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On the other hand, Soviet naval and air bases on the Kurile Islands might well be considered by Canada and the United States as potential springboards for launching an attack on the North American continent.

4. Should Canada become interested in establishing an international air route to the Far East, running by way of Edmonton, Alaska and the Aleutian Islands, it would be helpful if we could obtain emergency landing rights at any air fields in the Kurile Islands. If the U.S.S.R. annexes these islands outright it would be necessary for Canada to negotiate on a bilateral basis for landing rights in this group of islands. However, if the U.S.S.R. were to secure control of these islands on a trusteeship basis similar to that which the United States has established for the former Japanese Pacific mandated islands, it would be possible for Canada to claim landing rights for its civil aircraft on these islands similar to those accorded Russian civil aircraft. A concession of this kind would probably be meaningless for some years to come as the U.S.S.R. would probably not be operating civil air lines in the Kurile Islands, but rather military aircraft. However, from the point of view of long-run Canadian civil aviation interests there would be a value in having these islands given a trusteeship status rather than being annexed outright by the Soviet Union.

5. In view of the promises given at Yalta by the United States and the United Kingdom to support Soviet claims to the Kurile Islands, Soviet control of this group must be accepted as a fait accompli. If, however, it appears possible at the Peace Conference to modify this position it would be in the Canadian interest to support a Japanese claim to the retention of the two most southern islands in the Archipelago, as these would give ingress and egress to and from the Sea of Okhotsk. It would also be in the Canadian interest to press for Soviet control over these islands to be in the form of a trusteeship, even if a strategic area trusteeship, rather than outright annexation.

F. 1. Loochoo Islands (Ryukyu or Liuchow):
These islands extend across the entrance to the East China Sea, between Japan and Formosa, and are of considerable strategic importance. Japan assumed the suzerainty of these islands in 1879 from China.

2. In determining the future status of the Loochoo Archipelago the pre-war legal status or historical claims of various powers to these territories should be considered secondary to their removal from Japanese