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*Le sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures au haut commissaire
de Grande-Bretagne*

*Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs to High Commissioner
of Great Britain*

Ottawa, April 16, 1940

URGENT. SECRET

Dear Sir Gerald,

May I make further reference to your letter dated the 26th March, 1940, addressed to the Prime Minister on the subject of the defence of Bell Island in Conception Bay.

In my letter of the 10th April of this year, I referred to the Military as distinct from the Air Force aspects of the questions.

It is now possible to discuss the arrangements with regard to the Air Force.

It will be satisfactory that the necessary discussions should take place in St. John's, Newfoundland.

To this end, arrangements will be made for an officer from Eastern Air Command to proceed to St. John's, at a date convenient to the parties concerned, and I would be glad if the Newfoundland authorities could be so informed and requested to arrange this matter direct with the Air Officer Commanding, Eastern Air Command, Halifax, N.S.

It would be appreciated if the Newfoundland authorities could be informed also, that it is still the intention of the Canadian Government to proceed with the development of an air base at Red Bay, Labrador, the use of which location has met with their approval already, and to operate from that point if sufficient aircraft are available.

Any other air defence of Newfoundland will of necessity be contingent upon the situation as a whole, and will have to take the form of the despatch of a detachment from a squadron located in Nova Scotia, if and when required, to operate temporarily from Botwood, the use of which airport has also been approved by the Newfoundland Government.

Should necessity arise and the situation in Canada permit, the Canadian Government is prepared to undertake the despatch of an Air Force detachment to Botwood, Newfoundland, for temporary duty. The Air Force officer proceeding to St. John's will be instructed to inform the Commission of Government of Newfoundland that their Government will be asked to provide