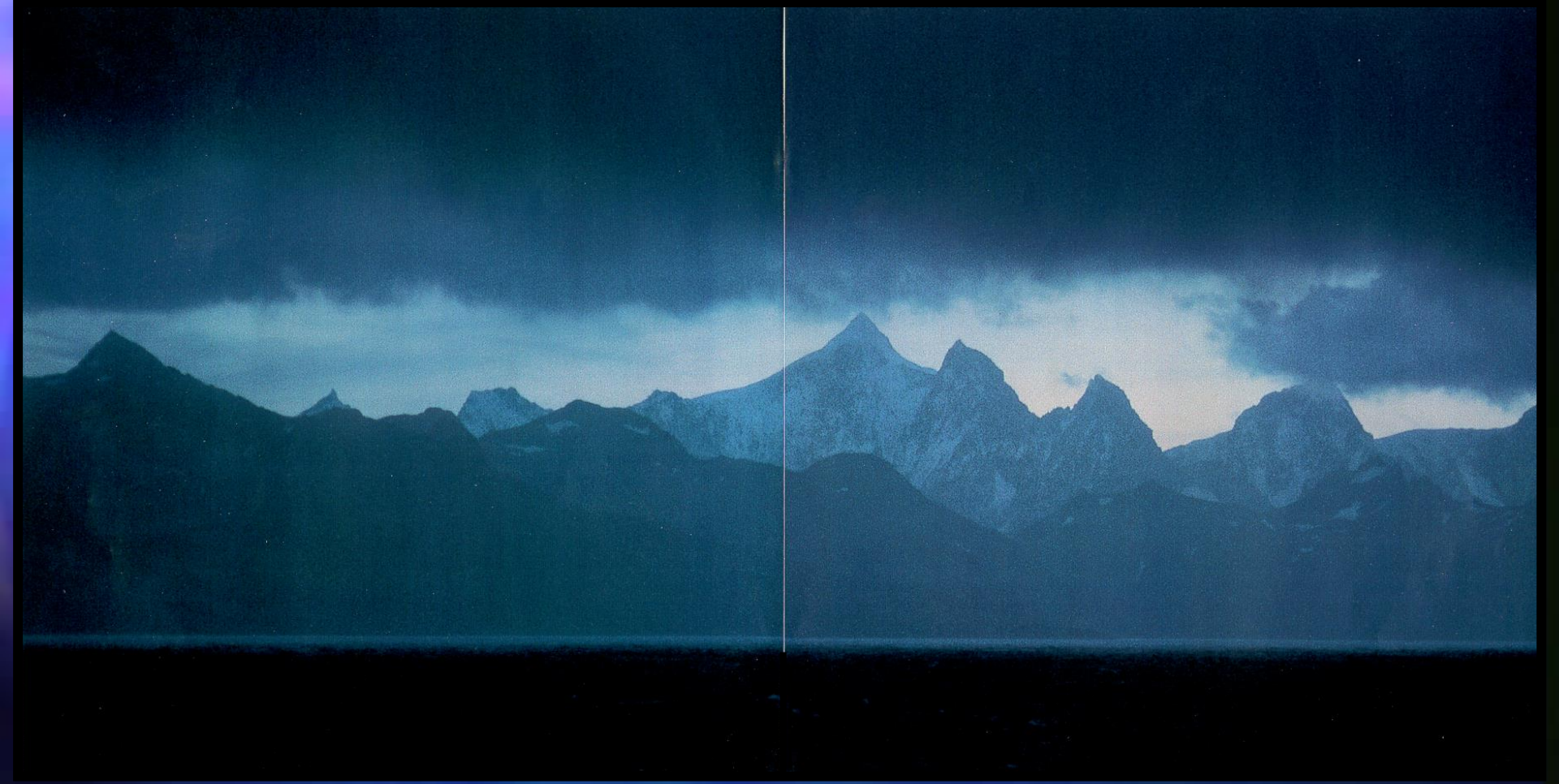














Decision Point #7

Situation:

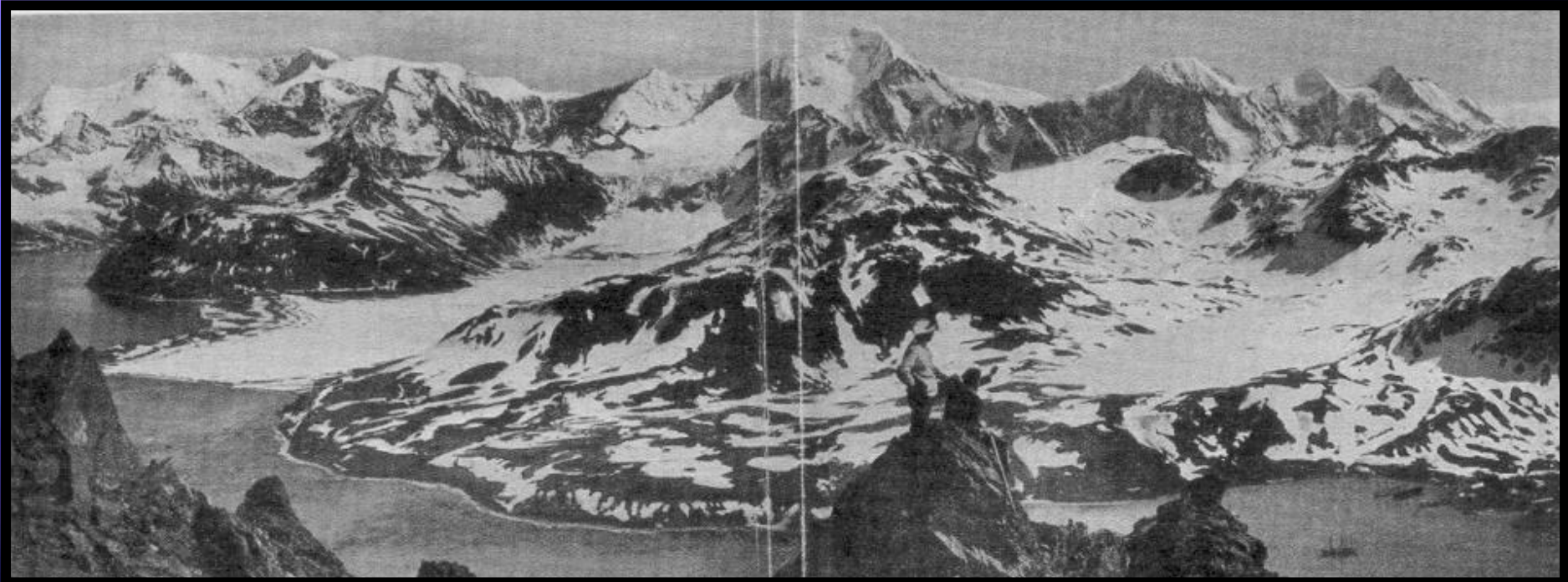
You are trapped on a mountaintop with a freezing fog setting-in for the night.

Alternatives:

- 1) Dig a windbreak in the snow, light the Primus, and endure the night.
- 2) Attempt to descend the glacier's precipice in the dark.

Decision to be made:

Which alternative would you select?







The Rescue

- ❑ Shackleton made four attempts to reach Elephant Island, and only the last possible one was successful, on Argentine tug *Yelcho*
- ❑ The 22 stranded men were on the island for 105 days, and had only two days of food left

Final Details

- ❑ Duration of the *Endurance* Expedition: 634 Days, from 5 Dec 1914 - 30 Aug 1916
- ❑ Shackleton never lost a man on any of the Expeditions he led

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- ❑ Lesson 1 - Never lose sight of the ultimate goal, but focus anxiety and fear on short-term objectives
 - Activities: Physical conditioning / Dog Sled racing
Hunting seals meeting objectives – Elephant Island
 - Find outlets for anxiety through short term activities

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- Lesson 2 - Set a personal example with visible, dramatic symbols and behaviors
 - Threw a handful of gold sovereigns along with a gold cigarette lighter into the snow when they left the ice and headed for Elephant Island
 - Tore a single page from the Bible given to him by the Queen Mother placed the rest of the book on the snow next to the gold
 - As a leader you are being watched – if everyone else is taking cuts so do you; avoid extravagance

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- ❑ Lesson 3 - Instill optimism and self-confidence, and stay grounded in reality.
- Although their food supply was dwindling Shackleton ordered that seal hunting would stop for it would signify delay in their escape
- Finding the right balance between optimism and realism is a key leadership task; particularly so under adversity

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- ▣ **Lesson 4 - Take care of yourself: maintain your stamina and let go of guilt.**
 - At times Shackleton would brood over what had happened feeling himself responsible; this brooding drained his energy and diminished his effectiveness
 - Effective leaders must avoid blaming themselves and others, learn from errors, conserve energy so that they are prepared for the next challenge

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- Lesson 5 - Reinforce the team message constantly: "We are one--we live or die together."

On the open boat journey to the interim refuge Of Elephant Island, Shackleton endeavored to maintain contact between the three boats and was eventually able to assemble the party at a single point

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- ❑ Lesson 6 - Minimize status difference and insist on respect, courtesy and caring.

Shackleton was called "the Boss" by team members, a term that communicated both their affection and respect. But he was never physically aloof, and never used his position to avoid sharing the hardships of the journey.

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- Lesson 7 - Master conflict: deal with anger in small doses, embrace dissidents and avoid needless power struggles.
- Shackleton deliberately assigned one “troublemaker” to his own tent so that he might listen to his complaints and boost his ego.
- Although it is tempting to keep problem individuals at a distance, the strategy of embracing dissidents is the course to take under adversity.

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

□ Lesson 8 - Find something to celebrate.

- When Shackleton cast his gold into the snow, he ordered one expedition member to take along his zither banjo to provide music for the team.
- Maintain morale under conditions that seem to grim for celebration.

Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

▣ Lesson 9 - Be willing to take THE BIG RISK.

- Creating a toboggan from their 50 feet of rope, sliding 2,000 feet down an uncharted mountain into the darkness
- Willingness to take the “Big Risk” is a hallmark of a successful leader

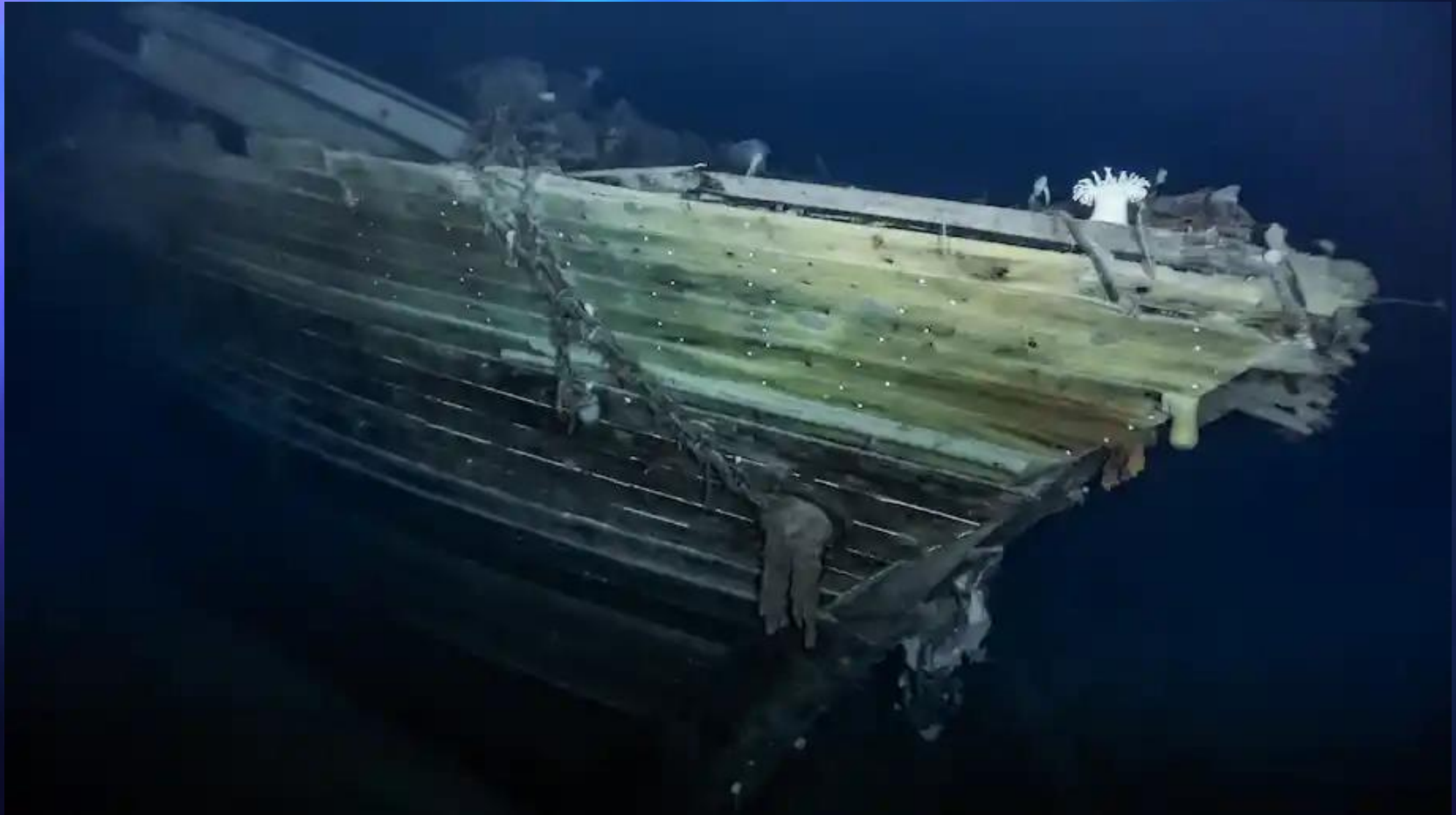
Business Lessons from the Shackleton Expedition

- Lesson 10 - Never give up: there's *always* another move.
- The qualities of hope and creativity that enabled Shackleton and the Imperial Trans-Arctic Expedition to survive are essential ingredients in any successful attempt to overcome adversity.
- Courage provides the energy to search for solutions, and creativity makes it possible to see answer when none seem to exist.

Circa March 2022: The vessel was found about four miles south of its last logged position coordinates which were found in Worsley's diary: $68^{\circ}39' 30''\text{S}$, $52^{\circ}26'30''\text{W}$



Endurance is found Circa 2022: The 1959 Antarctic Treaty declared the site of the Endurance a historic monument



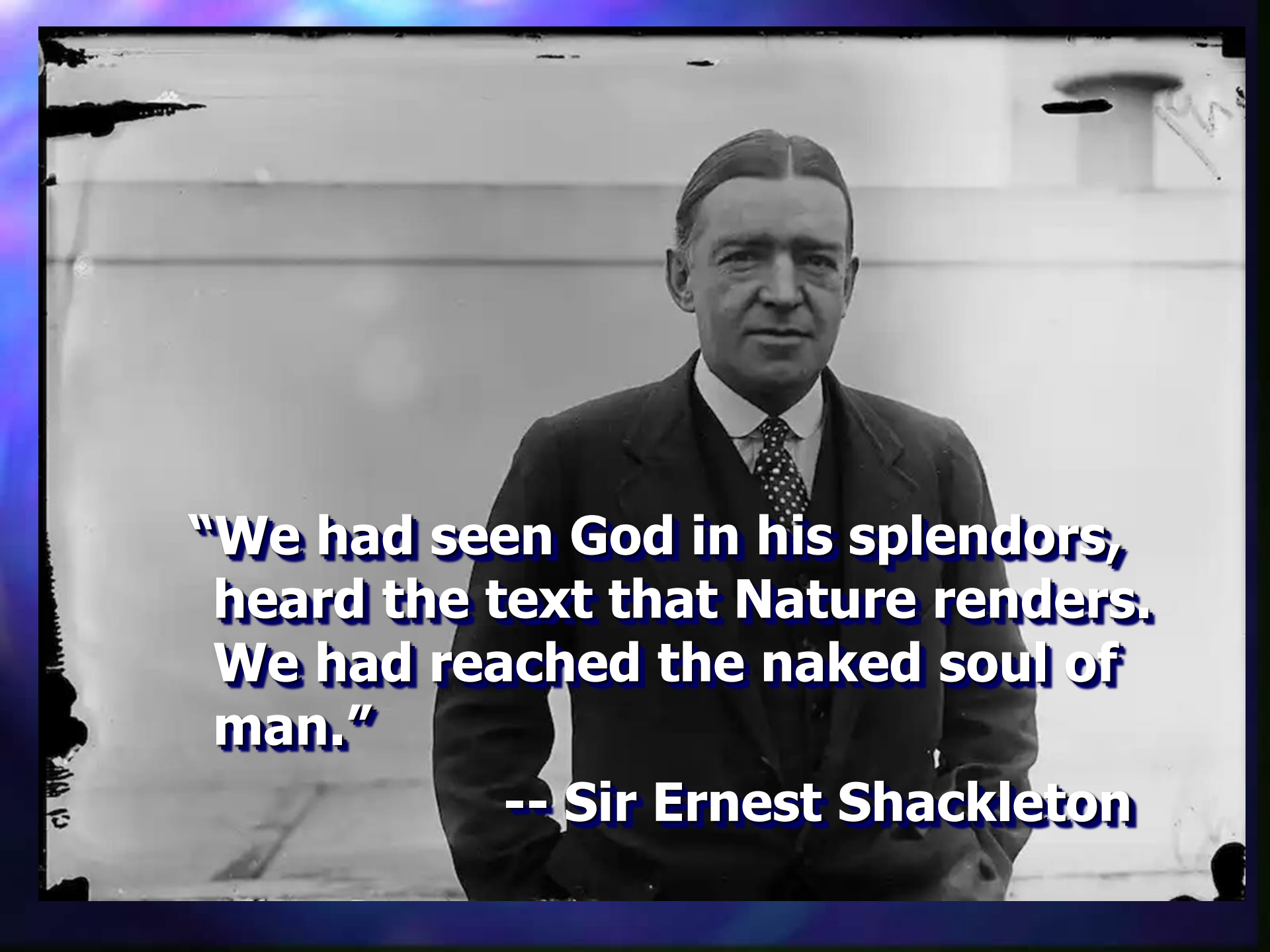
Conclusion

“The greatest leader that ever came on God’s earth, bar none.”

- Sir Edmund Hillary



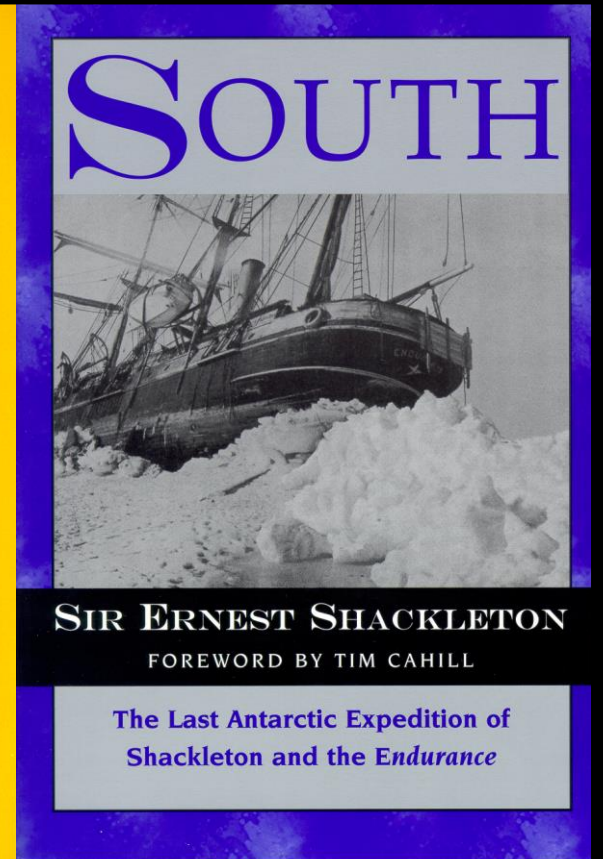
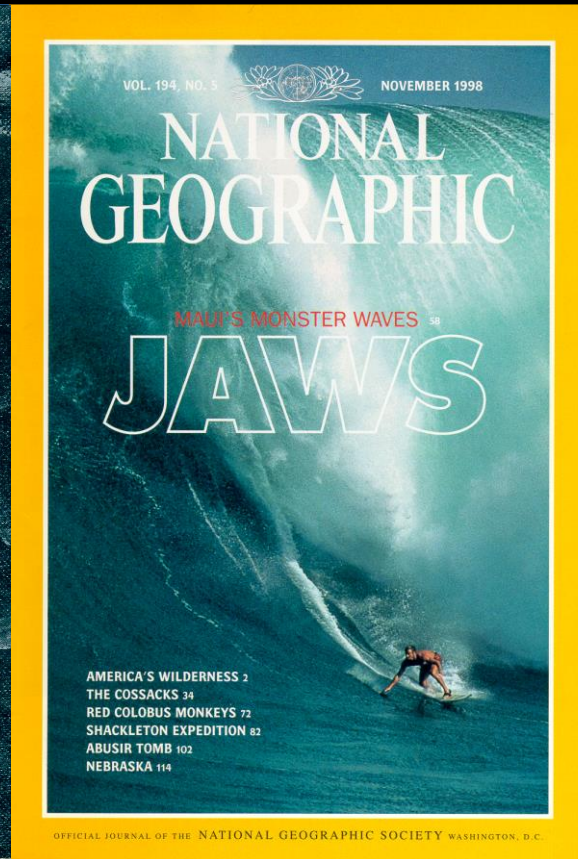
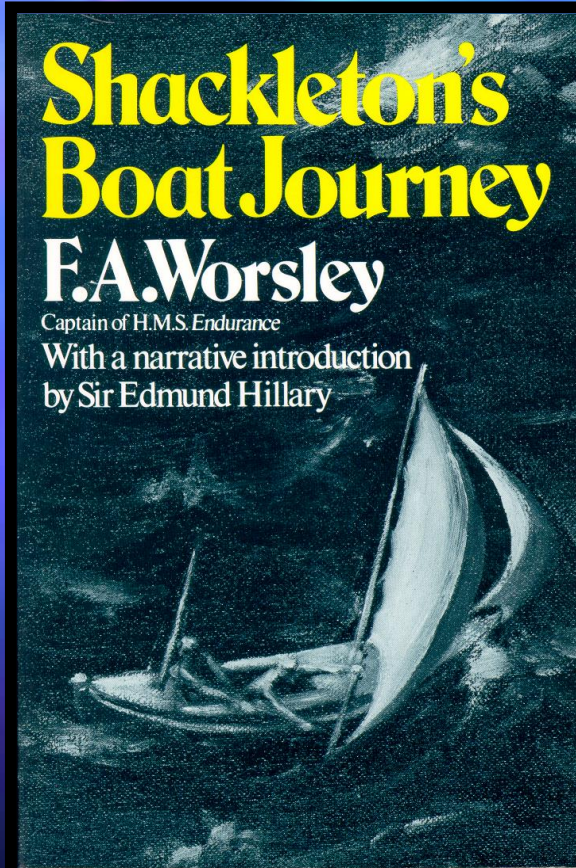
The first to summit Mt.
Everest May 29th, 1953

A black and white portrait of Sir Ernest Shackleton, a man with a serious expression, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and patterned tie. He is standing in front of a light-colored, possibly metallic, background. The image has a dark blue border.

**"We had seen God in his splendors,
heard the text that Nature renders.
We had reached the naked soul of
man."**

-- Sir Ernest Shackleton

Suggested Readings



NOVEMBER 1998

“Leadership at the Edge®”
and

<http://www.south-pole.com/p0000097.htm>