

*Torbay*

An airfield adjacent to St. John's made sense from the standpoint of defence and convenience of defence forces and the civilian population. Newfoundland was unable to participate financially, except to provide any crown lands needed, but it had no objection to the Canadian Government purchasing privately-owned lands as required. The new base became operable before the end of 1941. One restriction imposed by the Newfoundland Government was that Torbay should not be used during or after the war for civil aviation except as approved by the Newfoundland Government. Another restriction understood, if not spelled out, was that title would not be passed to any other Government without the consent of Newfoundland. The Americans with their headquarters base adjacent to the airfield would no doubt have readily taken it over if it had been available. They were, however, permitted free use of the base and facilities for military purposes. The question of post-war use—whether for defence or for civil aviation—was for the time being left open.

From the first Torbay proved to be an important asset in the Battle of the Atlantic since it substantially increased the distance over which air cover could be provided to passing convoys; it also afforded an additional bad weather alternate for both Canadian and American military aircraft.

*The Ogdensburg Declaration: the PJBD*

Until World War II was imminent Canada and the United States had formulated their respective defence policies in complete isolation from one another. Just before the second war the Prime Minister, when on a visit to the White House, had a brief informal talk on defence among other topics with Roosevelt, and with the consent of both governments there were some exchanges of views between defence officials. But there was no established procedure for consultation between the two governments at the political level or for the exchange of views or information between their defence advisers. When war came even the informal personal contacts between Roosevelt and King ceased for the time being, one difficulty being that the United States was still neutral, and as yet hoped to remain so, whereas Canada had joined in the war almost at the outset. Each government was therefore careful to avoid any appearance of alliance or military understanding with the other.

The military collapse in the summer of 1940, however, rudely awakened both governments to their common danger. Canada, as we have seen, quickly moved to the defence of Newfoundland, but American policy was far from clear for several weeks. In the uncertainty the Prime Minister agreed to staff talks between Canadian and American defence officials and, while the proposal was not acceptable in Washington for a time, the talks took place. Ultimately President Roosevelt personally telephoned Prime Minister King, suggesting that they meet in the Presidential railway car at Ogdensburg, New York, the following week-end when the President hoped to be in the vicinity. There, in an evening and morning discussion, the two leaders