

The Hamilton Spectator 1940 – thoughts on Gander

(by Robert G Pelley 2017-01-22)

In early 1940, it was still not clear what the new airport in middle of Newfoundland was supposed to be called. In this article from the Hamilton Spectator of 30 April 1940, a vague “Newfoundland Airport” was defined more or less in relation to other geographic positions such as Gander Lake, Botwood or St John’s.

Using Newfoundland Airport for aircraft crossing the Atlantic would be inaugurated “only if an urgent need arises for more planes or if the convoy system is endangered by enemy action and vessels now carrying bomber are threatened”.

**ASSERT BOMBERS
COULD MAKE HOP
IN URGENT NEED**

**United States Aircraft
For Allies Capable
of Long Jaunt**

NOTHING DEFINITE

Ottawa, April 30. — (CP)—Some bombers made in the United States and Canada probably will be flown across the Atlantic from Newfoundland to the United Kingdom if the allies require rapid delivery of the planes.

A British embassy official in Washington said Monday that a project for flying bombers over the Atlantic has been under study for some time and an authoritative source here indicated Monday that some Canadian military officials are aware of the plan.

The ocean hops will be inaugurated, it is understood, only if an urgent need arises for more planes or if the convoy system is endangered by enemy action and vessels now carrying bombers are threatened.

But all angles of the plan to ferry the huge aircraft over 2,000 miles of ocean are being considered to enable flights to start as soon as any demand arises for speedy delivery of planes.

Easy For Bombers

Modern fighter aircraft could not make such long flights but the new bombers being turned out for the allies on this continent could make the hop without much difficulty, an air expert here said.

"If commercial planes can do it on regular schedule, there is not much question about our new bombers being equally as efficient for such long-range flights," he added.

It is presumed here that the Newfoundland base for the bomber flights would be Newfoundland airport on Gander lake, 50 miles from Botwood, where the trans-Atlantic flying boats stopped last summer, and 125 miles northwest of St. Johns.

This vast airport is one of the largest in the world and was developed during peacetime as a possible terminal for a trans-Atlantic service by stratosphere land planes. Gangs of labourers worked on it during the summer and it is believed to be well advanced towards completion.

The runways are much longer than the usual airports and are also very wide. A modern weather station has been built at the field.
