



□ **PROFESSOR ZUBOV**, with her paintwork showing evidence of a number of months spent in Antarctica, arrives in Cape Town en route to Russia

# Russian fleets bring new business to port

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A NUMBER of various ship divisions of CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) have since earlier this year become regular callers at the Port of Cape Town, bringing much valued new business.

Not only has the port benefitted by calls of these vessels, but supporting industries have built up good business relationships, and indications are that this new area of maritime business will increase.

With a number of Russian deep-sea trawlers now using Cape Town as their base port, being the nearest harbour to the fishing grounds, substantial amounts of their fishmeal cargoes are passing through the harbour.

The repair yards were quick to seize the opportunity by of-

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tenance and repairs while in port, and the prompt and efficient service persuaded the Russians to commence dry-docking their vessels here. What began as a trial exercise has developed into a staple business and local yards deserve praise for succeeding in proving their competency in developing this most welcome business.

At the repair quay this week are four CIS deep-sea trawlers, some which have been dry-docked. Besides undertaking repairs they have been doing a considerable amount of sprucing up, including painting of the vessels.

Fish factory mother ships which spend several months at sea off the Falklands, give their crew a few days break when calling at the Cape on their homeward voyages.

Russia has registered a number of vessels under foreign flags as Cyprus, but these vessels are still Russian crewed and a number make use of the port's bunkering facilities.

With Besta Line now well established on the South African route, their regular calls bring continual business to the port and chandlers.

An increasing number of Russian scientific vessels are also making use of the port's facilities when voyaging to and from Antarctica and an official announcement is expected soon with regard to Cape Town becoming a major hop-off base port for vessels travelling to and from the ice.

The coming cruise season will see calls by five Russian cruise liners to Cape Town. About 2 500 passengers and 1 000 crew will be spending hundreds of thousands of rands

in the city while the vessels are stocked up with supplies and take on bunkers. KAPITAN KHLEBNIKOV will take on sufficient supplies to last for 31 days for her passengers and crew when she sails on her cruise to Antarctica on Monday.

A number of Russian reefers loaded export fruit cargoes at Durban this year and it is likely next year Cape Town will see visits by these types of Russian vessels.

Russia has a large amount of deep sea tugs and several of them have called at the harbour during the year, some towing former US naval ships to scrap yards.

Two years ago it was a rare sight to see Russian vessels at the Cape, but now with doors opening in both countries, the port and maritime industries of Cape Town will earn millions of rands this year from this newly acquired business.