

Despite the compromise between Canada and the United States on the question of command the Newfoundland Commission of Government, with United Kingdom support, continued to press for a unified command in Newfoundland under a Canadian officer—evidently preferring to treat with one Canadian military authority rather than with four or five separate military commands (Canadian Army, Air and Navy; U.S. Army and Navy).³² The Canadian authorities passed on to their American colleagues the Newfoundland proposal, but they could hardly advocate a unified command under a Canadian officer, having previously opposed in principle a unified command under an American officer. Nothing came of the proposal.

One important development, however, was the organization of separate national unified commands by both Canada and the United States. This doubtless improved co-ordination within national services. It also simplified the problems of co-ordination between national services, even if at times relations between national commanding officers were somewhat strained.

The Atlantic Ferry

After the military collapse in Europe in 1940 the United Kingdom was desperately short of aircraft of all types. Britain had a large aircraft industry but far from sufficient to supply its needs in full. For the balance it was heavily dependent on United States industry. New types of bombers and other planes were beginning to roll off production lines in giant new industries in the Western and Pacific states, but the problem of getting them quickly and in adequate numbers to Britain remained to be solved. Average delivery time by sea from factory to combat readiness in Britain was about three months. Moreover, shipping by sea required much precious cargo space and losses by submarines had to be accepted.

In July 1940 the British Ministry of Aircraft Production approached the Canadian Pacific Railway with the proposal that it organize a system of delivering long-range planes to Britain by air from Canada. The system worked out provided that civilian crews should fly planes direct from the U.S. factories to Montreal, where other civilian crews would take them over and fly them to Britain with a refuelling stop at Gander for land planes and at Botwood or Bermuda for seaplanes. Only the longer-range land planes such as bombers could as yet fly the Atlantic, and Gander to Britain was just within comfortable range. In mid-1941, the British Government took over the privately operated system, and the United States developed its own system which, until the completion of Goose, also mainly used Gander. Other ferrying routes were developed later, notably one across the Caribbean, Brazil and West Africa, after the landing of the Allies in North Africa, and a northern route via Goose Bay, Greenland and Iceland for short-range planes including fighters. But the Gander route (Montreal-Gander-Prestwick)—supplemented by the Goose Bay route in the latter half of the war—was the principal ferry route for bombers and other long-range planes.

³² See Chapter I, Part 5, Section c and Stacey, *C.P. op. cit.* p. 364.