

Chapter 7163

The usually laid-back, nine-to-five officials at Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) were unusually working overtime today.

In a fully enclosed meeting room,

They were intensely discussing the fleeting liquid level signal from the icebreaker.

The person who discovered the problem reported,

"I personally believe this is extremely serious."

"These people have been hiding something from us in Antarctica,"

"Doing something we don't know what,"

"And they're using all Japanese research equipment,"

"Yet they're not carrying out any exploration mission officially issued by Japan."

"I have reason to suspect they've committed treason!"

The MEXT official was deeply troubled.

Although he knew the situation was serious,

As the person in charge, he tried to downplay the seriousness, fearing the consequences for his leadership.

Nobody wanted such a serious systemic problem to occur under their jurisdiction.

If it were reported, how would he report it?

How would he present his performance?

He might even be removed from his post.

So he tried to speak in a gentle tone, saying,

"Mr. Watanabe, please don't get too agitated."

"We have no other evidence to prove that our Antarctic expedition team has betrayed us."

"Besides, the signal you mentioned only appeared for a moment."

"What if it was a false alarm?"

"Impossible, absolutely impossible!"

The reporter immediately exclaimed.

"The liquid level signal isn't a high-precision device."

"Nor is it a micro-control device."

"Its existence is to provide redundancy for all electronic systems."

"So, the fact that it showed that height data proves the float must have reached that height."

"Unless someone jumped in, grabbed the float,"

"And rapidly sank before instantly letting go,"

"Such data fluctuations are impossible."

The second-in-command asked him,

"You said there's a difference of 1,300 tons."

"Does that mean they've used that much fuel behind our backs?"

"Yes!"

The reporter explained,

"Their previous fuel consumption curve was very linear, slow, and reasonable."

"After all, the icebreaker was frozen solid,"

"So they wouldn't start the main engine, only the generator set."

"The fuel consumption rate couldn't possibly be fast unless there was a fuel leak."

The person in charge said,

"Well, maybe it is a fuel leak!"

To him, a fuel leak would be an embarrassing problem, but far easier to explain and survive politically than outright defection by the team.

Even if the icebreaker exploded and was totaled,

It was still far better than a complete defection.

After all, no research team in history had ever committed such a colossal act of defection.

If it were to get out, it would become international news.

The second-in-command, wanting to amplify the matter, said seriously,

"Over a thousand tons of fuel consumption,"

"If they really kept it from us, it proves they are definitely carrying out a large-scale operation."

"We still don't know what they are doing."

"What if they are carrying out some kind of terrorist activity?"

"What if they are massacring research team members from other countries in Antarctica?"

"If this gets out, our country will lose all face!"

Everyone immediately expressed their strong agreement.

The area is frozen over now, and people generally can't get in.

What if these people really go crazy and cause trouble up there?

Besides, everyone knows that in such a serious matter,

The person directly in charge will bear primary responsibility,

And the top leader's secondary responsibility.

Therefore, everyone hopes an investigation can be launched as soon as possible to prevent the situation from escalating.

Otherwise, everyone might lose their jobs.

The person in charge was also somewhat overwhelmed.

He asked everyone, "Think about it."

"Under what circumstances could dozens of research teams from different groups, units, and companies simultaneously betray their country?"

Even with eight brains, he couldn't figure it out.

This was a group of research team members,

And they weren't even from the same team.

Some were from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology,

While others were brought in from other research institutions.

After all, all research institutions nationwide, and even some companies, would seek help from the MEXT to rent research stations,

Or buy quotas if they needed Antarctic research.