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THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN 1939 to 1945

by Fred J. Hatch

Thesis presented to the Department of History of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was prepared under the supervision of Professor Sydney F. Wise, Director of History of the Canadian Armed Forces Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario.

The writer is also indebted to Dr. C. P. Stacey of the University of Toronto and former Director of History of the Canadian Armed Forces Headquarters who obtained authorization for him to have free access to material in the Directorate of History. Thanks are also due to the members of the Directorate staff for their continued interest and help.

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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Fred J. Hatch was born in Brant Alberta on 22 May 1915. He received the Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Alberta in 1942 and the Master of Arts degree in History from the University of British Columbia in 1955. The title of his thesis was The British Columbia Colonial Police 1858 to 1871.

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INTRODUCTION

Canada's air contribution in the Second World War presents a phenomenon in military policy because at the beginning of hostilities the Canadian Government, in what appears very much like a step backward into colonialism, signed an agreement which placed Canadian aircrew at the disposal of the United Kingdom with very few strings attached. Since the days of Joseph Chamberlain, the great British imperialist, Canadian statesmen of both major political parties, had stoutly resisted all British suggestions hinting at centralized imperial military organizations and had proclaimed that co-operation between the armed forces of Canada and those of Great Britain depended on Canadian autonomy in military matters. The only exception to this attitude was in the First World War when Canadian airmen served as individuals in the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service, the forerunners of the Royal Air Force which emerged in April 1918 when these two services were amalgamated. But Canadians had served in the British Air Forces instead of their own because Canada, in 1914, had no air organization whatsoever, either military or civil, and the Government had understandably decided to leave military aviation to the more experienced British. Before the war was over Canadians at home and in the theatres of war were expressing dissatisfaction with this arrangement. Canadian flyers, though they found the British Government to

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be generous in recognizing and rewarding meritorious service, learned that there was no place for them in the closely knit authoritative ranks at the British Air Ministry. They also resented the reluctance of the British to recognize that Canadians wished to serve together in the air as they did on land. Sir Edward Kemp, the Canadian Minister for Overseas Forces, strongly recommended the formation of Canadian air force units but little was accomplished along this line until the war was at an end.

By the time the Second World War began Canada not only had an air force of its own but it had made great strides forward in civil aviation. Moreover, between the wars, Prime Minister King had continued to stress Canadian autonomy within the Commonwealth structure. In view of the experience of Canadian airmen in the First World War, the progress made in Canadian aviation and the nationalist note continuously sounded by King it might have been expected that in the Second World War Canadian flyers would have gone into battle in their own air force, under the direction of their own officers with the Canadian Government maintaining a strong controlling position. How surprising, therefore, to find that at the beginning of hostilities the Canadian Government agreed to pool its air resources with those of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom in a large air training programme, the British Common-

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wealth Air Training Plan, whose main objective was to provide recruits for the Royal Air Force.

Although it was foreseen in some quarters that the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan would result in Canada's air effort being swallowed up in the Royal Air Force as it was in the First World War, the Plan itself, which was based in Canada and administered through the Royal Canadian Air Force, brought renown to both Canada and the Canadian Air Force. Long before the war was over it was recognized as one of Canada's main military contributions.

Despite the general importance attributed to the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, and its unique position in Canadian military history, it has never been studied in depth. During the war it was the subject of many eulogistic reviews. Since the war a few articles have been written on certain aspects of it. It has also been mentioned in military writings and in memoirs and autobiographies of men who were closely associated with it. One of the most vivid contemporary sketches of the Plan is contained in Canada Fights by John W. Dafoe.[1] The first two volumes of the series Canada in World Affairs also present the British

1 John W. Dafoe, Canada Fights, Toronto, Saunders, 1941, p. 165 - 170.

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Commonwealth Air Training Plan as viewed by contemporary observers.[2] A popular war version covering the Plan during the first two years it was in operation was written by journalist Leslie Roberts.[3] Official British military histories generally pass over the Plan very lightly with a few flattering phrases. Two British civil histories, North American Supply by H. Duncan Hall and Financial Policy 1939 - 45 by R.S. Sayers are the best references for the economic aspects.[4] Australian and New Zealand historians have also dealt with the Plan in official histories of air operations in the Second World War. Some of the Australian views are interesting because Australians tended to view the Plan with mixed feelings. However, Australia did not have so much at stake in the Plan as Canada did and Australian writers have not had the opportunity of consulting enough of the principal primary sources to discuss the Air Training Plan in its fullness.[5]

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2 Robert MacGregor Dawson, Canada in World Affairs Two Years of War 1939 - 1941, London, Oxford University Press, 1943; Cecil Lingard and Reginald Trotter, Canada in World Affairs 1939 - 1941, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1943.

3 Leslie Roberts, Canada's War in the Air, Montreal, Beatty, 1942.

4 H. Duncan Hall, North American Supply, London, Longmans Green, 1955; R.S. Sayers, Financial Policy 1939 - 1945, London, Longmans, Green, 1956.

5 John Herington, Air War Against Germany and Italy 1939-1943, Canberra, the Advertiser Printing Office, 1954; Douglas Gillison, Royal Australian Air Force 1939 - 1942, Canberra, Griffin, 1962.

Although Canada, as the host country and the administrator of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, gained more acclaim from the Plan than any of the other participating countries Canadian writers have been the last on the scene in the post-war era. An exception was Terence Sheard who was closely associated with the development of the Plan and who wrote a sound background article on "The B.C.A.T.P. and Defence Policy" in the January 1947 issue of International Journal.[6] Of special interest in recent years has been the publication of three volumes of memoirs and autobiographies of some of the key figures involved in the origin and development of the Training Plan: The Mackenzie King Record by J.W. Pickersgill contains a most interesting chapter on the negotiation of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Agreement which was signed in Ottawa in December 1939.[7] The Memoirs of Chubby Power A Party Politician, edited by Norman Ward, describes some of the important aspects of the Plan as seen by C.G. Power who served as Canada's Minister

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6 Terence Sheard, "The B.C.A.T.P. and Defence Policy", in International Journal, vol. 2, Winter, 1946-47, p. 37 - 46.

7 J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, vol. 1, (1939 - 1944), Toronto, University of Toronto, 1960, p. 40 - 59.

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of National Defence for Air during the war.[8] Vincent Massey, the Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom from 1935 to 1946, has provided some pertinent information on the origin of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan in his Memoirs.[9] A volume by Dr. C. P. Stacey covering Canadian military policy from 1939 to 1945, to which the present writer contributed some material, delves more deeply into the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan and is presently in process of publication by the Queen's Printer.

An abundance of primary source material is now available through the facilities of the Public Archives of Canada and the Directorate of History of the Canadian Forces Headquarters. During the past two years the Archives has received several blocks of files previously held by National Defence Headquarters. These files cover the years from approximately 1919 to 1950 and deal with a great variety of military matters including the British Common - wealth Air Training Plan. They are included in Records Group (R. G.) 24 and are supplied with suitable finding aids and indexes.

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8 Norman Ward, Ed., The Memoirs of Chubby Power A Party Politician, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966.

9 Vincent Massey, What's Past is Prologue, The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, Toronto, Macmillan, 1963, p. 304 - 306.

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Although the work of indexing is still going forward the files are available for research. Another large volume of primary source material is held by the Directorate of History. This includes diaries of all the units of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, minutes of meetings of various bodies, files, miscellaneous records and reports.

The purpose of this thesis is to trace the origins of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, to examine the problems connected with its operation, to assess its military significance and to determine why Canada, quite unprepared for war in 1939, was able to put the Plan into operation with great despatch.

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CHAPTER 1

CANADIAN AVIATION 1909 - 1939

In the course of Commonwealth history the possibilities, problems and complexities of military co-operation by the member countries have nowhere been better demonstrated than in the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan. In this Plan, which lasted from 1939 to 1945, airmen from various parts of the Commonwealth, but mainly from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, and from the other allied nations as well, trained together on Canadian flying fields and went forth to battle imbued with a firm purpose and a strong bond of fellowship. The military significance of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan (hereafter referred to as the B.C.A.T.P.) has been epitomized in the words of F. D. Roosevelt, the thirty-second President of the United States, who, in May 1942, proclaimed Canada as, "the Aerodrome of Democracy, sending forth from her training fields thousands upon thousands of her young men, and those of the other United Nations, to fight in the cause of liberty over all the battlefields of this planetary war".[1] As Roosevelt's words suggest, Canada, as the administrator of the B.C.A.T.P. and the trustee of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand in its organization and direction, has been accorded the major share of credit for

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1 Canada, Department of National Defence, Ottawa Air Training Conference, Report of the Conference, Ottawa, King's Printer, May 1942, p. 13

the Plan's success. It has generally been regarded as Canada's major contribution to the war in the air and was so closely intertwined with Canada's own air effort that the two are almost inseparable. Nevertheless it must be kept in mind that the Plan was a Commonwealth undertaking and a product of Commonwealth unity. The other Commonwealth partners, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand contributed men and money to its development and had a voice in its organization and direction.

In Canadian history the B.C.A.T.P. stands out as an important episode in aviation as well as a military achievement. For this reason a study of the B.C.A.T.P. may best begin with a general survey of Canadian aviation in the prewar years. Civil forms of flying must be reviewed as well as the military for both were involved in the development of the B.C.A.T.P.

To begin with, it should be pointed out that the B.C.A.T.P. was not the first occasion on which Canada served as an air training centre. In 1917 the United Kingdom, with the consent and co-operation of the Canadian Government, organized a similar but much smaller training scheme which was centered in the Toronto area. A training headquarters was located in the city and four main flying fields were

established in the surrounding region.[2] In this small complex approximately 4500 pilots, most of them Canadians but also including some Americans and British subjects living in the United States, were trained for air operations in the First World War.[3] Although this earlier training scheme had some bearing on the later and much larger B.C.A.T.P. it was not the source of it. Nor is it necessary to delve into the history of the first in order to understand the second. It is sufficient to say that the first plan was an important source of pilots for the British air services in the last year and a half of the First World War and a boon to Canadian aviation generally. It was on too small a scale to make a great impression nationally or internationally and was lost sight of once the war was over. After the war annals had been written historians paid scant attention to it and politicians none. It was best remembered by officers at the British Air Ministry but the Canadian Government never considered it as a precedent for the training of Commonwealth pilots in Canada.

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2 Alan Sullivan, Aviation in Canada 1917 - 1918 Being a brief account of the work of the Royal Air Force Canada the Aviation Department of the Imperial Munitions Board and the Canadian Aeroplanes Limited, Toronto, Rous and Mann, 1919, p. 16 - 22.

3 Ibid, p. 58.

Canada lagged behind the rest of the western world in the early development of aviation. After the historic flights by J.A.D. McCurdy and Frederick (Casey) Baldwin at Baddeck, Nova Scotia in 1909 there were no important developments in flying in Canada until 1917 when air training was organized by the British Government.[4] But the intervening years were not completely barren for here and there Canadian aviation enthusiasts were building and flying, or trying to fly, their own aircraft. They were also enjoying air shows staged by American flyers and balloonists. In the larger centres, Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, private flying schools sprang up but most of them withered on the vine. Only one, located in Toronto and managed by McCurdy, survived for any length of time. On the Western Front, and in other theatres of war, Canadian flyers wrought deeds that won fame for themselves and reflected favourably on their native land, but they did so as members of the British air services, the Royal Flying Corps and the Royal Naval Air Service which were amalgamated in 1918 as the Royal Air Force (R.A.F.).

Not until the war was almost over did the Canadian Government take steps to form a distinctive Canadian air organization on the war front and this formation, which

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4 Borden Papers, Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 26, vol. 74, Borden to Gordon, 3 November, 1916. As Canada did not have personnel qualified to operate this plan Borden asked the British to take full responsibility for it.

consisted of a wing of two squadrons, was disbanded in England soon after the end of hostilities.[5]

At home, Toronto aviation enthusiasts advocated that Canada take over the training scheme from the British as the basis for a peace time service, but Borden felt that it was unwise to take such a step before the Government had fully considered what its post-war air force needs would be. Having no reason to continue the scheme the British brought it to a close soon after the Armistice was signed. In 1918 the Canadian Government had formed a small Royal Canadian Naval Air Service to patrol the Atlantic coastal area but this too was dissolved when the war ended.[6] Although an estimated 22,000[7] Canadians were engaged in military aviation, some in active theatres of war and some at home, Canada ended the war without any permanent air organization.

For a decade the Canadian Government had adopted a wait-and-see approach but in 1919 it became necessary to give direction to the interest that had been generated in aviation. The Dominion

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5 Canada, The Ministry, Overseas Military Forces in Canada, Report of the Ministry, Overseas Military Forces of Canada 1918, London, (no date), p. 349-353.

6 J.D.F. Kealy and E.C. Russell, A History of Canadian Naval Aviation, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, p. 1-10.

7 Air Historical Section, R.C.A.F. Logbook, A Chronological Outline of the Origin, Growth, and Achievement of the Royal Canadian Air Force, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1949, p. 10.

now seemed on the verge of exploiting the possibilities of transportation and travel presented by the aeroplane. A host of well trained pilots were waiting to take up flying as a career. Great Britain had made Canada a gift of $5,000,000 worth of war surplus aircraft, spare parts and miscellaneous items and offered to send over officers of the Royal Air Force to advise how this material could best be put to use.[8] At Camp Borden, about 200 miles north of Toronto, where the British had constructed their largest training field, there was a modern airport equipped with a long row of hangars, shops and other buildings. These too, had been turned over to the Canadian Government to do with as it pleased. As early as 1915 Dr. Charles Camsell, then a geologist with the Department of Mines, had proposed the use of flying boats for survey work in the Canadian north.[9] Fishermen, foresters and the Royal North-West Mounted Police were also considering the possibility of employing aeroplanes in their various lines of endeavour. Also, the Canadian Pacific Railway executives were thinking of having their charter extended to include the operation of aircraft.[10]

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8 Canada, the Air Board, Report of the Air Board for the Year 1922, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1923, p. 5.

9 Charles Camsell, Son of the North, Toronto, Ryerson, 1954, p. 229.

10 J.A. Wilson, "Aviation in Canada" in Department of Transport, Development of Aviation in Canada 1879 - 1948, Articles by J.A. Wilson, Ottawa, (no date), p. 9-19.

Required to take measures to channel the widespread interest in aviation the Government introduced the Air Board Act on 29 April in the first post-war session of Parliament, to provide for an Air Board to supervise "all matters connected with aviation".[11] The bill was rushed through its three readings and received Royal assent on 6 June, 1919.

Less than three weeks later, on 23 June, the Air Board came into being. The two most urgent tasks placed before its members were to draft regulations for the control of air traffic and to determine what form of government air service should be established. It was the latter responsibility which presented the Board with the more difficult problems. In their deliberations the Board members came to the conclusion that a permanent professional military air force would prove too costly for Canada to maintain. Basing their decision on the premise that in a country such as Canada, having a small population scattered over a large area, military and civil aviation should be developed hand in hand, they recommended that there should be formed a semi-military air organization which would have a double responsibility. In its civil role it would carry out flying assignments for various departments of government and on the military side

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11 Canada, Debates, House of Commons, Session 1919, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1919, vol. 2, p. 1937

would provide a refresher course in military flying for veteran pilots who wished to keep up their interest in this aspect of aviation.[12] Subsequently, on 18 February, 1920 the Canadian Air Force (C.A.F.) was approved and its administration entrusted to the Air Board. A few members of the C.A.F. served both as civil servants and air force officers. In the former role they flew on civil government air missions; in the latter they donned military uniforms and conducted a training programme at Camp Borden where members of the C.A.F. were offered a twenty-eight day refresher course in military aviation every two years.

Neither the C.A.F. nor the Air Board lasted for long. It was soon realized by all concerned that twenty-eight days training every two years was practically of no use whatsoever and in the spring of 1922 the first administration formed by Prime Minister W.L. Mackenzie King consigned the C.A.F. to the limbo of defunct Canadian air organizations. During its brief existence the C.A.F., working under the direction of the Air Board, had established a chain of land stations and seaplane bases from which flights were scheduled in the interest of various government departments. Its most memorable accomplishment was the first cross-Canada flight which

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12 The Air Board, Report of the Air Board for the Year 1920, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1921, p. 11

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was carried out in relays starting out from Halifax on 7 October, 1921, and terminating at Vancouver ten and one-half days later.[13]

Among the officers who served in the C.A.F. special mention must here be made of Wing Commander R. Leckie who in due time was to play a prominent role in the B.C.A.T.P. Leckie was one of those who had learned to fly at the school which McCurdy had established in Toronto in 1915. He then entered the Royal Naval Air Service of the United Kingdom and during the war was decorated three times for valour, winning the Distinguished Service Cross in 1916, the Distinguished Service Order in 1917 and the Bar to the Distinguished Service Cross in 1918. He was appointed to command the Canadian wing of two squadrons which was formed in Great Britain in 1918. At the request of the Canadian Government he was loaned to Canada as Director of flying operations with the Air Board and served in this capacity until the C.A.F. was disbanded. He then elected to return to the United Kingdom to continue his career with the R.A.F. Some eighteen years later he was to return to Canada as Director of Training in the B.C.A.T.P. In the service of Canada he was to rise to the rank of Air Marshal and become Chief of Staff of the Royal Canadian Air Force (R.C.A.F.), to cap the climax of a

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13 Report of the Air Board for the Year 1921, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1922, p. 7-11.

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career during which he served both the United Kingdom and Canada.[14]

The dissolution of the C.A.F. was only one of a number of changes that took place in Canadian military re-organization between 1922 and 1924. During this period the Air Board, the Department of Naval Service and the Department of Militia disappeared and their functions were merged in a new Department of National Defence. In the shuffle the R.C.A.F. was brought into being as a permanent component of the Canadian defence forces.[15] Officially, its existence is reckoned from 1 April 1924 but it was in operation for some months before that date. The cut and colour of its uniform, its rules, regulations and customs were similar to those of the R.A.F. and as its flag it adopted the R.A.F. ensign. The new force was administered by an officer known as the Director of the R.C.A.F. who, although a member of the newly created Defence Council, was immediately responsible to the Chief of the Defence Staff of the Army which made the Air Force something less than an independent service in the same sense as the Royal Canadian Navy and the Army.[16]

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14 Leckie Biographical Material, Directorate of Military History, Air Force Biographical Section.

15 Canada, Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1923, Ottawa, King's Printer, p. 37-39.

16 Ibid.

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In one respect there was little change for the new Government, like the old, held to the theory that a military air force could be justified only if it could be made to serve as the handmaiden of civil government air operations and point the way for commercial aviation. Consequently, the bulk of flying done by the R.C.A.F. in the first decade of its existence was carried out on behalf of government departments. Flying out of the bases founded by the Air Board, and new ones established as the years went by, the pilots of the R.C.A.F. continued the work begun by the old C.A.F. In 1923 provision was made for a pilot training scheme which brought a new generation of flyers into the Air Force. The first class of nine provisional pilot officers, a rank equivalent to that of second lieutenant, was enrolled in May, 1923. The candidates, and those accepted for subsequent annual intakes, were members of the Canadian Officers Training Corps or cadets from the Royal Military College at Kingston, Ontario.[17] During the Second World War these officers were to serve as flying instructors and commanders of flying training schools. Others were to lead Canadian squadrons on operational flying and a few were destined to rise to higher positions of command. Between the wars, however, practically all of them were employed in piloting flying boats and sea-planes

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17 Ibid.

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on aerial surveys, forest fire patrols and other miscellaneous tasks. Not for a decade after the formation of the R.C.A.F. was military flying meaningfully discussed in the Canadian House of Commons or seriously studied by the members of the Air Force.

Between 1919 and 1929 Canadian aviation branched out to a number of different fields all of which were to make their contribution to the B.C.A.T.P. Commercial aviation quickly took root after the war. Surplus aeroplanes were cheap and pilots were plentiful. Many of the latter hoped to establish successful air transport companies, but through lack of capital or business acumen they often failed to get their enterprises past the barnstorming stage - giving aerial demonstrations at local fairs and taking passengers aloft for short pleasure rides. More enduring were the rewards of those who saw that while aircraft were not yet developed to the point where they could compete with trains and automobiles as a means of transportation, they could be profitably used in forestry work, aerial survey, prospecting and in opening up the remote sections of the country. From rather modest beginnings commercial aviation made good progress in these areas. A dozen or more well established companies and a large number of itinerant operators continued the work

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throughout the depression years.[13] Their activities came to a temporary halt only when the war diverted their energies in other directions.

The flying club movement was another aspect of civil aviation that was to become entwined with the military during the Second World War. Before 1914, flying clubs had been organized in many countries of Europe, and in the United States as well, and were to be an important source of pilots for the belligerent nations. Immediately after the war, flying clubs came into existence in a few centres in Canada. In 1927, when the supply of civilian pilots in Canada showed signs of becoming depleted, the Canadian Government began to take an interest in the flying club movement. Any flying club that could provide an approved flying field, undertake the repair and maintenance of light aeroplanes, arrange for the services of at least one qualified instructor and show a roll of at least thirty members who were willing to take flying lessons, and another ten who had already acquired their private certificate, was eligible for government assistance. To each approved club the government issued two light aeroplanes and in addition gave a cash grant of one hundred dollars for each member who obtained a private pilot's

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18 J.A. Wilson, "The expansion of Aviation into Arctic and Sub-Arctic Canada", in Department of Transport, Development of Aviation in Canada 1879 - 1948, p. 93-100.

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certificate. For every plane purchased by the clubs from their own funds the Government promised to provide another aircraft over and above the gift of the first two. In 1927 five clubs received government assistance under this scheme.[19] By the end of 1928 twenty-three were in existence.[20] They were supported and encouraged not only by the federal government but also by municipalities which hoped that the presence of the clubs and their flying fields would help to draw air traffic in their direction.

As Canadian aviation began to move forward at a quickened pace, the union between military and civil flying, which in the beginning seemed such a sound and sensible idea, began to show signs of strain. Neither element could develop properly when tied to the other. The need for a separation became quite apparent in 1927 and 1928 when the construction of the Trans-Canada Airway was under discussion. This undertaking, up to that time the most ambitious aviation project ever planned in Canada, was necessary to prevent expanding American air lines from extending their tentacles to engulf Canadian cities.[21] Obviously, it was not the type of scheme

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19 Directorate of Military History, 181.009 (D 1037), R.C.A.F. File 13/5, Aeroplane Clubs, Hewson to R.C.A.F. Liaison Officer, 14 December, 1927.

20 Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1930, Ottawa, King's Printer 1930, p. 74

21 J.A. Wilson, "Aviation in Canada", in Development of Aviation in Canada, 1372-1948, p. 2-19.

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to be left to the Chief of the General Staff and the Director of the Canadian Air Force. In 1927 a re-organization of air services within the Department of National Defence placed civil government air operations, the control of all other civil aviation and all aspects of aeronautical engineering under the direction of the Deputy Minister, the civilian head of the Department. The R.C.A.F. remained the direct responsibility of the Chief of the General Staff but with authority delegated almost entirely to the Director of the Canadian Air Force.[22]

The general trend of events also helped to hasten the separation of military and civil aviation. Partly because of the depression and partly because of the transfer of jurisdiction of the natural resources of the prairie region from the Federal to Provincial Governments, the amount of flying carried out on behalf of the Central Government was considerably restricted. As a result, the R.C.A.F., though it was doing less flying than in the late 1920's, was able to concentrate its efforts on military aviation. In spite of a severe setback in 1932, when the stringent demands of a depression budget slashed expenditure on the Air Force

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22 Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1928, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1928, p. 41, 75.

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from $5,442,000 to $1,750,000, the R.C.A.F. continued to be reshaped as a military force.[23] Although fifty-one officers and one hundred tradesmen, about one quarter of the total air force strength, were released, the training of those who remained was intensified and placed on a more professional military basis.[24] Each succeeding year saw more Canadians attending courses at British training establishments including the Imperial Defence College, the R.A.F. Staff College, the School of Army Co-operation and various technical training schools.

Complete separation between civil and military aviation came about in 1936 with the formation of the Department of Transport. The new ministry exercised control over all forms of aviation other than military including the regulation of commercial air transportation, private flying, the flying club movement and the use of aeroplanes for government purposes.[25] The R.C.A.F. was left free to concentrate on matters pertaining to military aviation and in addition had a small government commitment for aerial photography.

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23 Canada, Estimates for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1933, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1932, p. 27.

24 Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1933, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1933, p. 41-48.

25 Wilson, op. cit. p. 14.

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In 1938 important milestones were reached in both civil and military aviation. It was in that year that the Department of Transport inaugurated the first flight over the recently completed Trans-Canada Airway which now linked Canada from coast to coast with a chain of airports equipped with lighting, meteorological and radio services. In the same year, a steady, if belated, increase in military flying led to the head of the R.C.A.F. being raised in status to Chief of the Air Staff. This measure indicated that the Air Force was now an independent service on equal footing with the Army and the Royal Canadian Navy. Air Commodore G.M. Croil, who, as Senior Air Officer, had guided the Air Force since 1933, was the first to occupy this office. Like the Chief of the General Staff and the Chief of the Naval Staff, Croil was directly responsible to the Minister of National Defence.

The "bush" services which had established air communications with the remote settlements were also being re-organized and revitalized in the pre-war years. These companies had survived the depression without government subsidies and by 1939 were operating scheduled flights to the principal cities as well as providing services for more inaccessible areas. When war came, no less than 142 firms, large and small, were engaged in commercial enterprises of one kind

and another.[26] This was really more than the trade could bear but the Canadian Pacific Railway was already in the process of buying up many of the small air lines, and some of the chief carriers as well, with the intention of welding them into an integrated system.

Thus on the eve of the Second World War Canadian aviation was on the verge of making a new thrust forward. Plans for the future now had to be laid aside. Much of the strength and energy of civil aviation which had been accumulated over the years was channelled into the war effort. The whole of the civil organization, the flying clubs, the commercial air lines and the Department of Transport offered to put their personnel and facilities at the disposal of the Air Force. Without this assistance the task of expanding the R.C.A.F. to meet the war emergency would have been immeasurably greater and the B.C.A.T.P. might well have been impossible.

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26 C.G. Grey and Leonard Bridgman, Ed., Jane's All the World's Aircraft, 1939, London, Sampson Low, Marston, 1939, p. (35a).

CHAPTER 2

PRIME MINISTER KING AND THE AIR TRAINING PROBLEM

Although Canadian aviation formed the foundation on which the B.C.A.T.P. was established, it is elsewhere, in Commonwealth air relations, that its origins are to be found. The growth of aviation in the other Dominions parallelled that in Canada. Military and civil flying were developed hand in hand; commercial aviation prospered and together with civil government requirements and military demands gave rise to embryo aviation industries. With the exception of the British Air Force which had from its beginning been developed as a military air force, the air forces of the various Commonwealth countries were small and poorly equipped. In re-organizing themselves along military lines they were overtaken by the armament race. Their domestic aircraft industries could not provide them with the aircraft they wanted and those of the United Kingdom were fully occupied with orders for the R.A.F. Nevertheless, weak as they were, the air forces of Canada, Australia, New Zealand and other countries of the Commonwealth had strength in their resemblance to the R.A.F. in training and organization. Not unnaturally, the latter service came to look on them not as future partners in battle, but as valuable sources of trained recruits. Contingent upon this attitude, two dominant but contrary themes were sounded in Commonwealth air relations in the last five years before the war. One arose from the Commonwealth-wide

recruiting policy of the British Air Force. The other, almost the antithesis of the first, was centered in the determination of Prime Minister King to avoid warlike commitments. From the beginning of the twentieth century Canada had succeeded in rejecting British attempts to draw the various members of the Commonwealth into centralized naval and army organizations. But in air force policy it was the British view, nourished on the determination to attain air parity, if not superiority, in the event of war, that was to prevail. Under political pressure at home and abroad the Canadian Government made concessions to the British from time to time. When the war trumpets sounded in September 1939, the stage was set for Canada to assume large scale recruiting and training commitments for the British Air Force which was more imperial in make-up than the British Navy or Army had ever been.

While the air forces of the Commonwealth countries were growing to maturity they all shared the benefit of air liaison with the United Kingdom which was carried on by means of air liaison offices in London, periodic imperial conferences, the exchange of airforce officers and the use by all members of the Commonwealth of British military institutions such as the Imperial Defence College, the R.A.F. Staff College, the School of Army Co-operation and various technical training schools. The Canadian Liaison Office was established in 1919

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when a number of Canadian officers were appointed to assist Air Ministry representatives to sort out and ship the war surplus material offered to Canada. When this work was accomplished the Air Liaison Office became a part of the office of the Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom. The general duties of the incumbent were to keep the High Commissioner informed on aeronautical matters and to advise the R.C.A.F. of British aviation developments which might be of interest to Canada. With the approach of war more emphasis was placed on matters of a purely military nature. Squadron Leader H.V. Heakes, who held the appointment during the critical years from 1937 to 1939, made the most of his opportunities to gather information about the R.A.F., such as its general state of readiness, its air training difficulties and the broad assumptions made by the officers of the Air Ministry in the event of war with Germany. Heakes was an adviser to Canadian industrialists seeking to get contracts in aircraft production for the R.A.F. and sometimes played the role of foster father to young Canadians who wanted to join the R.A.F. In all his endeavours he was encouraged by Vincent Massey, who served as Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom from 1935 to 1946. Like the High Commissioners from the other Dominions Massey took considerable interest in air problems confronting the United Kingdom and depended on Heakes to keep him up to date on such matters, a

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somewhat surprising development since the Canadian Government expected neither of these officials, High Commissioner nor Liaison Officer, to dabble in matters of high policy.

One aspect of Commonwealth air relations which was the subject of conversation at Canada House as well as a matter of discussion at the Imperial Conference, was the Empire-wide recruiting programme of the R.A.F. In laying the foundation for a peacetime air force following the end of the First World War, the British Air Council reserved two vacancies for university students from each of the Dominions.[1] At the Imperial Conference of 1923 the Commonwealth representatives were reminded of this opportunity and were also advised that pilot candidates from the various countries of the Commonwealth were eligible to apply for short service commissions in the R.A.F. This arrangement was intended to have mutual advantages for at the end of a five year term with the British Air Force the fully trained pilots, if not offered a permanent commission in the R.A.F., would be given the option of returning to serve in the air force of their own country, or joining the R.A.F. Reserve.[2]

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1 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 322-103-89/2, Commissioning, Permanent Commissions, Vol. 1, Churchill to Byng, 2 February, 1922.

2 Public Archives of Canada, Accession List No. 63 A6, R.C.A.F., H.Q. 898-6-42, Royal Canadian Air Force, Co-ordination of Training Between the Royal Canadian Air Force and the Royal Air Force, Details of Proposals for Co-ordination of Training, 3 December, 1923.

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Until the era of the economic depression and the deepening of international tension, Canadians took little notice of these opportunities to serve in the British Air Force. The two vacancies for permanent commissions, though usually filled, sometimes went begging and with Canadian aviation demanding more and more pilots the short service commission proposal became a forgotten item. But in 1931, when the R.C.A.F. graduated nineteen pilots from its training schools and offered commissions to only seven, three of the others made enquiries about joining the R.A.F. As it turned out, none of them did, but their interest gave rise to a batch of official correspondence in which the Air Ministry again emphasized its willingness to accept a limited number of Canadians who were in possession of a pilot's certificate, were medically fit and able to produce a high-school diploma. Anyone so qualified was invited to proceed to England at his own expense. If accepted, he would be reimbursed for his trouble. This offer remained in effect until 1937 but the prospect of being turned down and thus out of pocket curtailed the number of applicants. So, too, did the fact that despite the depression Canadian commercial aviation continued to grow and qualfied pilots had little difficulty in finding employment. By the end of 1935 some fifty Canadians had been interviewed in

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the United Kingdom; very few of them had been turned down.[3]

In 1934 the Air Ministry set its quota of commissions to be granted to Canadians at twenty and increased the number yearly until it was finally established at 120 in March 1938.[4] In order to make their offer more attractive the British removed the prerequisite of a pilot's certificate which virtually made it possible for any Canadian boy who was in good health ahd who had completed high school to step out into the aviation world if he was so inclined. The terms of service were publicized in daily newspapers and aviation periodicals. Those interested were advised to apply in writing to the Air Ministry for detailed instructions. At first the co-operation of the R.C.A.F. in this recruitment was limited to interviewing the prospective candidates and rejecting those considered unsuitable. However, the Canadian Air Force Headquarters was gradually drawn more fully into the scheme in assuming the responsibility for ensuring that the candidates had all the necessary documents, were medically fit and arranging for their transportation.

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3 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 1044-3-3, Short Service Commissions in the Royal Air Force, Memorandum Re Canadian Applicants Recommended for Short Service Commissions in the Royal Air Force, Initialled by Squadron Leader F.C. Higgins, 25 January 1936.

4 H.Q. 322-103-89/2, vol. 1, Heakes to the Secretary, Department of National Defence, 29 March, 1938.

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In addition to those Canadians who were accepted in the regular way many impatient youths, unwilling to wait out six weeks while official correspondence travelled back and forth across the Atlantic, made their own way to the United Kingdom and presented themselves unannounced at the Air Ministry. They invariably expected to be taken into the British Air Force with no more than perhaps a week's delay. Instead the delay was usually six weeks occasioned in part by the necessity of the Air Ministry, or the individual, writing to Canada to obtain educational and birth certificates and also by the fact that the intake of trainees was arranged according to courses commencing on specific dates. As a result, the impetuous applicants often found themselves stranded in London without money or friends.

Caught in this unfortunate predicament the would-be pilots usually turned to Canada House and the Canadian Air Liaison Officer. In one of his regular reports to Air Commodore Croil, the Senior Air Officer of the R.C.A.F. and future Chief of the Air Staff, Leakes painted a grim picture of the difficulties faced by headstrong Canadian youths who sought entry into the R.A.F. without having made adequate preparation for their venture:

> Many of these cases are pitiful as these prospective candidates for H.M. Commissions work their way to England on cattle boats and have very limited means on which to subsist, and rarely with funds to carry them more than a week or ten days. Consequently they are living from hand to mouth as best they can,

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> and it is not unusual for us to have to deal with Canadian boys coming from good families who may not have eaten for one or more days, and who are probably living on one meagre meal per day.
>
> I have known individuals having to pawn their clothes to eat ... and many others who have eaten merely on account of the tolerance and forbearance of their boarding-house keepers. They are working at all sorts of things - in one recent case scouring out filthy public baths; another as a bartender in a second class pub; two others as commissionaires in Motion Picture Palaces; others as waiters .... But these are the fortunate ones as compared with the poor devils who cannot get work of any sort.[5]

Heakes warned both the Air Ministry and the R.C.A.F. Headquarters that if Canadian newspapers learned about the boys, "kicking around London in a semi-starved condition" there would be a "public outcry",[6] which would tarnish the service image and embarrass both the British and Canadian Governments. Moreover, he suggested that a solution to the problem was simple enough providing both air forces co-operated. His admonishment did not go unheeded. In Canada, the conditions of entry into the British Air Force were given greater publicity, arrangements were made for candidates to be medically examined before leaving for England and advertisements stressed the importance of applicants proceeding through the proper channels. In England, the Air Ministry

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5 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D531) R.C.A.F. Liaison Officer (London) file, "secret and personal" Letters to Air Commodore Croil, correspondence 5 August 1937 to 18 May 1939, Heakes to Croil 23 August 1938. (Further references to this file will be cited as Secret and Personal Letters to Air Commodore Croil)

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6 Ibid

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invited Heakes to be present when air force boards were examining Canadians. Applicants were interviewed within a few days of their arrival in London and even those who came without all the necessary papers and documents were enrolled without delay if they appeared suitable in all other respects.[7]

Australians, New Zealanders and South Africans were no less eager to find a place in the British Air Force. A minute sheet dated 9 September, 1938 addressed to the British Air Member for Personnel, the head of the air force branch that looked after general personnel matters including recruiting, said that:

> In recent months accepted candidates from the Dominions, etc., have averaged 20 a month, mostly from Canada. The selection Boards reject very few.[8]

During the last few years of peace far more Canadians were joining the R.A.F. than were being taken into the R.C.A.F. and parallel situations existed in other countries of the Commonwealth. In the fiscal year, 1 April, 1935 to 31 March, 1936, twenty-two pilot trainees were enrolled in the R.C.A.F. permanent force. In the next fiscal year only eight were accepted. From 1 April, 1937 to 31 March the number was twenty-three, and from 1 April, 1938 to 31 March

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7 Ibid, Minute Sheet, Slater to A.M.P. [Air Member for Personnel], 19 September, 1938.

8 Ibid.

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1939 it was still only a mere thirty-one.[9] The gravitation of air minded youths from all parts of the Commonwealth to Great Britain continued as an irreversible trend and was an important factor in shaping the course of future events.

No feature of the British air expansion programme was more important than training. Seven new training schools were authorized by the British Government in 1935 and because of the simultaneous demand for more operational air bases the Air Ministry hoped that any additional training schools could be formed outside the country. Possible locations for such schools was a question which was widely discussed by Air Ministry officials in 1936 and it was generally agreed that of all the countries of the Commonwealth, Canada offered the greatest strategical advantages as an air training centre. Not only did Canada have a huge air space but it was relatively close to the United Kingdom, conveniently adjacent to the industrial resources of the United States and safely out of range of hostile aircraft. Moreover, the British Government was very much aware that an air training agreement with

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9 Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1936, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1936, p. 66; Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1937, p. 73; Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1938, p. 102; Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1939, p. 108.

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Canada would be a sign of empire solidarity adding to British prestige in the world at large and providing a good tonic for British morale. Robert Leckie, then a Group Captain in the British Air Force and soon to be appointed as its Director of Training was among those who suggested that steps be taken to set up an air training establishment in Canada. In a memorandum to the Air Member for Training Leckie recalled the successful air training programme that the British had organized in Canada in 1917. He ventured to say that the establishment of a flying school in Canada would be well received by the senior officers of the Canadian Air Force but discreetly admitted that he was not in a position to judge what the political reaction to such a proposal might be.[10] In September 1936 Lord Swinton, the British Air Minister, asked Ian Mackenzie, the Canadian Minister of National Defence, how a proposal for training pilots for the British Air Force in Canada would be received by the Canadian Government. After referring this matter to his cabinet colleagues, Mackenzie returned a reply to the effect that:

> ...it would be inadvisable to have Canadian territory used by the British Government for purposes for training airmen. It is the intention of the Canadian Government to establish training schools of

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10 R. Leckie, "Notes on the Proposal to Establish a Flying Training School in Canada", The Roundel, vol. 11, No. 2, December 1949, p. 14.

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> its own. The situation might give rise to competition between governments in the matter of fields, pilots, equipment and the like.[11]

The reference to "training schools of its own" was a reflection of the re-organization that was taking place within the R.C.A.F. Prior to 1932, service training in the Canadian Air Force consisted mainly of a series of lectures and discussions that took place in the winter months when civil flying operations came to an end for the season. However, in 1932, [illegible] steps were taken to convert the R.C.A.F. . . . into a military, as distinct from a civil, air force, an army co-operation school, an armament school and a bombing school were established at Camp Borden. In 1935 these and other training schools were formed into a Training Group comprised of a Group Headquarters, with schools for technical training, flying training, air armament including bombing, air navigation and seaplane training. An event of major interest and importance was the opening of the new air station at Trenton on the Bay of Quinte, about sixty miles east of Toronto. This site had been selected as a training base in 1929. During the worst years of the depression construction of the buildingsand the installation of facilities had proceeded slowly but by 1936 Trenton had displaced Camp Borden as the

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11 Department of External Affairs, Department of External Affairs Air Training Files, Pt. 2 and memo to file, 11 September, 1936.

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major training centre of the Canadian Air Force.

In providing for the further expansion of these schools, in developing new bases for air operations on the east and west coastal regions and in obtaining modern military air craft, Croil was firmly backed by the Minister of National Defence who succeeded in convincing Prime Minister King of the necessity of strengthening the air force. In 1937 the annual air force vote, which had been increasing slowly but steadily since 1934, rocketed to over $11,752,650, an increase of almost $6,000,000 over the expenditure of the previous year.[12] The increased estimates received the general support of the Cabinet but in the debate on defence estimates in the House of Commons in February 1937 the Prime Minister and the Minister of National Defence found it necessary to make it clear to the Liberal following from Quebec that the money was being voted for the defence of Canadian territory. In answering a criticism that the proposed expenditure represented a war commitment to the United Kingdom the Prime Minister replied:

> I must deny categorically and immediately what my hon. friend has said. There are no commitments and no understandings in the nature of commitments

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12 Estimates for the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 1938, King's Printer, Ottawa, 1938, p. 26.

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between this government and the government of Great Britain or any other government.[13]

In the days ahead it became ever more difficult for the Canadian Government to draw a line of distinction between what constituted a war commitment and what did not. Later in the 1937 session of Parliament the Member for Brantford, Ontario, drew the attention of the Minister of National Defence to reports in Canadian newspapers which referred to a scheme that was in effect in Australia for training pilots for Great Britain and stated that a similar scheme was about to be undertaken by New Zealand. The reports pointed out that the British government would welcome the adoption of such a project by Canada. The Brantford Member wanted to know if the Canadian Government had taken, or intended to take, any steps leading to an arrangement of this kind.[14] Without committing himself directly, the Minister tabled a return outlining the arrangements already in existence between Canada and the United Kingdom in connection with recruiting of personnel for the British Air Force. The return showed that since 1 January 1935 the Air Ministry had accepted sixty-eight Canadian pilot applicants for short service commissions

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13 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer 1937, vol. 1, p. 890.

14 Ibid, vol. 3, p. 2049-2050.

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and two for permanent commissions.[15] Since the way was more or less open for any British subject to join the British military forces if he so desired, the pilot recruiting programme attracted no special attention from the isolationist groups in Parliament but it conveniently enabled the Government to point out to the imperialists that it was providing valuable assistance to the United Kingdom in developing its air strength.

When Prime Minister King led the Canadian delegates to the Imperial Conference in London in May 1937 he appeared determined to resist any British overtures relating to military co-operation. A recommendation prepared by the Canadian Joint Staff Committee to the effect that an air training station, administered by the R.C.A.F. but financed by the United Kingdom, be established in Canada for the training of pilots for the British Air Force, was scotched by the Prime Minister before it got to the conference table.[16] Nevertheless, the Canadian Government gave approval to a more modest plan under which the R.C.A.F. would select and train fifteen pilot candidates annually for short service commissions in the British Air Force. It was similar in nature to the

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15 Canada, Sessional Paper No. 237, Return Showing Data re Recruits for Air Force since 1 January, 1935, 23 March, 1937.

16 James Eayrs, In Defence of Canada, Appeasement and Rearmament, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1965, p. 92.

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schemes already in effect in Australia and New Zealand. Known as the Trained in Canada Scheme, the plan as the Canadians saw it, was intended as a means of reducing the number of recruits who, by independently journeying to the United Kingdom and getting themselves into financial straits, might embarrass the Government and the Air Force.[17] However, the plan was too small to have any real effect. The Trained in Canada Scheme went almost unnoticed in either Canada or the United Kingdom.

The candidates selected under the Trained in Canada Scheme began their flying training at Trenton in January 1938. On 18 October, nine of them completed the course which was originally scheduled for a period of twelve months but was altered to meet the need for pilots in the United Kingdom. Three students graduated in November instead of October and three others were withdrawn from training for failing to make satisfactory progress. The training was carried out in conjunction with training for R.C.A.F. pilots. Instruction was based on the standard syllabus of the Royal Air Force. For each pilot trained the cost to the United Kingdom was 1,555 pounds sterling.[18]

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17 H.Q. 1044-3-3, Breadner to Adjutant-General, 25 June, 1937.

18 Ibid, Short Service Commisions in the R.A.F. (G.D. Branch), Canadian Cadet Entry, Conditions of Service.

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In 1938 another advance was made to the Canadian Government which was to result in Prime Minister King making a policy statement about the training in Canada of pilots for the United Kingdom. A party of Air Ministry civilian officials and officers arrived in Ottawa early in May primarily to make a survey of Canadian aircraft manufacturing potential, but also to sound out the Canadian Government on the possibility of arranging some sort of air training agreement. The mission headed by J.C. Weir, a British industrialist and formerly an adviser to the British Under Secretary of State for Air, had been hastily organized following a wave of public criticism of the British aircraft industry. While publicly expressing confidence that the domestic aircraft manufacturers would be able to meet all demands placed upon them, the British Government decided to send Weir, who had business connections in both Canada and the United States, to examine the possibilities of the American aircraft industry and also to take a cursory glance at the Canadian potential. Although the British Government had at first hoped to keep the mission and its purpose an official secret, news of the forthcoming visit leaked out to British and Canadian papers.[19]

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19 Secret and Personal Letters to Air Commodore Croil, Heakes to Croil, 5 July, 1938.

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On the day after Weir and his colleagues reached Ottawa, Sir Francis Floud, the British High Commissioner to Canada, brought up the subject of air training in Canada during an interview with the Canadian Prime Minister who received it rather coldly. King explained that he wished to avoid the issue as the drift toward isolationism in Canada would grow stronger if it were thought that the Canadian Government was under pressure from Great Britain to undertake anything in the line of commitments for war purposes. Later in the same day, Weir also approached the Prime Minister on the same question and was likewise informed that there was a cleavage in Canadian opinion on such matters which, if brought to the surface would be detrimental to future co-operation with the United Kingdom.[20]

Weir received a more cordial reception in connection with the other purpose of his mission, which was to arrange for the manufacture of British aircraft in Canada. This work was facilitated by officials in the Canadian Department of National Defence who brought the British industrialists into contact with the Canadian manufacturers. Provision was made for the formation of a central company of two main

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20 Department of External Affairs, Air Training Files Files II-2-84, Strictly Confidential Memorandum for External Affairs, dates 13 May, 1936, but continuing with Memorandum re meeting on 16 May.

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subsidiaries to contract directly with the British Government.[21] But this arrangement was less fruitful than Canadian producers had expected. The British placed only a few token orders for aircraft and the Canadians, who had anticipated that at least a large order for training aircraft would be made were inclined to place the blame for the state of affairs at the feet of the Canadian Government.

News of the political rebuff to the Weir Mission leaked out to the Opposition Party through unknown sources, most likely a Canadian one. The matter was tossed into the political arena on 14 June when Senator Arthur Meighen, King's foremost political foe, claimed that he had "received information to the effect ... that the British Government had made a request to the Government of Canada for permission to establish ... a training school in Canada for flyers" which had been turned down.[22] Meighen asked the Government Leader in the Senate, Senator Raoul Dandurand, if there was any truth in the allegation. The answer, after considerable beating round the bush, was that "some informal conversations have taken place with persons who did not indicate that they

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21 C.G. Grey and Leonard Bridgmen, Ed., Jane's All the World's Aircraft 1939 London, Sampson Low, Marston, 1939, p. (77c).

22 Canada, Debates of the Senate of the Dominion of Canada, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1938, p. 521.

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had been authorized or instructed by the British Government to make any proposals". Dandurand added that the Canadian Government was prepared to discuss proposals with the British Government at any time and to make its wish known to the Canadian people.[23] The political pressure was beginning to build up.

Storm signals were also flying in the House of Commons. On 1 July, the day the session came to an end, Mr. R.B. Bennett, the leader of the Opposition, brought the matter to a head in what was to be his last major speech in the Commons Chamber. Making much of the imperial connections, Bennett castigated the Government for its reputed refusal "to give the old partner who established us" the right to have schools in Canada to protect "our common heritage".[24] His remarks were challenged by Mr. King, stoutly supported by Mr. E. Lapointe, who expressed the French Canadian apprehension of British domination of Canadian military affairs. Mackenzie, the Minister of National Defence, reviewed what had already been done in the way of recruiting and training pilots for the United Kingdom stating that, "We are sending 120 a year to Great Britain and training some at Trenton -

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23 Ibid.

24 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1938, vol. 4, p. 4528.

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fifteen at the present time...."[25] However, his assertion, that in regard to the training of Canadians and preparing them for commissions in the British Air Force the Canadian Government had met every request, was something of an over-statement.

The Prime Minister attempted to evade the main issue by dragging the question of Canadian sovereignty into the argument and by accusing the Leader of the Opposition, who declined to divulge the source of his information, of paying too much attention to public rumour. But King was unable to shake Bennett's conviction that the air training question was a serious matter which the Canadian Government had too long disregarded. Bennett, in what must have been one of his most successful performances on the floor of the House of Commons, continued to press the attack until he had forced King to make a statement of the Government's position. The climax in the debate was King's remark that, "We ourselves are willing to have our own establishments and to give in these establishments facilities to British pilots to come and train here."[26]

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25 Ibid, p. 4525.

26 Ibid, p. 4531

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King's utterance was significant for it opened the way for the commencement of formal air negotiations between the United Kingdom and Canada. It seemed as if the British insistence in obtaining air training space in Canada, which was now coming to have political as well as military importance, had forced King from the narrow path he had been treading in regard to warlike commitments. However, it was but a temporary aberration. An analysis of his remarks reveals that he had conceded very little. For one thing, Canadian air training facilities, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, were inadequate to meet even the modest needs of Canada, let alone cater to the much greater requirements of the United Kingdom. Moreover, in offering these facilities, such as they were, to the United Kingdom, King said that British pilots were welcome "to come and train here". This was not exactly what the Air Ministry wanted, at least not for the time being. What they were hoping for was some kind of extension of the Trained in Canada Scheme whereby more Canadians would be trained as pilots and then sent to the United Kingdom. Unfortunately, this is what the British thought King was offering them. But so too, apparently, did many in Canada, including the Minister of National Defence, the Deputy Minister and the Senior Air Officer of the R.C.A.F. Almost twelve months were to pass before the misunderstanding was cleared up.

After the debate on July 1, events moved quite rapidly. On 5 July Sir Francis Floud was called to a Cabinet meeting of the Canadian Government to be informed that Canada was willing to accept British Pilot recruits for training in Canada by the R.C.A.F. It was pointed out that the British flying instructors and British aircraft would be needed to augment the Canadian facilities.[27] In Great Britain the news of this offer was well received. In the Parliament at Westminster Sir Kingsley Wood, the British Secretary of State for Air, stated on 7 July that:

> ... a reply had been sent expressing warm appreciation for the offer, and arrangements are being made in accordance with a suggestion of the Canadian Prime Minister for an officer to be sent immediately to Canada to explore in co-operation with the Canadian Government the possibilities of working out such a scheme for training facilities in Canada.[28]

These sentiments of appreciation were re-echoed in the British press. The London Times, for instance, commented that the Canadian offer:

> ... opens up the prospect of a welcome addition to the training facilities of the Royal Air Force, and ... shows the readiness of the Canadian people

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27 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 045-7, Air Historian R.C.A.F. - Historical Information on the Development of the R.C.A.F. and B.C.A.T.P., vol. 1, Empire Co-operative Air Training Plan.

28 United Kingdom, Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, 1937-1938, vol. 338, 4 July-29July, p. 595.

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> to co-operate with other British Governments in assuring the safety of the whole Commonwealth of British nations.[29]

An item in the Yorkshire Post gives an even better indication of Canada's importance as an air training centre and at the same time reveals how King's offer had been misinterpreted:

> ... it is satisfactory to have the reassurance of Mr. Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister, that there are no objections to the establishment of a British flying School in the Dominion .... The importance of this step can hardly be overrated. It is not only that the Dominion is in itself a source of strength in men and materials, but also that it provides the Mother Country with a great strategical advantage.... Canada's promised aid will be of immense value to Great Britain.[30]

But King had not said that he had no objections to the establishment of a British flying school in Canada. He had stated that the British were welcome to use the Canadian training facilities, which were still in the stage of development and could accommodate very few pupils. But nothing was done to correct the erroneous impression that had got abroad. Consequently, when the R.A.F. sent one of its officers, Group Captain J.M. Robb, to Canada, he was instructed not merely to explore the possibilities of working out an air training agreement but to draw up a detailed plan for training Canadian pilots in a separate school, or schools, to

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29 London Times, 7 July, 1938 (clipping in H.Q. 045-7).

30 Yorkshire Post, 7 July, 1938 (clipping in HQ 045-7).

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be established by the British, albeit under the general administration of the R.C.A.F.

In the meantime, the Deputy Minister of National Defence for Canada, Colonel L.R. LaFleche, had instructed Croil to draw up a plan which could be used as a basis for a proposal to the United Kingdom. Croil pointed out that the present facilities, in so far as aircraft, flying instructors and mechanics were concerned, were entirely consumed in meeting R.C.A.F. requirements. By increasing these facilities he estimated that it would be possible to train a limited number of pilots for Great Britain, "not in excess of 50 per year".[31] If a larger number were to be trained, Croil took 300 as a hypothetical figure, separate schools would have to be built to accommodate the British. Personally, Croil expressed himself as being in favour of the larger scheme for he no doubt believed that sooner or later air training facilities in Canada would have to be greatly expanded and the sooner the work was undertaken the better.[32]

When Robb arrived in Canada in the latter part of July he prematurely came to the conclusion that the Canadian

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31 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. general file, R.C.A.F. History 1930-1939, Operational, Technical and Personnel, folder labelled "Memorandum by S.A.O., Training Scheme - R.A.F.", Croil to the Deputy Minister, 5 July, 1938. (Futher reference to this file will be cited as R.C.A.F. general file, R.C.A.F. History 1930-1939).

32 Ibid.

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Government would welcome a proposal to have 300 pilots a year trained in Canada. Neither Croil nor the Minister of National Defence appear to have given him any reason to believe differently. Nor, seemingly, did they explain to him that the pupils were to come from England, not from Canada. Whether this was an attempt to force the Government to move at a faster pace or just part of a general muddle is a matter of speculation. Probably it was a compound of both elements. In any event, the Minister, a man who disliked detail and routine, left Croil and Robb to work out the plan by themselves.

Training was to be given in three stages, elementary, intermediate and advanced with the complete course lasting about a year. In addition to Camp Borden, where intermediate training was to take place, three new schools were deemed necessary - an elementary flying training school, to be located at Patricia Bay in British Columbia, an advanced school near Montreal and an air navigation centre in the vicinity of Moncton, New Brunswick, where the pilots would receive the finishing touches before proceeding to the United Kingdom.[33] News of Robb's visit spread quickly throughout the country and brought him letters from mayors and other officials who claimed, on behalf of their respective communi-

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33 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 898-6-41, Training - R.A.F. Pilots in Canada, vol. 1, La Fleche to Mackenzie, 5 August, 1938.

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ties, to be able to provide ideal locations for air training fields.

During the first week or two that Robb was in Canada he had every reason to feel that his mission would be a success but it was doomed to failure from the very beginning. The Canadian Government was inclined to be very circumspect in matters where British military officers were concerned. If the nature of their duties required them to visit Canada, which seldom happened, except for naval officers who slipped in and out of Halifax almost un-noticed, they were expected to state their business and leave the country with discreet despatch. The aspect of a British officer moving about the country and discussing military training must have been difficult for King to countenance. In anyevent, when he learned of the nature of Robb's proposals, first through the Minister of National Defence and then saw it splashed in the press he brought the whole proceeding to an abrupt and unpleasant halt. King's first criticism of the scheme was that it departed from what was intended in that the pilots to be trained were to be recruited in Canada, not in the United Kingdom. But he was also alarmed at the size of the scheme. The training of 300 pilots a year for the British Air Force when the R.C.A.F. was taking in a mere fraction of that number, and the establishment of special schools to meet British needs made too great a departure from the policy of

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no commitments, to suit the Prime Minister. The cost was another matter for concern. For the first year it would have amounted to about $23,000,000, approximately double the amount voted for the R.C.A.F. in that fiscal year, and four times as much as Croil had earlier estimated it would cost.[34] Although practically all the expenditure would have been recoverable from the United Kingdom it would have been awkward as an item to fit into the Canadian budget. King found little in the plan that pleased him and moved swiftly to deliver the coup de grace.

On 10 August Robb was summoned without warning to a Cabinet meeting in Ottawa which Croil and the Deputy Minister, LaFleche, were also required to attend. The Prime Minister told Robb the plan departed radically from the original terms of reference and lectured him like an errant school boy on the political necessity for Canada to avoid warlike commitments.[35] Robb, however, failed to appreciate the logic in King's proposition that only by keeping militarily aloof from Great Britain could Canada come to her aid. One of his most vivid recollections of the meeting was King's flash of

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34 R.C.A.F. general file, R.C.A.F. History 1930-1939, folder labelled "training Scheme of Pilots for the R.A.F., Revised 27 August, 1938".

35 Eayrs, Op. Cit. p. 100-101.

of testiness as he remarked, "If the war your country wants to prepare for does break out, how do you know that Canada will come into it on your side?"[36] This was too much for the British officer, who said no more. After the interview he went immediately to the British High Commissioner to ask for permission to return home.

Squadron Leader Heake's observations on the Robb affair are enlightening. In a letter to Croil which was marked "Confidential and Private", the Air Liaison Officer summed up the event as he had viewed it from the United Kingdom:

> ... when the matter was first raised in the Senate in Canada, I noticed it was on the basis of establishment of schools in Canada for the training of pilots from Britain. I also noticed the same reports concerning the Conservative Conference and later in the Prime Minister's offer to this country.
>
> I pointed this out to the High Commissioner at the time, for I foresaw difficulties and I knew what the R.A.F. was after was really Canadian man power.
>
> Unfortunately, steps were not taken by the Government here to correct this impression and I believe when the matter came up for discussion in the British House of Parliament, it was on this erroneous basis.[37]

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36 John W.R. Taylor, C.F.S.: Birthplace of Air Power, London, Putnam, 1958, p. 157.

37 Secret and Personal Letters to Air Commodore Croil, Heakes to Croil, 4 October, 1938.

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Although Heakes was inclined to blame the British for the unfortunate turn the negotiations had taken he remained sympathetic to the cause of the R.A.F. and in concluding his letter he put in a strong appeal on its behalf:

> I think that the way could be smoothed for the R.A.F. if the Canadian authorities would disregard what has occurred and accept the essential element in the situation, namely that Britain needs Canadian man power in the R.A.F. and permit ... a really substantial number of Canadians to be trained in Canada.[38]

In replying to Heakes, Croil expressed appreciation for the information but cautioned him against adopting too inquisitive or pressing an attitude in matters of high policy. He wisely pointed out that the settlement of the air training question "lies outside of the Service, and we must await decision in the matter."[39] Nevertheless, neither Croil nor the officers who had served under him could remain unresponsive to the air problems of the United Kingdom. Most of the R.C.A.F. officers who had reached the rank of squadron leader or above by 1938 had served as members of the British Air Force in the First World War and still cherished something of the "boys of the Old Brigade" feeling for their former comrades. As professional military aviators they were acutely aware of the disparity between British and German

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38 Ibid.

39 Ibid, Croil to Heakes, 19 October, 1938.

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air strength. Through information supplied by Heakes, through their contact with British officers and through publicly announced changes in British air policy they were also aware of the broad strategical assumptions of the Air Ministry. By the autumn of 1938 the British had come to envisage the opening phase of the air war with what was to prove to be a reasonable degree of accuracy. Germany with its superior force would undoubtedly launch an air offensive against the United Kingdom which, the Air Ministry reasoned, could be blunted by a strong fighter force. Then, with a continuous supply of aircrew from the Commonwealth, and by drawing on the industrial resources of the United States, the R.A.F. would in due time deliver its own counter offensive.[40] In a word, the two old antagonists would carry on from where they had left off in 1918 but with faster and more powerful planes and much larger air forces. To obtain air parity with Germany, and eventually to gain air superiority, the British were counting heavily on Canada and the other Commonwealth countries to provide them with air training schools and aircrew recruits to round out the R.A.F., to prepare it for action and sustain it in battle.

The Canadian Government, which considered that Canada itself was not immune to air attack, must also have been

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40 Ibid, Heakes to Croil, 18 November, 1938.

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aware of Britain's greater vulnerability and the general plan of British air strategy. The Munich Agreement of September 1938 and the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, which shook the western world to its foundations, jarred the Canadian Government still further from its policy of no warlike commitments. In September, shortly after Robb's departure for England, Croil was asked to modify the plan which he and Robb had prepared, to scale it down in size and provide for the co-relating of R.C.A.F. and R.A.F. training. By late October no further word had been received from the British Government about air training, presumably because it was fully occupied with the great debate over the Munich crisis, and Croil was instructed to get in touch with the Air Ministry to remind it that the offer to train British pilots in Canada was still open. On 28 October he informed Heakes by trans-Atlantic telephone that:

> The Minister personally would like to know what likelihood there is of an official request from Air Ministry for the development of a training scheme for Royal Air Force pilots in Canada. He is personally anxious to go ahead with the proposal and is surprised that no word has yet been received ... The Minister is anxious to receive word in order that he may discuss the matter with his colleagues. The Minister does not anticipate that there will be any serious difficulty here. It may be necessary to satisfy local conditions, that the plan

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> be co-ordinated with Canadian Air Force requirements, and that an adjustment of the number available to the R.A.F. may be necessary. Ascertain unofficially what the Air Ministry intends to do and advise by 'phone earliest possible moment.[41]

The next day Heakes replied:

> Owing to the high cost involved in the original scheme Air Ministry are preparing a new scheme based on training 135 pilots per year, which, it is hoped, they will be able to submit to the Canadian Government in the near future. Will press on with it as rapidly as possible.[42]

Apart from the atmosphere of urgency that now hung over the whole question of air training, two points in Heake's reply merit special attention. One is the reference to the high cost; the other is the number of pilots to be trained. Although the threat to peace posed by the Munich crisis was very real it was not yet serious enough for economic considerations to be tossed out the window. The cost of air training in Canada was high, higher than anywhere else in the Commonwealth, which cast up a stumbling block in the path of air training negotiations. The plan drawn up by Robb would have involved the United Kingdom Government in expenditures of $23,000,000 in the first year of its operation, an amount

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41 Ibid, Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation, 28 October 1938, Between Air Vice Marshal M. Croil, Canada and Squadron Leader F.V. Heakes, London.

42 Ibid, Trans-Atlantic Telephone Reply to Trans-Atlantic Telephone Conversation held 28 October, 1938, between Senior Air Officer and Canadian Liaison Officer, 29 October, 1938.

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which Great Britain, already faced with an unfavourable trade balance with Canada, could ill afford. Even if King had not so rudely rejected the Robb report it seems fairly clear from what Heakes said to Croil that the United Kingdom Government would have been forced to turn it down on account of the cost. Thus it is important to remember, particularly if one is inclined to pass judgement on King for being dilatory in his consideration of Britain's air training problem, that the economics of the situation would have prevented the development of a large scale international air training scheme in Canada before the war. It was only when the war forced the Commonwealth countries out of the rut of orthodox financing that such a scheme became possible, and even then the financial aspects of air training presented problems enough.

The figure of 135 mentioned by Heakes had been arrived at by the Air Ministry by taking the 120 pilots recruited in Canada annually for the R.A.F. and adding to this the fifteen trained under the Trained in Canada Scheme. In other words, instead of asking the Canadian Government to provide the R.A.F. with 120 untrained pilots and fifteen who were trained, the British Government was now proposing that Canada send 135 qualified flyers to the R.A.F. every year. Viewed in retrospect, this appears to have been reasonable enough. After all, Canada had already promised to send 120

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untrained pilots a year to the United Kingdom and in addition, King had offered the United Kingdom the use of Canadian air training facilities. Would it not, therefore, be reasonable to train the 120 Canadians before sending them across the Atlantic? Otherwise, the United Kingdom had to assume the cost of transporting Canadians across the Atlantic and then training them on the other side, while at the same time sending British raw recruits to Canada to be trained in Canadian schools and then bringing them back to Britain. All the extra transportation seemed to represent a waste of time, effort and money. Moreover, it was known from experience that a certain proportion of the pilot trainees sent from the United Kingdom would fail the flying course and thus more expense would be incurred for no good purpose. It would be simpler and much less expensive, to train the quota of 120 Canadians before sending them to the United Kingdom and let it go at that. So reasoned the Air Ministry and Croil. However, King had stated in his speech in Parliament that one of the conditions of making Canadian air space available to Great Britain was that the recruits came from the United Kingdom, notwithstanding the fact that 120 untrained Canadians were being sent to the United Kingdom annually. Not even the Czechoslovakian crisis, with all its serious implications, could bring him to change his mind. There are two plausible explanations for the seemingly illogical stand

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that King took. One is that it was a stalling tactic, designed to hold the United Kingdom at a distance until the clash of arms occurred. The other is that at this stage King was thinking in terms of air training facilities and the conditions under which they could be made available to the United Kingdom. On this assumption King's stand is not so unreasonable as it otherwise might seem to be. Nevertheless, it is unfortunate that the situation was left to clarify itself.

Given these two points of view; King's demand that the pilot trainees be recruited in the United Kingdom and on the other hand, the British feeling that this was uneconomical and impractical, it is easy to see that a satisfactory air training agreement was not going to be easily worked out. Croil's position was a particularly difficult one because he could see both sides of the situation so clearly. It is perhaps not surprising that he tended to lean towards the British point of view. In the revised plan which he was asked to prepare, he also used the figure 135, with all of the pilots to be recruited in Canada.

Croil's revised plan was presented to the Canadian Government on 5 November and the new British proposal was received in

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Ottawa about a month later. The two were quite similar. Both were really proposals for extending the Trained in Canada Scheme to embrace the training of 135 pilots a year. The main difference was in regard to cost, Croil suggesting that the British assume a large proportion of the overhead costs while the British showed a preference to pay for the training on a fixed per capita basis and accept only a small share of the running expenses. However, the Canadian Government found neither of the plans to be suitable as a basis for negotiations. One reason was that the number of pilots to be trained for the United Kingdom was too large in proportion to the intake of the R.C.A.F., which would make it appear that Canadian air training schools were being operated for the benefit of the British Air Force. The other was that, contrary to the Prime Minister's specific instructions, the plans proposed that the pilots for the R.A.F. were to be recruited in Canada.[43]

New proposals now had to be drafted. In December Croil sat down with officials from the British High Commissioner's Office to make adjustments in costs, numbers of recruits and methods of training that would be acceptable

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43 Howe Papers, Public Archives of Canada, M.G. 27, vol. 48, S 14-1, Royal Air Force Training Scheme.

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to the Canadian and British Governments. As finally drafted, the agreement provided for the training of fifty pilots a year for the R.A.F. whose instruction was to be integrated with that of Canadian flyers. The British Government, seeking to keep costs to a minimum, was still reluctant to transport raw recruits to Canada when it knew in advance that some would fail the course. This problem was overcome by arranging for the British trainees to take their elementary training in the United Kingdom. Consequently, trainees who had already demonstrated their ability as pilots would be involved in the scheme and would take their intermediate and advanced training in this country. The combined training programme was expected to turn out 125 pilots a year, seventy-five of whom would be for the R.C.A.F. In announcing British acceptance of the plan, the British High Commissioner stated that the only qualification was that the cost to the United Kingdom, £4,800 per pupil, should be reviewed at the end of the first year as it was considered to be unduly high.[44] The plan was in draft form early in January but negotiations were delayed by preparations being made for the Royal visit to Canada. It was not until April that the acceptance of the scheme was officially announced.

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44 H.Q. 898-6-41, vol. 1, Memorandum of Agreement: Training of Short Service Commissioned Officers (General Duties Branch).

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One of the most interesting features of the scheme was the decision to contract the elementary training of the R.C.A.F. candidates out to civilian flying clubs. Croil had earlier considered making use of these clubs for R.C.A.F. training but the irregular and uncertain intake of the Canadian Air Force had precluded any steps being taken in this direction. Under the new arrangement, with a more solid training programme to work on, the R.C.A.F. selected eight flying clubs to provide pilot instruction at the primary level. Those chosen were located at Vancouver, Calgary, Regina, Winnipeg, Hamilton, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.[45] To ensure that the instruction given by the clubs was in accordance with R.C.A.F. standards, the civilian instructors were given a complete military flying instructor's course at Camp Borden. The first class graduated in May, and on 5 June the elementary instruction for the first batch of the R.C.A.F. candidates got under way with each of the clubs taking in four pupils at a time, training them for a period of twelve weeks and then passing them on to Camp Borden for intermediate training. Contracts worked out between the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Flying Clubs Association provided that the clubs would receive $200 for

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45 Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1939, p. 110.

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each candidate they trained plus an additional amount for each hour spent in the air. A scale of payments for ground lectures was also arranged. In all, the clubs were to be paid a total of $1074 for each student flyer for whom elementary training was completed to the satisfaction of the R.C.A.F.[46] The intermediate and advanced phases of training were given at R.C.A.F. schools at Camp Borden and Trenton respectively. The length of the entire course, including a week of leave between each phase, was fifty weeks. The first group of British pupils, who took their elementary training in England was scheduled to arrive at the intermediate school at Borden in the second week of September but by that time war had broken out.

In the Canadian House of Commons the training scheme was discussed in much detail. The new Leader of the Opposition, R.J. Manion, called it a "flea bite" but in general the remarks were favourable.[47] The overall cost of the scheme was $6,000,000 - a sum which seemed to be large enough to impress most of the imperialists yet not so large as to antagonize the isolationists. In outlining the training

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46 H.Q. 13/5, Kenny to R.C.A.F. Liaison Officer, 9 August, 1939, Appendix A.

47 Debates, House of Commons, 1939, vol. 4, p. 3976.

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programme the Minister of National Defence explained that it could be enlarged if the two partners agreed. Perhaps this was the most significant comment of all. Time was quickly running out but the problems involved in air training had been widely discussed. In the process many misunderstandings had been cleared up and the door was open for future negotiations.

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CHAPTER III

SEPTEMBER 1939: MASSEY, KING AND THE B.C.A.T.P.

The outbreak of war in September 1939 raised the air training question to a new level where it was no longer hedged by political expediencies but viewed as a military matter in which the Canadian Government was ready to co-operate. The first indication of this came on 2 September, the day before Great Britain declared war, when Croil, on instructions from the Minister of National Defence informed the Air Ministry that if, in the urgency of the situation, it was deemed advisable to retain the seventeen student pilots in Britain they could be replaced by seventeen Canadian candidates for the R.A.F.[1] This gesture was accepted and more concrete offers of assistance were to come as soon as the Canadian Government began to explore the various ways in which it could co-operate with the United Kingdom in the prosecution of the war. One suggestion then followed another in quick succession until by the end of the month the concept of the B.C.A.T.P. had evolved.

The first war measures taken by the Canadian Government fell into the category of home defence precautions. The country began to move from a peace to a war footing on

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1 H.Q. 898-6-41, Training - R.A.F. Pilots in Canada, Telegram from Chief of the Air Staff to CANLIAISON, 2 September, 1939.

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25 August when a telegram sent out from Ottawa just before midnight, instructed the air force commands, the naval divisions and the military districts to begin calling up their respective reserve organizations upon whose support the initial phase of the military effort depended. This work was intensified after Great Britain, on 3 September, declared its belligerency. Canada's own declaration of war on 10 September, deliberately delayed to demonstrate the independence of the decision, came almost as an anticlimax to two weeks of hectic military activity. "War has broken out with Germany",[2] read the poignant but superfluous telegram that brought the official word to the nerve centres of the country's defence organization. Between the despatch of the first telegram from Ottawa and the official declaration of war a tremendous amount of work had been accomplished. All personnel of the permanent units in the three services were assigned to war duties. Existing reserve units which were immediately required were authorized to recruit to strength while some others, planned but still unformed, were brought into existence. Anticipated war activities necessitated the organization of new branches in all the services, establishments had

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2 C.P. Stacey, Six Years of War, The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1955, p. 40-49.

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to be revised and construction programmes, undertaken before the war, had to be speeded up.

As one may well imagine, the first steps in mobilization, although carried out according to plan, were not without confusion. There was no lack of volunteers. Consequently, the squadrons of the R.C.A.F., the units of the Royal Canadian Navy and the regiments of the Army had no difficulty in reaching their allotted strength. In the early days of the war no regular recruiting organization was in existence. Each unit of the Air Force, Navy and Army looked after its own manpower needs and stopped recruiting as soon as it acquired its complement of personnel. The problem of future manpower requirements was not yet in sight and one of the most pressing problems was to find clothing, accommodation and equipment for those who were enrolled. Since there were more applicants than positions to be filled, many young men, having given up jobs or sold businesses with the thought of joining one or other of the services were told to their utter dismay that there was nothing for them to do but go home and wait.

The new status that the war had already brought to Canada received unexpected emphasis on 31 August. On that day two Westland Wapiti aircraft of No. 3 Squadron, en route from Calgary to their appointed war station at Halifax, developed engine trouble shortly after leaving Ottawa and were

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forced to land at Millinocket, Maine. Under normal conditions this incident would have passed as a routine matter. But with war about to break out between Great Britain and Germany the presence of Canadian military planes on American territory was a matter of more than ordinary interest. A flurry of messages flowed from Ottawa and Washington to the usually quiet little town, urging the stranded pilots to get their machines on the way again before the crews were interned and the aircraft impounded. Late in the day of 1 September two mechanics were flown in from Ottawa with the necessary spare parts. By the morning of the 2nd the aeroplanes were serviceable but bad weather kept them grounded on United States' soil. On 3 September Great Britain declared war and in the American capitol officials wondered if this meant that Canada was at war too. If so, what was to be done with the Canadians at Millinocket? To everyone's relief the weather cleared on the morning of the 4th enabling the Canadian aircraft to take off for Blissville, New Brunswick.[3]

Canada's general state of war readiness was typified by the obsolete Wapitis. They were general purpose bi-planes which the Canadian Government had purchased in 1935 after they

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3 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary No. 3 (B) Squadron, vol. 1, entries for 31 August, to 4 September, 1939.

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had been cast off by the R.A.F. In performance and appearance they resembled aircraft of the First World War but until April 1940 they served as Canada's main air strike force on the east coast. More modern operational aircraft, on order from Canadian factories, were still in the early stages of production when war began. When the R.C.A.F. began to mobilize, its total aircraft strength, including obsolete types in storage, was about 270 of which approximately one half were trainers. Only thirty-seven front line machines could be mustered. These included nineteen Hurricanes, ten Battles and eight Stranraer flying boats. But the Battles, single-engined light bombers, were soon to be relegated to a training role and the Stranraers were also becoming outmoded. No replacements were in sight.[4]

On paper, the battle order of the R.C.A.F. consisted of eleven permanent force squadrons and twelve auxiliary, or reserve, units. Of the former only one, No. 5 General Reconnaissance Squadron, was fully trained and equipped for its operational role. On 2 September it was ordered out on convoy patrol in co-operation with the Royal Canadian Navy, beginning a task that was to grow to tremendous proportions as

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4 Air Historical Section, RCAF Logbook, A Chronological Outline of the Origin, Growth and Achievement of the Royal Canadian Air Force, King's Printer, 1949, p. 58.

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the war went on. The twelve auxiliary squadrons were in various stages of organization when Canada declared war. Eventually only seven were mobliized, absorbing the personnel of the other five. Recruiting and training were their first preoccupations as they prepared to take their place in the country's defence organization.[5] The oldest of the auxiliary units, No. 110 Army Co-operation Squadron, selected to accompany the 1st Canadian Division into battle, was the first Canadian Squadron to proceed to an overseas theatre of war.

On 29 August the Chiefs of Staff Committee presented the Government with a memorandum reviewing the form that the Canadian national war effort might take if the country became involved in a major war. The first step, of course, was to secure the home defences. But plans for this were already in hand and it remained to determine in what way the Canadian forces could co-operate with those of Great Britain and the other Commonwealth countries. The policy of no commitments had hitherto precluded any formal consideration of direct assistance but plans and ideas existed in men's minds even though they hadn't previously been committed to paper. According to the Chiefs of Staff Committee Memorandum, the Army's contribution would consist of raising a corps of two

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5 F.J. Hatch, "Salute to the Auxiliary", in Roundel, April, 1964, vol. 16, No. 3, p. 5-13.

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divisions and despatching it abroad as soon as possible. The Navy could best help by providing protection for shipping in Canadian waters and assisting the Royal Navy in keeping the sea lanes open. Air force assistance would begin with Canada helping to safe-guard domestic sea lanes, but Croil, in the Chief of Staff Memorandum, also mentioned that, "we are in a position from the outset to provide direct intervention in the shape of the personnel for an Army Co-operation Wing of three squadrons and a Bomber Wing of three squadrons, but with no aircraft or equipment."[6] Strangely enough the Memorandum made no mention of training aircrew for the R.A.F. though the Chiefs of Staff, especially Croil, must have been aware that this would be a major role of the R.C.A.F.

On 3 September, a Prime Minister to Prime Minister telegram told the British Government that Canadian measures for overseas assistance were under consideration and asked for, "an appreciation of the probable theatre and character of the main British and allied operation, in order that we may consider the policy to be adopted by Canada."[7]

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6 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 5199-S, Canada's National Effort, Armed Forces in the Early Stages of a Major War, vol. 1, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Minister, 29 August, 1939.

7 Directorate of History, 111.13 (D1) High Level Messages - 1940, Telegram Prime Minister to Prime Minister, 3 September 1939.

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Three days later, on 6 September, Anthony Eden, the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs replied:

> Generally, as far as immediate steps are concerned provision of naval vessels and facilities and of air force personnel would be of most assistance.... As regards land forces, policy here is to avoid a rush of volunteers such as occurred in the last war and to expand by means of controlled intake.[8]

This message was followed by a memorandum from the British High Commissioner, Gerald Campbell, outlining the air requirements in greater detail:

> The United Kingdom authorities anticipate real difficulty in meeting personnel requirements if, as seems likely, intensive air operations develop in Western Europe. It is suggested therefore that the best way in which Canada could assist would be to concentrate first on the individual training of pilots, observers, and particularly air gunners and W/T operators, rather than by forming and training complete units for dispatch to Europe (Canadian expeditionary units excepted) when sufficient officers and personnel were available in England and France the aim would be to form a Royal Canadian Air Force contingent.[9]

Further steps suggested in this memorandum included the expansion of Canadian air training facilities to achieve an eventual output of 2000 pilots a year, the training of as many observers and air gunners as possible, the immediate enlisting of skilled mechanics both for the R.C.A.F. and the

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8 H.Q. 5199-S, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada, 6 September, 1939.

9 Ibid, Campbell to Skelton, 6 September, 1939

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R.A.F. and, at a later stage the possible transfer of "at least four Royal Air Force Flying Training Schools to sites in Canada."[10]

In essence, the British were asking for a continuation and expansion of the training arrangements that were in effect before the war. However, two items in their request require further comment. One is the transfer of R.A.F. flying training schools, the other, the reference to a contingent of the R.C.A.F. At the start of the war the British had in operation a complex of some eighty-four flying training schools, providing instruction for pilots, air observers, or navigators, and air gunners.[11] Although the Air Ministry foresaw that eventually it would be necessary to transfer some of these schools outside of the United Kingdom, this was not a problem calling for immediate attention. After the first suggestion made in September 1939 the matter was not raised again for about a year when the transfer of British schools to Canada became a matter of major importance.

In regard to the formation of a contingent of the R.C.A.F., it was almost painfully obvious that the British preferred not to have one, at least not at the outset. As Heakes had so clearly pointed out, what the British wanted

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10 Ibid.

11 United Kingdom, Air Member for Training, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training, 1939-44, [London] Air Ministry, 1945, Appendix 3.

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most of all was a continuous flow of manpower from Canada to round out the squadrons of the R.A.F. There were several reasons for this line of approach. In the first place, one large international air force, or Commonwealth air force, such as the British had in mind was more economical in terms of man power than a conglomeration of smaller air forces working side by side. The larger air force could also exploit more effectively the mobility inherent in air power. Another factor was that Canada had no air force units equipped, trained and ready to meet the enemy in action. It was true that the R.C.A.F. could have sent over to Britain the personnel for small army co-operation and bomber formations but these would have to be operationally trained in R.A.F. schools, already fully engaged with training British personnel, and equipped from R.A.F. stocks of aircraft. Then there was the question of leadership. With few exceptions Canada, as the Air Ministry well knew, could not immediately provide pilots who were qualified to lead squadron and higher formations into battle. Unlike the Army, the British Air Force was in close contact with the enemy from the first day of the war. Air operations thus took shape much more quickly than did those on land. Under the circumstances the dispatch of untrained air units from Canada would be more of a hindrance than a help. But overshadowing all other factors was the need for pilot material and the belief of Air Ministry

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officials that the air potential of the Commonwealth could best be developed from the complete integration of individuals from its various parts. Nevertheless, knowing something of Canadian feeling about military co-operation, the Air Ministry could not completely rule out the ultimate formation of R.C.A.F. units.

On 12 September, King, on advice from the Chiefs of Staff, informed Campbell that an immediate expansion of R.C.A.F. training facilities was to be undertaken. He pointed out that in the meantime, as an offer of immediate assistance, a number of Canadian pilots "with considerable experience on civil types but untrained in service duties", plus a number of newly enlisted airmen of various trades, "could be made available on loan until such a time as Canada had sufficient trained personnel overseas to form air force units of its own."[12] The most interesting feature of King's letter is that it reflects some anxiety on the part of the Government to establish at least a token of air representation in the United Kingdom as quickly as possible and clearly indicates that the desire of creating national air force units was ever dominant. No reply to this letter has been found

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12 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 1, correspondence labelled "Financing of No. 110 (Army Co-operation Squadron), King to Campbell, 12 September, 1939.

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among air force records but it could hardly have aroused much excitement at the Air Ministry where the air officers, though undoubtedly glad to know that Canadian air training facilities were being expanded, could hardly have welcomed either the prospect of receiving pilots with "considerable experience on civil types but untrained in service duties" or the reference to the formation of national air force units.

On 16 September, the Canadian Chiefs of Staff met with the War Committee of the Cabinet, a group composed of the leading Cabinet Ministers and presided over by the Prime Minister or, in his absence, the Minister of National Defence. The various forms of assistance which should be undertaken by the armed forces of Canada were again reviewed against the background of the British proposals. On the 17th the Chiefs submitted a combined report to the Minister summing up the decisions reached the previous day. Croil's contribution to this report differs sufficiently from the Memorandum presented on the 29 August and also from King's letter of 12 September to warrant its reproduction in full:

> Very careful consideration has been given to the different ways in which the Royal Canadian Air Force can best co-operate in the war effort. Canada has neither equipment nor trained personnel in effective quantities to offer the Royal Air Force at the present time. Our present Canadian aircraft production is only adequate to meet the requirements of Canadian home defence, and there is no margin for overseas contribution. Therefore, we cannot offer immediately any effective aid to the Royal Air Force.

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> The Royal Air Force has advised that we can best help by the provision of trained personnel. Because the Royal Air Force has not yet been in action seriously, its resources are in anticipation of future rather than present needs. It is clear that the wastage in man power will be extremely heavy; that replacements will be required as soon as possible; and that training in the United Kingdom may be very seriously interrupted.
>
> It is my opinion, based on my knowledge of these conditions, that we can best help the United Kingdom by concentrating our entire efforts, after securing our home defence, upon the production of the greatest possible numbers of trained personnel in all categories. Our own Royal Canadian Air Force now at slightly over half the required strength, designed for and employed for home defence, will be able to contribute little to this problem. I recommend therefore that we should not consider the despatch of any personnel at present to the Royal Air Force, but rather that we should absorb all resources of trained airmen available in Canada with the object of securing as many instructors as may be possible in the various trades and activities of the Air Force, as it is only by so doing that we can exert our fullest effort to the task of providing an adequate supply of trained personnel in the shortest possible time. I recommend further that we should aim, as a start to produce at the rate of one thousand trained men, including all trades, per month, and that when this rate has been accomplished, consideration be given to the possibility of expanding the programme.[13]

Croil drafted an outline of a scheme for achieving the recommended output. His plan included the utilization of flying clubs and commercial companies, the establishment of two initial, or pre-flight, training schools, three

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13 H.q. 5199-S, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Minister 17 September, 1939, Appendix C., Royal Canadian Air Force Memorandum.

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intermediate and advanced flying training schools, three air observer schools, three gunnery schools and technical schools capable of training 10,000 ground tradesmen per annum.[14] This scheme got no further than the paper stage though existing schools were kept working to full capacity in order to bring the permanent and reserve squadrons up to strength.

Meanwhile, in the United Kingdom, air training was being discussed as a matter of national survival. In a message to the R.A.F., King George had declared that one of its greatest responsibilities "will be the safeguarding of these Islands from the menace of the air." [15] The damage caused by German air attacks on Polish aerodromes, communication centres and cities added bitter emphasis to his words and pointed grimly to the role of air power in the coming struggle. It was, then, in this atmosphere that the Air Ministry seriously began to cast about for a solution to the air training problem that would be something more than a continuation of the programme in effect before the war. The other Dominions, like Canada, had agreed to undertake the training of aircrew for the R.A.F. on an enlarged scale, but it still remained to find the training aircraft, to ensure permanence and continuity to what was promised and to co-ordinate the

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14 Ibid.

15 Quoted in Air Commodore L.G.S. Payne, Air Dates, Toronto, Heinemann, 1957, p. 91

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training in the different parts of the Commonwealth.

The answer to this problem came from an informal meeting in London of the High Commissioners from the various Dominions. In his memoirs, Vincent Massey, The Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom from 1935-1946, relates that on 13 September he and Viscount Stanley M. Bruce, the Australian High Commissioner, together with Group Captain F.V. Heakes, the R.C.A.F. Air Liaison Officer, a Group Captain of the R.A.F. and two Australian officers, "sat in my room and discussed air matters - the disparity in force [between ourselves and Germany] and other gloomy features."[16] The High Commissioners were fairly well informed on the air training situation which they had been following closely in the pre-war years. After Massey mulled over the problem further it occurred to him that Canada might be able to make a decisive contribution to the common war effort by training airmen from other parts of the Commonwealth. "I consulted my Australian colleague, who enthusiastically agreed."[17] The two High Commissioners again met at the Dominion Office on 16 September and suggested that consideration be given to a scheme whereby Canadian, Australian and New Zealand airmen

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16 Vincent Massey, What's Past is Prologue, The Memoirs of the Right Honourable Vincent Massey, Toronto, Macmillan, . 1963, p. 303.

17 Ibid.

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should be trained in Canada, "and should then be sent to the front as distinctive Canadian, Australian and New Zealand air forces."[18]

There was further elaboration of the idea at the Dominion Office. On 22 September, Bruce outlined the four main points in conversation with Captain Harold Balfour, the British Under Secretary of State for Air.[19] The first was that the training problem should be approached from the standpoint of pooling the resources of Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The second was that elementary training should take place in each of the countries on aircraft produced by domestic industries. Thirdly, pilots from Australia and New Zealand on completion of their elementary training would go to Canada for intermediate and advanced training. Finally, on completion of their training the pilots were to proceed to England to join squadrons of their own country.[20]

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18 Ibid.

19 It is not clear why the initiative in this instance was taken by Bruce, except that he had served as Prime Minister of Australia, 1923-1929, and perhaps felt less constrained than did the Canadian High Commissioner in discussing matters of policy.

20 United Kingdom, Air Member for Training, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training, 1939-44, [London], Air Ministry, 1945, p. 120.

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At this point the initiative passed to the Air Ministry where the bare outline was transformed into a vast air training scheme including observers and air gunners as well as pilots. Events now moved swiftly. On 26 September proposals were put forth in telegrams from the British Prime Minister to the Prime Ministers of the other countries. An interesting sidelight on this part of the story is that Vincent Massey, recalling how Mackenzie King had looked coldly on the pre-war proposals for training British pilots in Canada, took a hand in drafting the telegram from Chamberlain to King and worded the opening paragraph in such a way as to make a favourable impression on the Canadian Prime Minister. However, as Massey admits, this precaution may not have been necessary for the war had greatly altered the Prime Minister's view of air training. The telegram, about three pages in length, began:

> I am sure that you will agree that the scheme outlined in the following message is of first importance. For this reason, and because it invites cooperation with Canada to a very special degree, I want to make a special personal appeal to you about it. I feel that so far-reaching a project will strike your imagination particularly as it concerns an all important field of war activity in which Canada has already made so striking and gallant an individual contribution. May I therefore ask that the matter should receive very urgent attention.[21]

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21 H.Q. 5199-S, Telegram, The Director of State for Dominion Affairs to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 September, 1939.

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The body of the message went on to point out that the success of the German Air Force in Poland made it evident that an overwhelming force was needed "to counter German air strength and, in combination with other military measures and economic pressure to bring ultimate victory."[22] The need for aircrew from the Commonwealth was estimated at not less than 20,000 pilots and 30,000 aircrew annually. It was expected that four-ninths of these could be raised and trained in the United Kingdom with the remainder to be recruited in various parts of the Commonwealth and trained in Canada. The message concluded with an almost dramatic flourish which may be evidence of further editing by Massey:

> We hope you will agree as to the immense influence which the development and realization of such a project may have upon the whole course of the war. It might even prove decisive. We trust therefore, that this co-operative method of approach to the problem will appeal to your Government. The knowledge that a vast potential was being built up in the Dominions where no German air activity could interfere with expansion might well have a psychological effect on the Germans equal to that produced by the intervention of the United States in the last war....
>
> It would be most helpful if you could let me know at the earliest possible moment whether your Government approved the suggested scheme in principle and whether they are agreeable to joint discussions in Canada in order that immediate arrangements may be made to that end.

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22 Ibid.

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> I have conveyed the substance of the above scheme to the Prime Ministers of Australia and New Zealand also.[23]

The communication from Chamberlain was an appeal rather than a request. From beginning to end it stressed the military importance of the scheme and the favourable attention it would bring to Canada. In Mackenzie King the message struck a responsive chord. The Prime Minister received it just after dinner in his library at Laurier House and was deeply impressed by the magnitude of the scheme and the importance which Chamberlain attached to it. Musing on the contents he agreed in his own mind, "that the most effective military contribution Canada could make was through a great co-operative project to train pilots and aircrew for the Commonwealth air forces."[24]

It is not surprising that Mackenzie King should come to this conclusion. Although no military strategist, King was well aware of the importance of aircraft in warfare. For instance, in April 1939, in an article in the Canadian Defence Quarterly, he stated that, "Aeroplanes have brought new resources and scope to other arms in joint operations and have in themselves given war new range, new flexibility

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23 Ibid.

24 J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1960, p. 40.

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and new terrors."[25] Moreover, in reviewing the Government's plans for military co-operation during the special war session of the House of Commons in September 1939, he said:

> The information we have obtained indicates that the most immediate and effective means of cooperation would be a rapid expansion of air training, and of air and naval facilities, and the dispatch of trained air personnel. These measures we propose to institute immediately.[26]

It is also likely that King shared the opinion of his Quebec lieutenant and close associate, E. Lapointe, who emphasized that:

> This war, more particularly in its initial stages, will be largely in the air. Planes will do their utmost to destroy the industries and aviation centres of the enemy.[27]

Given further that the Canadian Government was fully aware of the adverse disparity between British and German air strength and that the security of Britain was a powerful factor in shaping Canadian defence policy, it appears evident that the proposal held out in Chamberlain's telegram was generally in line with King's own thinking on military matters and his view of Canadian co-operation with the United Kingdom.

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25 W.L. Mackenzie King, "Canada's Commonwealth and Foreign Policies", in Canadian Defence Quarterly, vol. 16, No. 3, April 1939, p. 267.

26 Debates, House of Commons, Second Session 1939, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1939, p. 36

27 Ibid, p. 67

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The plan presented by the British Prime Minister also appealed to King in another way which neither Massey nor Chamberlain may have foreseen. While perusing the telegram King noted that, "with concentration of Canadian energies on air training and air power there would be less risk of agitation for conscription".[28] The air training proposal held out the prospect of a large part of the R.C.A.F. and a good portion of Canadian man power being employed at home on air training operations. This in turn would help to blunt the arguments of those, both within the government and without, who felt that Canada should raise a large expeditionary force which always carried with it the possibility of enormous casualties and a demand for conscription as had happened in the war of 1914-1918. Canada was already committed to sending an infantry division to serve with the force of the United Kingdom. Another division was being raised for home defence and as the generals were playing down all thoughts of limited war there was little doubt that it would soon follow the first. Despite some fantastic thinking about the potential of aeroplanes as weapons of war the public at large still thought about the war in terms of regiments, batallions and brigades. Offers to form such units were reaching the Government daily from various parts of the

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28 Pickersgill, op. cit., p. 40.

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country. Mackenzie King, while recognizing the necessity of Canada having military representation in the war, deplored the thought of an army contingent on the scale that Canada contributed in the First World War. He knew that public demand and the urging of the generals would be difficult to resist and on this ground must have welcomed the air training proposal. Yet notwithstanding this consideration, the merits of the scheme as presented to him, as well as thoughts of the political battles previously fought over air training, make it inconceivable that he could have done other than to accept the proposal. On 28 September, after discussing the matter in Cabinet, he sent a telegram to Chamberlain giving Canada's acceptance in principle and agreeing that discussions between Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand should be held in Ottawa.[29]

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29 H.Q. 5199-S, Telegram, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, 28 September, 1939.

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CHAPTER IV

NEGOTIATING THE B.C.A.T.P. AGREEMENT OCTOBER - DECEMBER 1939

The air training negotiation in Ottawa lasted from about the middle of October when the first members of the British Air Training Mission arrived in Ottawa, until 17 December when the Agreement was signed. The discussions took place in three stages. Until the first week of November, when the representatives of Australia and New Zealand reached the Canadian capital, the main subject of discussion was the cost of the air training scheme and its effect on the financial and commercial relations of the United Kingdom and Canada. In November the talks centered mainly on the problems of Australia and New Zealand. In December the discussions switched back to questions concerning Great Britain and Canada and centered on specific difficulties connected with the formation of national air force units.

Although King had accepted the British proposal in principle he held some reservation about the training scheme. He wished that it had been put forward at the very beginning of the war because his Government had already decided on certain military measures which involved a substantial financial outlay. An infantry division was to be sent across the Atlantic and a second division was to be raised and kept under arms at home, though pressure was already mounting to have it follow the first. An extensive ship building programme was to be undertaken for the Royal Canadian Navy and

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aircraft were on order for the Air Force. Data submitted by the Chiefs of Staff indicated that in the first year of the war Canada's military programme, exclusive of the air training scheme, might cost as much as $491,689,000.[1] Canada had also offered to extend credit to the United Kingdom to enable it to purchase war materials, though no sum had as yet been mentioned. How much more could Canada do? The Government, not yet accustomed to thinking in the huge figures of war finance, nor completely committed to the view that the war effort demanded a resort to higher taxation, felt that the country had already gone about as far as its financial position warranted. Canada was also experiencing a balance of payments problem with the United States which it was feared would be intensified by the purchase of material required for the training schools. When Lord Riverdale, industrialist, diplomat and head of the United Kingdom Air Mission arrived in Ottawa in mid-October and paid a preliminary courtesy call on the Prime Minister, King left him in no doubt that it would be difficult to reach a satisfactory agreement. What Canada could do in the way of developing the scheme the British had in mind would depend, "first of all on the

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1 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 5199-S, Canada's National Effort, Armed Forces in the Early Stages of a Major War, vol. 1, Chiefs of Staff Committee to the Minister, 17 September, 1939.

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physical possibilities and secondly, the cost."[2]

Pending the arrival of the members of the Australian and New Zealand Air Missions, who reached Ottawa early in November, the British and Canadian delegates proceeded to study the plan which had been outlined by the Air Ministry. At a preparatory meeting of the British delegates with Canadian Cabinet Ministers and R.C.A.F. officers, Riverdale outlined the basic British proposals. In doing so he unfolded a plan embracing the training of 850 pilots, 510 air observers and 870 air gunners every four weeks. Elementary flying training schools were to be established in each of the three Dominions but advanced flying training as well as all the air observer and wireless operator-gunner training was to be carried out in Canada where there were to be thirteen elementary flying training schools, twenty-five advanced or service training schools, fifteeen air observer schools, fifteen bombing and gunnery schools, three air navigation schools and four wireless schools. In addition there was to be a supporting organization consisting of a number of schools for instructor training, and depots for maintenance, repair and supply. The number of planes, estimated at just over 5,000 was roughly twenty times the number of military

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2 J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1960, p. 41.

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aircraft in all of Canada. To man the schools, depots and headquarters would require 34,074 air force personnel and 1,022 civilians - a force six time greater than the entire complement of the R.C.A.F.[3] Air Commodore E.W. Stedman, head of the Engineering and Supply Branch of the Air Force, and a member of the Canadian delegation, notes in his diary that the scheme put forward by the British was so far ahead of anything the Canadians had thought of that, "everyone who had not heard of the details before was quite taken aback at its magnitude."[4]

One of the first tasks of the R.C.A.F. in connection with the training organization, and one in which Stedman took a leading part, was to make an overall estimate of the cost of the scheme up to 31 March 1943, a termination date selected on the hypothesis that the war would last for at least three years. After a price had been put on the necessary aircraft, airfields, buildings and fuel, and the maintenance, administrative and personnel costs added in, the total came to $888,500,000.[5]

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3 Stedman Papers, Directorate of History, binder labelled, "Flying Training Scheme 1939", memorandum (no signature), 23 October, 1939.

4 Ibid, manuscript, "The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan".

5 Ibid.

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This figure was first presented for discussion at a meeting of the Canadian and British delegations on 31 October and gave rise to some plain speaking. The United Kingdom's share of the expense, Riverdale pointed out, was to be in kind, in other words in the form of aircraft, engines, spare parts and accessories valued in all at $140,000,000. This left a balance of $748,500,000 to be apportioned among the other three countries in the ratio of the recruits they were expected to feed into the training schools. Canada, which was to furnish about one half the trainees was to bear responsibility for one half the balance, or $374,250,000, and Australia and New Zealand the other half. Prime Minister King, who had moved cautiously from the very beginning, reminded the British that the scheme had not been suggested by Canada but had "been devised in Great Britain for training pilots and air crews in Canada".[6] He maintained that while Canada had expressed a willingness to co-operate in the scheme it could go only so far as the Minister of Finance felt was financially safe. To this Ralston added that he he did not think that it was possible for the Canadian Gov-

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6 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D 786), folder labelled "A.F.H.Q. folder - contains notes concerning meetings and discussions in Ottawa re terms of the B.C.A.T.P. dated October - December 1939", Notes of a Meeting on 31st October with members of the Canadian War Cabinet.

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ernment to come within "shooting distance" of the financial proposals.[7] King even went so far as to state that the war was not Canada's war in the same sense as it was Great Britain's, a remark which he later regretted having made and which he tried to explain away by saying that his first statement did not detract from Canada's determination to do its full share in the war.[8]

In explaining the British point of view, Riverdale pointed out that the need for the scheme had been much accentuated since the Mission had sailed from England. He also emphasized that at home the United Kingdom was bearing the expense of an air training programme that was almost equal in size to the one under proposal. Enlarging on Riverdale's remarks, Captain Balfour, the British Under Secretary of State for Air, and Riverdale's chief adviser, said that the British Government was planning a very large effort in the air which by the third year would probably cost British tax payers over a thousand million pounds sterling. How the money was to be found was not the Air Ministry's responsibility, he said, but that of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. To this line of reasoning King retorted that in planning Canada's war effort his Government could not take the attitude

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7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

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that the money would be found somewhere. If Canada put too much money into air training it would have to cut back its effort in other directions. After the two sides had presented their initial arguments, King suggested that there was little point in pursuing the matter further at present and proposed that the negotiations be continued with a round of discussion between the members of the British Air Mission and the Canadian Cabinet Ministers.[9]

As the talks developed, the factors involved in achieving a satisfactory financial arrangement became ever more complicated. They included not only the cost in dollars and cents to each country but reached out into the overall trade and financial relations between Canada and the United Kingdom and touched on Canada's economic position in regard to the United States. While the air training discussions were taking place another British Mission, the British Purchasing Mission, was in Canada negotiating the extension of credit for the war time purchase of war materials and food. In trying to meet the requests of these two bodies the Canadian Government laid down two conditions which it felt were necessary in order to keep the country's economy functioning at a level where it would enable the Canadian people

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9 Ibid.

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to make a maximum contribution to the war. One condition was that the British Government increase its planned purchase of Canadian wheat and the other was that the amount of British credit buying in Canada would have to be restricted because of the large amount that Canada was being asked to expend on the training organization. As the Canadians viewed the problem they saw that the air training commitment would mean increased imports from the United States. To keep their balance of payments with that country under control they would require funds from the British that could be readily converted into American dollars. The overall question facing the British, therefore, was whether the training scheme was important enough for the United Kingdom to sacrifice some of its credit purchasing of war materials, wheat and other food products and dig deeper into its gold reserves which were already dangerously low. The decision went in favour of the training scheme. The British asked that it be given priority over any other plan of war production in Canada and the British Treasury accepted the consequent heavy strain on its gold and dollar reserves.[10]

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10 R.S. Sayers, Financial Policy, 1939-1945, London Longmans, Green, 1956, p. 324-333.

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Possibly the most astonishing feature of the financial arrangements was that the Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand squadrons to be formed from the aircrew trained in Canada were to be paid for by the British Government. This radical departure from the principle that a Commonwealth country was financially responsible for the maintenance of its own forces was proposed by the British early in the negotiations. Riverdale presented the proposal as a gesture to compensate the other countries for the expenses they were shouldering in connection with the training scheme but it was really motivated by the British conception that all of the graduates turned out by the air training organization in Canada, whether they were formed into Dominion squadrons or not, were to be part and parcel of the British Air Force. Notwithstanding that this looked very much like a return to colonialism, the Dominions accepted it as the proper thing for the United Kingdom to do. The general view was voiced by the Canadian Minister of Finance, Colonel Ralston, who maintained that the scheme, though located in Canada, "was none the less a scheme for training men for the British Air Force, and the United Kingdom should pay for these men."[11] The only financial responsibility Canada and the other two Commonwealth countries were willing to accept in connection with the squadrons to be

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11 181.009 (D 786), Notes of a Meeting on 31st October with members of the Canadian War Cabinet.

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formed under the scheme was to make up the difference in pay between the R.A.F. rates of remuneration which the British Government proposed to pay to Dominion aircrew and the rates which Canadian, Australian or New Zealand airmen normally received. Although the arrangement whereby Britain paid for the equipment maintenance and personnel costs of the Dominion squadrons might be justified in view of the overall expense of the training programme, it was one of the most unfortunate decisions taken at the Ottawa conference. It weakened the Canadian position in regard to the administration, organization and direction of the Canadian squadrons when these came to be formed, and reinforced the appearance that these were part of the R.A.F. Later on in the air training discussions, the formation of squadrons was discussed in more detail and in a different context, but Britain's acceptance of financial responsibility for them was never questioned.

The representatives of Australia and New Zealand arrived in Canada on 3 November. For the remainder of the month the negotiations, which had hitherto centered on Canadian problems were focussed mainly on the difficulties facing the two countries of the South Pacific. The attitudes of Australia and New Zealand towards the air training scheme were very similar. Both had taken slightly longer to approve the idea in principle than had Canada. In the case of

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Australia, the enthusiasm earlier shown by Bruce, the High Commissioner in London, was not shared by the Government. Air training in Canada involved an expenditure that neither the Australians nor the New Zealanders had counted on at the beginning of the war and one which they had no surplus of Canadian dollars to meet. Besides, both had already made a start in air training and wished to expand their own establishments. On the other hand, they were, like Canada, prepared to follow British advice in military affairs and accepted the logic that a great and immediate expansion of the R.A.F. was essential for Britain's survival, that the Dominions would have to supply aircrew for this purpose and that Canada had the best strategic location for a centre of advanced air training. Moreover, Australia and New Zealand were no more ready than Canada to take part in the war immediately and welcomed a concrete proposal from the United Kingdom which would serve as a focal point in their military programmes. Another factor which motivated all the negotiators, including the Canadians, in their effort to reach a satisfactory agreement was the realization that if such an important proposal was rejected it would deal a severe blow to Commonwealth solidarity and British prestige.[12]

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12 Douglas Gillison, Royal Australian Air Force, 1939 - 1942, Canberra, Griffin, 1962, p. 81.

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In Canada, the Australian and New Zealand Missions learned that of the 50,000 aircrew the United Kingdom estimated would be needed every year of the war, five-ninths, about 28,000 were to come from the three Dominions and receive training in Canada. Of this number Canada was allotted 48 per cent, Australia 40 per cent and New Zealand 12 per cent. The cost of the scheme, after allowing for contributions in kind from the United Kingdom, was to be shared in like proportions. The Australian and New Zealand delegates were quick to point out that these quotas were not in keeping with the existing population ratios of 57:35:8 which meant that the two smaller countries were expected to carry more than their fair share of the manpower burden while Canada's contribution was smaller than it ought to be.[13]

Another difficulty voiced by Australia and New Zealand arose from Canada's demand that they pay their share of the training costs monthly in securities that could readily be converted into American dollars. Since Australia and New Zealand were running unfavourable trade balances with both Canada and the United States they had no means of raising the necessary funds save by digging into their foreign exchange reserves which they might want to use to meet other

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13 Ibid, p. 83

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expenses arising from the war.[14]

The formation of national squadrons was another question of major importance for Australia, though New Zealand was not so inclined to press it to the fore. Like Canada, Australia looked forward to having its aircrew serve in distinctively national air force units and formations and regretted that in spite of the reference to Dominion squadrons in the original proposal the Air Ministry envisaged the formation of one large air force into which the other three countries, through the medium of the training organization, would feed pilots, air observers and wireless operator-air gunners. But since the British were accepting the entire cost of air operations, the Australians accepted this arrangement and also the British explanation that in view of the administration problems involved, only a limited number of Dominion squadrons could be formed.[15] The bulk of the aircrew supplied by Canada, Australia and New Zealand would end up in British squadrons.

The conditions governing Australia's, and to a lesser extent New Zealand's, participation in the air training scheme were formally presented to the British and Canadian

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14 J.M.J. Ross, Royal New Zealand Air Force, Wellington, Government Printer, 1955, p. 51.

15 John Herington, Air War Against Germany and Italy 1939-1943, Canberra, the Advertiser Printing Office, 1954, p. 3-4.

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delegates on 23 November. The three main points were that the quota of aircrew to be provided by Canada, Australia and New Zealand should be calculated on a population basis, that great Britain should help overcome the dollar shortage difficulty by underwriting the monthly payments due to Canada and that seven-ninths of the Australian aircrew contribution should be completely trained at home with the United Kingdom providing aircraft and advisory personnel for this project in the same proportion as for the Canadian training. If these conditions were not met Australia indicated its intention of carrying out the whole of its air training in its own establishments.[16]

As a result of Australia's demands, which were accepted by Canada and Great Britain, certain changes had to be made to previous plans including a reduction in the number of establishments. A new estimate put the cost of the training in Canada to $607,271,000 up to 31 March 1943. This figure included Britain's contribution in aircraft, valued at $185,000,000 which when deducted left $422,271,000 as the pool of expenditure in Canada. Canada agreed to absorb

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16 181.009 (D 786), Memorandum for United Kingdom Mission Presented on Behalf of Australian Mission and Submitted to Canadian Sub-Committee on November 22, 1939.

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the entire cost of initial and elementary schools, $66,146,048, since these were for the use of Canadian pupils only, thus reducing the amount to be shared by the three Dominions to $356,125,162. It was further calculated that Canada was to contribute 80.64 per cent of the pupils and should pay a like proportion of the cost, or $287,179,221. Australia and New Zealand were to send 11.28 per cent and 8.08 per cent respectively of the pupils and their corresponding shares of the cost were $40,170,918 and $28,774,913. The total amount Canada was now asked to spend on the scheme was $353,325,379,[17] about $20,000,000 less than originally estimated but still a very large sum in proportion to what the Minister of Finance had estimated that the war would cost.

The points conceded to Australia and New Zealand meant that there were to be three training plans instead of one and later in the year the United Kingdom signed separate agreements with the other two countries. Australia had an air training organization similar to the one established in Canada but it was on a much smaller scale and primarily for the use of Australian nationals. Air training in New Zealand was restricted to the elementary phase of flying instruction. In 1940 the United Kingdom entered into air training arrangements with South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Kenya and the

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17 Stedman Papers, folder labelled, "Flying Training Scheme, Estimate of 26 November, 1939".

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United States. Canada, however, was the main air training centre of the Commonwealth and more than half of the aircrew required for the R.A.F. were to pass through Canadian schools. At first referred to by various names, such as the Empire Air Training Scheme and the Joint Air Training Plan, the scheme in Canada became officially known as the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, though the other names also continued to be used.

The air training organization to be established in Canada was outlined in an appendix to the Memorandum of Agreement. The number of schools was somewhat reduced from the original plan presented by Riverdale. There were to be eighteen service flying training schools in place of twenty-five, ten air observer schools instead of fifteen, ten bombing and gunnery schools rather than fifteen and two air navigation schools in place of three. The number of initial schools, four, and the number of elementary flying training schools, thirteen, were unchanged as these were for the training of Canadian pupils only. The training was to commence on 29 April, 1940, when the first initial training school was to open its doors. Five elementary training schools, five service flying training schools, four observer schools, two wireless schools and one navigation school were also scheduled to come into operation in 1940. The B.C.A.T.P. was to be fully developed by April 1942 and would then be

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turning out 544 pilots, 340 air observers and 580 wireless operator-air gunners every four weeks or approximately 17,500 aircrew a year.[18]

Anxious to keep the schools operating at full capacity the United Kingdom reserved the right to send pupils from its own shores, or from elsewhere in the Commonwealth, to take up the slack if Canada,. Australia or New Zealand fell short in providing their quota of trainees. Newfoundland, which had no training organization of its own, but which desired to provide a fighter squadron to serve with the British Air Force made arrangements with the Governments of the United Kingdom and Canada to have its pilots trained in the Canadian schools. Pupils from Newfoundland were to be counted as members of the British Air Force and the cost of their training charged to the British Government.[19]

The number of aircraft required for air training in Canada, though somewhat reduced from the first estimates still loomed large. The total was set at 3,540 planes. This figure included 702 Tiger Moths and Fleet Finches for elementary flying training, 720 Harvards for combat training,

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18 Canada, Air Training Agreements, Agreement Relating to Training of Pilots and Aircraft Crews in Canada and Their Subsequent Service between the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Signed at Ottawa, December 17, 1939, (Further references will be cited as B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, December 17, 1939).

19 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 927-1-1, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 2, Campbell to Skelton, 7 November, 1939.

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1368 twin-engine Avro Ansons for training pilots and observers for bombing and coastal operations, and 750 Fairey Battles for teaching bombing and air gunnery to air observers and wireless operator-air gunners. Of the aeroplane requirements, Great Britain was to supply all of the Ansons and Battles, 533 of the Harvards with 133 replacement engines, and all of the engines for the Tiger Moths. The cost of the balance of the Harvards, 177, was to be absorbed by Canada, Australia and New Zealand. Canada was to be financially responsible for the Tiger Moth air frames and for both engines and air frames for the Fleets.[20] This rather complex breakdown of financial responsibility was one of the less desireable features of the B.C.A.T.P. As may well be imagined it led to an enormous, and to some extent futile, exercise in bookkeeping.

All of the aircraft, with the exception of the Fleet Finch, were standard equipment in British Training Schools. Tiger Moths were widely used in Canada while the Finch, a Canadian built aircraft equipped with an American engine had barely got past the experimental stage. The Harvard, an American aircraft, had been selected by the Air Ministry in 1938 as the best combat trainer available. Canada had

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20 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, 17 December, 1939.

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followed suit and had about fifteen Harvards on order when the war broke out. By contrast, the British had ordered 400 in the pre-war period and placed a demand for another 533 for the air training scheme while the Ottawa negotiations were taking place. [21]

The pupils of the Royal Air Force, the Royal Australian Air Force and the Royal New Zealand Air Force, sent to Canada for training, were to be "attached" to the R.C.A.F. In laymen's language this meant they were subject to the rules, orders and regulations of the Canadian Air Force but otherwise retained their identity as members of their own service. They also received Canadian rates of pay while serving in Canada. Like other expenses connected with the Training Plan, the personnel costs were met in the first instance by the Canadian Government and accounts rendered monthly and annually to the other partners. [22]

Special regulations, based on British wartime procedures, provided that aircrew recruits were to be enrolled as aircraftman-Class II, a classification which put them at the bottom of the rank structure. This method of enlistment was

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21 Power Papers, Queen's University Archives, Box 18, D 1017, Notes of a Meeting Held at Air Ministry on 13 December, 1940.

22 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, 17 December, 1939.

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a distinct departure from the ordinary practice of granting pilot recruits a commission as provisional pilot officers, the equivalent of second lieutenant. While undergoing training, pilots and observers, the elite among the aircrew, were to be advanced to the classification of leading aircraftman, a step below corporal, but on graduation were to be promoted to sergeant rank. According to the Agreement, wireless operator-air gunners were to retain the classification of aircraftman-Class II until the completion of their training when they too, might be promoted to leading aircraftman.[23] Before the first schools opened, however, this inequality was righted and wireless operator-air gunners, like pilots and air observers, could look forward to becoming sergeants on graduation.

Nothing was said in the Agreement about the commissioning of aircrew other than the brief statement that, "A number of pilots and observers will be selected, on passing out of training, for commissioned rank..."[24] A more definite commissioning policy was adopted in July 1940, about three months before the first pupils of the Air Training Plan were to graduate. This was embodied in a ruling passed to the other Commonwealth partners by the United Kingdom, that

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23 Ibid.

24 Ibid.

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thirty-three per cent of the pilots and observers were to receive commissions on graduation depending on their final examination results. A further seventeen per cent, to be chosen from among those who rendered "distinguished service, devotion to duty and display of ability in the field of operations", were to be commissioned later on.[25] Not until February 1941 was provision made for commissioning wireless operator - air gunners or air gunners who were sometimes referred to as "straight air gunners" to distinguish them from their comrades who received training in both wireless operating and air gunnery. The discrepancies in granting commissions to the various aircrew categories gave rise to unending discussion among the various Commonwealth partners. Both Canada and Australia found the United Kingdom policy of granting commissions to be too restrictive but because of their close association with the R.A.F. in the B.C.A.T.P. they felt more or less obligated to follow the British lead.

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25 Directorate of History, Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters, Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff to the Members of the Supervisory Board of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan from its inception on December 17, 1939, to Termination on March 31, 1939, Ottawa, Air Force Publications, 1945, p. 26. (Further references will be cited as Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff).

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By 27 November the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement was in substantially the same form in which it was finally accepted. The United Kingdom Air Mission now wanted to proceed with the formality of signing the document without further delay. The Australian and New Zealand representatives, having received authority from their respective governments, were likewise to affix their signatures to the Agreement and return home. However, at this stage Prime Minister King, who dominated the remaining part of the conference, reminded the British delegates that there were still some items of business to be settled. One of these concerned certain details of the trade and financial arrangements between Canada and the United Kingdom. Graham Towers, the Governor of the Bank of Canada, had left for England to discuss these matters with British authorities and King felt that the Agreement should not be signed until he received word that the Canadian terms regarding trade and finances had been approved. Another outstanding matter dealt with a statement which King had requested from the British Government which was to spell out the general importance of the air training scheme, a statement which King could use to counter the arguments of those who might be critical of the B.C.A.T.P. or who might advocate sending a large army contingent across the sea. A third condition which King wished, was a guarantee from the British that the Canadian squadrons to be formed under the B.C.A.T.P.

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would definitely be designated as R.C.A.F. units and not R.A.F.[26]

The first two problems that were troubling King were easily disposed of. The statement the Canadian Prime Minister had asked for arrived on the first day of December and about the same time word was received from Towers that the British had accepted the Canadian terms regarding trade and international finance. It now remained to determine how the squadrons to be formed under the B.C.A.T.P. were to be designated. The settlement of this matter gave rise to some of the most contentious and exhaustive meetings of the entire air training conference.

The text of the Agreement contained but one brief paragraph, Article 15, on the question of the squadrons which gave little indication as to how they would be formed or what national designations they would be given:

> The United Kingdom Government undertakes that pupils of Canada, Australia and New Zealand shall, after training is completed, be identified with respective Dominions, either by the method of organizing Dominion units and formations, or in some other way, such matters to be agreed upon with the respective Dominion Governments concerned. The United Kingdom Government will initiate inter-governmental discussions to this end.[27]

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26 Pickersgill, op. cit., p. 45-48

27 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, 17 December, 1939.

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Something of what the British had in mind was illustrated by the formation of No. 242 Squadron in October, 1939. This unit was made up of Canadian fighter pilots who had joined the R.A.F. before the war, and British ground personnel. It was designated as No. 242 (Canadian) Squadron and as such it took part in the early fighting in France and later served in the Battle of Britain. The pilots, although Canadians, were members of the R.A.F. and the squadron was organized and administered as a unit of the British Air Force.[28]

The Australians, somewhat reluctantly, and the New Zealanders, were willing to settle for this type of organization but the Canadians, who had more at stake in their larger manpower commitment, wanted something more specifically national. This demand came both from the political and military leaders. King and the Cabinet Ministers feared they would be in serious trouble with the Canadian electorate if Canada's manpower contribution was completely swallowed up by the R.A.F. whose officers were thinking in terms of one big Commonwealth air force.[29] Croil and the senior Canadian air force officers likewise felt that the R.C.A.F. was in danger of losing its national identity. In a memo-

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28 Directorate of History, Air Historical Section, Among the Few, Air Force Publications, January, 1948, p. 15-19.

29 Norman Ward, Ed., The Memoirs of Chubby Power, A Party Politician, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966, p. 202.

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randum on this subject addressed to Rogers, the Canadian Defence Minister, Croil stated in consideration of Canada's prestige as a nation and the morale of R.C.A.F. personnel it was essential that arrangements be made for the R.C.A.F. to participate in war activities. He recommended that steps be taken to ensure the eventual organization of R.C.A.F. fighter and bomber formations as well as a wing of three Canadian squadrons to support the Canadian land forces. These units and formations would use up only a portion of Canada's aircrew contribution but they would, so Croil said, help to satisfy Canada's national aspirations.[30]

The Air Ministry was opposed to such developments for reasons that were difficult to refute. After all, the British Government had undertaken to meet the personnel, equipment and maintenance costs of all units to be formed under the B.C.A.T.P. In addition the R.A.F. was going to provide all the ground personnel. Since in any air force unit the members of the technical and administrative staffs far out-numbered the aircrew it was difficult to justify the designation of a squadron as R.C.A.F. simply because the flying members were Canadians. If the Canadians wanted to be represented by distinctively national air units and formations

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30 H.Q. 927-1-1, vol 2, Croil to the Minister, 23 November, 1939.

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they should provide the ground staff and stand the expense. So ran the British argument.[31]

The Canadians rejected this line of reasoning. They pointed out time and again that the large sum they were committed to spend on air training and the size of the air training organization they were obliged to staff, which Croil estimated as being the equivalent of fifty complete squadrons, justified their request.[32]

At the beginning of December, when the two Commonwealth countries were deadlocked over the issue, King took a strong line and demanded that before he could sign the Agreement it would have to be supported by a note guaranteeing that R.C.A.F. squadrons would be formed. The week between 8 and 16 December was then taken up with attempts to draft a satisfactory statement. In conversation with Rogers on 7 December, Riverdale conceded that the ambiguous Article 15 implied that R.C.A.F. squadrons were to be organized.[33] Yet he did not wish to give the Canadians a carte blanche on

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31 181.009 (D 786), United Kingdom Air Mission, Notes of a Meeting Held at the Department of National Defence at 2 p.m. on 14th December, 1939.

32 H.Q. 927-1-1, vol. 2, Croil to the Minister, 23 November, 1939

33 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, B.C.A.T.P., vol. 1, Miscellaneous Correspondence labelled "Employment of Output of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan", Riverdale to Rogers, 8 December, 1939.

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the matter and to Mackenzie King's annoyance sought to lay down certain conditions under which such units could be formed. In a letter to Rogers on 9 December Riverdale said that R.C.A.F. squadrons would be formed "in all circumstances in which it is feasible."[34] Both King and Rogers rejected this as unsatisfactory. Riverdale then put forward a new formula worked out by Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, one of his senior advisers and a supporter of the Air Ministry's conception of one air force for the Commonwealth. Brooke-Popham's proposal was that squadrons would be designated as R.C.A.F. if they were composed of Canadian aircrew and ground personnel. This response was even further off the mark than the previous formula. King, who took a dislike to Brooke-Popham, contended that the B.C.A.T.P. was not concerned with ground crew, and turned down this solution to the problem.[35] On 15 December Riverdale and Ralston together drafted a statement which said that the number of R.C.A.F. squadrons to be formed, "will be the subject of discussion between the two governments".[36] Both sides found this to be a suitable compromise and the Agreement at last seemed to be

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34 Pickersgill, op. cit., p. 48

35 Ibid, p. 49

36 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, Miscellaneous Correspondence, vol. 1, Riverdale to Rogers, 16 December, 1939

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on the point of being concluded. Before finally accepting this principle, however, the British Air Mission referred it by telephone to the Air Ministry who, in place of approving it submitted a new formula in which the number of R.C.A.F. squadrons was to be governed by the actual amount of money which Canada was putting into the air training scheme.[37]

Annoyed at the British for dragging finances back into the picture, King termed this suggestion as "impossible".[38] In his own mind he had already set 17 December as a deadline for getting the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement signed. During the remaining hours of 15 December and all day of the 16th he and Ralston worked feverishly to attain this goal, eventually succeeding at the end of a series of climactic events which perhaps are more important for the light they throw on Mackenzie King's method of getting things done than for what they contribute to an understanding of the B.C.A.T.P. The crux of the problem as King saw it was how to get Riverdale to sign the statement which he (Riverdale), and Ralston had worked out earlier and which both regarded as satisfactory. Ralston, who had taken over from Rogers due to the latter's illness, spent a good deal of time on 16 December with the British Air Mission discussing this proposal and stressing

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37 Pickersgill, op. cit., p. 50-51

38 Ibid.

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the importance of getting the Agreement signed without further delay. Riverdale was more or less of the same mind but Brooke-Popham was more inclined to check once again with the Air Ministry and felt that after so much delay had occurred already, waiting another day or two for the signing would make no difference.

Meanwhile, at work in his office, King was expecting a call from Riverdale. By evening nothing had been heard from the head of the British Air Mission and on learning that he was at a dinner party King contacted him by phone and speaking "as Prime Minister of Canada"[39] asked him to come to his office at once. King then phoned the Governor-General, Baron Tweedsmuir, and requested to see him immediately, "on the most important matter I have ever had occasion to discuss with him".[40] After hearing Mackenzie King, the Governor General agreed that the matter should be settled at once and that his views should be made known to Riverdale and Brooke-Popham. Furthermore, at the urging of the Prime Minister, Tweedsmuir, despite the fact that he was ill in bed, consented to have a personal word with Brooke-Popham, who at this moment seemed to be the main figure in holding up the signing of the agreement. Brooke-Popham, who was

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39 Ibid, p. 54

40 Ibid, p. 55

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attending a hockey match, was accordingly summoned and King hurried back to his office where Riverdale was waiting. Together, they went over the statement about R.C.A.F. squadrons. After making a slight alteration in the wording they both accepted it as basically correct.[41] The statement read:

> On the understanding that the numbers to be incorporated or organized at any time, will be the subject of discussion between the two governments, the United Kingdom accepts in principle as being consonant with the intention of Paragraph 15 of the Memorandum Agreement, that the United Kingdom Government, on the request of the Canadian Government, would arrange that Canadian pupils, when passing out from the training scheme, will be incorporated in, or organized as units and formations of the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Field. The detailed methods by which this can be done would be arranged by an intergovernmental committee for this purpose, under Paragraph 15.[42]

It was almost midnight when the question of national identity was laid to rest (for the time being at least) and the delegates were ready to sign the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. Brooke-Popham arrived at the stroke of twelve, a bit crestfallen after his meeting with the Governor General. As 17 December happened to be Mackenzie King's birthday there was a slight pause while congratulations were offered and then, to everyone's relief, the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement was signed by Riverdale for the United Kingdom and King for Canada.

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41 Ibid, p. 57-58

42 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Miscellaneous Correspondence, Riverdale to Rogers, 16 December, 1939.

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The Australian and New Zealand delegates having left for home the document was later signed in London by their respective High Commissioners.

On the evening of 17 December King made a special broadcast announcing the signing of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. In his address to the nation the Prime Minister described the co-operative undertaking as being of "great magnitude":

> It will establish Canada as one of the greatest air training centres in the world. Its development will result in a rapid increase in the number of air training schools in this country, and will achieve a steadily increasing output of highly trained pilots, observers and air gunners. The plan will enable the four countries to meet the greatly increasing requirements of trained personnel for their respective air forces, and for such service as the combined forces may be called to perform in the theatres of war. The aim in short, is to achieve, by co-operative effort, air forces whose co-ordinated strength will be overwhelming.[43]

Making use of the statement which he had requested from Chamberlain King said that, "The United Kingdom has since informed us that considering present and future requirements, it feels that participation in the Air Training Scheme would provide for more effective assistance toward ultimate victory than any other form of military co-operation which Canada could give." He added, however, that the United Kingdom, "would welcome no less heartily the presence of

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43 [W.L. Mackenzie King], The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan: Broadcast by Right Honorable W.L. Mackenzie King, M.P., Sunday, December 17, 1939, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1939. p. 3.

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Canadian land forces in the theatre of war at the earliest possible moment." Later in the evening, recording the events in his diary, Mackenzie King wrote, "I suppose no more significant Agreement has ever been signed by the Government of Canada."[44]

The sheer size of the scheme and what this meant in terms of finance, construction and Canadian prestige might alone have justified the Prime Minister's sentiments, but no doubt there were other thoughts in his mind as well. The B.C.A.T.P. was more than a training plan. It was a symbol of the Commonwealth's determination to act in the interest of democracy. In this sense it was a force bolstering public morale in all parts of the Commonwealth and helping to mould public opinion in other parts of the world, particularly in the United States whose people were watching the events from the sidelines. Moreover, the Plan held special significance in the field of domestic politics. Mackenzie King, a man of peace to the depths of his soul, well knew that the Canadian people would find it difficult to accept him as their war leader. His arch-enemy, Premier Mitchell Hepburn of Ontario was already alleging that the Canadian war effort was characterized by apathy and misdirection while R.J. Manion, Leader of the Opposition, continued to harp on King's

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44 Pickersgill, op. cit., p. 59

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handling of the air training question in the years immediately preceding the war. The advocates of a large land contingent, some of them from King's own party, were making their voices heard in various parts of the country leaving the Prime Minister in danger of being forced along a path he did not wish to travel. In the Air Training Plan, King had an instrument with which he could disarm his most vociferous critics and which had not been forced upon him by a particular faction but had rather fallen into his lap from an unexpected quarter. He could see the Air Training Plan in all its dimensions, military, economic, international and political. There were, it is true, certain aspects about it which he did not like but with a clear conscience he could call on the Canadian people to support it to the full. With a federal election not far off, could the Canadian Prime Minister have asked for more?

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CHAPTER V

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE B.C.A.T.P. A NEW DEPARTMENT AND A NEW MINISTER

The direction and control of the Air Training Plan was at first vested in the Canadian Minister of National Defence. However, as the Plan began to take form the Canadian Government created a new department, the Department of National Defence for Air, to deal with all matters relating to it. The Air Portfolio was given to C.G. Power who became the dominant figure in the administration of the B.C.A.T.P. Under the Minister of National Defence for Air the Chief of the Air Staff held executive command of the R.C.A.F. and of the B.C.A.T.P. But the chain of command was not quite so simple as these arrangements would suggest. During the air training negotiations in Ottawa the administration of the B.C.A.T.P. was one of the matters discussed. The results of the deliberations on this particular subject were summed up in an exchange of letters between Rogers, the Canadian Minister of National Defence, and Balfour, The British Under Secretary of State and were later approved by the Governments of the four countries concerned although they were not written into the text of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. In short, they provided that while control of the Plan was to remain in Canadian hands its general direction was to be entrusted to a Supervisory Board on which each of the four participating countries would have representation. The position of the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand was to be further

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strengthened by the establishment of Air Liaison Missions in Canada to safeguard their respective interests in the Plan. In addition, it was agreed that the other countries would provide staff and instructor personnel to help the R.C.A.F. put the Plan into operation.[1] Although the loaned personnel were not really part of the administrative machinery they did, at least in the case of the United Kingdom, exercise some influence in shaping the growth and development of the Plan.

The Supervisory Board was one of the main instruments in the administration of the Air Training Plan. Its terms of reference, contained in the correspondence between Rogers and Balfour, provided that it was to meet under the chairmanship of the Canadian Minister of National Defence, though the latter was soon to be replaced by the Air Minister. Other Canadian members were to include the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Transport, the Deputy Minister for Air and the Chief of the Air Staff. Contact between the Board and the Canadian Government was to be effected through the Chairman, and with the R.C.A.F. through the Chief of the Air Staff who was responsible for implementing the Board's recommendations. The United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand chose to be represented on the Board by their respective High Commission-

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1 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting Held 24 January, 1940, Appendix No. 3, Rogers to Balfour, 27 November, 1939.

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ers and their Liaison Officers and thus had a military as well as a political voice in the direction of the Plan. Another member of the Board, and one who occupied a more or less neutral position, was the Financial Advisor who was responsible for administering a bewildering number of accounts involving the capital, personnel and technical costs.[2]

The Board held its first meeting in January 1940 and met regularly thereafter at intervals of approximately a month. The members delved into all aspects of the B.C.A.T.P. They made the wishes of their own governments known to the Board and kept home authorities informed on the progress and problems of the Plan. At every meeting the Chief of the Air Staff, or in his absence the R.C.A.F member for Air Training, presented a comprehensive account of the previous month's activities including such details as the number of pupils under training, the number of schools in operation, problems pertaining to equipment, and the like.[3]

The United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission was organized in January 1940 under the direction of Brooke-Popham who had remained in Ottawa for this purpose after the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement was signed. It was given accommodation in the Jackson Building, at the corner of Bank and Slater Streets

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2 Ibid.

3 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vols. 1-10.

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in Ottawa, where the R.C.A.F. had its headquarters. Consequently, the members of the British Mission, who numbered fourteen in all, had easy access to the officers of the R.C.A.F. They were also at liberty to visit any of the units of the B.C.A.T.P. at any time and present their observations and recommendations directly to the Chief of the Air Staff or pass them on to the Supervisory Board.[4]

In effect, the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission was an extension of the British Air Ministry. It was the main channel of communication through which the B.C.A.T.P. was kept in tune with operational requirements and other air training programmes. As a rule, any alterations in training desired by the Air Ministry, such as a change in syllabus or the introduction of new equipment, were made known to the United Kingdom Air Liaison Office and passed on to R.C.A.F. Headquarters. Likewise, changes in the programme which were dictated by conditions in Canada were revealed to the Air Ministry by the British Air Liaison Officer in Chief. From this it will be seen that the R.C.A.F. was not a free agent in the administration and direction of the B.C.A.T.P. It was more in the position of a contractor who had undertaken to turn out a product, in this case, pilots, air observers

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4 United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, History of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, January 1940 to 31 March, 1945, Ottawa, (no publisher), 1945, p. 1-2.

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and wireless operator-air unners, according to the requirements and specifications of a principal user - the R.A.F. The Governments of Australia and New Zealand also established Air Missions in Canada with similar privileges and responsibilities as that of Great Britain but playing a less conspicuous part in the development of the B.C.A.T.P.

One of the subjects discussed between Balfour and Rogers was the loan of R.A.F. Officers and other ranks to the R.C.A.F. Recalling their conversations on this matter, Rogers, in his letter to Balfour on 27 November wrote as follows:

> ...I made it clear to you...that we would appreciate the full co-operation of the various Governments concerned. Having regard to the proportions of the air training plan, we readily understand that we would require the loan of considerable numbers of R.A.F. personnel who would hold staff and instructor appointments within the Canadian organization. This will be not only necessary for the successful working of the air training plan, but will also express our mutual desire for continuing co-operation in the successful conduct of the plan.[5]

In December 1939 a list of positions to be filled by members of the British Air Force was drawn up by the R.C.A.F. and submitted to the Air Ministry. A total of 267 British personnel were asked for including eighty-five officers

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5 Minutes of the Meeting of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting Held 24 January, 1940, Appendix No. 3, Rogers to Balfour, 27 November, 1939.

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and 182 other ranks.[6] Most of these were required immediately in order to get the Plan launched on schedule; others were to be sent over as the training organization expanded. The first contingent of 85 officers and 180 N.C.O.'s and men landed at Halifax in January 1940 and more arrived from time to time until the number of "loaned personnel" numbered about 300.[7] They were selected from various branches of the R.A.F. and included experienced staff officers, logistics personnel, engineers, pilots, navigators, armament officers, technicians and administrators. In Canada they filled some of the key positions in the training organization. Some were to be found at R.C.A.F. Headquarters, others at the various commands, at schools and miscellaneous units. Croil welcomed them as "brother members of our service" and Air Chief Marshal Brooke-Popham,furthered good relations by stressing to the new arrivals that they must regard themselves from the start as part of the R.C.A.F. looking to R.C.A.F. Headquarters rather than the British Air Liaison Mission as the source of their orders and instructions.[8]

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6 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 927-1-1, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 1, Kenny to Director Air Personnel, 3 January, 1940.

7 United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, op. cit., P. 12.

8 H.Q. 927-1-1, vol. 1, Brooke-Popham to Maclachlan, 8 January, 1940.

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The British personnel appear to have fitted quickly and easily into the structure of the R.C.A.F., a possible reflection of the great need that existed for their services. Legally, their position in the R.C.A.F. was governed by the Visiting Forces (British Commonwealth) Acts, a group of statutes passed by the various Commonwealth parliaments in 1933. In general, these Acts provided for units or individuals of one Commonwealth force, in this case, the R.A.F., to serve with those of another. In legal parlance, the British officers and other ranks were said to be "attached" to the R.C.A.F. In other words they maintained their rank, seniority of appointment and authority as members of their own force but were subject to the disciplinary and administrative regulations of the R.C.A.F. Their relationship to the R.C.A.F. was much the same as that of the air trainees from abroad and, like the latter, they received the R.C.A.F. rates of pay.

On the whole, relations between the R.C.A.F. and R.A.F. went along smoothly enough but there were exceptions. In January 1940 a dispute arose in connection with the selection of one of the officers to be sent out from the United Kingdom to assist with the B.C.A.T.P. Although of minor proportions and of little significance in itself, the incident holds interest because of the personalities involved and the manner in which it was settled. Among the officers requested

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by Canada was one of air commodore rank, the equivalent of brigadier, to serve as Director of Training in the B.C.A.T.P. To fill this important position the Air Ministry selected Air Commodore Leckie. This was a logical choice for Leckie was a Canadian, well known in the R.C.A.F. as well as R.A.F. and a member of a successful business family. He had served as Director of Training (R.A.F.) from 1935 to 1938 and was therefore familiar with the problems and requirements of a large scale training organization. Moreover, his career in the R.A.F. had taken him to many parts of the globe and had given him experience in all types of air operations. On duty in Malta as Air Officer Commanding the R.A.F. in that theatre, when informed of his impending transfer to Canada, Leckie was no doubt reluctant to give up an operational command in exchange for a training job in Ottawa. Yet few could visualize more clearly than he the real significance of his new task. He returned to England to prepare to leave with the main party of loaned personnel.

Leckie did not sail with the others. His crossing was delayed when it was discovered at R.C.A.F. Headquarters that he out-ranked every officer in the R.C.A.F. with the exception of the Chief of the Air Staff. The position which was to be held open for him in Ottawa was that of Director of Training. But it so happened that in the structure of R.C.A.F. Headquarters, the Directorate of Training was a

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subordinate part of the Organization and Training Division which had been created in November 1939 to deal with organizational problems of the expanding Air Force. The Division, or the higher formation, was commanded by Air Commodore G.O. Johnson, one of the most able officers in the R.C.A.F. but junior in rank by a few years to Leckie. The latter, despite his seniority, would thus be the subordinate. The Air Ministry, not inclined to let military custom stand in the way of obtaining a desired objective, suggested that the difficulty would disappear if Johnson was promoted to the rank of air vice marshal. This proposal, sensible though it was, proved to be unacceptable to the R.C.A.F. Two other air commodores, E.W. Stedman and L.S. Breadner, were both in line for promotion ahead of Johnson andthe R.C.A.F. had not yet reached the point where it had room to expand at the top or juggle with appointments and promotions. The most curious proposal was that Leckie be granted a temporary commission in the R.C.A.F. gazetting his appointment at some date which would conveniently make him junior, in theory at least, to Johnson. But it was pointed out to Croil by the Canadian Judge Advocate General that Leckie's seniority was protected by the Commonwealth Visiting Forces Acts.[9] A solution could

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9 Ibid, vol. 2, Chief of the Air Staff to Judge Advocate General, 24 January, 1940.

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also have been effected by raising the Directorate of Training to the status of a Division thus separating it from the Organization Division and making Leckie, like the heads of other Divisions, responsible to the Chief of the Air Staff. Eventually, this is the way the difficulty was overcome. But in February 1940, the R.C.A.F. was not prepared to go this far, presumably because as head of a Division, Leckie could not very well have been denied a seat on the Air Council - a body made up of the Chief of the Air Staff, the heads of the various Divisions, generally referred to as "Air Members", and the Minister. It was through the Air Council that the R.C.A.F. made its recommendations to the Minister and, understandably enough, there was some doubt on the part of the R.C.A.F. hierarchy as to the wisdom of admitting an officer of the R.A.F., albeit a Canadian, to its inner sanctum. There were no Canadians on the British Air Council and little likelihood of any being invited.

So impossible did the situation seem from the R.C.A.F. point of view that Croil cabled the Air Ministry that, "it is apparent another selection should be made in place of Air Commodore Leckie to avoid complications."[10] In reply Croil was informed through the R.C.A.F. Liaison Office in London

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10 Ibid, Telegram, Chief of the Air Staff to CANLIAISON, 21 January, 1940.

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that Air Ministry felt that it "must insist on...Leckie's posting remaining unchanged , and was taking the matter up through the Dominion's Office with the High Commissioner for U.K. in Canada".[11] Soon after this exchange of telegrams Leckie was on the high seas bound for Canada. Yet one more attempt was made to avoid what was considered to be a most undesirable situation. On 30 January Croil proposed to Brooke-Popham, that if Air Commodore Leckie was appointed to the British Air Liaison Staff instead of to R.C.A.F. Headquarters it would be a simple way of overcoming any difficulties. Croil pointed out that Leckie, though on the staff of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Office, would be working in close co-operation with the R.C.A.F. and could still make his experience and knowledge available.[12]

In most instances the Air Ministry allowed the R.C.A.F. to use the loaned personnel as it saw fit, provided they were employed where their experience could be used to advantage. In Leckie's case, however, the British took a particularly strong line. Brooke-Popham, having received his instructions, was not prepared to make any alteration in Leckie's appointment.[13]

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11 Ibid, Telegram, Canadian Air Liaison Officer to Chief of the Air Staff, 22 January, 1940

12 Ibid, Croil to the Liaison Officer in Chief, 30 January, 1940.

13 Ibid, Croil to the Air Member for Personnel, 31 January, 1940.

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If the episode left any ill feeling on either side it was quickly overcome. Leckie arrived in Canada at the beginning of February and was soon firmly entrenched as Director of Training. In this position he was immediately responsible to Johnson, his junior in rank, years of service and age, a discrepancy which was fortunately submerged by the character and ability of the two men. With little difficulty Leckie was able to make himself at home within the R.C.A.F. Headquarters organization which was based on that of the R.A.F. In November 1940 the expansion of the B.C.A.T.P. forced the R.C.A.F. to draw new organization charts. In the shifting about of functions from one division or directorate to another, the Directorate of Training was raised to the status of a Division embracing three Directorates: Air Training, Technical Training, and Training Plans and Requirements.[14] This development made for greater efficiency and at the same time solved the problem of seniority attending Leckie's appointment. As Air Member for Training he was, like other heads of Divisions, directly reponsible to the Chief of the Air Staff.

It was anomalous that an officer of the R.A.F. should be in charge of such an important part of Canada's war effort

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14 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, R.C.A.F. Personnel History, [unpublished material], vol. 4, p. 857.

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as air training, so in 1942, arrangements were made for Leckie to transfer from the R.A.F. to the R.C.A.F. It is a tribute to the importance of his job as Air Member for Air Training and the way in which he carried it out that in January 1944 he was appointed Chief of Staff of the R.C.A.F.

It would be easy enough to imagine that conflict rather than co-operation would characterize the administration of a project in which four air forces were involved, but such was not the case in the B.C.A.T.P. Although misunderstandings occurred the administrative machinery worked smoothly enough leaving little evidence of serious disagreement. One reason for this happy state lies in the determination of the British and Canadian Governments to make the Plan succeed; for the former this was a vital necessity and for the latter it was a great challenge. The situation can only be fully understood in the context of the appointment of C.G. Power as the Canadian Minister of National Defence for Air and in his conception and direction of the B.C.A.T.P.

The decision to form a separate department to administer the B.C.A.T.P. was made in the spring of 1940. The task of organizing the B.C.A.T.P. which included the procurement of aircraft, the establishment of a large number of air bases and the recruiting and training of thousands of supporting ground personnel, not to mention air training itself, was of such great proportions that the Government felt that it

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should be separated from the ordinary work of the Department of National Defence. Accordingly, on 11 April, 1940 James S. Duncan, vice president and general manager of Massey Harris Company Limited, was appointed Acting Deputy Minister within the Department of National Defence to administer the B.C.A.T.P. and other air force matters.[15] The German military success in Norway in April, followed by the lightning attack on France and the Low Countries, again demonstrated the importance of air power and pointed to the significance of the B.C.A.T.P. as a factor in the war. These events convinced the Prime Minister of Canada to carry the decentralization of the services a step further and create a separate Department of National Defence for Air under the direction of a Cabinet Minister.[16]

The man whom King selected, C.G. Power, was first elected to the House of Commons in 1917 as Member of Parliament for the riding of Quebec South and had been returned in each succeeding election. In 1935 he joined the Cabinet as Minister of Pensions and National Health. In September 1939, when King was looking for a new Minister of National Defence to replace Mackenzie, he offered the post to Power who since

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15 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1940, vol. 2, p. 1386.

16 Ibid, vol. 1, p. 46.

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1935 had served as acting Minister of National Defence from time to time. Power foresaw political difficulties looming between Ottawa and the Duplessis Administration in Quebec and declined to accept the appointment on the grounds that it would diminish his usefulness to the Government as a federal representative from Quebec. In a realignment of Cabinet positions that followed, he accepted the less demanding Post Office Portfolio and Rogers became Minister of National Defence. Nevertheless, in his new role, Power still found himself associated with defence matters. The provincial election in Quebec kept him away from Ottawa, and the B.C.A.T.P. negotiations, during most of September and October but thereafter he was often to be found in Rogers' office while the latter was away on speaking engagements. On 8 April, in company with Rogers, he attended a meeting of the Supervisory Board of the B.C.A.T.P. On 6 May, at the regular meeting of the Board, and again at a special session on 10 May, while Rogers was in England, Power presided as Chairman of the Board though the creation of the new Ministry and the appointment of a Minister of National Defence for Air were not announced in the House of Commons until 20 May.

At first, Power does not seem to have been a particularly strong advocate of the B.C.A.T.P. In his Memoirs he admits that during the crisis in the summer of 1940 he sided with those who felt that the Plan should be abandoned in

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favor of sending as many Canadian pilots as possible to the United Kingdom to take part in the Battle of Britain.[17] However, it was also at this critical juncture that the sudden unleashing of air power by both sides and the certainty that extensive aerial operations would follow seem to have left him convinced that through the Air Training Plan, Canada could make a contribution that would be of momentous consequences in the final outcome of the war. His future pronouncements were clear and emphatic on this point.

One of his first acts was to make explicit through Parliament, the Press and the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Public Relations what the B.C.A.T.P. was expected to accomplish. He felt that if it was not made clear to the Canadian people that the B.C.A.T.P. was aimed not at furnishing immediate assistance to the R.A.F. but at supporting it in its long-range plans to gain air supremacy, they would soon become critical of the Plan's seemingly slow step by step progress while Great Britain itself was under attack. Although a summary of the B.C.A.T.P. had been given to the newspapers and tabled in the House of Commons very few people found time to read it carefully enough to understand its schedules and ambiguous clauses. R.B. Hanson, the leader of the Opposition, who

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17 Norman Ward, Ed., The Memoirs of Chubby Power, a Party Politician, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966, p. 181-191.

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perused the summary pamphlet more assiduously than most Members of Parliament, admitted his bewilderment to Power saying, "I should like to have some explanation.... I do not understand very much about this scheme."[18] If a man of Hanson's position was at sea, how much more so was the ordinary citizen! As Power set about the task of enlightening Parliament and the people on the aims and objectives of the B.C.A.T.P. information was forthcoming, and in detail and abundance.

A glance through the 1940 and 1941 editions of Hansard will reaveal that in those years Parliament devoted more attention to the B.C.A.T.P. than to any other aspect of Canadian military policy. About the only item on which Power was sealed to secrecy was the actual number of graduates proceeding overseas and at the request of the United Kingdom a very limited amount of information was divulged about plans to move R.A.F. schools to Canada. On other aspects of the B.C.A.T.P. the Minister answered questions with such genuine frankness and provided such pertinent information that was not specifically asked for that he soon won the confidence of the Opposition. In his speeches he frequently reviewed the general progress of the Plan. He took time to explain to individual members, either on the floor of the House or in

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18 Debates, House of Commons, 1940, vol. 1, p. 262.

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private conversation, why contracts for training schools in the various ridings had not yet been filled. To clear up misunderstandings of the training and duties of the aircrew categories he provided charts showing the sequence of instruction given to pilots, air observers and wireless operator-air gunners. Tables were presented listing the various kinds of training schools, their location, the amount of money spent in their development and the number of buildings each contained. All this was written into Hansard which in places reads like a ready reference to the B.C.A.T.P.

In winning support for the B.C.A.T.P. Power was ably assisted by Duncan, the Deputy Minister, who was convinced that, "the whole plan of air training, with its schedules and incomprehensible delays was something that had to be sold to the public through well-planned publicity."[19] With this in mind he set about organizing the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Public Relations and used it in preparing and distributing brochures, leaflets and articles outlining the organization and progress of the B.C.A.T.P. A persuasive speaker himself, Duncan addressed clubs and associations on the meaning and significance of the Plan and encouraged the public appearance of Canada's air heroes of the First World War in its support.[20]

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19 Ward, op. cit., p. 208.

20 Ibid.

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But Power intended to be much more than a mouthpiece for the B.C.A.T.P. On taking office he at once moved to establish a clear working relationship with his associates. As Minister he was prepared to leave matters of detail to the experts - the high ranking air force officers, and reserved for himself the responsibility for making final decisions on matters of policy and important developments and presenting them for cabinet approval. Within this framework the senior officers, entrusted with the leadership and direction of the R.C.A.F., were expected to make recommendations to the Minister but were reminded that they had no authority to formulate policies.[21]

It took a few months for this idea to become accepted at R.C.A.F. Headquarters and in the process of establishing his authority Power found it necessary to remove Croil as Chief of the Air Staff. In the years before the war Croil, like the other service Chiefs, had come to regard Mackenzie, then Minister of National Defence, as little more than a departmental figure-head whose military purpose was fulfilled in the presentation of defence estimates to the House of Commons. In spite of a Defence Committee consisting of the Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice, National Defence and Finance, Mackenzie took little interest in defence

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21 Ibid, p. 206.

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planning and left the various Chiefs of Staff free to work out their own problems and procure their equipment, the only restriction being that they keep within the confines of the miserably inadequate defence budgets.[22] This situation had prevailed since 1935 and Croil having carried the burden of responsibility for air defence for so long had become, like the other service leaders, quite sensitive to political interference in military affairs.

Moreover, the Chief of the Air Staff and the Minister were men of contrasting temperament. Croil, who had been in the service since 1915 was meticulous, methodical and reserved, with a great respect for military protocol and procedure as evidenced by the difficulties surrounding Leckie's appointment as Director of Training. Patience and persistence, important qualities for the Dominion's military leaders in the depression years, were among his virtues. By contrast, Power, one of Canada's most colourful politicians, was a thoroughly outgoing person, witty, gay and persuasive. He saw Croil as, "an excellent, conscientious, hard-working officer", but:

> To my civilian mind he was altogether too regimental. I got the impression, rightly or wrongly, that friendly, sympathetic co-operation with him would, owing to our fundamental difference of temperament, be difficult if not impossible. I wanted friend-

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22 C.P. Stacey, Six Years of War, The Army in Canada, Britain and the Pacific, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1955, vol. 1, p. 9.

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> ship and co-operation; he, I imagine, expected me to give little more than routine supervision, leaving him the unquestioned authority over the members of the service, and possibly over the purely civilian functions of the department. There was already... a degree of antipathy between the uniformed members of the forces and the numerous civilian staff. I felt that Croil's influence would lean altogether too heavily on the side of the uniform and so upset the balance that should exist in a department of this kind. I requested him to hand in his resignation as Chief of the Air Staff, and to accept a position as Inspector General of the Royal Canadian Air Force.[23]

Since Croil's resignation was not entangled with any crucial aspects of government policy and did not lead to immediate retirement from the service it created little stir either within the R.C.A.F. or in public life generally. Croil accepted the situation with goodwill although as Inspector General, an office that carried considerable responsibility but little authority, he soon went into eclipse. Over the years the valuable contribution he had made to the development of the R.C.A.F. in the difficult depression years has been all but forgotten. Fortunately, Power, the man who dismissed him also rescued him from obscurity. In his Memoirs Power says he "learned to lean heavily upon him and to have the utmost confidence in his reliable and accurate reports".[24]

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23 Ward, op. cit., p. 206-207.

24 Ibid.

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Also in his Memoirs Power credits Croil with having drawn the War Committee's attention to the importance of providing Canadian defence for the large airport at Gander. It might be added that in earlier years Croil had taken the initiative in developing air bases on the east and west coasts and had clearly foreseen the important role that Canada was to play as an air training centre.

To succeed Croil, Power appointed Air Vice-Marshal L.S. Breadner who was next in line in terms of seniority. Big, bluff, candid, congenial and having a dislike for the ostentatious, Breadner was a man in whom Power instinctively recognized a kindred spirit and with whom he formed a lasting friendship. On major questions of policy the Minister and the Chief of the Air Staff were often of one mind but for all that, Power found that Breadner was not a "yes" man. "In private conversation, he spared me neither his criticism nor his strictures."[25]

Power's success in establishing his administrative authority over the B.C.A.T.P. lay in the fact that he was at heart a skilled politician and an accomplished diplomat. He adhered firmly to government policy and procedure yet seldom underestimated the worth of individuals or the importance of forming satisfactory relationships with his colleagues both

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25 Ibid.

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in and out of Parliament. He made it his business to know his counterparts in the British Air Ministry in a more than superficial fashion. He likewise made acquaintance with senior officers of the R.A.F. as well as with those of the R.C.A.F. and fully appreciated Leckie's worth as Director of Training. With one and all he was prepared to indulge in witticisms or serious discussions as the occasion demanded.

The British respected Power for his personal qualities as well as for his position as chief government spokesman for the B.C.A.T.P. Alterations in the Plan sometimes involved large sums of money such as the purchase of additional aircraft or the construction of new schools. While these costs were to be shared by the other partners in the Plan, expenditure in the first instance was made by the Canadian Government. Much hinged on Power's recommendation, for it was he who presented the estimates to the Cabinet and defended the expenditures in the House of Commons. No respecter of red tape, he was sufficiently sure of himself and of the importance of the B.C.A.T.P. to risk making decisions involving heavy expenditure before confirmation of his action could be obtained from the Government.

Power was the key figure in the B.C.A.T.P. Where a lesser man might have failed, he succeeded in drawing the partners into a harmonious working relationship. All those involved in the Plan looked to him for the final answer when

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important decisions had to be made. In Parliament he summed up policies and important developments in a way that struck responsive chords in his associates. His orations, in which one can detect a peculiarly Churchillian ring, revealed the problems and setbacks as well as the achievements of the Plan with a frankness that won him the acclaim of the opposition members as well as the adherents of his own party. Typical was an address given in July 1940 when the seemingly slow progress of the Plan left many people wondering if it was worth while:

> The plan is proceeding; the work is progressing. To-day we are not yet out of the woods, far from it; but we believe we can see a picture, not finished, not complete, but somewhat less gray and nebulous than it was. We have had our share of disappointment. Mistakes and blunders we make and commit every day. We endeavour to repair the one and to remedy the other. We need help. Tell us what is lacking; point out what is wrong. If possible, tell us how to repair our mistakes; show us where the drawbacks are.
>
> Those of us who are closely associated with the plan firmly and steadfastly believe it will win through. We have been told that it is Canada's most important contribution to the common effort and ultimate victory. We are determined that it shall be.[26]

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26 Debates, House of Commons, 1940, vol. 3, p. 2108.

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CHAPTER VI

THE ROLE OF CIVIL AVIATION IN THE B.C.A.T.P.

Faced with the problem of putting the training scheme into operation on rather short notice, the R.C.A.F. called the civilian flying clubs, the commercial air companies and the Department of Transport to its assistance. By the end of 1940 the Department of National Defence for Air had made arrangements with seventeen flying clubs and six commercial companies, including the Canadian Pacific Airlines and some of its subsidiaries, to take part in the training programme. In 1941 another seven flying clubs were brought into the picture. The clubs assumed responsibility for operating the elementary flying training schools, and the commercial companies for the air observer schools where aerial navigation was taught. The Department of Transport, which was closely associated with the R.C.A.F. from the beginning to the end of the war, played a conspicuous part in the selection and development of airfields.

The advantage of using the flying clubs lay in their availability. They had the fields, a nucleus of personnel and equipment and the experience required to carry out the elementary or preliminary phase of flying training. In 1938 Croil had raised the possibility of employing the flying clubs for air force purposes. As mentioned in an earlier

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chapter,[1] a scheme was inaugurated in 1939 whereby eight flying clubs were selected by the R.C.A.F. to undertake the initial phase of flying training leaving the Air Force free to concentrate on the intermediate and advanced training in its own schools where specialization in military flying began. The success of this programme led the Flying Clubs Association to prepare to undertake a greater share of air training if war should come. The clubs not involved in the military scheme were encouraged by M.A. Seymour, President of the Flying Clubs Association, to take steps to improve their facilities, enlarge their membership and purchase more aircraft. When hostilities broke out, Seymour was able to offer the Air Force the services of fourteen more flying clubs. Later, when the groundwork for the Commonwealth Air Training Plan was being laid, he proposed to British and Canadian officials that the flying clubs take over the entire elementary flying training programme.[2]

This suggestion was readily accepted and Norman Rogers, the Minister of National Defence, set up a committee consisting of the Deputy Minister, the Chief of the Air Staff, Seymour and a few others to consider how it could best be

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1 V. supra, p. 57-58

2 Alice Gibson, Department of Transport, information supplied to the writer, 10 October, 1967.

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carried out. The committee made two major recommendations. One was that instead of thirteen elementary flying training schools, as provided for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, there should be twenty-six half-size schools each operated by a flying club, or in some localities by two clubs working together. This arrangement made it possible to distribute the flying training task fairly evenly among the clubs as there were approximately twenty-six in existence in September 1939. The other recommendation made by the committee was that each of the participating clubs should be re-organized as a limited liability company under the Dominion Companies Act.[3] In other words they were to become crown corporations. This measure was deemed necessary to bind the clubs more closely to the air training organization and provide a sound basis for their expansion. It was also an indication that the development of the clubs, which were relatively small in proportion to the task they were undertaking, was considered to be in the order of a national emergency.

The corporations thus formed were known as flying training companies. Usually the name of the sponsoring club reappeared in the name of the company. For instance, the Quebec City Flying Club sponsored the City of Quebec Flying

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3 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D3), History of Civilian Flying Schools with copies of agreements, financial arrangements, etc., p. 1-19.

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Training School Limited which operated No. 22 Elementary Flying Training School at Ancienne Lorette near Quebec City. In like fashion, the St. Catharines Flying Club formed the St. Catharines Flying Training School Limited which conducted flying training at No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School located at the municipal airport at St. Catharines, Ontario. Before entering into a contract with the Government, a flying training company had to raise a working capital of $50,000 by the local sale of company stock, not for actual expenses, which were guaranteed by the Government, but as a demonstration of financial stability, community support and good faith. The companies also had to satisfy the Air Force that they could provide an adequate staff of administrative, technical and instructional personnel. Those employed were required to give proof of being ineligible for military service in order that they could be kept in their positions with the civilian companies.[4]

The committee formed by Rogers drew up a standard form of contract governing the relations between the companies and the Crown. As their main source of revenue the companies received a monthly managerial fee of $18,185 which was intended to cover their major operating expenses. In addition they were given allowances for oil, gasoline

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4 Ibid.

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and rations and a payment of fifty cents per flying hour. All of these charges were subject to revision every six months. Over the years they were altered considerably with the general trend being toward a consolidation of payments. The amounts paid by the Government to the companies were intentionally set at a level which would permit an efficiently operated company to realize a net profit or saving of approximately $5,000 annually. Out of this amount the companies could declare a dividend of five per cent on their shares; the balance of the profit was placed in a government controlled fund to be used for the benefit of civil aviation in post-war years. Since the Government regulated the salaries and wages to be paid to company employees opportunities for private profit making were strictly limited.[5]

Major items of equipment, such as aircraft and accessories, and machinery required for the general maintenance of the airfields, were provided by the Government. Additional construction and other improvements carried out in expanding facilities were also undertaken at public expense. The agreements signed with the Government specified that the companies were responsible for the proper care and maintenance of all equipment placed at their disposal, though major overhauls of aircraft, performed periodically as standard

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5 Ibid, Appendix 2, Schedule 2

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air force practice, were also paid for out of public revenue.

In the United Kingdom and the United States civilian organizations were also used to assist the military by carrying out elementary flying training. In both of these countries the more successful civilian schools were financially backed by aircraft companies. In the United Kingdom the flying schools were nationalized at the beginning of the war and placed under contract to the Air Force. In the United States where there were a number of large civilian schools, the Government entered directly into contract with a chosen few. These were assisted with loans of aircraft and other essential equipment. They received special allowances, somewhat similar to those granted to the Canadian companies, but their main income was a per capita payment based on the number of pupils trained to service requirements.[6] At first glance it might appear that this method of reimbursement was simpler than the system of payments adopted in Canada. It must be kept in mind, however, that in any air training organization the majority of failures occur at the primary level. The failure rate may run as high as thirty per cent of the total intake. Cost accounting for pupils eliminated at various

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6 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate, Men and Planes, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1955, (U.S.A.F. Historical Division The Army Air Forces in World War II, vol. 6), p. 455-461

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stages of a programme of mass production presents special problems, as the Americans discovered. Another objection to per capita payments was that they might tempt a training school to continue to carry pupils who, though they could be taught to fly, might not have the potential of becoming good military pilots. In any case, the main point to observe here is that Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States all made good use of civilian facilities. Each country worked out an arrangement in the way it thought best and in each case the civilian contribution was one of major importance.

At the start of the war the Canadian clubs were quite small, being able to accommodate only a few pupils at a time. The B.C.A.T.P. Agreement provided for a pupil population of forty-eight for each elementary flying training school based on a course that lasted approximately seven weeks and an intake of twenty-four pupils every four weeks though some of the schools were double, tripled and even quadrupled in size as the war went on. Because Canada had a shortage of civilian pilots the problem of obtaining a staff of flying instructors was the greatest problem faced by the flying clubs. Their main sources of supply were the bush services, the Department of Transport and veterans of the First World War who had kept up their interest in aviation. All pilots hired by the clubs were sent to Camp Borden to take the regular air force course of flying instruction.

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The recruiting and training of civilian pilots went on through the fall and winter of 1939-40 and by spring some of the clubs were ready to begin negotiations with the R.C.A.F. The Toronto Flying Club, re-organized as the Malton Flying Training School Limited, was selected to operate No. 1 Elementary Flying Training School Limited at Malton (Toronto) airport.[7] In April negotiations were begun for the opening of more schools. Because of the difficulty of finding pilots, some of the schools opened without a full complement of instructors.

Another suggestion emanating from the committee set up by Rogers was that commercial aviation companies be invited to operate the air observer schools. Subsequently, the Canadian Pacific Airlines, some of its recently acquired affiliates and a few independent firms agreed to manage the ten air observer schools. The contracts negotiated between the commercial companies and the Government were similar to those made with the flying clubs. In dealing with the commercial firms, however, the Government made no allowance for profit, all payments being adjusted to meet salaries, wages and actual operating expenses.[8] Another difference was that all

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7 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, B.C.A.T.P., vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting held 8 April, 1940.

8 History of Civilian Flying Schools with copies of agreements, financial arrangements etc., Appendices 1, 6, 7.

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instruction at the air observer schools, where aerial navigation was taught, was done by air force personnel. Although the airline companies did not have an instructor problem to contend with, as did the flying clubs, they did have to provide a staff of civilian pilots whose role was to fly students and instructors on navigational exercises. Sometimes referred to understandably as "taxi drivers" or "chauffeurs", staff pilots were experienced flyers with an extensive knowledge of navigation. Though not required to do any instructing themselves they had to be able to follow a course charted by a student observer. In the event that the novice gave navigational directions that brought the aircraft miles from its intended path, as could easily happen, the staff pilot was responsible for getting plane and passenger safely back to base. The supply of pilots with the required experience, and with the added qualification of being ineligible for military service, was barely equal to the demand. As the training scheme expanded the source became exhausted with the result that the Air Force had to post military pilots to some of the air observer schools.

The Department of Transport became involved in the B.C.A.T.P. at an early date. On 3 October, about a week after the original proposal had been made by Great Britain, Air Vice-Marshal Croil and Air Commodore L.S. Breadner met with Mr. J.A. Wilson, Controller of Civil Air Operations, and

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other transport officials to consider how the Department of Transport could best assist the R.C.A.F. in the event that the scheme was approved. In view of its experience in building and improving airports, principally along the line of the Trans-Canada Airway but in other parts of the country as well, it was agreed that the Department of Transport should undertake the initial selection of airfield sites and, when these had been approved by the R.C.A.F., proceed with the development of the landing fields, including the laying of hard surfaced runways, the provision of utilities such as water, power and communications systems, and the construction of access roads. Reponsibility for the design and erection of buildings was left to the Air Force. This decision went into effect as soon as details of co-operation between the two Departments were worked out.[9] Letters then went out from the Department of Transport headquarters to its airway inspectors and airway engineers in various parts of the country instructing them to proceed with the selection and preliminary surveys of potential airfield sites. They were urged to move quickly enough to get this work, or as much of it as possible, completed before winter set it, and secretly enough to avoid speculation in land values. Daily reports were to

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9 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 103-74/68, Co-operation Between the Departments of National Defence and Transport on Aerodromes, vol. 1, Smart to Deputy Minister, 11 October, 1939.

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be forwarded to Ottawa outlining the progress made.[10]

The records of the Department of Transport show that at the start of the war Canada had 153 licensed flying fields.[11] Not all these were suitable for flying training. Airports closer than five miles to the international border were ruled out lest aircraft on training missions drift into the United States through faulty navigation. Some sites had to be ruled out because of their location in mountainous country, their position as key airports for the Trans-Canada Airway or, in the coastal regions, their selection for operational air bases. But on the whole the picture was encouraging. The Department of Transport was able to offer the R.C.A.F. twenty-four airports which required little more than the construction of extra buildings to adapt them for flying training. Some of the larger aerodromes, such as those at Regina, Portage la Prairie and Toronto could house both an elementary flying school and an air observer school which meant that the twenty-four fields could provide space for fourteen elementary flying training schools, six air observer schools, two bombing and gunnery schools, the main aerodromes for twelve service training schools and relief fields for

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10 Ibid.

11 J.A. Wilson, "Aerodrome Contruction for the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan 1940", in Department of Transport, Development of Aviation in Canada 1879-1948, Articles by J.A. Wilson, Ottawa, (no date), p. 29.

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two more.[12] The latter were required to allow for emergency landing and also to prevent overcrowding at the main aerodromes. Each elementary training school was supposed to have one relief field and each service flying training school, two. Counting relief fields and main aerodromes, approximately 122 airfields were needed for the entire programme. One third of these were provided by utilizing existing airports; the balance had to be newly constructed.

The search for new airfield sites went ahead with all possible speed aided by the open fall weather that favoured most parts of the country in 1939. By the end of the year the field parties of the Department of Transport, with the help of the surveyors from provincial highway departments, had inspected some 1,647 possible sites.[13] On 24 January, 1940 the Chief of the Air Staff reported to the Supervisory Board that sites for all of the flying schools had been tentatively selected and would be adopted definitely as the scheme progressed. This in itself represented a big step forward but it still remained for complete surveys to be made on a large number of the sites, for detailed contruction

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12 Ibid. p.30

13 Public Archives Record Centre, H. Q. 927-1-1 , British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 2, Croil to the Deputy Minister, 26 January, 1940.

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plans and estimates to be made for those definitely selected, for property transactions to be carried out and tenders called for. The first contracts were let in April and heavy construction machinery began to move onto the selected sites soon after the frost was out of the ground. Before the end of the summer practically all contractors experienced in paving and highway building were engaged in the construction of aerodromes for the B.C.A.T.P.

The selection of flying training school sites was by no means a simple task. It involved all the factors normally considered in choosing an airfield such as safety of approach, adequate size, suitable terrain and availability of public utilities. The soil had to be capable of supporting a good sod in order to keep the corrosive effect of dust on aircraft engines to a minimum. Special consideration had to be given to the training activities each school was intended to serve. Bombing and gunnery schools required large land or water ranges approximately one hundred square miles in area where training operations would not endanger lives or property. Navigation centres had to be located where trainees would get practice in flying over various types of terrain including large bodies of water.

Choosing sites for service flying training schools was one of the most exacting parts of the work. Each of these schools was expected to use upwards of fifty aircraft

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of relatively long range and had to be located so as to avoid as much as possible, air traffic congestion. Every service flying training school really consisted of three fields - a main aerodrome and two nearby relief fields. The latter were needed to reduce the number of take-offs and landings at the main centre; if necessary they could be developed as separate schools. The main aerodrome was to be equipped with three double hard surfaced runways, 100 feet wide and 2500 feet long laid out in the form of a triangle to allow for variation in wind direction during landing and take-off. The relief fields were of a similar pattern but with single runways; sometimes one relief aerodrome was left with grass landing strips. Each service flying training school also had to have access to a practice bombing range. Because southern Ontario and the southern parts of the Prairie Provinces possessed a combination of terrain favouring economical airport construction, and long periods of fine weather suitable for flying, a certain preference was given to these regions in the development of service flying training schools.

The existence of established municipal airfields was the predominant factor in determining the sites for elementary flying training schools and air observer schools. Consequently, these two types of schools were formed at airfields adjacent to cities and town, though in some cases over crowding of air lanes later forced a removal to new and

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more remote sites. Aerodromes at seven cities, Quebec, Toronto, London, Hamilton, Portage la Prairie, Regina and Edmonton, were deemed suitable to accommodate an air observer school and an elementary flying training school. It was found too, that all seven airfields could be made ready for training operations merely by the addition of buildings and equipment.[14]

Another factor in selecting suitable sites was the regional distribution of training units. Geographically, the training organization was divided into four zones or commands each in charge of an officer, known as the Air Officer Commanding, who answered directly to Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa. No. 1 Training Command, with its headquarters at Toronto covered Western Ontario. No. 2, centered at Winnipeg, included all the schools in Manitoba plus a few in Saskatchewan and a lone elementary training school at Fort William, Ontario. No. 3 Training Command, which had its headquarters at Montreal, included the province of Quebec, Eastern Ontario and the Maritimes. The units of No. 4 Training Command were spread over Alberta, British Columbia and southern part of Saskatchewan, having headquarters first in Regina and later in the more centrally located Calgary.[15] Since the Air Force intended that each of the Commands be as

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14 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting held 11 March, 1940, Appendix A.

15 V. infra, Figure I, p. 161a.

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self-sufficient as possible with its own recruiting and manning organization, supply depots, repair depots and air training schools, the sites had to be chosen accordingly.

In the selection of training field sites there was necessarily a good deal of co-operation between the Departments of Transport and National Defence. An air force officer usually accompanied the Department of Transport field parties. In Ottawa the Aerodrome Development Committee of the Air Force, headed by the Chief of the Air Staff, examined the detailed reports compiled for the various sites, compared the merits of each and made the final decision as to where the various schools were to be located. Estimates then had to be prepared to show the total cost, first of the aerodrome proper, done by the Department of Transport, and then of all the building construction which was the responsibility of the Air Force. As soon as the suitability of the site itself had been confirmed by the Aerodrome Development Committee, the Department of Transport took steps to acquire the desired property either by rental, as was usual in the case of municipally owned airports, or else by purchase with land values being set by the real estate adviser to the Department of Transport.

After the estimates had been approved and detailed plans drawn up, the Department of Transport called for tenders and let out contracts for the construction, or improvement,

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of runways, the development of power, water and communication facilities, the building of access roads to isolated aerodromes and the laying of turf. The amount of paper work was voluminous and seemed more so because of the shortage of staff. Nevertheless the work went forward with a mimimum of red tape and without interruption save when delegations from municipalities all across Canada descended upon the Aerodrome Development Committee requesting that an airport be constructed within the community they represented. Very often these requests were turned down but if the delegates could show that the airfields they wanted would have definite residual value either as a military or civil airport the request was examined more thoroughly.[16] Thus the immediate needs of the B.C.A.T.P. was the main factor governing the selection of new sites; future needs was a secondary consideration.

Although a study of the impact which the B.C.A.T.P. had on the post-war development of civil aviation in Canada is beyond the scope of this thesis, it may be noted in passing that the development of the B.C.A.T.P. witnessed the greatest boom in air port construction in Canadian history. Some of the airfields that were constructed for air training fell

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16 Directorate of History, Department of Transport, "The Selection and Development of Airports for the British Commonwealth Joint Air Training Plan", in Air Force Historical Section, Miscellaneous Sectional Histories, (unpublished material), p. 6.

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into disuse after the war but others became part of the national airways system. Airports leased for a nominal fee were returned to the owner municipalities after the war with runways extended and all the new developments added including proper airport lighting, air traffic control facilities and the expansion of navigational aids and meteorological services. In some instances, municipalities that had no airport before the war found one ready made close by and took steps to acquire it. The net result was improved facilities on the main system and an increase in the number of feeder lines.

Through the commercial air line companies and the flying club movement the aid of some of the country's ablest aviation executives was drawn to the B.C.A.T.P. A prime example was C.H. Dickins, pioneer bush pilot and air line executive. In 1928 Dickins received the McKee Trophy, awarded annually to the Canadian, military or civilian, deemed to have made the most outstanding contribution to national aviation, for a flight across the unmapped Barren Lands. He figured prominently in the development of commercial aviation in the Canadian North and during the war became operating manager of Canadian Pacific Air Lines. In this position he was closely associated with the operation of the air observer schools.[17] Other McKee Trophy winners, men judged by their

17 Dickins Biographical Meterial, Directorate of History, Air Force Biographical Section.

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peers as being among the most outstanding in their field, who contributed to the operation of the elementary flying training schools or air observer schools were R.W. Hay, M.A. Berry and A.A. Seymour. D.R. Yorath, who during the war served as managing director of the Lethbridge Flying Training School Limited and was also active as a director of the Canadian Flying Clubs Association, received the McKee Trophy in 1949. Two members of the Department of Transport, A.D. McLean and J.A. Wilson were presented with the award in 1941 and 1944 respectively for their work in developing airfields for the Trans-Canada Airlines (now Air Canada) and for the B.C.A.T.P.[18] Thus there was a good showing of talent among the civilians who strove beside the air force leaders to put the Training Plan into operation.

The maintenance and repair of aircraft and aeronautical research were two other areas where civilian agencies supported the Air Force in the development of the Plan. In the R.C.A.F. the responsibility for maintenance and repair lay with the Directorate of Technical Maintenance of the Aeronautical Engineering Division. During the first year that the B.C.A.T.P. was in operation this branch was not overly burdened since most of the aircraft in use were new and several schools were not yet opened. However, with

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18 Frank H. Ellis, Canada's Flying Heritage, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1954, p. 366.

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thousands of aircraft in service, or due to come into service, it followed that maintenance would eventually become a task of major proportions. Consequently, in 1940 the Department of Munitions and Supply, in co-operation with the R.C.A.F., created an Overhaul and Repair Division embracing several civilian firms, both large and small, which were capable of assisting with the important task. From 1941, when the planes began to show wear and tear, until the end of the war, the Overhaul and Repair Division which employed about 18,000 men and women, proved its worth. It repaired and returned to service over 6,500 airframes and 30,500 engines almost ninety per cent of which were training machines.[19]

Two airmen of note who assisted with the organization of the Overhaul and Repair Division were T.W. Siers and R. Vachon. The former was an aeronautical engineer and superintendent of maintenance for Canadian Airways, Limited, a commercial company in Western Canada. He won the McKee Trophy in 1940 for his experiments with lubricants which allowed engines to be started in cold weather with less difficulty. His services were made available to the Department of Munitions and Supply and through it to the R.C.A.F. Vachon is known in aviation as the most widely renowned of a

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19 J. De N. Kennedy, History of the Department of Munitions and Supply, Canada in the Second World War, King's Printer, Ottawa, p. 30.

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family of four brothers whose careers were devoted to flying. Best known for his ability as a pilot, he was also an engineer and an able executive. He won the McKee Trophy in 1934 for his work in organizing radio and weather reporting services when manager of Quebec Airways in 1934.[20] During the war he worked with the Department of Munitions and Supply principally in the field of aircraft maintenance.

Although aeronautical research was a topic that seldom, if ever, got into the newspapers, aeronautical engineers and scientists were constantly at work on problems connected with aeroplane design and development, testing material that went into aircraft construction and finding substitutes for substances that were either unobtainable or else in short supply. Since most of the aircraft manufactured and used in Canada during the war were trainers it follows that the greater part of aeronautical research was carried out in support of the B.C.A.T.P. The R.C.A.F. had its own Test and Development Section at Rockcliffe (Ottawa) which was in constant touch with the laboratories of the National Research Council and those of the various firms engaged in aircraft manufacture. The National Research Council had been involved in aeronautical research between 1919 and 1939 and during the war years this sphere of its activity became increasingly

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20 Ellis, op, cit., p. 366

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important. One of the major projects was the performance of wind tunnel tests on models of aircraft used in the Air Training Plan. These tests, the results of which were studied alongside reports on the actual performance of the aircraft in flight, enabled the Air Force to make a better assessment of the flying characteristics of its training planes and sometimes pointed up the need for modifications. The resources of the Council's structures laboratory were almost entirely taken up with the full scale testing of wings, tails and control surfaces of training aircraft. The instrument laboratory rendered valuable assistance in the design and construction of aircraft instruments. Other more routine work of the Council dealt with the improvement of aviation fuel and lubricants, the prevention of aircraft icing and the facilitating of cold weather starting.[21]

There was practically no limit to the ways in which Canada's civil aeornautical resources were brought to bear in support of the B.C.A.T.P. When the Canadian Government agreed to participate in the B.C.A.T.P. the British Air Ministry, though grateful, was under the impression that the scheme was far too big for Canada to organize and control. But the British under-estimated Canada's air potential. The

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21 Débates, House of Commons, Ottawa, Kings Printer, 1940, vol. 5, p. 4384-4886.

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Canadian public too was not fully aware of the progress that was being made, for much of the flying was being done along the northern frontier. It was only when a sensational mercy flight or mission in the northern regions made headline news that public interest was aroused. When war came civil aviation was in the process of taking a giant step forward and was thus able to give a much needed fillip to the war effort. To a remarkable degree the success of the B.C.A.T.P. was due to the assistance provided by the civil air organization.

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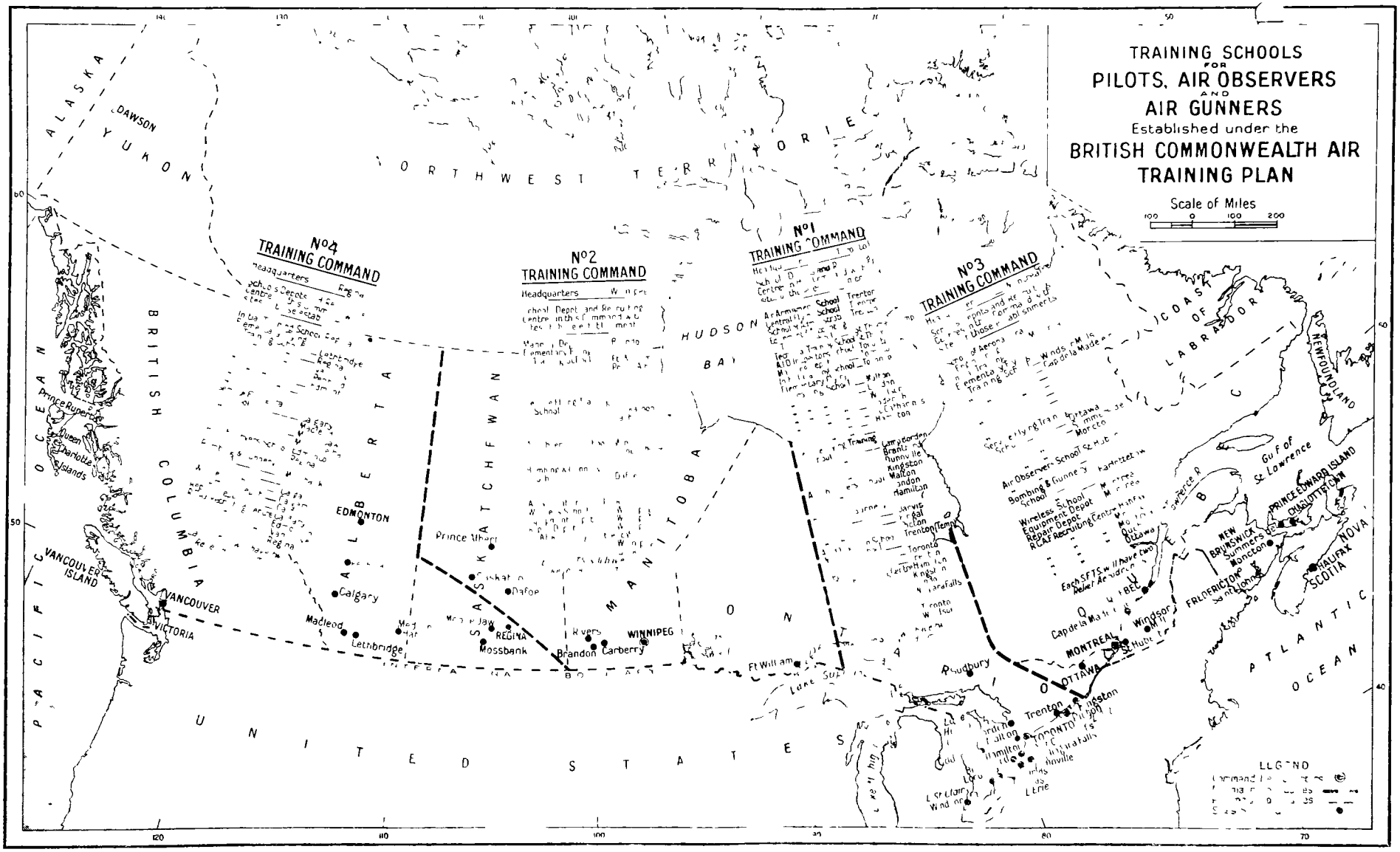
FIGURE I [22]



Training Commands, 1940

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[22] J. Fergus Grant, "British Commonwealth Air Training Plan", in Canadian Geographic Journal, vol. 21, No. 1, July, 1940, p. 7.

CHAPTER VII

THE INTERIM PERIOD: SEPTEMBER 1939 TO APRIL 1940

The term "phony war", which popular opinion gave to the period from September 1939 to April 1940, held little meaning for the R.C.A.F. for these were months of intense preparation. Even with the support it received from the civilian side of aviation, the Air Force faced a formidable task in putting the Air Training Plan into operation. Using the term in its broadest sense this was a problem of logistics, of procuring personnel, buildings and equipment - the main elements that went into the Training Plan - on the scale required and within the time limit fixed by the starting date of the Plan, 29 April, 1940. By that date the Air Force had to recruit and train a cadre of instructors, procure hundreds of aircraft, spare parts and miscellaneous items of equipment and ensure that its building programme was far enough advanced to accommodate the first influx of trainees and meet the fixed schedule of school openings. In all this the Air Force was not left entirely to its own resources for behind it lay the industrial potential of the country, especially the building trade and the aircraft industry. The Departments of Labour and Munitions and Supply were also at its service. But the responsibility for directing, organizing and shaping the whole to meet the deadline lay with the Air Force. The problem really involved more than logistics for while procuring men and material in the first months of the

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war the Air Force itself was going through a period of rapid expansion and re-organization.

The problems faced by the R.C.A.F. in getting the Air Training Plan under way may be more fully appreciated if it is kept in mind that in Canada the Air Force had two distinct roles. One, by far the most important, was embodied in the Training Plan, the other in what was known as the Home War Establishment. The main element in the latter was a force of fighter and bomber reconnaissance squadrons engaged in continental defence. A detailed account of the work of the Home War Establishment lies beyond the scope of this thesis but it must be pointed out that it operated quite apart from the B.C.A.T.P. Most of the home based squadrons were located in the coastal regions in zones known as Eastern and Western Command. For the purpose of this thesis, however, it is perhaps more interesting to note that separate accounts had to be kept for the Home War Establishment and the B.C.A.T.P. for the former was purely a Canadian responsibility while the expenses of the latter were shared between Canada and its Commonwealth partners. By and large this did not present too great a problem but it did involve considerable bookkeeping. If equipment, such as aircraft, spare parts or accessories were transferred from units of the Home War Establishment to those of the B.C.A.T.P., as sometimes happened when stocks of reserve equipment ran low, special entries

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had to be made in the ledgers. Similarly, if the Home War Establishment found it necessary or convenient to borrow items from the depots of the B.C.A.T.P. the accounts had to be kept straight. Some units and formations, such as R.C.A.F. Headquarters, served both the domestic squadrons and the Training Plan. In such cases a cost sharing formula had to be worked out according to the number of man-hours the unit in question devoted to the B.C.A.T.P. and the Home War Establishment. Calculations completed at the beginning of January showed that R.C.A.F. Headquarters devoted about seventy per cent of its time and effort to the Air Training Plan and thirty per cent to the Home War Establishment.[1]

When hostilities began the R.C.A.F. was in process of mobilizing its squadrons and bringing them up to strength. The training scheme which had been inaugurated earlier in the year[2] was continued with the newly trained pilots being sent out to the home based units. The whole air force training establishment at Camp Borden and Trenton, Ontario, was working at full capacity in order to put the Air Force on a war footing. With the first mooting of the Air Training Plan the emphasis began to shift to the training of instructors. The

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1 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, B.C.A.T.P., vol. 2, Minutes of the Meeting Held 8 July, 1940, Appendix 2.

2 V. supra, p. 56-59.

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schools at Camp Borden and Trenton were enlarged, re-organized, in some cases relocated and gradually brought within the structure of the B.C.A.T.P. Camp Borden and its facilities were transferred to the B.C.A.T.P. on 1 November, 1939 and Trenton and its schools were classified as B.C.A.T.P. units from 1 February, 1940. The changeover was of course, accompanied by a transfer of operating costs from the ledgers of the Home War Establishment to those of the Air Training Plan. Article 14 of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement provided that vacancies in the home based squadrons could be filled from aircrew turned out under the training scheme provided that the pupils so disposed of did not exceed 138 pilots, thirty-four observers and 58 wireless operator-air gunners in any year.

After some shifting around of units and sub-units, Camp Borden and Trenton settled into a routine of training pilots and flying instructors for the Training Plan. Pilots trained to elementary standard by the flying clubs were sent to the Intermediate School and the Advanced School at Borden. A few of the graduates were sent to the home squadrons, a few were assigned to miscellaneous flying duties but the majority of them were posted to the Flying Instructors' School at Trenton. Civilian pilots recruited by the flying clubs were fed into this stream, some of them receiving a refresher course at Borden if the R.C.A.F. felt that they needed extra training, before going to specialist training at Trenton.

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The decision to get on with the task of training flying instructors was well taken for about 1,000 were needed for the service flying training schools and almost as many again for elementary schools. Even with the good start it had made the Air Force had to contend with a severe shortage of flying instructors during the first year the B.C.A.T.P. was in operation.

In the training of instructors for the air observer schools and bombing and gunnery schools, the Air Force faced a slightly different problem. In one respect it was simpler for where the ratio of instructors to pupils was about one to six in pilot training, in teaching navigation, gunnery and wireless operating, one instructor could handle twenty or more students. Consequently not so many instructors were required. However, in the pre-war Air Force the other aircrew categories, air observers and wireless operator-air gunners, were practically unknown. While it is true that there was a Navigation School, a Wireless School and an Air Armament School at Trenton before the war, these were used only as part of the pilot training programme and the courses were taught by pilots, though in a few cases it was done by ground personnel who had undergone specialist training in schools of the British Air Force. The pilot of the pre-war Air Force was his own navigator and wireless operator. If he needed an air gunner or bomb aimer for a special exercise he selected

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either a brother pilot or a ground tradesman, who normally performed other duties in his daily routine, to accompany him. Consequently, when the R.C.A.F. assumed responsibility for the B.C.A.T.P. it had no specialist navigators, armament operators or wireless officers other than pilots. It did, however, have about 100 ground personnel of warrant officer rank and below schooled in wireless and telephony and a number somewhat less than this trained in various phases of air armament who provided a small initial staff of technicians and instructors for the armament and wireless schools.[3] Navigation instructors for the first air observer schools were sixteen university graduates with a grounding in mathematics who were trained at the Air Navigation School (previously the preserve of pilots), given additional training as instructors and sent out to teach others the science of aerial navigation.[4] In the long run, instructors for these specialist branches, and also for pilot training, had to come from the Training Plan which was obliged to turn out instructors and maintenance staff as well as aircrew for service with the R.A.F.

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3 Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending 31 March, 1937, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1937, p. 76; Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Ending March, 1939, p. 111.

4 Canada, Directorate of History, Department of National Defence, Reports to the Prime Minister by the Chiefs of Staff Committee, Summary of Information Departmental Activities, Summary No. 7, Air Services, 23 December, 1939

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At the beginning of the war the administrative or "housekeeping" services normally associated with a military force were, in the case of the R.C.A.F., either quite small or completely lacking. The list of non-flying officers was comprised of forty-seven equipment, or supply, officers, about thirty of whom were quite new to the trade, eight aeronautical engineers, five administrative officers, two photographers and two construction engineers. There were no pay officers, no medical officers and no chaplains.[5] In earlier days some of these services, for instance pay accounting, construction engineering and medical attention, were provided by the Army but with both forces expanding under the impact of war this was no longer convenient and the Air Force had to branch out in new directions. To a certain extent this was done by training new recruits in service schools but the R.C.A.F. depended heavily on the direct entry method of recruiting civilians with the desired qualifications and assigning them with little or no military training to positions of responsibility.

Growth of the Directorate of Works and Buildings may be cited as an example of the way in which the R.C.A.F. grew under the impact of the B.C.A.T.P. Before the war practically

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5 Directorate of History, Air Member for Works and Buildings, History of Construction Engineering, (Unpublished Material, no date), Section 12, p. 1-2.

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all construction projects for the R.C.A.F. were undertaken by the Army Directorate of Engineer Services. However, in May 1939, when both Army and Air Force were beginning to think in terms of mobilization, a Directorate of Works and Buildings, composed of a few specialist officers and clerks, was formed at R.C.A.F. Headquarters. With the advent of the B.C.A.T.P. a tremendous load of work fell to the still developing Directorate and the Air Council decided to place it under the direction of an experienced civil engineer. The man chosen was A.R. Collard, vice-president and general manager of Carter-Hall-Aldinger Construction Company of Winnipeg, who was considered to be one of the most able construction executives in the country. Collard, who came into the air force with the rank of Wing Commander and later became Air Vice-Marshal, quickly gathered round him qualified and experienced engineers often recruited from the firms carrying out construction projects for the R.C.A.F. These men, most of whom were not elegible for military service in an active theatre of war, were appointed to commissioned rank as maintenance officers and formed the mainstay of the war time Works and Buildings Directorate. Their main task, in the execution of which they were constantly harrassed by rapidly approaching deadlines, cramped working conditions and a severe shortage of help, was to draw up plans and specifications for all new air force building and the general layout of aerodromes.

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At first the personnel of the Directorate were concentrated at R.C.A.F. Headquarters in Ottawa but as the building programme got under way engineering sections were established in the field to supervise construction, take care of modifications made necessary by substitution of certain material or a last minute change in plans, and see that the work was completed on schedule. During the first four and one half years of war more than three quarter million blueprints were issued, about 33,000 finally approved drawings were made and 8300 buildings constructed. Although the Directorate of Works and Buildings served the Home War Establishment as well as the B.C.A.T.P., most of its works was undertaken to meet the requirements of the Training Plan.[6]

The Directorate of Works and Buildings carried on its activities in co-operation with the Department of Munitions and Supply and the construction industry at large. The awarding of all contracts was done through the Department and the actual construction was carried out by private building firms. The main R.C.A.F. responsibility lay in designing the various buildings - the hangars, the drill halls, the workshops and barrack blocks - determining their location on the site and supervising their construction. The erection of buildings was pushed with even more vigour than the con-

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6 Ibid, Section 12, p. 1-2.

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struction of runways and development of aerodromes proper. Administrative and technical personnel had to be on the sites and equipment in readiness well in advance of the opening of the schools.

Some of the other main divisions of the Air Force, the Pay and Accounts Branch, the Medical Branch and the Supply Branch were developed in much the same way as the Directorate of Works and Buildings. Although the Air Force had its own supply organization at the beginning of the war it was quite inadequate for the work involved in requisitioning, storing and distributing the enormous amount of equipment, varying from complete aircraft to bits and pieces of clothing, required to keep the Training Plan functioning. To overcome the difficulty the Supply Branch depended on civilian assistance to a greater degree than did the other parts of the Air Force. Altogether about 3300 civilians, several of them occupying key positions, were employed in the equipment depots which kept material moving out to the training schools.[7] In addition, civilians acquainted with the problems involved in keeping large industrial organizations properly supplied and equipped assisted the Air Force in dealing with difficult supply problems. It is worth noting, too,

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7 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 045-7, Historical Information on the Development of the R.C.A.F. and the B.C.A.T.P., vol. 1, Conboy to the Deputy Minister, 20 November, 1944

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that contrary to the usual practice, the head of the Supply Branch was a civilian, Mr. T.M. Sheard. As Air Member for Supply, Sheard had a seat on the Air Council.[8] It should also be mentioned that the personnel loaned by the R.A.F., who assisted the R.C.A.F. in laying the groundwork of the training organization, were especially helpful in the organization of equipment depots and the training of personnel in supply procedures.

While the Supply Branch was coping with the problems of expansion, re-organization and training it also had to take steps to procure the initial equipment for the opening of the air training schools and estimate their future requirements. The purchasing was done by the Department of Munitions and Supply to determine the best source of procurement. By 1 November the seemingly endless lists of necessary equipment had been drawn up. Croil was able to tell the Supervisory Board at its first meeting in January that orders had been placed in Canada for small tools, workshop equipment, barrack furniture, clothing and miscellaneous equipment. Preliminary contracts for light trainers were being negotiated with the de Havilland Aircraft Company of Canada at Montreal and the Fleet Aircraft Company at Fort Erie. An

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8 Norman Ward, Ed., The Memoirs of Chubby Power, a Party Politician, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966, p. 209-210.

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order for 100 Harvards was being arranged with Noorduyn Aviation Limited, also in Montreal, which had obtained Harvard manufacturing rights from an American firm, North American Aviation Incorporated of Inglewood, California.

As the time for opening the first of the air training schools drew near there was only one small cloud on the horizon. The development of the B.C.A.T.P. depended to a large degree on two types of equipment supplied by the United Kingdom. One was the various aircraft and engines, such as the Ansons and Battles, which Britain was committed to supply. The other included miscellaneous electrical and technical items such as wireless sets, aircraft instruments, hydraulically operated gun turrets, guns and photography equipment which Canada normally purchased from the United Kingdom. At the commencement of hostilities the Air Force and the War Supply Board, the forerunner of the Department of Munitions and Supply, made a survey of the problems involved in the manufacture of some of these items in Canada and found that the costs involved, based on production of Canadian requirements only, was prohibitive. An endeavour was made by the R.C.A.F. and the War Supply Board to interest the Air Ministry in placing orders in Canada for a portion of their own requirements. The Air Ministry, satisfied that United Kingdom

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supplies were adequate, was not impressed.[9]

Some of the material on order from the United Kingdom for the Air Training Plan began to arrive in Canada during the winter months. The shipments were not so regular as the Canadian Air Force would have liked but under the stress of war, delays and interruptions in the shipping schedules were bound to occur. In April, after the problem of procurement of supplies from the United Kingdom had been discussed by the Supervisory Board, and taken up with the Air Ministry through the United Kingdom Air Liaison Office, Croil advised the Minister of National Defence that no serious delay in the arrival of equipment from the United Kingdom was expected;

> The United Kingdom has a vital interest in this Plan and the formation of a Committee headed by Mr. Balfour will assure that equipment is despatched to Canada for the Plan in accordance with the scheduled requirements.[10]

In retrospect it is clear how erroneous this assumption was. In a few short weeks, after France was overrun and the United Kingdom itself faced the possibility of being invaded by the enemy, the procurement of supplies from Great Britain presented an altogether different picture.

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9 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, correspondence labelled, "Problems of Supply of the R.C.A.F.", Croil to the Minister, 9 April, 1940.

10 Ibid.

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Recruiting for the R.C.A.F. came under the direction of the Directorate of Manning whose overall function was to co-ordinate the intake of personnel with air force requirements. To the bewilderment of the first applicants, however recruiting began on a very cautious note. While establishment figures were being worked out in Ottawa, recruiting officers were instructed to confine their activities, with few exceptions, to preliminary interviews including trade testing and medical examination but not attestation.[11] The heralding of the B.C.A.T.P. made an immediate impact on the recruiting situation, hurrying the policy makers at R.C.A.F. Headquarters and bringing a new rush of applicants. In October 1939, the war establishment of the R.C.A.F., which never remained static for very long, was set at 1500 officers and 15,000 airmen. In February it was raised to 3500 officers and 41,000 airmen.[12] Since the peace time list was 410 officers and 3650 airmen, this represented a tenfold increase in strength. It was neither possible nor desirable that the expansion take place all at once. Consequently within the authorized strength a limited establishment of 2400 officers and 28,000 airmen was put into effect.[13] These figures

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11 V. supra, p. 62

12 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, (unpublished material no date), vol. 1, p. 15.

13 Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence for the Fiscal Year Engding 31 March, 1940, p. 95.

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included personnel for the home defence force (8500 all ranks) and a token overseas force consisting of an army co-operation squadron sent to the United Kingdom to support the 1st Canadian Division, an Overseas R.C.A.F. Headquarters in London and a Records Office comprising in all less than 1000 personnel. The balance of the limited establishment, 20,900, was needed for the air training organization.[14]

In October quotas for ground and air personnel were issued to the recruiting centres. These were quickly filled and in some cases exceeded, with the result that No. 1 Manning Depot, located at the Toronto exhibition grounds, where the recruits were fed, clothed and documented, was soon overtaxed.[15] The stock of R.C.A.F. uniforms was depleted and recruiting had to be suspended. During the next few months recruiting proceeded by fits and starts. The main concern of the Directorate of Manning at this stage was to get enough skilled tradesmen and professional help to round out the ground organization for the B.C.A.T.P. Up to the end of March 1940, 5500 had been added to strength and another 15,000 had been trade tested and put on a waiting list. By

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14 Air Member for Personnel, op. cit., p. 15.

15 Manning depots were large centres where new recruits received their uniform, learned the basic elements of foot drill and generally were introduced to service life. Although four manning depots were planned, the one in Toronto was the only one in operation at this time.

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the end of the fiscal year some 1710 applications had been received. From among these 343 officers were selected including construction engineers, aeronautical engineers, signals officers, armament officers, equipment officers, navigators and adjutants.[16]

Between the time of the opening of the recruiting centres in September and 31 March about 2760 youths had filed applications for aircrew training but only 259, enough to fill the vacancies at the flying clubs, could be accepted. In addition a few fully qualified civilian pilots were selected as direct entries, some being granted commissions and some enlisted as sergeant pilots.[17] These men were needed as part of the air training organization per se and should not be confused with the quota of aircrew recruits which Canada was obliged to provide under the terms of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. The latter were not accepted until April. In the interim, recruiting officers spent endless hours explaining to the eager applicants that before air training could be undertaken on a large scale a lot of preparatory work still had to be done; more airfields must be constructed, more buildings erected, more technicians trained and more instructors

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16 Department of National Defence, op. cit. p. 88

17 Air Member for Personnel, op. cit., p. 120, 128.

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qualified. Prospective aircrew trainees were sent away from the recruiting units with instructions to hold themselves in readiness. It was also pointed out to them that under the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement all aircrew would be enlisted as aircraftman class II in contrast to existing regulations, in effect until approximately the end of March, which provided for pilot entrants to be enrolled in the R.C.A.F. either with commissioned rank as pilot officers or non-commissioned rank as sergeants.

By the beginning of spring the stage was set for the opening of the first initial training schools, elementary flying training schools, service flying training schools, air observer schools and bombing and gunnery schools. Some of these were already in operation on a limited scale training instructors. At the beginning of April, 169 of the aircrew applicants were recalled to the recruiting centres in various cities across the country,[18] and sent to No. 1 Manning Depot at Toronto. On 29 April they were transferred to No. 1 Initial Training School in the same city to commence their air training as course No. 1 of the B.C.A.T.P. Thanks to the long months of preparation the Training Plan was off to a good start.

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18 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel Division Progress Reports, vol. 1, Richards to Director of Air Force Manning, 29 April, 1940.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE CRISIS OF 1940

The summer and fall of 1940 was a time of near disaster for the Commonwealth. The only bright spot in the military picture was the performance of the R.A.F. at Dunkirk and again in the Battle of Britain. It was under these circumstances that Power understandably hesitated, wondering if it would not be better to suspend the development of the B.C.A.T.P. in order that Canada could come to Britain's assistance with aircrew reinforcements. The answer came back that instead of being curtailed or scaled down the Air Training Plan must be pushed forward with all possible speed. In almost the same breath the Government of the United Kingdom made two other pronouncements that were to have a profound effect on the course of the Air Training Plan in Canada. One was a request to transfer a number of air training schools directly from the United Kingdom to Canada. The other, made with some regret, was that it would be necessary to suspend the shipment of aircraft and other items required for the Air Training Plan. This was a severe blow to those connected with the administration of the B.C.A.T.P. and left them wondering how the Plan could be continued let alone be speeded up. It was now painfully obvious that the Plan should have been based on North American production at the outset. But in the midst of war there was little time for

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regret or recriminations. How to overcome the shortage of equipment, expand the training organization and provide accommodation for the British schools thrust an enormous amount of responsibility on Canada and kept the Canadian Air Force and the Supervisory Board fully occupied for the remainder of the year.

In Great Britain, German air superiority and the danger it posed had been the subject of urgent discussion ever since the Polish campaign of September 1939. The onslaught against Norway had again demonstrated Germany's air strength and it was becoming ever more apparent that where air power was effectively combined with land or sea forces nothing could stand in the way. In reviewing the war situation on 8 May, Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, declared that:

> Our numerical deficiency in the air - despite our superiority in men and materials - has condemned us and will condemn us for some time to come to a great deal of difficulty, suffering and danger, which we must endure with firmness until more favourable conditions can be established as assuredly they will be....[1]

In making this statement Churchill may not have had the B.C.A.T.P. in mind but it is evident that he viewed the development of air power as a relatively long range programme. So too, did the Air Ministry. When hostilities suddenly

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1 Toronto Globe and Mail, 9 May, 1940.

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flared up on the western front the British Air Staff, reviewing its plan of air operations and resources, sought how it could provide as many squadrons as possible within the next crucial six months without exhausting its air strength. There was no intention of expanding rapidly at the expense of the Air Training Plan. As far as the B.C.A.T.P. was concerned Canada was told that the efficient prosecution of the war could best be achieved by adhering to the plans laid down for the Air Training Scheme and by "accelerating them to the utmost".[2]

The course of action to be followed in Canada now seemed clear enough but on 24 May, a few days after Ottawa had received the instructions to speed up the Plan, the Canadian Government was advised by the United Kingdom that:

> ...in view of the increased probability that in the next phase enemy bombing objectives will be air frame and aero-engine factories in this country we have regretfully come to the conclusion that the export of Battle and Anson aircraft (airframes and engines) should be suspended for two months subject to review in the light of the war situation.[3]

In the same message the United Kingdom again stressed the importance of the B.C.A.T.P. expressing the earnest hope that the Canadian Government would, "continue to exert every

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2 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 927-1-1, The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 3, Campbell to Rogers, 20 May, 1940.

3 Directorate of History, H.Q. S-1-6, Policy - British Commonwealth Air Training Scheme, Vol. 1.

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effort to make it productive to the fullest practicable extent in the shortest possible time."[4] In his Memoirs, Power recalls that this message, "sent most of us into a bit of a panic, and there was some question whether the plan would be abandoned."[5]

Much depended on the number of aircraft available, and the members of the Supervisory Board began at once to re-examine aircraft inventories and to cast about for new sources of supply on the North American continent. There was no problem in regard to elementary trainers. These aircraft were produced in Canada and there was already a good supply in hand. The situation respecting aircraft for the service flying training schools, however, was extremely critical. To operate efficiently and safely it was estimated that a flying training school having a capacity for one hundred and sixty pupils and thirty-four instructors, required one hundred and eight æroplanes. Two thirds of these were to be twin-engined Ansons for training pilots for bombing and coastal operations; one third was to be Harvards for the training of fighter pilots. Up to the end of May only about fifty-nine Ansons had been received and the number of Har-

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4 Ibid.

5 Norman Ward, Ed., The Memoirs of Chubby Power, a Party Politician, Toronto, Macmillan, 1966, p. 210.

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vards on inventory totalled about half this number.[6] The shortage was somewhat alleviated by the use of substitutes. Airspeed Oxfords, of which the R.C.A.F. had about twenty-two, and which were still serving in the R.A.F. for twin-engine training, could be used in place of Ansons. In addition to these about a dozen Beechcraft and some eighteen Lockheed Electras, two types of light transport planes, were obtained from various parts of Canada and the United States. Six Dragonflys, used by the R.C.M.P. aerial patrols, were requisitioned for the B.C.A.T.P. but were found to be unsuitable for training purposes. The R.C.A.F. had a temporary surplus of Fairey Battles supplied by the United Kingdom for bombing and gunnery schools, which could be used in lieu of Harvards. By employing all available aircraft - Ansons, Oxfords, Electras, Beechcraft, Harvards, and Battles - the R.C.A.F. could equip two service flying training schools, keep the flying instructional and navigational schools going and open one air observer school and one bombing and gunnery school. But in so doing they were scraping the bottom of the barrel. The Oxfords were quickly approaching the end of their life span and there was a deficiency of engines for the Battles

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6 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Meeting Held 10 June 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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and spare parts for the other aircraft.[7]

The British Government intimated that the cessation in flow of equipment was only temporary but with deliveries already behind schedule the Canadians were inclined to believe that there was little likelihood of regular shipments ever becoming a reality. It was now quite evident that the Canadian economy must be re-organized to produce training craft on a large scale. Why not begin with the manufacture of Ansons? This suggestion arose quite naturally in various quarters since Ansons coming in from the United Kingdom were being erected at Canadian plants which included the Canadian Car and Foundry Company of Fort William and Amherst, McDonald Brothers Aircraft Company of Winnipeg and de Havilland Aircraft Company of Canada at Montreal. These firms, plus one or two others, also had contracts for manufacturing Anson wings and without too serious a delay the whole of the aircraft could be produced at home. At least so it seemed.

The most pressing problem was to obtain an engine. Since Canada had no aircraft engine industry it was necessary

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7 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 5 August, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C; Minutes of Meeting Held 9 September, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendices C and D; Minutes of Meeting Held 9 October, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendices C and D; Minutes of Meeting Held 11 November, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendices C and D.

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to turn to the United States. Within a day or two of receiving word that there would be a delay in the shipment of Ansons and Battles, C.D. Howe, the Minister of Munitions and Supply, Duncan, and a party of R.C.A.F. officers were in New York discussing aircraft sources and supply with members of the British War Supply Board, which, through extensive dealings in the United States was in close touch with the leading American aeroplane and engine manufacturers. In New York it was learned that a suitable power plant for the Anson could be obtained from the Jacobs Aircraft Company of Pottstown, Pennsylvania.[8] With many buyers in the American market it was necessary to act quickly and the Department of Munitions and Supply immediately began to negotiate with the company for an order of twenty-three hundred 330 h.p. L-6 Jacobs engines involving a commitment of about ten million dollars.[9] Simultaneously the Department approached Canadian manufacturers in regard to the production of the Anson airframe redesigned from the British model to take the Jacobs engine and American instruments. About eleven Canadian aircraft firms were lined up to share in the manufacturing and assembling of the major components. In order to co-ord-

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8 H.Q. 927-1-1, vol. 2, Duncan to the Minister, 28 May, 1940

9 H.Q. S-1-6, vol. 1, Telegram No. 103, From the Government of Canada to the Government of the United Kingdom, 13 June, 1940.

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inate the sub-contracting of components and the output of the finished product a crown corporation, Federal Aircraft Limited, with headquarters in Montreal, was formed in June and given an initial contract for 1,000 aeroplanes.[10]

It was rather optimistically estimated that Federal Aircraft would be able to begin delivering planes to the R.C.A.F. in February 1941. Until then, twin-engined aircraft would be in short supply. To help fill the gap Duncan and A.B. Bell of the Department of Munitions and Supply, arranged a contract with the Cessna Aircraft Company of Wichita, Kansas, for 180 Cessna Cranes,[11] though with the Air Force of the United States now embarked on a programme of expansion, American aircraft were becoming ever more difficult to obtain.

Although the manufacturing of the Ansons and the purchase of the Cranes was financed by Canada the cost involved was chalked up to the United Kingdom since the latter was committed to supplying twin-engined trainers for the Air Training Plan. Consequently, the British Government had to be kept informed of the steps taken. Canada gave its assur-

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10 Directorate of History, Department of Reconstruction and Supply, A Report on the Canadian Programme of Aircraft Production and Maintenance, (1939-1945), p. 83-84.

11 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Meeting Held 9 October, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C.

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rance, however, that the manner in which the accounts would be settled could be left until the war situation had become more clarified.[12]

In the long run the decision to produce Ansons in Canada proved to be a major factor in the successful development of the B.C.A.T.P, but with production still in the distant future, it did nothing to alleviate the immediate shortage of aircraft. Nor did the purchase of Cessna Cranes, for they would not be delivered until November. In June the overall aircraft picture looked gloomy enough. In July it brightened somewhat as single-engine trainers became available from orders placed by Great Britain with North American Aviation Company Limited in the period immediately before the war and just after hostilities broke out. Included in these were the 533 Harvards which the United Kingdom had ordered for the B.C.A.T.P. Production of these was well advanced. Delivery was begun in July at the rate of five per week and gradually increased with the order being completed in the spring of 1941 when it was hoped that the Noorduyn factory would be producing Harvards.[13]

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12 H.L. S-1-6, Telegram No. 103, From the Government of Canada to the Government of the United Kingdom, 13 June, 1940.

13 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of the Meeting Helf 5 August, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C.

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Canada came close to losing the Harvards from North American Aviation when Lord Beaverbrook, whom Churchill had appointed Minister of Aircraft Production, suddenly stepped into the picture. Beaverbrook was opposed to the release of these aircraft contending that they were needed in the United Kingdom, since, in an emergency, they could be used in an operational role.[14] Power and Breadner, the Chief of the Air Staff, were understandably alarmed and the Minister immediately sought clarification of the British Government's views. It appeared that Beaverbrook was acting without the full consent of the British Government and to the Canadians' relief the planes were delivered to Canada.[15]

In a very timely acquisition the R.C.A.F. obtained 119 Yales which were about to be delivered to the French. In the period just before the war and in the months following November 1939, France was the major purchaser of American aircraft. On the fall of France the French contracts were taken over by the United Kingdom after some delicate negotiations. The Yales were transferred to Canada and paid for by the Canadian Government which was gradually taking on financial responsibilities far beyond those called for in

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14 Power Papers, Queen's University Archives, Ministerial Files, Box 16, D 1002, Duncan to the Chief of the Air Staff, 14 June, 1940.

15 Ward, op. cit., p. 196-197.

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the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. Forty-five of the Yales were delivered in July, sixty-four in August and the remaining ten in September.[16] They arrived with instruments calibrated in metric units and were flown a considerable time before American instruments could be obtained. Similar in design to the Harvard but somewhat lighter and fitted with less powerful engines, the Yales were better suited to intermediate training than to advanced instruction. In spite of these few shortcomings the Yales played an important part in keeping the B.C.A.T.P. moving ahead when the aircraft situation was most critical.

The unexpected legacy of Yales, the acquisition of Harvards and the promise of more Ansons and Battles from Great Britain enabled the R.C.A.F. to speed up the training of pilots. The first step to expedite the expansion of the training organization, however, was taken while the supply of aircraft was still very much in doubt. On 28 May, taking advantage of its existing surplus of elementary training aircraft, the R.C.A.F. decided to open eight elementary flying training schools by 22 July instead of only two as called for in the schedule of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. This was

16 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of the Meeting Held 5 August, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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rather a bold stroke considering that at the time there were enough aircraft for only two service flying training schools whereas five would be necessary to absorb the output of the elementary training pupils. But it was no longer possible to hold back the wave of recruits clamouring to begin air training or to expect the Canadian people to understand the nature of the problems which were threatening to interrupt the progress of the Training Plan. If worse came to worst the Air Force intended to hold some of the pupils at elementary flying schools beyond the allotted time. Luckily, this expedient which would hardly have been appreciated by either pupils or instructors, became unnecessary with the improvement in aircraft supply. Late in July the R.C.A.F. envisaged the opening of eight service flying training schools by the end of the year, three more than was provided for in the original schedule.[17] Since one service school could absorb the output of two elementary schools it now became necessary to put six more of the latter into operation as soon as possible. The flying training schools opened in 1940, according to location, original dates of openings, new dates, and extent of acceleration in time are shown in Table I.

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17 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 5 August, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 2.

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TABLE I [18]

Service Flying Training Schools - Acceleration

School	Location	Original Date	New Date	Acceleration
No. 1	Camp Borden, Ont.	22 July	22 July	---
No. 2	Ottawa, Ont.	2 September	5 August	4 weeks
No. 3	Calgary, Alta.	16 September	28 October	6 weeks
No. 4	Saskatoon, Sask	28 October	16 September	6 weeks
No. 5	Brantford, Ont	9 December	11 November	4 weeks
No. 6	Dunnville, Ont.	20 January, 1941	25 November	8 weeks
No. 7	McLeod, Alta.	3 February, 1941	9 December	8 weeks
No. 8	Moncton, N.B.	14 April, 1941	23 December	16 weeks

Elementary Flying Training Schools - Acceleration

School	Location	Original Date	New Date	Acceleration
No. 1	Malton, Ont.	24 June	24 June	---
No. 2	Fort William, Ont.	24 June	24 June	---
No. 3	London, Ont.	19 August	24 June	8 weeks
No. 4	Windsor Mills, P.Q.	19 August	24 June	8 weeks
No. 5	Lethbridge, Alta.	14 October	22 July	12 weeks
No. 6	Prince Albert, Sask.	14 October	22 July	12 weeks
No. 7	Windsor, Ont.	9 December	22 July	20 weeks
No. 8	Vancouver, B.C.	9 December	22 July	20 weeks
No. 9	St. Catharines, Ont.	17 February, 1941	14 October	18 weeks
No. 10	Hamilton, Ont.	17 February, 1941	14 October	18 weeks
No. 11	Cap de Madeleine, P.Q.	3 March, 1941	14 October	20 weeks
No. 12	Goderich, Ont.	3 March, 1941	14 October	20 weeks
No. 13	St. Eugene, Ont.	31 March, 1941	28 October	22 weeks
No. 14	Portage la Prairie, Alta.	28 April, 1941	11 November	28 weeks
No. 15	Regina, Sask.	28 March, 1941	28 October	26 weeks
No. 16	Edmonton, Alta.	7 July, 1941	11 November	19 weeks

[18] Ibid, vol. 3, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 3.

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In order to accelerate the output of pilots even further the periods of training were reduced from eight weeks to seven in elementary flying training schools and from sixteen weeks to fourteen in the service flying training schools. This increase in tempo was in line with experiments being carried out in the United Kingdom. Equally high standards of flying were to be obtained by increasing the number of instruction hours per month from sixty to seventy and it was judged that the number of hours flown by training aircraft could be safely increased from an average of 480 per year. In October the time spent at service flying training schools was again reduced from fourteen weeks to ten. This was accomplished in part by transferring bombing and air firing from the syllabus of service flying training schools to operational units in England, which were equipped with the same type of front line aircraft which were in use in fighter and bomber commands of the R.A.F.

These changes brought about major re-organization in the flying training programme. In place of an intermediate course and an advanced course each of seven weeks duration there was now one complete course of ten weeks. The terms "intermediate training squadron" and "advanced training squadron" which had been in use in the R.C.A.F. almost from its beginning were discarded as each service flying training school was re-organized into two training squadrons each

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consisting of four flights which retained their pupils for the entire ten weeks of instruction. Instead of taking in forty pupils every four weeks, service flying training schools were to receive approximately fifty-six trainees every twenty-four days. The net result was that the pilot output of the B.C.A.T.P. was more than doubled. The actual output of pilots to December 1941 as compared with the original forecast is shown in Table II.

Table II

Comparison by months between original forecast and actual pilot output to December 1941

	Original[19]	Actual[20]
1940 October	----	----
November	34	132
December	68	106
1941 January	102	358
February	136	248
March	306	420
April	204	532
May	238	537
June	238	386
July	272	912
August	170	725
September	306	1019
October	374	713
November	374	806
December	374	860
Total 1941	3094	7516
Total 1940	102	238
Total 1940-1941	3196	7754

19 Ibid, vol. 2, Minutes of Meeting Held 11 November, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 3.

20 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Headquarters, Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Publications, Ottawa, 1945, p. 45-46.

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In Canada and the United Kingdom the acceleration of pilot training was heralded as a great achievement, as indeed it was. It was made possible only by a great exertion of energy and display of initiative on the part of all concerned. The planners and organizers left no stone unturned in their efforts to obtain equipment and get it to the schools, while the instructors and students worked close to the limits of endurance of themselves and their machines. Nevertheless, the very success of the rapid expansion led to certain complications and problems. For instance, somewhere along the line, either late in 1940 or early in 1941, a point was reached where pilots were being trained faster than they could be absorbed into the operational end of the R.A.F. and an accumulation of pilots began to appear in the United Kingdom. This situation and other related difficulties arising from the acceleration of the training programme will be left to the next chapter.

In comparison to the changes made in the pilot training programme only slight alterations were made in the courses for air observers and wireless operator-air gunners. Training for observers began on 27 May 1940 when No. 1 Air Observer School at Malton received its first class of thirty-four trainees from No. 1 Initial Training School. This group and those who came after them, followed with little variation the syllabus laid down at the beginning of the war which

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called for two months of instruction at air observer school, a month at a bombing and gunnery school and finally a month at a navigation schoolcatching up on the latest developments in aerial navigation. The number of air observers trained in 1940, one hundred and fifteen, was just twenty-one short of the number anticipated in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement.[21] The course for wireless operator - air gunners consisted at first of twenty-four weeks at wireless school followed by four weeks of bombing and gunnery practice. The period spent at wireless school, which was altered a number of times during the course of the war, was shortened to eighteen weeks parallelling a similar reduction at R.A.F. schools, with the effect that the number of personnel trained in 1940 rose from a predicted fifty-eight to an actual 149.[22]

Because of the lack of proper equipment gunnery training for both air observers and wireless operator - air gunners was at first rather crude. In place of Browning guns, which were mounted in bomber and fighter aircraft, the Canadians practised with obsolete weapons such as the Lewis and Vicker guns of First World War vintage. Since gun turrets could not be obtained, air firing practices were performed with a free gun mounted in the rear cockpit , much the

21 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941.
22 Ibid.

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same as in the First World War. To hasten the training of wireless operator-air gunners three bombing and gunnery schools were opened in 1940 in place of two, which put a strain on available equipment. The Battles, of which there was a surplus in May, were now in short supply. Since Britain had fallen behind in delivery of both complete planes and spare parts, several Battles had to be kept grounded until parts arrived. As an interim measure thirty-two Northrop Nomads were purchased in the United States for target towing while some Harvards which could ill be spared from the service flying training schools, were fitted with gun mountings and used in place of Battles to enable air firing practices to be carried on.

Since Canada was dependent upon the United Kingdom for its supply of aircraft guns, firing mechanisms, bombsights and other bits and pieces of armament equipment, it had only a negligible quantity of such items when war began. As late as February only one shipment of armament equipment had arrived from the United Kingdom. After representation had been made to the Air Ministry the material began to arrive in dribs and drabs only to be cut off again as the military crisis mounted in the summer of 1940. Some items were found ready made in the United States but the supply was limited. Some parts had to be altered to meet Canadian needs. Consequently Canadian manufacturers were asked to undertake

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the production of armament requirements for the R.C.A.F. for both the Home War Establishment and the B.C.A.T.P. Delays were encountered both in tooling the factories and acquiring the necessary blueprints from the United Kingdom. Until late in 1941, when Canadian production began to hit full stride the bombing and gunnery schools had to get along as best they could making use of obsolete weapons, devising adaptations for American equipment and carefully shepherding the supplies which arrived from the United Kingdom from time to time.[23]

One of the most important results of the 1940 crisis was the decision to move a number of R.A.F. training schools, complete with staff and equipment, from the United Kingdom to Canada. The first intimation that such a step might become necessary came at the beginning of hostilities.[24] With the launching of the B.C.A.T.P. nothing further was heard of this request, apparently because the Air Ministry felt that it would interfere with the expansion of training in Canada. But with a training programme in the United Kingdom roughly equal in size to the one in Canada the Air Ministry still felt the need to move some of its schools outside of the country. Such a step would make way for the expansion of

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23 Directorate of History, Air Member for Aeronautical Engineering, "Armament Activities" in Air Force Historical Section, Miscellaneous Sectional Histories, (unpublished material, no date), p. 1 - 3.

24 V. supra, p. 68.

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operational air bases. In May 1940, the Canadian Government, acting on the advice of the Supervisory Board, informed the United Kingdom that Canadian aerodromes could be placed at the disposal of the R.A.F.[25] At this point, however, the Air Ministry was contemplating the transfer of three of its schools to France where sites were under construction. Subsequent military setbacks put an end to this plan but on the invitation of French authorities consideration was given to using air bases in Morocco for training purposes. This scheme likewise came to nothing after France fell under Nazi domination and on 13 July Canada was informed by cable from London that the British Government was anxious to move four existing service flying training schools en bloc from the United Kingdom to Canada.[26]

On 15 July, at a special meeting of the Supervisory Board called to discuss the British request, Power told the British High Commissioner, and later confirmed in writing, that accommodation for the four schools, and any other the Air Ministry might wish to transfer, could be provided without interfering with the progress of the B.C.A.T.P. It was understood that all operational costs would be borne directly

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25 N.A. 927-1-1, vol. 3, Campbell to Rogers, 20 May, 1940.

26 Minutes of the Meeting of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Special Meeting Held 15 July, 1940, p. 2

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by the United Kingdom. The proportion of capital expenditure on aerodrome development to be paid by the British would be worked out at a later date. These conditions were cabled to the Government of the United Kingdom which in reply revised its original request to include the transfer of eight service flying training schools, two air observer schools, one bombing and gunnery school, one general reconnaissance school, one air navigation school and one torpedo training school. All of these were to be transferred complete with staff and equipment.[27] The Canadian Government was prepared to receive these units by the end of the year. But the Air Ministry entertained second thoughts about the wisdom of sending a large proportion of its aeroplanes and potential pilots out of the country while Britain was under air attack, and decided to delay the transfer of its schools pending the outcome of the Battle of Britain. Consequently, only five schools were moved before the end of the year, one in August and the others just at the onset of winter.

The promptness with which sites were made ready for the R.A.F. schools demonstrates how vigorously the construction of aerodromes and buildings was being pressed. Before the decision to accelerate the B.C.A.T.P. the preparation of

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27 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 5 August 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 4.

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sites was proceeding satisfactorily, slightly ahead of schedule, but following the British request to hasten the expansion of the training programme the work pace picked up almost over-night. The Department of Munitions and Supply took full advantage of the fact that standardization of plans and specifications permitted a hastening in the letting of contracts and speeding up the work on the site. Instead of following the customary practice of advertising for public tender and selecting the lowest bidder, the Department selected a number of competent firms known to have the necessary capital, equipment and personnel and invited them to bid on each project on the basis of a lump sum cost estimated by members of the Department from past experience. In exceptional cases, where a project was unusually large or difficult, or where speed was essential, the work was entrusted to a specially selected contractor on the basis of cost plus a fee, usually ten per cent. Since the costs involved in this type of contract tended to soar, the Department favoured the lump sum contracts which became the general rule. As soon as a contractor was selected he was asked to begin the work without waiting for the approving order-in-council to be passed by the Government.[28]

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28 J. De N. Kennedy, History of the Department of Munitions and Supply, Canada in the Second World War, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1945, vol. 1, p. 248-250.

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On the sites, the work took on the aspect of a race against time - which it really was. Howe informed the supervisory Board that with construction crews working round the clock the buildings required for a service flying training school, including hangars, barracks, workshops, but not a drill hall, could be completed within the incredibly short time of six weeks.[29] But a mistake that was repeated time and again was to delay the locating of an adequate supply of water with the result that buildings were often occupied before running water could be supplied to them. This predicament occurred not only on the prairie, where deep wells sometimes had to be dug, but also in the central part of Canada and in the Maritime Provinces. To enable the schools to open on schedule water often had to be brought in by trucks and rationed to kitchens, hospitals and barrack blocks. Speaking in the House of Commons about the water problem, Power said:

> The question of water is perhaps the most serious we have had to face. ... We have had people looking for water everywhere. There is hardly a school ... where there has not been trouble in getting water to it. I never for one moment imagined that this country was so dry. ...[30]

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29 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Special Meeting Held 15 July, 1940.

30 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1616.

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The first British school to move to Canada was No. 7 R.A.F. Service Flying Training School of Peterborough, Northamptonshire. It was unique among R.A.F. schools in as much as its role was to train pilots for the Fleet Air Arm which may also explain why it was the first school chosen for evacuation since naval pilots were not likely to become involved in the air fighting over Britain. A site at Kingston, Ontario, originally scheduled to be ready in June 1941, was rushed to completion to accommodate No. 7 which, to avoid confusion with B.C.A.T.P. schools, was henceforth officially known as No. 31.[31]

The first echelon, comprising 316 all ranks, left Peterborough on 29 August and sailed from Liverpool while the port was under air attack. Disembarking at Montreal on the morning of 10 September the group arrived at Kingston in the mid-afternoon while painters and carpenters were putting the finishing touches to the camp. By the end of October the R.A.F. officers and airmen had organized their maintenance facilities, supply centre and mess halls and were ready for their first class of trainees. Since the the first group of naval ratings, who received their elementary training in England, were not due to arrive in Canada until the end of

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31 In numerical designation numbers 31 and above were reserved for R.A.F. schools transferred to Canada.

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the year the school undertook to train regular B.C.A.T.P. entrants. Two courses of approximately 40 members each graduated from the school before it returned full time to its role of training pilots for the Fleet Air Arm.[32]

During its first year in Canada No. 31 experienced in rather severe form the shortage of aircraft parts which was a common complaint of most service flying training schools in Canada. The R.A.F. school was equipped with Battles which had been brought from England with the advance party along with a limited stock of spare parts. The overhaul of Merlin engines, the power unit in Battle aircraft, was then almost at a standstill throughout the R.C.A.F. because of the lack of tools and spare parts. In spite of the ingenuity of its maintenance staff the British school sometimes had half the Battles unserviceable with resulting delays in the training programme. The inmates of Kingston Penitentiary assisted the school by manufacturing bomb racks and ring sights for the Battles, the work being so well done as to leave the impression that the prison had some excellent tradesmen among its clientel.[33] However, it was not until June 1941, when No. 31 began to exchange its Battles for Harvards,

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32 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, Diary of No. 31 Service Flying Training School, [R.A.F] vol. 1, various entries, 28 August, 1940 to 28 February, 1941.

33 Ibid.

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that its maintenance problems were left behind.

After the Battle of Britain was over and the Air Ministry felt it could safely remove more airmen and aeroplanes from the country the exodus of R.A.F. schools began. In November two more flying training schools were moved to Canada. Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, was selected as the location of No. 32 and Carberry, Manitoba, for No. 33. Both units received their first intake of trainees in December. No. 31 Air Navigational School began operations at Port Albert, Ontario, on 18 November. The first echelon of No. 31 General Reconnaissance School, where pilots and observers were introduced to Atlantic Patrol tactics was welcomed at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, a few days after Christmas. The first class of trainees arrived from the United Kingdom in January.

From a legal point of view, the position of the British schools in Canada was governed by the Visiting Forces Acts which enabled them to keep their national identity and, to a limited degree, their autonomy while serving abroad. In legal terms the R.A.F. schools were declared to be both "serving together" and "acting in combination with" the R.C.A.F. which simply meant that the Canadian force possessed extensive powers over the R.A.F. units.[34] A Canadian officer commanding one of the four training commands of the B.C.A.T.P.

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34 Canada, P.C. 6481, 25 November, 1940.

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could, for example, order a British school located within his area of jurisdiction to alter its training programme, to carry out special manoeuvres, or could post R.A.F. personnel to any unit in the command, be it British or Canadian, if their services were needed there for the efficient conduct of operations. In matters of administration and discipline a Canadian officer commanding a command was in the unenviable position of having to apply two different sets of rules and regulations, those of the R.C.A.F. and the R.A.F. The situation was rendered somewhat easier by a reciprocal arrangement with the Air Ministry which provided that R.A.F. schools would, in so far as was practicable, be made identical in numbers of personnel and types of equipment with B.C.A.T.P. schools.[35]

The Visiting Forces Acts were in effect from the time of arrival of No. 31 Service Flying Training School which came under the general jurisdiction of the air officer commanding No. 1 training command at Toronto, but it took some time for a satisfactory relationship to become established. The transferred schools were at first inclined to carry their grievances and problems to the United Kingdom Air Liaison

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35 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 19-10-11, R.C.A.F. Overseas - Control and Administration, Memorandum of Agreement in Respect of the Administration of R.C.A.F. Squadrons in the United Kingdom, and of R.A.F. Schools in Canada, (no date).

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Mission instead of going through the regular chain of command which led from the R.A.F. units up through the R.C.A.F commands to R.C.A.F. Headquarters and thence to the Air Ministry and the British Government. The Air Mission, however, contributed greatly to the harmonious relationship of the two forces by insisting that the proper channels be followed and accepting for itself the role of adviser to the R.C.A.F. in problems arising from the presence of the British units. Throughout their stay in Canada the R.A.F. schools retained their R.A.F. identity, being commanded by British officers and staffed by British personnel with a few Canadians attached for special services such as dental care and construction engineering. Most of their trainees were drawn from the United Kingdom but also included a sprinkling of pupils from other parts of the Commonwealth, including Canada, and nationals from the occupied countries of Europe.[36] Besides augmenting the general training organization the R.A.F. schools contributed a number of highly skilled technical and administrative personnel whose talents were sorely needed at R.C.A.F. depots and headquarter formations. In practice the British units formed an extension of the B.C.A.T.P. but not until 1942 were they incorporated as part of it.[37]

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36 V. infra, Chapter 14.

37 V. infra, Chapter 11.

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At the request of the United Kingdom, no publicity was given to the movement of R.A.F. schools whose staff generally slipped into Canada unannounced, though on arrival at their destination they were likely to be greeted by a welcoming committee from the nearest city, town or village. By 1942 R.A.F. units were to be found in every part of Canada.

Although the war tended to draw the British visitors and their Canadian hosts together in a bond of friendship, the adjustment was not always smooth. On the whole the British did not appreciate being uprooted and transferred to Canada and most of them were anxious to get back to the United Kingdom and the scene of action. Nor did they always show appreciation for the material comforts available in Canada as contrasted to conditions in their war torn homeland. The absolute safety from enemy action to be found in Canada, far from giving them a feeling of security, sometimes led them to feel that Canadians were not doing their full share in the war. Nor were they favourably impressed with the abundance of food on Canadian tables and were apt to complain about the absence of familiar British dishes in their own mess halls which were now dependent on Canadian rations. These differences were relatively minor, however, and easily overcome. Much more serious was the British inclination to use the term "colonial" in referring to Canada and things Canadian. The unfortunate dropping of this word could end a

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budding friendship, provoke a quarrel or create a barrier between a British school and the surrounding community.

Better understanding must have developed as time went by for it is estimated that 3,750 Canadian girls married members of the British, Australian, New Zealand and allied air forces.[38] Since aircrew trainees were kept to a routine that left little time for extracurricular activities it may be assumed that most of the matches were made with staff members of the British schools whose duties kept them in Canada for a prolonged period.

The arrival of the first group of Australians in Canada, a course of forty pilots, was looked to as a symbolic event in the progress of the B.C.A.T.P. and was accorded a fitting degree of publicity. An official welcoming party including the Honourable E.W. Hamber, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, Major General Sir William Glasgow, Head of the Australian Air Liaison Mission to Canada, and Air Minister Power was on hand to greet the Australians when they disembarked from the passenger liner Awatea[39] at Vancouver harbour on 27 September 1940. With little delay the airmen, forty pilots who had been trained up to the elementary fly-

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38 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 27.

39 The Niagara, the vessel on which they had been originally scheduled to sail, was sunk in June 1940, the first ship to become the victim of mining in the Pacific.

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ing level in Australia, entrained for Ottawa and o. 2 Service Flying Training School. On their first appearance at their new unit the Australians, distinctive in their dark blue uniform, were greeted with a rousing cheer from Canadian airmen, who, not usually demonstrative, in this case took the opportunity "to show our Australian cousins how welcome they are in our midst."[40] On October 2, flying training began for the new arrivals who formed course No. 6 at the Ottawa school. They graduated on 22 November when their pilots' wings were presented to them by Major General Glasgow. During the next week they were briefed on embarkation procedures and left Ottawa on 13 December en route for the United Kingdom.[41]

The second group of Australian pilots arrived in Canada on 25 October in company with 141 wireless operator-air gunners, seventy of whom were from New Zealand. The pilots made up the initial course at No. 3 Service Flying Training School at Calgary whose citizens were to become accustomed to these trainees from the South Pacific. The wireless operator-air gunners were taken on strength of No. 2 wireless

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40 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary No. 2 Service Flying Training School, entry for 2 October, 1940, Appendix A.

41 Ibid, entry for 14 December, 1940.

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school also located in Calgary.[42] In November another draft, comprising forty Australian pilots, seventy Australian wireless operator-air gunners and 103 New Zealand wireless operator-air gunners were welcomed to the foothills city. It was more by coincidence than planning that so many Australians and New Zealanders were concentred in one area, for the policy was to place them in those schools which happened to have training space available on their arrival. Groups were sometimes split between two schools though they were seldom divided into groups of less than fifteen. Of the Australians who arrived in Canada in November, forty pilots went to No. 1 Service Flying Training School at Camp Borden[43] and forty-two air observers were posted to No. 2 Air Observer School at Edmonton.

The December contingent which comprised 194 Australians and 114 New Zealanders was distributed between Calgary, Edmonton, Camp Borden and London, Ontario. Calgary received another group of forty pilots who arrived in time to participate in the graduation of the first course at No. 3 Service Flying Training School, plus 143 wireless operator-air gunners

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42 Diary No. 3 Service Flying Training School, vol.1, entry for 26 October, 1940; Daily Diary No. 2 Wireless School, vol. 1, entry for 26 October, 1940.

43 In keeping with the accelerated pilot training programme the entry of Australian pilots was increased from forty to eighty a month commencing with the November draft.

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some of whom were later transferred to No. 1 Wireless School at Montreal. Edmonton welcomed its second class of Australian pilots while No. 4 Air Observer School at London enrolled the first course of New Zealand air observers, forty-two in number, to be trained in Canada.[44] No New Zealand Pilots were scheduled to arrive until February 1941.

By the end of the year the B.C.A.T.P. had expanded to an organization of some sixty-seven units and formations. Of these sixteen were elementary flying training schools, eight were service flying training schools, four air observer schools and three, bombing and gunnery schools.[45] Thirty-one schools of various kinds were due to be opened in the

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44 Daily Diary No. 3 Service Flying Training School, vol. 1, entry for 24 December, 1940; Daily Diary No. 2 Wireless School, vol. 1, entry for 24 December, Daily Diary No. 2 Air Observer School, entry for 24 December, 1940; Daily Diary No. 1 Service Flying Training School, vol. 1, [Instructional Section], entry for 27 December, 1940; Daily Diary No. 4 Air Observer School, entry for 27 December, 1940.

45 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, Minutes of the Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix A.

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following year. In addition, four R.A.F. schools were in operation in Canada, ten others were scheduled to institute training operations in the Dominion during the next few months and the Canadian Government had informed the United Kingdom that more could be accommodated if necessary. The aircrew trained and under training since the opening of the first B.C.A.T.P. school was approximately 10,000, roughly twice as many as had been called for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement.[46] The number of graduates was 575, including 238 pilots, 115 air observers, 149 wireless operator-air gunners, seventy-three air gunners who had not taken the wireless part of the course.[47] All of these were Canadian with the exception of a class of thirty-seven Australian pilots who had completed their training at No. 2 Service Flying Training School at Ottawa in December.

Contrary to their expectations, the members of the first course of B.C.A.T.P. pilots, all Canadians, who were hoping to get postings to the United Kingdom on completing their air training at No. 1 Service Flying School at Camp Borden on 5 November, were assigned to duty in Canada. Seven were sent to home defence squadrons and twenty-seven were

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46 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, p.5.

47 Ibid.

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assigned to positions in the B.C.A.T.P.[48] Subsequent classes were employed in similar fashion. Of the 238 Canadian pilots who graduated in 1940, only twenty were posted to the United Kingdom. A few went to home defence squadrons but 165 found themselves back in the B.C.A.T.P. which still needed instructors for the flying training schools and staff pilots for routine flying tasks at bombing and gunnery schools or at the headquarters formations.[49]

The first course of air observers, whose training took them from No. 1 Air Observer School at Malton to No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School at Jarvis, Ontario and then to No. 1 Air Navigation School at Trenton, received their air observer badges on October 26. All thirty-seven candidates were immediately detailed for the United Kingdom and about a month later, on 24 November, arrived at their destination.[50] In December two other air observer courses, comprising seventy-seven pupils in all, completed their training and embarked for the United Kingdom. During November and Decem-

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48 R.V. Manning, "Graduation of the First Pilot Course, B.C.A.T.P." in Roundel, vol. 12, No. 7, September, 1960, p. 18-20.

49 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 3, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, p. 5.

50 R.V. Manning, "The First Observer Course, B.C.A.T.P.", in Roundel, vol. 12, No. 8, October 1960, p. 14-15.

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ber 149 wireless operator-air gunners graduated from No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School at Jarvis, Ontario, No. 2 at Moss-bank, Saskatchewan and No. 4 at Fingal, Ontario. All were posted to the United Kingdom.

Towards the end of the year Prime Minister King in a message to the United Kingdom Government, summed up what had been accomplished during the year through the B.C.A.T.P., and forecast something of further developments:

> It is now possible to forecast with reasonable accuracy the output of air crews under [the] Commonwealth Air Training Plan. I am advised that the plan will be operating at...capacity before the end of the next year. During 1941 the output of air crews will rise from something over 400 in January to over 1,000 in May and over 1,700 in December. It is estimated that at full capacity, that is, from January 1942 onwards some 800 pilots will be turned out each fortnight, and 420 observers and another 80 gunners every 28 days. These figures do not, of course, include output of such R.A.F. schools as are, or may be, transferred to Canada under existing arrangements. This means that despite many difficulties encountered, the plan, as a result of efforts which have been made by all concerned, will have reached its peak considerably in advance of the date originally contemplated.51

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51 H.Q. S-16-1, Prime Minister to Prime Minister, 15 November, 1940.

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CHAPTER IX

A YEAR OF ANXIETY: 1941

The year 1941 was a period of anxiety for those who were responsible for the administration and direction of the Air Training Plan. The problem of procuring aircraft remained and grew more acute as the aeroplanes in use began to show the effects of long hours of flying and the assembly lines were not turning out new ones in the numbers expected. After the first rush of recruits the rate of enlistment dropped off sharply and the Directorate of Manning was left wondering if Canada could continue to meet its aircrew commitment under the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement. Yet in spite of these and other difficulties the Plan continued to expand at an accelerated rate. More B.C.A.T.P. schools were opened, more R.A.F. units were transferred from the United Kingdom and Canada continued to grow in importance as a strategic centre of air training and aircraft production.

As 1940 drew to a close there were three questions arising from the acceleration of the air training programme which the Canadian Government wished to have settled as soon as possible. One of these concerned the formation of national squadrons as provided for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement.[1] With graduates of the Plan at last beginning to be sent to the United Kingdom and thousands of recruits entering the

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1 V. supra, p. 103-111

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training stream the Government felt that the time had come for the formation of Canadian squadrons. There was also concern about the financial commitments which had been undertaken in procuring aircraft and engines which, under the Agreement, the United Kingdom was supposed to supply. Some way of settling the accounts and making provision for the future supply of equipment had to be devised. Finally the Government wished to known what plans, if any, the United Kingdom had for the expansion of the air training organization in Canada.

Late in 1940 J.L. Ralston, the Minister of National Defence[2], C.D. Howe and Breadner, left for England to discuss these problems with the Air Ministry and to ensure a continued co-ordination of planning with the British[3]. Under the catalytic force of war little time was spent in haggling over the financial question which was settled on a broad basis. The British Government agreed to accept ultimate responsibility for expenditures incurred by Canada in obtaining equipment which the United Kingdom had originally agreed

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2 Ralston became Minister of National Defence following Rogers' death in an aeroplane crash in June, 1940.

3 The three men journeyed to the United Kingdom separately. Ralston left Canada in November. Howe, whose boat was torpedoed off the coast of Scotland, and Breadner, followed in December. Power, although Minister of National Defence for Air, was not one of the party as it was inadvisable to have three key Ministers away from Ottwa at one time. Ralston,also went to discuss army matters with the British War Office.

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to pay for under the Agreement. However, the British asked that all such expenditures be approved by the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission in Ottawa before being charged to the United Kingdom account. The British also pointed out that this arrangement did not in any way affect the right to make their contribution in kind. From the point of view of the United Kingdom Treasury this consideration was most important for it left open the possibility that some way might be found of offsetting British indebtedness.[4] Aircraft, spare parts and other items were still being shipped to Canada and even though these arrived far behind schedule and seldom in the amounts anticipated the British wanted to be credited with them.

The Canadians hoped to get some indication from the Air Ministry as to what extent future strategic air requirements were likely to affect the air training organization but Sir Archibald Sinclair, the British Secretary of State for Air, was unable to give them a definite answer. He pointed out that at the moment the Air Ministry was too absorbed with combatting the night offensive which had followed the Battle of Britain, and preparing for aerial operations in the spring to make any definite decisions about expanding

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4 Directorate of History, H.Q. S-1-6, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 1, Air Force message A. 91, from Ralston for Power, 26 December, 1940.

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the B.C.A.T.P. However, he gave assurance that all the air training schools presently being developed in Canada would be fully utilized and explained that Britain was contemplating transferring more training schools to Canada. Under the existing circumstances Sinclair felt that it was most important for Canada to concentrate on the production of Anson aircraft for they were a limiting factor in the expansion of the air training programme,[5] being required for training pilots for bombing and ocean patrol as well as for the general training of air observers. By force of circumstances the B.C.A.T.P., during 1940, had had to rely heavily on single-engined trainers, namely Harvards and Yales. This situation would continue well on into 1941 but with a bomber force in the making the Air Ministry wanted to get twin-engined trainers out to the service flying training schools as quickly as possible. Moreover, the British Ministry of Aircraft Production, which was producing Ansons for British and Australian schools, wished to transfer to the Canadian aircraft industry as much of the Anson load as it could, giving the British factories more scope to work on operational aircraft.

From an historical point of view the most important result of the winter meetings in London was the Sinclair-

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5 Ibid.

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Ralston Agreement which related to the formation of Canadian squadrons.[6] In the main, the Agreement provided for the formation of twenty-five R.C.A.F. squadrons to be formed between March 1941 and April 1942. Viewed in retrospect this number appears fairly modest because even allowing for replacements the twenty-five units would not absorb more than one third of the 11,000 aircrew that Canada could expect to send to the United Kingdom through the medium of the Air Training Plan by April 1942. Ralston and Breadner wanted to have the balance, approximately 8,000, grouped together in a limited number of British squadrons but the Air Ministry asked for a free hand to post them wherever they were most needed. Sinclair pointed out, as Riverdale had during the negotiations in Ottawa in 1939, that the United Kingdom was paying for all costs connected with the twenty-five squadrons and that if the Canadians wished to build up a larger national force they should assume the cost. Ralston referred the matter by telegram to King and Power[7] who gave their consent to the British proposal on the understanding that the way

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6 Ibid, Memorandum of Agreement as to the arrangements to be made under Article 15 of the British Commonwealth Air Training Agreement and the letter of 16th December, 1939, from Lord Riverdale to the Canadian Minister of National Defence, 7 January, 1941.

7 Ibid, Ralston to Prime Minister and Power, 14 December, 1940

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would be left open for the formation of more R.C.A.F. squadrons at some later date.[8]

Since the organization of these squadrons and their subsequent history really belongs to the operational history of the R.C.A.F. it does not come within the scope of this thesis. It should be mentioned however, that the formation of national squadrons was beset with difficulties. The British, whose responsibility it was, had not made proper provision for separating the flow of trainees from Canada into their national components. Apart from giving the so-called Canadian squadrons the designation "R.C.A.F.", and a special number, the Air Ministry dealt with them as if they were units of the R.A.F. The result was that the twenty-five squadrons contained a fairly large representation of R.A.F. aircrew as well as flyers from other parts of the Commonwealth. To King, Power and the hierarchy of the R.C.A.F. this situation was abominable but the Air Ministry, making virtue out of necessity, took refuge in the theory that mixed squadrons were more effective than those formed along national lines. Moreover, to the chagrin of their Canadian allies, the British pointed out that most of the young Canadian aircrew preferred serving in mixed squadrons.[9]

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8 Ibid, Telegram A.167 A 612, Power to Ralston, 15 December, 1940.

9 V. infra, p. 331-333.

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It is a phenomenon of British and Canadian air relations in the Second World War that the debate over national squadrons was carried on almost entirely between the R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters in London and the Air Ministry. Even though Power himself was deeply involved in it, the problem was seldom, if ever , discussed at the meetings of the Supervisory Board or between R.C.A.F. Headquarters in Ottawa and the United Kingdom Air Liaison Office. It was raised in Parliament from time to time and occasionally got into the newspapers but otherwise never entered the administrative councils of the B.C.A.T.P. Nevertheless two points stand out quite clearly. One is that the B.C.A.T.P. was set up to serve the needs of the R.A.F., not those of the R.C.A.F. The other is that as a result of the B.C.A.T.P. Canadian aircrew became scattered far and wide throughout the British Air Force.

One of the highlights of air training in 1941 was the appearance of the Canadian built Anson though full production was not reached until early in 1942, almost a year later than anticipated. It will be recalled that Federal Aircraft Limited, a crown corporation was organized in June 1940, not as a manufacturing concern but as the agent of the Department of Munitions and Supply to co-ordinate the sub-contracting of Anson parts and the final assembly of the plane by

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major aircraft companies.[10] Since the Canadian aircraft industry was already exerting itself to the utmost to meet the rather small orders placed by the United Kingdom in 1938 and 1939, and as there was a general lack of personnel in Canada experienced in the work of designing and manufacturing aeroplanes, there is little wonder that in its initial stages the Anson programme was plagued with troubles.

At first the directors of Federal Aircraft, who had extensive experience in general manufacturing but knew little of aircraft design, were, in the words of C.D. Howe, "a bit at sea".[11] Their most serious mistake was in underestimating the complexity of their task which basically was to redesign the British Anson to provide for the use of an American made engine. The project involved considerably more than producing a copy of the British model. The Anson II, as the Canadian version came to be called, was to be fitted with American instruments, a Canadian propellor and other miscellaneous parts. At the request of the R.C.A.F. it was to incorporate certain improvements over the British Anson including a roomier cockpit, hydraulic instead of hand operated air brakes and an undercarriage that could be retracted by hydraulic power, rather than by a manually operated crank.

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10 V. supra, p. 184-186.

11 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1143.

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All this involved considerable work in aircraft engineering and design.

In September 1940 the Chief of the Air Staff reported to the Supervisory Board that Anson production in Canada was progressing, "but not so favourably as could be wished". There had been some delay due to the transition between direct control by the Department of Munitions and Supply and control by Federal Aircraft Limited.[12] Howe's main problem in regard to the new crown company was to find a board of directors who enjoyed the confidence of those aircraft firms which were contributing to the manufacture of the Anson. On returning from England in January he was confronted by a number of the sub-contractors, obviously unhappy with the directorship of Federal Aircraft. A letter, jointly signed by some of the sub-contractors, was addressed to Howe asking that the corporation be dissolved and its functions taken over by the de Havilland Aircraft of Canada. Copies of this letter and others exchanged between the aircraft firms and the Minister appeared in the press.[13] Under attack from several quarters Federal Aircraft found it difficult to hold its staff together and some of the key men, fearing they soon

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12 Directorate of History, Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Meeting Held 9 September, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C.

13 Debates, House of Commons, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1119-1142.

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would be out of a job, handed in their resignations. In Parliament the Opposition, not too sure of which way to move, sought to enlarge the accusation of inefficiency within the crown company into a general attack on the Government's aircraft production as a whole. This approach accomplished very little but it enabled Howe, who did not deny that Federal Aircraft was having trouble at the managerial level, to point out that the root of the problem was that the rapid expansion of the Canadian aircraft industry had created an acute shortage of experienced personnel. He had no intention of disbanding Federal Aircraft. To do so, he argued, would only wipe out the progress already made and lead to additional delay and expense.

Federal Aircraft weathered the storm of criticism and protest intact, even managing to make some headway in the face of its difficulties. On 9 January a flight test was carried out with a flying model consisting of an English airframe fitted with the Jacobs engine and a Canadian made propellor.[14] This experiment, though successful, simply revealed that there was an extensive amount of redesigning to be done.

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14 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of the Meeting Held 10 February, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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Organizational troubles were also being overcome. In January, W.A. Newman, formerly chief mechanical engineer of the Canadian Pacific Railway, was appointed managing director of Federal Aircraft. Gifted with a fortunate combination of executive ability and engineering knowledge Newman succeeded in getting the full co-operation of the sub-contracting companies. Howe gave him credit for pulling the Anson programme together in a marvellous way.[15] By June 1941 the designing work was virtually completed and the Canadian airframe with all its component parts was in production by the several sub-contractors. Assembly began in June but it was not until August that the first Canadian built Anson was successfully flown. Production did not grow at the rate expected. The R.C.A.F. received only one plane in August, seven in September, twelve in October, sixteen in November and thirty-four in December. At that time it was accurately forecast that production would rapidly mount to about one hundred aircraft per month.[16]

Because of the delay in Anson production the B.C.A.T.P. throughout 1941 remained handicapped by a deficiency of twin-

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15 Debates, House of Commons, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1053.

16 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 January, 1942, Report by the Chief of the Air Staff.

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engined aircraft. The R.A.F., as a result, faced a shortage of bomber pilots. In 1940 the United Kingdom had been advised that Canadian production would begin in March 1941 and was asked to continue supplying Ansons for B.C.A.T.P. schools in the interval. However, as it became clear that Federal Aircraft was in difficulty, the United Kingdom was advised that British Ansons would be needed by the B.C.A.T.P. schools at least until the end of September 1941 at the rate of seventy per month.[17] Although the shipments of Ansons arrived spasmodically, and, to the annoyance of the R.C.A.F., generally without any explanation for the delays in shipping, the United Kingdom continued to supply Ansons until about the middle of 1942 when a grand total of 1511, 143 more than it had agreed to contribute for the B.C.A.T.P., had been delivered.

The production and assembly of Ansons was the largest programme of aircraft manufacture undertaken in Canada during the war. Altogether five different versions were used in the Air Training Plan. The Anson I was the British Anson fitted with the British Cheetah engine. The Anson II was the Canadian Anson designed to take the Jacobs engine. Because the British did not supply Cheetah engines for all the Ansons they shipped to Canada, about 153 of the Anson I frames were

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17 Ibid, vol. 3, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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modified by Federal Aircraft to receive the Jacobs engine and were known as Anson III's. Approximately another 170 British Ansons were flown with another American engine, the Wright Whirlwind, and were designated Anson IV's. The fastest and most powerful version of the Anson flown in Canada was the Anson V which used the American Pratt and Whitney Junior Wasp engine. This model, which appeared in 1943, was especially designed for the training of navigators. Yet another model, the Anson VI, was designed for use as a bombing and gunnery trainer giving some idea of the extent to which specialization was beginning to enter into air training. However, the war ended before the Anson VI went into production, the prototype model being the only one produced.[18]

Table III, which lists the principal aircraft produced in Canada during the war, shows the position of the Anson in relation to other aircraft produced. Although the Harvard appears to be a very close second to the Anson, when the amount of work which went into the Anson programme in the way of designing and adaptation is considered a better perspective of the significance of the two is obtained. The table also illustrates something of the way in which the B.C.A.T.P. shaped the Canadian aircraft industry which was

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18 Directorate of History, Department of Reconstruction and Supply, A Report on the Canadian Programme of Aircraft Production and Maintenance, [Ottawa], (no publisher), [1945], p. 46-48, 83-86.

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given over mainly to the production of trainers. As far as the economy as a whole is concerned, it may be noted that the production of aircraft, which in 1939 did not hold a place among the country's forty leading industries, was ranked eighteenth in 1942, eighth in 1943 and fourth in 1944.[19]

TABLE III[20]

CANADIAN AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION 1939-1945

Name of Aircraft	Type	Number Completed
Anson II	Trainer	1,832
Anson V	Trainer	1,050
Harvard	Trainer	2,800
Tiger Moth	Primary Trainer	1,520
Cornell	Primary Trainer	1,735
Fleet Finch	Primary Trainer	431
Bolingbroke	Operational	626
Canso	Operational	721
Helldiver	Operational (U.S.Navy)	1,165
Hampden	Operational	160
Hurricanes	Operational	1,451
Mosquito	Operational	1,133
Lancaster	Operational	430
Total Number of Trainers Produced		9,368
Total Number of Operational		5,686

Although the delay in the production of Canadian Ansons was a hindrance to the full development of the

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19 Canada, The Canada Year Book, 1947, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1947, p. 542.

20 Department of Reconstruction and Supply, Op. Cit. p. 9-10.

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B.C.A.T.P., an even more serious problem arose over the lack of spare parts for training aircraft of British make. From the very beginning of the B.C.A.T.P. the irregular arrival and non-arrival of spare parts from the United Kingdom had been a cause of concern and as more schools were opened and more planes put into use the parts shortage became extremely critical. By the fall of 1941 many aircraft were becoming due for major overhauls which, according to air safety regulations, must be given at stated intervals in addition to minor periodic checks, inspections and repairs. Relatively little difficulty was experienced in getting replacement parts for American or Canadian equipment but a large proportion of the English trainers, about thirty-eight per cent of the Battles and one tenth of the Ansons could not be put back into the air for lack of essential items.[21] In November, Power summed up the repair problem in picturesque words:

> Last year it was a headache; this year it is arthritis, phlebitis, St. Vitus dance and everything else put together. The cause of the disease is the shortage of spares, and particularly of engines. Naturally it arises from the urgent demand for engines for operational aircraft. The planes we use in our bombing and gunnery schools are Fairey Battles powered by Merlin engines.... We are carrying on thousands of hours of bombing, and our demands for spares are enormous and probably unprecedented....

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21 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 January, 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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> What spares can be made here we will make, but there are limits in that regard. It is a difficult art, calling for special tools which may be needed elsewhere. The answer is to extemporize, substitute and multiply. We are doing all of this. So far there has been no hold-up, and we hope there will not be. But I do not wish to disguise from the committee that the going is pretty tough, and that we shall have a hard time to keep those planes in the air.[22]

Because of the preponderance of British equipment in use, providing spare parts lay largely with the United Kingdom. Some engine components were of necessity being turned out in Canada by motor companies or aircraft manufacturing firms but because the making of engine components in Canada was costly, the British Treasury, acting through the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, retained control of the sums of money that could be expended in this way. It was understood that the great bulk of spares would come from the United Kingdom but the British Ministry of Aircraft Production, rightly or wrongly, was concentrating its efforts on the production of operational aircraft. The less spectacular essentials such as trainers and spare parts tended to be neglected.[23] This policy may have been necessary to reassure the public that there were plenty of operational aircraft on hand and, by the same token, to intimidate the enemy. It also

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22 Debates, House of Commons, 1941-1942, vol. 4, p. 4141-4142.

23 John Slessor, The Central Blue, Recollections and Reflections by Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir John Slessor, London, Cassell, 1956, p. 308.

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suited the manufacturers because the production of complete aircraft was less troublesome and offered more in the way of prestige and profit than the manufacture of spare parts. This policy played havoc with the training pro ramme. It took a strongly worded messa e fro Power to the Air Ministry to get action on the spare parts problem.

> ...during August and September of this year, engines beco ing due for overhaul exceeded the numbers overhauled by 120 per month. In October this figure was 163 and there is every prospect that in November the disparity between engines becoming due for overhaul and the number overhauled will be even greater. In addition, 48% of the Battle aircraft in Canada are at present unserviceable. This alarmin situation is entirely due to the non-receipt of parts.
>
> The situation in British schools in Canada is equally serious. Forty-three per cent of the two hundred and seventy-five Oxford aircraft in these schools are now unserviceable due to the shortage of parts. Practically no spares of this type have been received so that the situation will continue to deteriorate rapidly.
>
> I consider it essential that Canada be empowered to purchase parts on this continent as a charge against the United Kingdom account when such parts are not being supplied from the United Kingdom in sufficient time to prevent the Plan being seriously hampered by unserviceability of aircraft. In the meantime it is vital that a high priority be given to the issue and despatch of spares demanded by Canada for the B.C.A.T.P.[24]

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24 Directorate of History, 180.009 (D.8) Extracts from Privy Council file D-19-C. vol. 2 (Jan-Dec. 1941) re B.C.A.T.P. and its operation, message No. 1786 from Secretary of State for External Affairs, Ottawa, to High Commissioner for Canada in London, 13 November, 1941.

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Power's urgent appeal to the Air Ministry at least received a sympathetic reception. Sinclair, the British Secretary of State for Air launched an inquiry into the question of supply of aircraft and component parts for the B.C.A.T.P. and the British schools in Canada. But the problem was deeply rooted in the established pattern of British aircraft production and could not be easily overcome. Of some benefit was a British concession which gave the Canadian Air Force a freer hand in determining what items could be manufactured in Canada. Lists of the most needed parts were prepared and submitted to the Department of Munitions and Supply. Their manufacture was pushed to the limit but many months were to elapse before reasonable stocks could be accumulated. In the meantime there was a hiatus in the supply of such equipment and those responsible for keeping the aeroplanes flying were forced to rely on their own initiative and resourcefulness. The situation was not peculiar to Canada for the training schools in Britain were no better off. The Air Ministry, though it could not completely ignore Power's appeal, turned a deaf ear to the complaints of the R.A.F. Air Training Command that training requirements were being overlooked by the British aircraft industry.[25] To a lesser degree air training schools in the United States suffered from the same problem.

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25 Slessor, op. cit. p. 308.

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Fortunately for schools in Canada as well as in the United States, the production of training aircraft was given high priority in the America aircraft programme early in the war. Later on, however, as the United States became fully engaged in the war the emphasis swung heavily to the manufacture of operational planes; trainers and accessories then became more difficult to obtain.[26]

One of the most serious difficulties faced by the R.C.A.F. in 1941 was a decline in the rate of enlistment. This problem was not peculiar to the Air Force but simply a manifestation of the general manpower situation within the country. At the start of the war Canada was just emerging from a long period of economic depression and unemployment was still a national problem. The expansion of the armed forces and the increase in the production of material for war purposes soon took up the slack. After the fall of France in 1940 it was realized that Canada, as well as supplying food and munitions would have to make a heavy manpower contribution as well, and a national manpower policy began to take shape. As a first step, a system of national registration was instituted. In October the voluntary method of recruiting for military service was supplemented by the introduction of

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26 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate, Men and Planes, Chicago, University of Chicago, 1955, (U.S.A. Historical Division The Army Air Forces in World War II, vol. 6) p. 226

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compulsory army service for home defence purposes, though provision was made through order-in-council that men might be dispatched to areas outside Canada if the need should arise. The inauguration of women's services was another feature of the national policy. In July 1941, the Women's Division of the R.C.A.F. was organized.

The Air Force carried on its recruiting programme within the general framework of the national manpower policy and in co-operation, at least to a limited degree, with the other services, though its prime considerations were governed by its own peculiarities and its own problems. Between December 1939 and December 1941 the R.C.A.F. increased twelve fold, from a strength of approximately 8,000 to 98,000. During the same period the Army quadrupled in size from about 63,000 to 274,000 while the Navy increased from 5,000 to approximately 28,000.[27] The unprecedented expansion of the Air Force shows the effect of the B.C.A.T.P. which, though concerned directly only with aircrew training created a need for a large ground organization. The Air Force encountered little difficulty in recruiting men and women for its ground staff, the main problem being to get them properly trained. In the enlistment of aircrew, however, the Air Force had some anxious moments during 1941. Here again one may see the shadow of

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27 Canada, Wartime Information Board, Canada at War, Ottawa, King's Printer, July, 1945, p. 22.

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the B.C.A.T.P. for through it Canada was committed to provide a definite quota of aircrew, and against a background of a threatening shortage of manpower there was great concern lest the country fail to meet these obligations.

One of the main features of the Air Force method of aircrew enlistment was the formation of a reserve pool from which pilots,air observers and wireless operator-air gunners could be drawn as required. In 1940,when thousands of young Canadians were applying for aircrew training, the Air Force enrolled about 5,000 more than could be taken into the training stream immediately and assigned them to guard duty. Needless to say, this assignment was most unpopular with the would-be flyers. In February the Air Force adopted a slightly different policy whereby aircrew applicants were enlisted forthwith, given leave without pay and instructed to report back to the recruiting unit at a given date when space would be available in the training organization. In this way a reserve of aircrew trainees was always available. Men in the reserve holding were called in and new recruits, it was hoped, would come forward in sufficient numbers to replenish the pool.

The Air Force hoped to keep the numbers in the pool from dropping below the 5,000 mark but throughout 1941 there was a fairly steady decline in aircrew enlistments and the trend continued well on into the next year. The general picture is represented in Table IV under the heading Aircrew

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Enlistment. Under the heading Aircrew Intake, the table shows the rate at which personnel were being absorbed into the training scheme. More trainees were being taken out of the reserve pool than were going into it. Consequently, those associated with the B.C.A.T.P. were faced with the prospect that it might eventually become depleted. It never did, but the trend was disturbing especially as there was the possibility that the United Kingdom might want to expand the training programme in 1942.

TABLE IV[28]

		AIRCREW ENLISTMENT	AIRCREW INTAKE
May	1941	1135	2241
June	1941	1027	1614
July	1941	1481	2027
August	1941	1715	1934
September	1941	1233	3575
October	1941	1196	3156
November	1941	962	1625
December	1941	727	1969
January	1942	453	790
February	1942	824	1150
March	1942	728	1331
April	1942	811	1365
May	1942	1187	1411

Table IV also illustrates the seasonal trends in both aircrew enlistment and the rate at which aircrew were absorbed

28 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vols 306, Minutes of Meetings Held from 9 June 1941 to 15 June 1942 and attached Reports by the Chief of the Air Staff.

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into the training organization. As a rule, the months when schools and universities were closed were good months for recruiting. The training schools also functioned more efficiently in summer than in winter. Cold weather and snow tended to impede aircraft maintenance and flying operations and generally slow up the whole process of air training.

In March 1941 Power told the House of Commons that although there was as yet no shortage of aircrew applicants he was not at all certain that Canada would be able to meet its future aircrew commitments under the B.C.A.T.P. The sector of the population from which aircrew were drawn consisted of men from 18 to 28 years of age, physically fit with good eyesight and having two or more years of high school education. A survey carried out under the direction of the Department of National Defence indicated that there were an estimated 150,000 such men available. The R.C.A.F. acting on advice from the R.A.F. preferred to select younger men from the eighteen to twenty-five bracket, unmarried and physically fit for high altitude flying. In this category there were about 105,000 and according to the Minister, 15,000 to 20,000 more were coming in every year.[29] This pool of manpower was drawn on by the Royal Canadian Navy, the Army and industry as well as by the R.C.A.F. whose aircrew requirement in 1941

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[29] Debates, House of Commons, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1606.

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was approximately 25,000.

Envisaging a future shortage of recruits the Minister and the senior officers of the service continued to keep the manpower situation under close scrutiny. A regular recruiting programme, supplemented in rural areas by mobile units was carried on from twenty centres spread across the country. In addition a number of special programmes were instituted to obtain aircrew candidates. In February, in a movement started by Air Minister Power, representatives of the three services met and agreed on the necessity of co-operating in their respective recruiting programmes. In particular, recruiting officers of the Air Force and Navy were to be permitted to enlist men who were undergoing thirty day compulsory training in the Army, as well as members of the Reserve Army. Recruiting officers of the Army and Navy were to be permitted to interview aircrew applicants who had been found unsuitable for flying duties.[30] Under this reciprocal arrangement 4,549 men volunteered to change from khaki to air force blue during 1941.[31]

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30 Directorate of History, 112.1 (D49), Minutes of Meeting of Defence Council held at 1100 hours, Monday, 24 February, 1941

31 Directorate of History, 133.065 (D590), Statistics on Enlistments and Discharges, 1939-1947, War Service Records.

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In looking to its future manpower needs under the B.C.A.T.P. the leaders of the R.C.A.F. turned to the country's high schools, universities and youth organizations. Early in the recruiting programme it was surmised that a large number of potential pilots and air observers were being turned away from the recruiting centres simply because they did not have the necessary formal education. In order to bring into the service as many of these as possible, provision was made in October 1941 for aircrew applicants who were suitable physically but who had not completed two years of high school, to enrol for academic training under the Dominion Provincial Youth Training Programme which, since early in 1939 had been conducting technical courses for R.C.A.F. tradesmen. Instituted in the depression years to promote vocational training, the Programme became known during the war as the War Emergency Training Plan. Courses in English, mathematics and science, designed to meet air force requirements and supervised by R.C.A.F. officers experienced in school duties in civilian life, were organized in every province. This type of training proved to be quite popular. Candidates, who had to have completed one year of high school with a good record, signed an agreement to enlist for aircrew duties and received a small weekly allowance to meet living expenses. By the end of 1941, 491 were taking pre-aircrew academic courses under this scheme. A year later

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enrolment in the scheme reached 2,231.[32]

Before hostilities began some servicemen's clubs, inspired by the air cadet movement in the United Kingdom, were independently conducting training programmes for boys with a view to promoting youth interest in the Air Force. During 1940 this movement spread and with the support of the R.C.A.F. culminated in November 1940 in the formation of the Air Cadet League of Canada with chartered authorization to train boys between fifteen and eighteen years of age for possible future enlistment in the R.C.A.F. Although it remained under civilian direction the Air Cadet League came to be closely associated with the R.C.A.F. which provided funds for uniforms, summer camp training and equipment. Organization was closely identified with that of the R.C.A.F. and the syllabus was patterned after the ground training given to aircrew in initial training although instruction in armament and navigation was not given to the same degree. In response to an appeal from the Minister of National Defence for Air, provincial departments of education agreed to encourage the formation of air cadet units in schools and to have air force subjects listed as optional courses in high school curricula. Prior to 1 September 1943 no records were kept of the number

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32 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, (unpublished material, no date), vol. 3, p. 515 - 532.

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of aircrew who had received air cadet training but subsequent to that date 2,528 air cadets were enlisted in the R.C.A.F. The Air Cadet League estimated that approximately 3,500 air cadets enlisted in the R.C.A.F. during the war, the great majority as aircrew.[33]

The R.C.A.F. approach to universities came too late to produce a steady stream of recruits such as the Army was able to derive from the long established Canadian Officer Training Corps. In September 1941 the R.C.A.F. proposed the formation of university air training squadrons. Although the suggestion was well received by the universities it was found impossible to organize the squadrons until after the academic year was well advanced. In most instances air force units did not begin to function on the campuses until 1942.

Steps were also taken to increase enlistments in Quebec. A bilingual section, including public relations personnel was established in the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Manning "to promote, direct, manage and supervise such ideas, plans and publicity schemes as would be likely to foster in the minds and hearts of the youth of the Province of Quebec an ardent desire to serve with the R.C.A.F."[34] The need to learn English presented a problem to the French Canadians.

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33 Ibid, vol. 4, p. 926-960.

34 Ibid, vol. 1, p. 221-227.

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A language training course of eight weeks' duration was established at No. 4 Manning Depot in Quebec City but it was really helpful only for those who already had a grounding in English. Those who entered the school with no understanding of English at all found it extremely difficult to acquire sufficient understanding to enable them to absorb instruction in air training. Because of the language barrier and also because Quebec's attitude toward the war differed substantially from that of the other parts of the country, recruiting in the Province continued to lag proportionately. Table V shows R.C.A.F. enlistments for both air and ground appointments by province of origin.

TABLE V[35]

Air Force Appointments and Enlistments by Province
September 1939 to December 1946

Place of Residence	R.C.A.F.	R.C.A.F. (Women's Division)	Total
Prince Edward Island (93,919)	1,615	112	1,727
Nova Scotia (573,190)	8,198	853	9,051
New Brunswick (453,377)	6,888	737	7,625
Quebec (3,319,640)	26,078	1,334	27,412
Ontario (3,756,632)	95,200	5,231	100,431
Manitoba (722,447)	21,226	1,305	22,531
Saskatchewan (837,747)	23,070	2,461	25,531
Alberta (788,393)	20,590	1,856	22,446
British Columbia (809,203)	22,000	2,300	24,300
Other British Empire	932	662	1,594
United States	8,469	129	8,598
Other Countries	182	4	186
TOTAL	234,448	17,034	251,482

35 Canada Year Book, 1947, p. 1129.

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The manpower situation was temporarily eased by a change in the pilot training programme. An analysis undertaken in the R.A.F. in January 1941 convinced Air Marshal A.G.R. Garrod, the Air Member for Training in the R.A.F. that the reduction in length of the pilot training course implemented in 1940 in the interest of obtaining higher output had seriously impaired operational efficiency.[36] In the United Kingdom air accidents were occurring at an alarming rate. In the operational squadrons they were taking a toll of sixty-seven bomber aircraft and seventy-eight fighters damaged or destroyed each month,aloss which represented twenty per cent of the total production of these planes. The basic cause of the increase in accidents, so it seemed, was that the increase in skill of individual pilots had not kept pace with their advance to the more complicated types of aircraft.[37]

Another aspect of the problem was that pilots from Canada were arriving in the United Kingdom faster than they could be taken into the operational training units of the R.A.F. In the interval of waiting, which in winter might be a month or more, the young flyers, who were kept occupied

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36 V. supra, p. 192.

37 Great Britain, Air Ministry, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training 1939-1944, Air Member for Training, January, 1940, p. 74-75.

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with a series of ground lectures, became impatient, sometimes unruly and inevitably forgot something of what they had learned in air training. The overall solution proposed by Garrod was to give the pilots more flying practice at the elementary and service levels of training in Canada and to use the fields vacated by R.A.F. units which had been transferred to Canada as advanced flying units where pilots newly arrived from the Dominions could continue flying training without any undue break in practice.[38]

In September the R.A.F. Air Member for Training arrived in Ottawa to discuss details of the revision with the R.C.A.F. To provide more flying practice the training at elementary schools was to be increased from seven to eight weeks and at service schools from ten to twelve weeks with a distinct possibility that at the latter pilot training would be increased again in the near future.[39] The R.A.F. wished to have the new programme introduced without any drop in pilot output but with the schools already filled to capacity the longer courses naturally reduced the rate of pupil flow. Consequently the aircrew intake fell off sharply from 3,156 in October to 1,625 in November when the new programme came

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38 Ibid, p. 144.

39 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 15 September, 1941.

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into effect. The result is shown in Table IV. However, the lengthening of flying training was accompanied by an enlargement of the training schools, some of which were doubled in size. In December 1941, following another request from the United Kingdom courses at service flying training schools were extended to sixteen weeks.[40] The new programme could not be implemented all at once but had to be introduced gradually as additional accommodation, aircraft and flying instructors became available. In the spring of 1942, training schedules became fully adjusted, and the flow of trainees regained its momentum.

The introduction of the longer periods of pilot training affords an opportunity to observe how an alteration in the training syllabus affected the flow of trainees in the B.C.A.T.P. pipeline. While a decrease in the length of courses tended to accelerate the flow and increase the output, as in the summer of 1940, an extension of the training period had the opposite effect, reducing both the rate of flow and the output unless increased accommodation, more aircraft and additional instructors could be supplied quickly. Other factors that might disrupt the smooth operation of the air training included irregularities in the delivery of training aircraft and spare parts, the introduction of new

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40 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 January, 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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types of operational planes, and changes in air tactics and strategy. As the war went on specialization inevitably made its way into air operations and back through the training organization necessitating the introduction of new courses or the altering of existing ones.

It will be appreciated that there was always a lag in adjusting the training program to meet operational requirements. Because of the peculiar way in which Commonwealth air power developed, with operations under the control of the R.A.F. in Great Britain and most of the training being carried out by the R.C.A.F. in Canada, and by various air forces in other parts of the Commonwealth as well, the lapse in time was greater than would have been the case if both operations and training were controlled by one air force and one government as in the United States. In the B.C.A.T.P., requests and instructions for alterations in the syllabus came from the R.A.F., as a rule directly from Garrod, the British Member for Air Training to Leckie. As administrator of the B.C.A.T.P. the R.C.A.F. had no alternative but to implement the modifications as quickly as it could though there were times when the alterations had to have the formal sanction of the Air Council or, if a large outlay of money was involved, by the War Committee of the Cabinet. In view of the frequency of the requests from the R.A.F., which often came with little warning, and the opportunities that existed for

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delays, frustrations and disruptions in gearing the training programme in Canada to operational situation in the United Kingdom and other theatres of war, the surprising element in the whole situation is that adjustments were carried out with little grumbling on either side. The fact that relations were kept on an even keel must be attributed mainly to the diplomacy shown by the members of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, who were aware of the problems faced by the R.A.F. in its conduct of air operations and those posed by the mass training of aircrew by the R.C.A.F.

In spite of all the problems, delays and difficulties encountered in 1941 the Air training programme continued to surge ahead. During the year twenty-eight B.C.A.T.P. schools had come into operation. The opening of No. 9 Bombing and Gunnery School at Mont Joli in the Province of Quebec in December completed the programme of school construction provided for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement except for one more bombing and gunnery school which had not yet become necessary.[41] In June the United Kingdom had asked for space in Canada for more R.A.F. Schools including six elementary flying training schools, six service flying training schools, three operational training units, one general reconnaissance school and

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41 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 5, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 January, 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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a radio (really radar) school, making a total of thirty-five R.A.F. schools scheduled to carry out training in Canada.[42] By the end of the year eighteen were already formed and in operation; sites for remainder had been chosen and were being rushed to completion. Table VI shows the air training schools and operational units in Canada for the R.A.F. and the B.C.A.T.P. as of 31 December 1941.

TABLE VI[43]

Flying Training Schools and Operational Training Units in Canada as of 31 December 1941. Numbers in brackets refer to units planned but not opened

	B.C.A.T.P.	R.A.F.	Total
Elementary flying training schools	22	2(6)	24
Service flying training schools	16	8(6)	24
Bombing and Gunnery schools	9	1	10
Air Observer schools	10		10
Navigation schools	2	3	5
Wireless schools	4		4
General reconnaissance schools		1(1)	1
Operational training units		2(4)	2
Radar School		1	1
TOTAL	63	18(17)	81

Air training for the R.A.F. was being carried on in other countries besides Canada. South Africa had an air training scheme and training schools were also located in

42 Ibid, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 14 July, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

43 Ibid, vol. 5, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 January 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix A.

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India, Southern Rhodesia and Kenya. There were still various types of flying training schools in the United Kingdom while in the United States a number of American schools were training pilots and wireless operator-air gunners for the R.A.F. But the air training organization in Canada was something over and above all the others forming the main source of pilots and other aircrew categories for the R.A.F. In spite of reversals the scheme was paying dividends in 1941.

Records show that a total of 14,703 aircrew, excluding those trained in transferred R.A.F. schools, had been trained by the B.C.A.T.P. up to 31 December 1941. Of these eighty per cent, or approximately 11,764 were Canadians. A further breakdown of figures reveals that 4,236 R.C.A.F. pilots, 1,457 observers, 2,280 wireless operator-air gunners and 475 air gunners had been posted to the United Kingdom. Of the remainder, 1,462 had been turned back into the B.C.A.T.P. and 588 had been sent to R.C.A.F. squadrons in Canada.[44] Those who had left Canadian shores were to be found mainly in R.A.F. squadrons though some had been posted to the newly formed R.C.A.F. units and a number were still undergoing operational training in the United Kingdom. During 1941, 926 R.C.A.F. personnel were killed on air operations in the United Kingdom and other war theatres, 417 were missing and

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44 Ibid.

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and 121 were prisoners of war. Not all, but practically all of these were graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. Canadians were being employed on night bombing operations over Europe, in daring daylight fighter sweeps over France and the Low Countries, in providing air support for the ground forces in the see-saw battle across the Libyan desert, in hunting submarines with units of Coastal Command of the R.A.F. and in escorting ships around northern Europe to Russia. In short, whereever the R.A.F. was engaged in operations Canadians were to be found. In summing up the progress of the B.C.A.T.P. in the House of Commons Power remarked:

> There were those who jeered when we began eighteen months ago with the first class of 168 men and said that we could not win wars on schedule[s]. That class of 168 men has been multiplied one-hundred-fold, and to-day I think we can safely say that the empire training scheme has won its wings.[45]

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45 Debates, House of Commons 1941-1942, vol. 4, p.4142

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THE BRITISH COMMONWEALTH AIR TRAINING PLAN 1939 to 1945

by Fred J. Hatch

Thesis presented to the Department of History of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Ottawa as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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CHAPTER X

THE UNITED STATES AND THE B.C.A.T.P.

One of the reasons why Canada was chosen as the main centre of Commonwealth air training was the proximity of the Dominion to the industrial resources of the United States. Over a year before the B.C.A.T.P. was conceived the R.A.F. had selected the North American Harvard as the best combat training plane available and this aircraft, the engine that powered it, and the vast quantity of material that went into the making of a large air training programme, could be obtained in Canada more readily than anywhere else in the Commonwealth because of the intertwining of the Canadian and American economies. The prospect of such a sudden increase in imports of American goods presented some balance of payments problems. To the Canadians these appeared formidable but the British, reassured by Lord Keynes' theories of international trade and finance, felt that they could be overcome. In time their judgement was to be upheld as foreign exchange difficulties disappeared under the impact of such imaginative programmes as lend-lease, mutual aid, reverse lend-lease and the general concept that the Republic and the Commonwealth should pool their material resources in order to win the war. But while it was fairly obvious that the success of the B.C.A.T.P. would depend to a large extent on American economic co-operation, an unexpected contribution was to come from south of the border in the form of manpower as the B.C.A.T.P. caught

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the imagination of American youth.

The relationship of the United States to the Training Plan can best be understood if viewed against the background of Great Britain's pre-war interest in the American air industry. It was in this area that the first link in the American-Commonwealth alliance was forged. During the last years of peace Great Britain and its ally, France, uncomfortably aware that by themselves, or even with the help of the Commonwealth, they could not overtake Germany in the race for air superiority, looked to the United States for help. Here they found the American air industry open to them though it was as yet geared to a sluggish peace time economy. Heedless of the cost, Great Britain and France proceeded jointly to develop the vast American aircraft manufacturing potential with the two-fold objective of supplementing the immediate output of their own factories and paving yhe way for the mass production of military aircraft by American firms if and when war broke out.[1] In the United Kingdom this policy aroused considerable controversy as many people felt it was neither patriotic nor politically sound to order planes for the R.A.F. other than those designed and produced by the home industry or its subsidiaries in Commonwealth

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1 H. Duncan Hall, North American Supply, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955, p. 39-46.

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countries.[2] By the time the war started the decision to buy in the United States had begun to bear fruit as American producers, with British and French money, undertook large additions to their plants. The total number of American aircraft ordered by Great Britain before the war, comprised 400 Harvard trainers and 250 Hudsons, the latter being a twin-engined aircraft procured originally as a navigational trainer but put into service as a coastal reconnaissance bomber.[3] The overall cost of aircraft and engines amounted to $43,000,000, a modest sum as compared to later expenditures but at the time about equal to the annual aircraft expenditures of the United States Army Air Corps.[4] Initial orders placed by France, whose own aircraft industry was in a state of disorganization and inefficiency, approximately doubled those of the British and included fighters and bombers as well as trainers.[5] Although a number of other countries, including Canada and Russia, were buying aircraft in the American market it was the British and French orders which put the American industry on a war time footing.

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2 Owen Thetford, Aircraft of the Royal Air Force, 1918-1957, London, Putnam, 1957, p. 38.

3 Ibid.

4 Irving Brinton Holley, Buying Aircraft: Material Procurement for the Army Air Forces, Washington D.C., Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1964, p. 200

5 Ibid.

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With the coming of war a question arose that was of the utmost concern to the British and French procurers of aircraft and the American manufacturers. What interpretation would the Congress of the United States place on the American neutrality statutes? In their existing form these laws forbade the export of weapons to belligerent nations and one of the immediate results of the French and British declaration of war was a halt in American aircraft deliveries. But in November 1939, under the urging of President Roosevelt who hoped that by making weapons available to Britain and France, the United States might keep out of the war and being well aware that the profits and prosperity to be derived from big aircraft sales would be lost under the arms embargo, Congress amended the neutrality acts with the cash-and-carry clause. Belligerents, which in effect meant Britain and France, could now obtain munitions from the United States up to the limit of what they could pay for and carry away in their own transports. The two countries at once placed more aircraft orders. British orders included Harvards for the B.C.A.T.P.[6] The urgency in placing fresh orders stemmed from British and French desperation but it also reflected the competition that was setting in as the American forces belatedly began to re-arm. The American

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6 V. supra, p. 187.

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Army Air Force and Naval Air Service had regarded with satisfaction the early aircraft orders from Britain and France which had stimulated the production of military aircraft, but it was hardly to be expected that they would acquiesce indefinitely in the pre-emption of home production by foreign powers, no matter how friendly they might be or how great their cause. After the fall of France the Army Air Corps, aroused by the fact that the United States ranked no better than fourth or fifth among the air powers of the world, at last won Congressional approval for a programme of air force expansion.[7] A situation now arose where British and American requirements came into conflict. While sympathetic towards the British position, American military leaders could not help but feel that the R.A.F., now demanding aircraft by the thousands, was asking for more planes than was warranted either by the scope of its operations or its pilot strength.

At this juncture of events the B.C.A.T.P. was drawn to the attention of American air force leaders in a most curious way. In September 1940 a group of American military observers returned from a visit to the United Kingdom with a story that the Canadian Air Training Plan was a failure, that it was short of aeroplanes and that its pilot output was

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7 J.F. Craven and W.L. Cate, Men and Planes, Chicago, 1955 (U.S.A.F. Historical Division, The Army Air Forces in World War II, vol. 6) p. 431.

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below schedule.[8] To this they appended the sequel that if the B.C.A.T.P. was a failure Britain would be short of pilots and "thus it is useless to ship more aeroplanes from the U.S.A."[9] One of the first Canadians to learn of the report was C.D. Howe who happened to be in Washington just as the story was beginning to spread. To squelch the rumour, damaging to both Canada and the United Kingdom, as well as to the allied cause generally, Howe immediately issued a press release through the British Purchasing Commission showing that the B.C.A.T.P. was well ahead of schedule in the number of schools opened and the number of pilots trained. The main problem, Howe pointed out, was the shortage of aircraft which was gradually being overcome by purchase in the United States and production in Canada.[10]

Intended for the attention of President and Congress as well as for the eyes of the military heirarchy the timely press release contained statistics on air output, a bold measure in as much as such information had hitherto been guarded as secret, and appears to have been successful in scotching the rumour.[11] Nevertheless, Washington's interest in the B.C.A.T.P. had been aroused and the success of the

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8 Hall, op. cit., p. 32.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.

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Plan was henceforth a factor to be considered in adjusting American aid to British needs. Apart from its international implications the incident illutrates the important part played by C.D. Howe in the B.C.A.T.P. A ubiquitous figure during the war, he was a member of the Supervisory Board, Minister of Munitions and Supply and a member of the British Purchasing Commission in New York a channel through which supplies for the B.C.A.T.P. reached Canada. Although no longer Minister of Transport he maintained control over the Civil Aviation Branch. In these capacities he made a valuable contribution to the B.C.A.T.P.

The critically important problem of allocating American aircraft production was not satisfactorily resolved until April 1941 when the Joint Aircraft Committee was formed. This organization, one of the first of the network of British American joint staff agencies, was given powers of control over both production and distribution. It had the authority to establish production schedules of competing aircraft firms and to determine the allotment of aircraft, engines, spare parts and accessories to the two major claimants, the United Kingdom and the United States, and their allies including Canada, the other Commonwealth countries, China and Russia.

Just before the Joint Aircraft Committee came into existance, the basis of Anglo-American co-operation shifted from the friendly but orthodox principle of cash-and-carry

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to the much more significant concept of lend-lease. Here again it is worth observing the important consideration given to aircraft requirements. Although Britain looked to Canada as its main supplementary arsenal in making up for munitions lost in the disastrous summer of 1940 it still leaned heavily on the United States as its principal outside source of aircraft. In September 1940, for instance, the British had an order in the United states for 7,239 aeroplanes and engines to match, whereas its requisitions in Canada were for a mere 850 aircraft.[12] By the end of 1940 Britain had placed orders in the United States for more aircraft than she could possibly pay for without stripping herself of all convertible assets at her disposal.[13] Cash-and-carry had gone about as far as it could go. To keep the aircraft, other munitions and war material flowing to Great Britain, Roosevelt and his advisers felt that, "we ourselves had to find means to pay for them", and lend-lease was the result.[14] The definition of the Act, "to Promote the Defence of the United States", clearly indicates the reasoning behind it.[15]

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12 Hall, op. cit., p. 27.

13 Ibid., p. 107-126.

14 CordellHull, The Memoirs of Cordell Hull, New York, Macmillan, 1948, vol. 1, p. 872.

15 The Lend Lease Act, (Public Law 11-77th Congress) (Chapter 11-1st Session) (HR-1776) An Act Further to Promote the defense of the United States, and for other purposes.

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Although the Lend-Lease Act settled the question of United States assistance to Britain and other democracies, the effective mobilization of the resources of Canada and the United States was accomplished through the Hyde Park Declaration of economic collaboration which was announced jointly by the Canadian Prime Minister and the President of the United States in April. This Agreement was in part made necessary by the fact that Canada, for economic reasons, did not wish to become the recipient of lend-lease aid but its main purpose was to promote economic collaboration between the two countries in the realm of defence and also to provide additional assistance to Great Britain and other allied nations. Under its terms whatever goods and material were imported by Canada from the United States but which were intended ultimately for use by Great Britain in the form of war supplies, could now be brought across the border under lend-lease payment. The interlocking of lend-lease and the Hyde Park Declaration was climaxed by the establishment of War Supplies Limited, a company whose function was to negotiate contracts with the United States Government for war supplies to be manufactured in Canada. Through this body the United States War Department, in August 1941, placed its first order for Harvards to be built for the B.C.A.T.P. under lend-lease. Other orders for Harvards and Cornells, an American monoplane elementary trainer introduced into

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the B.C.A.T.P., followed in 1942.

In 1943 Canada felt financially strong enough to provide Britain's share of aircraft for the B.C.A.T.P. through its own Mutual Aid Programme but engines for these continued to come in under lend-lease aid. Petroleum imports, too, in so far as it was Britain's obligation to provide them for the B.C.A.T.P. were paid for under the American Act. By the end of the war the total estimated value of all items furnished for the Plan under the American Lend-Lease Act amounted to approximately $283,000,000 or almost one seventh of the total cost of the Air Training Plan.[16]

While it may well be said that American economic co-operation in the development of the B.C.A.T.P. was not unpredictable, a more unexpected, and therefore more noteworthy, contribution was to come from below the border in the field of manpower. The first sound of the distant war trumpets called many young Americans to volunteer for the R.C.A.F. and the R.A.F., clearly indicating that the sentimental bond was not limited to members of the Commonwealth and that isolationism was by no means universal in the United States. Since the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, then under negotiation, contained no reference to the training and employment of anyone other than British subjects Croil informed the Air Ministry

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16 V. infra, Chapter XVI

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that Americans were offering their services and asked if, "those of enemy parentage are acceptable in view [of] Air Ministry Regulations governing nationality?"[17] To this the Air Ministry replied that the situation should be explored further and suggested that any Americans who wished to join the R.A.F. be retained in Canada for training with the R.C.A.F. since British facilities in the United Kingdom were already overburdened.[18] Desiring a more specific answer Croil sent another message to the Air Ministry on 3 November again putting the question, "would they after training be acceptable to the R.A.F.?"[19] The reply was that Americans trained in the R.C.A.F. and not subsequently required either for R.C.A.F. squadrons or the B.C.A.T.P. could transfer to the R.A.F. if they wished to do so providing that they were suitable and that vacancies existed.[20]

In response to American interest the Canadians had been amending their own air regulations. The King's Regulations and Orders for the Royal Canadian Air Force, 1924, stated that, "a Candidate for a Commission in the Active Air Force must be a British subject". An amendment incorporated

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17 Public Archives of Canada, R.G.24, H.Q. 45-10-2, Enlistments in U.S.A., Croil to the Minister, 16 October, 1939.

18 Ibid., Message CL/709, Canadian Liaison Offices to R.C.A.F. Headquarters, 26 October, 1939.

19 Ibid, Air Force Message P. 165, Chief of the Air Staff to the R.C.A.F. Liaison Offices, 3 November, 1939.

20 Ibid, Message CL/764 Air Liaison Office to R.C.A.F. HQ., 10 November, 1939.

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in April 1939 as Paragraph 211F read as follows:

> A candidate for a commission in the Royal Canadian Air Force must be: - (a) of pure European descent and a British Subject....

After the outbreak of war Paragraph 211F came up for review and in June 1940 a new version appeared in the Kings Regulations stating that a candidate for a Commission must be:

> Of pure European descent and (except in the case of an appointment to the Special Reserve) a British Subject....

The "Special Reserve" was simply a military euphemism for the war time Air Force. The exception was made to accommodate American applicants and the retention of the phrase "of pure European descent" was apparently intended as a colour bar.

Because the United States was not at war and because many Americans held strongly to the view that their country must refrain from providing anyform of assistance to the belligerent nations, the enlistment of American citizens in the armed forces of Canada and Great Britain was a matter to be handled delicately. There was no difficulty in the enrolment of American citizens living in Canada who were dealt with in much the same way as Canadian applicants. However, R.C.A.F. recruiting units were cautioned against corresponding with American nationals residing in the United States other than to reply to those who wrote, that they could obtain information about the R.C.A.F. by visiting any recruiting unit

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in Canada. Those who followed this suggestion and volunteered their services, were interviewed, medically examined, documented and informed that their application would be considered as vacancies arose. If selected, they were advised by Air Force Headquarters, which examined all applications from residents of the United States, that if they wished to renew their application in Canada, "the Department might now be in a position to give consideration to such an application".[21]

This roundabout approach was discarded rather abruptly as the B.C.A.T.P. began to unfold. On 6 May, Croil, in his report to the Supervisory Board, referred to the shortage of trained pilots and the necessity of taking special measures to make up the deficiency. He pointed out that such personnel were required principally for the bombing and gunnery schools as target towing pilots, "that is to say, as 'Air Chauffeurs', distinct from Instructional Pilots". Since the Canadian supply of pilots showed signs of exhaustion the Chief of the Air Staff said that the time had come to consider the entry into the R.C.A.F. of pilots from the United States.

One of the obstacles to the engagement of American citizens in the Canadian forces was a reluctance on the part of the recruits to take the Oath of Allegiance since they

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21 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History (unpublished material) vol. 3, p. 547.

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would thus forfeit their status as citizens of the United States. Early in 1940 the Judge Advocate General, Brigadier R.J. Orde, had several discussions on this subject with officials of the United States Legation in Ottawa and was assured that so long as an American national did not take an oath of allegiance to the head of any other state he would not suffer any disability of citizenship.[22] The next question to consider was whether an individual could serve in the Canadian forces without taking the Canadian Oath of Allegiance. The Judge Advocate General's opinion, in which the legal adviser of the Department of External Affairs concurred, was that it made no material difference as far as discipline was concerned whether or not recruits took the Oath. Consequently, the Government ruled by order-in-council that foreign nationals enlisted in the Canadian armed forces need not swear allegiance to His Majesty the King.[23] It is interesting to note that Croil, who felt that sufficient numbers of American pilots who had no objection to taking the Oath could be obtained, went on record as saying that should the Government desire to remove the Oath in the case of foreign nationals, "I raise no objection other than a personal regret, which I feel will be shared by many, that

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22 Ibid, p. 612.

23 Canada, P.C. 2399, 7 June, 1940.

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tradition and custom have been discarded."[24]

Before embarking on a more active recruiting programme for American pilots the Canadian Government instructed its Legation at Washington to determine how such a move was likely to be received by American authorities. The reply indicated that a co-operative attitude prevailed in the American capital;

> Regarding enlistment of United States citizens in Canadian Forces, Moffat, Department of State, called at Legation at 3.00 p.m. and asked me to transmit secret message to the Prime Minister from the "highest quarter" informing him United States authorities will not be embarrassed by the enlistment in Canada of United States citizens who proceed to Canada for such purposes. Moffat added it was his understanding that such United States citizens would be called upon to take the Oath of Obedience but not the Oath of Allegiance. He further explained United States authorities fully appreciate action thus far taken by Canada in this respect in conformity with neutrality and international law.[25]

Even with the assurance that the enlistment of United States citizens for the Candian armed forces would not embarrass the Roosevelt Administration it was nevertheless advisable to tread warily so as not to invite the antipathy of the large isolationist element south of the border, especially in an election year. Recruiting, therefore, was not conducted openly but was entrusted to a semi-secret organization, known

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24 H.Q. 45-10-2, Croil to the Deputy Minister, 16 May, 1940.

25 Ibid, Telegram 91, The Canadian Minister to the United States to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, Canada 18 May, 1940.

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as the Clayton Knight Committee, whose guiding members were three World War I flyers well known in Canadian and American aviation circles. The director was H.F. Smith who in private life was connected with a Toronto financial firm and travelled extensively between that city and New York. In September 1939 he was commissioned as a wing commander, the air force equivalent of lieutenant-colonel and, moving cautiously and discretely, carried out a preliminary survey of the pilot situation in the United States.[26] In 1940 when the rapid expansion of the B.C.A.T.P. gave rise to a need for American pilots Smith was instructed by the Chief of the Air Staff to develop an organization which would locate pilots and route them to Canada.[27]

The two other principal figures in the Committee, who worked under Smith as director, were C.L. Knight and C.H. Fowler. Knight, after whom the clandestine recruiting organization took its name, was a successful commercial artist living at Cleveland, Ohio and an acquaintance of the state Attorney-General. Knight assumed responsibility for the public relations part of the recruiting campaign - a task which mainly involved making the Committee's purpose known to avia-

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26 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q. 45-10-3, Recruiting in the U.S.A.: Clayton Knight Committee for Organization and Administration, Breadner to the Deputy Minister for Air, 1 June 1940.

27 H.Q. 45-10-2, Curtis to the Air Member for Personnel, 31 May 1940.

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tion groups in the United States. Fowler, whose background may convey some idea of the plane on which the Clayton Knight Committee operated, was its chairman. An American citizen, he served first with the British Royal Flying Corps and later, when the United States came into the war in 1917, with the American Air Service. Retired with the rank of lieutenant colonel he engaged in investment banking and also dealt in the field of petroleum. Outside of his business interest he made a name for himself as a hunter of big game and in England was known for his prowess at steeplechasing.[28]

By September 1940 Smith was directing a coast to coast organization from his headquarters at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York. A memorandum addressed to the Air Member for Personnel indicated that he had canvassed British Consulates, Canadian Trade Commissioners and Canadian Legion Posts for "voluntary heads of our various offices, with a pilot interviewer as adviser".[29] In addition to the New York headquarters, offices were soon located in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Texas, and Kansas City and were planned for Chicago and Cleveland.[30] By the end of September the

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28 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Biographical File.

29 H.Q. 45-10-3, Memorandum initialled by F.H.S., to Air Member for Personnel, 13 September, 1940.

30 H.Q. 45-10-2, Circular Letter from Canadian Legation to Consulates-General, Consulates, The British Embassy, the South African Legation, the Australian Legation, the Canadian Government Trade Commissioners, the British Passport Control Office, 14 December, 1940.

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Committee had obtained 104 pilots for bombing and gunnery schools, thirty-seven for instructional duties at service flying training schools and two for elementary schools as well as forty-four ferry pilots for the R.A.F. and seven skilled tradesmen. The New York office had on file some 2,000 applications from pilots who were just short of the 300 hours of certified flying time required by the R.C.A.F. for entrants from the United States.[31] In addition, during the three months between 1 July and 30 September over 6,000 written offers of service were acknowledged by the Directorate of Manning at Air Force Headquarters in Ottawa while the recruiting units at Niagara Falls and Windsor in Ontario received an average of twelve personal enquiries per day. Other recruiting centres, situated farther north of the international boundary, reported a correspondingly smaller number of enquiries from United States residents.[32]

To keep the activities of the Clayton Knight Committee within the legal limits of American neutrality, the Canadian Government, by Order-in-Council in January 1941, created the Dominion Aeronautical Association Limited.[33] This

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31 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Reports, Air Member for Personnel Division Progress Reports, 12 February 1940 to July 1941, vol. 1, Edwards to Air Member for Air Services, 10 October 1940.

32 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, p. 557

33 Canada, P.C. 739, 31 January 1941.

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institution, which must rank as one of the most remarkable of Canadian crown corporations, functioned as an integral part of the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Manning. In theory the Clayton Knight Committee procured pilots, not for the R.C.A.F., but for the Dominion Aeronautical Association to which the Committee was directly responsible and from which it received its instructions. The Canadian Treasury, working through a chartered bank, opened credit accounts in Toronto and at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York from which Smith, as one of the directors of the Dominion Aeronautical Association was able to draw funds to meet salary and office expenses of the Clayton Knight Committee and defray the expenses of send-recruits to Canada.[34] Candidates accepted at the American offices of the Clayton Knight Committee were provided with transportation to Ottawa and instructed upon arrival there to report to the Dominion Aeronautical Association. Candidates from the American west coast region, which seemed to be a mecca for unemployed pilots, were sent to Ottawa via Vancouver, where a depot was established by the Dominion Aeronautical Association.

In Canada, the American recruits had a number of choices open to them. Those who hoped to enter the service could apply for commissioned rank in either the R.C.A.F or

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34 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, p. 549.

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R.A.F. Civilian positions were available as ferry pilots with the R.A.F. flying new aircraft across the Atlantic to Great Britain, as elementary training instructors at B.C.A.T.P. schools or as staff pilots ('air Chauffeurs' as Croil called them), employed to fly instructors and students on practice navigational and bombing flights or pilot target aircraft during gunnery exercises. Besides those who reached Canada through the channels of the Committee many individuals, after making preliminary enquiries, left for Canada on the strength of information given them and presented themselves at the nearest recruiting centre. Most of these were youths intending to enlist as aircrew trainees but their number included some trained and partially trained pilots as well. To accommodate the latter group the Air Council ruled in March 1941 that applicants with less than 300 hours of solo flying time would be accepted but would be required to take the complete flying training course along with young men from the Commonwealth.[35] Yet most Americans had an advantage over their Canadian comrades for they missed the obnoxious period of guard duty and on graduation were presented with a wider range of choices than their classmates.

After the enactment of the lend-lease legislation in March 1941 the enlistment of Americans in the Canadian and British armed forces became part of Roosevelt's policy

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35 Ibid, p. 565

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to extend aid to the Commonwealth countries.[36] At a press conference in June 1941 Roosevelt pointed out to the assembled reporters, some of them in doubt about the propriety of the activities of the Clayton Knight Committee, that any American citizen who chose to go to Canada to accept employment as a civilian pilot or to join the Canadian or British forces was at perfect liberty to do so.[37] Following the Presidential pronouncement the Headquarters of the United States Selective Service System was advised that American citizens serving with the British or Canadian armed forces were exempt from being called up by local draft boards. The President, apparently relying on the goodwill and co-operation of Canada and the United Kingdom, stated that Americans serving with the Commonwealth forces would be returned to the United States if a need arose for their services at home.[38]

Encouraged by the American attitude and prompted by the falling off aircrew enlistments in Canada, the Air Council decided to use the Clayton Knight Committee to obtain 2,500 elementary trained graduates turned out by the United States Civilian Pilot Training Plan.[39] The first move in the new

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36 Ibid, Hershey to State Directors, Selective Service System, 30 June, 1941.

37 H.Q. 45-10-2, Canadian Minister in Washington to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 June, 1941.

38 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, Hershey to State Directors, Selective Service System, 30 June, 1941.

39 Ibid, p. 568.

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recruiting drive consisted of a discreet approach to the head of the Civil Aeronautics Authority in Washington who expressed his willingness to co-operate within the limits of the law. Through the auspices of the Civil Aeronautics Authority the Clayton Knight Committee contacted the regional managers of the Civilian Pilot Plan who agreed to let it be known at their schools that aircrew were needed by the R.C.A.F.[40] Although the Clayton Knight Committee preferred to advertise mainly by word of mouth and sometimes used placards and notices placed with air organizations, in this instance it obtained the names and addresses of 55,000 students who had taken or were taking the course offered by the Civilian Pilot Training Plan. In spite of some misgivings as to whether or not it would be leaving itself open to legal accusations of recruiting within the confines of the United States, the Committee finally decided to take a risk and send out letters but with a wording bland enough to avert legal action.[41]

Before the new recruiting campaign was launched the Clayton Knight Committee was reorganized, enlarged and given a new guise as the Canadian Aviation Bureau. Smith was instructed to proceed slowly, working in close consultation

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40 Directorate of History, J.M. Hitsman, Report No. 67, Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Air Force in the Second World War, (unpublished material), 1954, p. 262.

41 Ibid.

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with the Dominion Aeronautical Association and taking in recruits in regular monthly quotas as laid down by the Director of Manning.[42] Moreover the American recruits were to be directed only to recruiting units at Windsor, Winnipeg and Vancouver where special reception facilities were established.

In spite of the intention to maintain an orderly flow of recruits across the border the Canadian Aviation Bureau and Dominion Aeronautical Association were hard pressed to keep up with the response of American youth. Smith found it almost impossible to stick to the quotas assigned by the R.C.A.F. for most of the applicants were not content to be put on a waiting list. If the Bureau of Canadian Aviation would not accept them immediately they were tempted to make their own way to Canada. Others, on being told that they could not qualify for entry into the R.C.A.F, threw this advice to the winds and promptly headed for the border and the nearest recruiting office.[43] Although Smith was instructed that all recruits under twenty-one years must have their parents' consent for R.C.A.F. acceptance, many of the more wilful youths who came to Canada on their own account, and some of those who crossed the border through the regular channels, had left home without parental approval. In more than one

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42 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, p. 574.

43 Ibid, p. 581.

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instance frantic fathers pursued headstrong sons to border crossing points, or even to recruiting units, trying to reason with them to forget about foreign wars and if they felt an urge to enlist, to join the forces of their own country.[44]

Inevitably, unfavourable attention was drawn to the Canadian Aviation Bureau by some of these cases which were reported in daily newspapers or referred to Members of Congress who in turn related them to the Department of Justice. Through its investigative arm, the F.B.I., it kept the Canadian Aviation Bureau under close scrutiny though no charges were laid. One zealous official in the Justice Department was said to have taken exception to a sentence in a letter sent out by the Committee which stated that, "Pilots who have served satisfactorily for reasonable periods...are given opportunity to apply for transfer to the Air Force if they so desire".[45] Although this was a fairly restrained statement the Justice Department considered that it might lay the Committee open to prosecution for carrying out recruiting activities on American soil. In referring the matter to the Canadian Minister at Washington the American State Department hinted broadly that there was no real cause for concern and

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44 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q. 45-10-5, R.C.A.F. Enlistments, U.S.A. Personnel For, Requests for Prevention of, various correspondence.

45 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, p. 576

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nothing further was heard of the incident.[46]

Somewhat ironically, the Bureau of Canadian Aviation found itself coming in for more pointed criticism at home than abroad thanks to the fact that it was becoming too unwieldy to be easily managed. The R.C.A.F. Directorate of Pay and Accounting was finding it more difficult to keep the Bureau's accounts in order and occasionally Smith found it necessary to add names to his pay roll without the prior approval of the R.C.A.F.[47] The Air Member for Personnel, anticipating a regulated intake of recruits, was concerned lest the irregular flow of Americans across the border have unfavourable political repercussions. Smith, on his part, asked that the recruiting units in Canada co-operate by rejecting those applicants who proceeded across the border without bearing a stamp of approval from the Bureau. But to refuse these American volunteers, some of whom would then have been stranded in Canada without funds, might have created more problems than it would have solved so that the recruiting units had little choice but to enrol those who were found eligible.

In its recruiting drive which had begun in August, the Bureau had, by the end of the year, sent to Canada 1,805

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46 Ibid.

47 Ibid, p. 580.

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individuals of whom 1,455 enlisted as staff pilots and aircrew trainees.[48] In addition a large number of Americans had by-passed the offices of the Bureau to present themselves at Canadian recruiting centres. As of 8 December 1941 the number of American citizens serving in the R.C.A.F. had reached the impressive total of 6,129, over six per cent of the overall strength of the R.C.A.F.[49] Approximately half of these were aircrew undertaking or waiting to undertake aircrew training and making up about ten percent of the regular intake of the B.C.A.T.P. schools. About 530 American members of the R.C.A.F., holders of commercial licenses, were employed as staff pilots mainly at bombing and gunnery schools while Americans instructing at elementary flying training schools numbered 118.[50] Almost 900 Americans had graduated from B.C.A.T.P. schools and were to be found on air operations in war theatres with R.C.A.F. and R.A.F. squadrons.[51] In addition to those serving in the R.C.A.F. several Americans were employed in a civilian capacity as instructors at elementary schools and as ferry pilots at other B.C.A.T.P.

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48 Ibid, p. 574.

49 Reports to the Prime Minister, vol. 4, Summary No. 110, Air Services, 13 December, 1941.

50 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, p. 584-585.

51 About 200 of those serving with the R.A.F. were banded together in three units known as the Eagle Squadrons.

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units. A small number of Americans, about 50, were enlisted as ground personnel. In commenting on the participation of American citizens in the B.C.A.T.P., Power, in March 1941 understandably remarked, "Without them we would have had an extremely difficult time to get as far as we have."[52]

With so many citizens of the United States enrolled in the R.C.A.F. it was inevitable that they would develop an awareness of their unique position among the Commonwealth forces. In evidence of the fact that the west coast had been a particularly fertile recruiting area, a group of American trainees at No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School at St. Catharines, Ontario, in a carefree off-duty mood, removed the Royal Canadian Air Force sign at the entrance to the school and substituted one marked "Royal California Air Force," a prank which cost the culprits a few hours of guard duty.[53] Some more serious minded youths at No. 1 Bombing and Gunnery School at Jarvis, Ontario, felt that Americans in the R.C.A.F. should wear some distinctive insignia and promoted the use of a badge composed of a maple leaf superimposed on the familiar Uncle Same's hat. Referring to themselves as the Hat and Leaf Squadron the trainees sought permission to have their badge officially approved by the Chief

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52 Debates, House of Commons, King's Printer, 1941, vol. 2, p. 1614.

53 Len Morgan, The AT-6 Harvard (Famous Aircraft Series). New York. Arco. p. 2.

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of the Air Staff urging that such a measure, if widely publicized, would catch the imagination of American youth and encourage them to enlist in the R.C.A.F.[54] The suggestion received careful attention in the Air Council but the general feeling of the Air Members was that the hat and leaf insignia was not sufficiently dignified. They proposed instead to provide the American members of the R.C.A.F. with a shoulder badge similar to that worn by members of the Commonwealth.[55] Sample badges were made up and in May 1941 it was promulgated in Air Force Routine Orders that American citizens who joined the R.C.A.F. subsequent to 2 September 1939 were entitled to wear a shoulder badge with the lettering "U.S.A." while serving in Canada. American members of the R.C.A.F. stationed outside of Canada wore a shoulder badge similar to that worn by Canadians but which had the letters "U.S.A." below "CANADA".

Even after the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941 American citizens continued to show interest in the R.C.A.F. The Windsor Recruiting Centre received 247 applications from the United States in January 1942 and another 167 in the first three weeks of February. However, recruit-

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54 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q.C. 15-1-1439 American Personnel, Identification of, Knickerbacker to Chief of the Air Staff, 30 December 1941.

55 Ibid, Extract from Meeting of Air Member for Air Council Held on 13 January, 1941.

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ing centres were instructed on 17 December, 1941 not to enlist any American citizens for the balance of the year.[56]

The entry of the United States into the war naturally focussed attention on the position of Americans enrolled in the Canadian armed forces. On 17 January, 1942 Roosevelt issued a press statement explaining that the repatriation of those Americans serving abroad who wished to transfer to their own country's forces was under negotiation. He emphasized that until the arrangements for voluntary transfer were complete, "the American citizens involved can best serve the interests of their country through contributing loyal and effective service in the units in which they are now enlisted".[57] Although the President did not press for the forthwith return of all personnel the Chief of Staff of the R.C.A.F., believing that most Americans would sooner or later elect to serve in their own force, felt that an immediate transfer en masse would cause less disruption in the B.C.A.T.P. than if the process were extended over a long period. Consequently, he proposed to the Minister of National Defence for Air that all Americans serving in the R.C.A.F. should be offered their discharge without delay.[58] This recommendation became the basis

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56 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, p. 582.

57 Ibid, p. 588

58 Ibid.

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for an agreement between the two governments although Canadian authorities reserved the right to postpone release if, "in their opinion immediate transfer would prejudicially affect the common war effort".[59] In February the various R.C.A.F. units were advised of the conditions of transfer and instructed to canvass all American personnel to give them an opportunity to elect to return to the United States or to continue to serve in the R.C.A.F. It was to be made clear that those who did not wish to take advantage of the opportunity to transfer would not in any way prejudice their American citizenship.[60] The arrangements entered their final stage in May 1942 when a combined board of American and Canadian officers consisting of naval, army and air force personnel travelled across Canada in a special train stopping at the main centres to interview all candidates who wished to transfer. As soon as they were given release papers by the Canadian authorities the applicants were sworn into the American force of their choice and issued with transportation to a reporting centre in the United States. A representative of the State Department was on hand to look after the expeditious reinstatement of the few who had lost their citizenship by taking the Canadian Oath of Allegiance. A total of 1,759 American

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59 Ibid.

60 Ibid, p. 591

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members of the R.C.A.F., approximately one-quarter of those enrolled, were repatriated in this way.[61]

Subsequent to the discharge effected in the manner outlined above other releases occurred from time to time. In January 1944 the procedure to be followed in the release of American citizens was written in the form of a routine order and published quarterly at all R.C.A.F. units in Canada, a measure which indicates that the American recruits had become widely dispersed throughout the R.C.A.F. and thoroughly integrated with Canadian personnel.[62] Statistics compiled after the war show that 8,864 United States nationals enrolled with the R.C.A.F., a total of 3,797 were discharged on transfer to the armed forces of the United States at various times while 5,067 elected to complete their service with the R.C.A.F. This number includes both air and ground crew and represents about one fiftieth of the total number of all personnel who enrolled in the R.C.A.F. during the war. Perhaps a better measure of the American contribution is given by figures for casualties. Of the 17,047 fatalities suffered by the R.C.A.F. during the war 797 or five per cent were American nationals.[63]

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61 Ibid.

62 Directorate of History, Royal Canadian Air Force Headquarters, Royal Canadian Air Force General and Routine Orders with Supplements and Index, Air Force Publication, vol. 9, Air Force Routine Order No. 184, 28 January, 1944.

63 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, Information supplied by the Directorate of Statistics in Dicks to Air Historian, 17 May, 1956.

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This proportionate comparison takes on a further meaning when it is remembered that the recruiting of American citizens for the R.C.A.F. was virtually halted at the end of 1941 whereas the R.C.A.F. continued to grow from a strength of about 100,000 at the end of December 1941 to over 200,000 at the peak of its strength in December 1943.[64]

For the B.C.A.T.P. the presence of the Americans had its own particular significance in helping the Plan through its first two difficult years when the supply of flying instructors and staff pilots was a critical factor. The fact that the R.C.A.F. was able to propose the blanket arrangement for repatriation of Americans without any fear of disrupting the Plan shows that the training organization had now reached a stage where it was able to meet its needs for instructors and pilots without seriously interfering with aircrew output. While leaning on the Americans the R.C.A.F. had continued to nourish its own aircrew supply. The youth training scheme and the air cadet movement were beginning to pay dividends in the form of more aircrew enlistments. Considerable headway had been made in encouragement of ground crew personnel to apply for aircrew training and the raising of the age limit to thirty for compulsory military training had brought forth more recruits. Although it would be an exaggeration to say

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64 Canada, Wartime Information Board, Canada at War, King's Printer, July, 1945, p. 38.

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that the R.C.A.F. had no manpower worries after 1941 it did appear more confident of meeting its aircrew quota under the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement.

The bond of friendship between the Republic and Commonwealth was further demonstrated and strengthened by a plan for training aircrew for the R.A.F. in the United states which, although it had no direct connection with the B.C.A.T.P., was regarded by the United Kingdom as a sort of supplement to it. The possibility of using American flying training schools by the R.A.F. was first discussed in the spring of 1940 when it appeared that training in the United Kingdom might become dislocated through enemy action and even the B.C.A.T.P. might bog down for the lack of advanced training aircraft. In June the British Government asked Canada to join with it in making an approach to Washington in regard to training pilots in American schools not only in the elementary stages but up through the intermediate and advanced phases as well. The British were careful to explain that the proposed scheme should not be thought of as a substitute for the B.C.A.T.P. but the Canadian Government could not help but feel that the project, if accepted, would cast the B.C.A.T.P. in an unfavourable light, create an embarrassing political situation at home and involve an unwelcome flight of dollars across the border. Nevertheless, the Canadian Charge d'Affaires in Washington was instructed to join with the British Ambassador in

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broaching the subject to the American Government.[65] But 1940 was an election year and Roosevelt, though he encouraged American assistance for the B.C.A.T.P., had no desire to have Canadians and Britons training on American soil before the returns were in. The American forces, preoccupied with an expansion programme, felt they needed all available air training facilities for their own purposes and were also opposed to the suggestion. No doubt some satisfaction was felt in Ottawa when the proposal was turned back with the expressed desire that the Canadian and British authorities "would not choose to press this particular request".[66]

Although the Canadians were prepared to accept the American decision as final the British felt it might be profitably pursued. They were encouraged in this attitude by the American civilian flying schools most of which were committed to training aircrew for the United States Army Air Corps. Yet they appeared intrigued with the idea of training flyers for Canada and the United Kingdom. Canadian authorities at once let it be known that they were not interested but Air Commodore G.C. Pirie, the British Air Attache in Washington, entered into discussions with some of the civilian

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65 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, 45-9-1, U.S., Training of Pilots In, Mahoney to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 June, 1940.

66 Ibid.

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schools with the thought in mind that if authority could be obtained for a small number of British pilots to be trained in the United States it would form the spearhead for a large scale training programme.

The Air Ministry favoured Pirie's proposals and persuaded the United Kingdom Government to keep an open mind on the question of using American facilities for training British flyers. With a critical election in the offing, the American forces opposed, and the British shortage of funds, the time was not ripe for making strong advances. Nevertheless, and in spite of assurances from Prime Minster King that the B.C.A.T.P. could be expanded to meet additional R.A.F. requirements, the British continued to hope that something could be done along the lines suggested by Pirie. When Ralston, the Canadian Minister of National Defence was in London on a prolonged visit during December 1940 and January 1941, Sir Archibald Sinclair, the British Secretary of State for Air assured him that the use of American facilities "would not imply any reflections on the energy, efficiency and success with which the Joint Air Training Plan had been carried through".[67] Sinclair emphasized that air training capacity, including aerodromes, instructors and advanced training aircraft were available in the United States and Britain's need for aircrew was

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67 V. supra, p. 217-219.

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"such that we should feel bound to use it as a reinforcement to the training facilities developed by our co-operative efforts within the Commonwealth".[68]

With the advent of lend-lease the British plans matured quickly. Roosevelt accepted air training as one of the ways in which aid could be extended and directed the War Department to make arrangements for training British flyers. In Ottawa the British High Commissioner kept Prime Minister King informed of these developments and once again reminded him of the importance of the American scheme.

> In the first place the United Kingdom Government wish me to set out the very great advantages which will be derived from this scheme. It enables the R.A.F. to get the use of 540 additional training aircraft which could not be obtained in any other way and which their training effort most urgently needs; secondly, it enables them to obtain the services of additional instructors, of which there is equally urgent need; thirdly it is hoped that the scheme will enable volunteers from the United States who would not otherwise be forthcoming to be brought into training; and finally, it has political advantages in that it will strengthen the ties of friendship and goodwill which exist between the United States and the British Commonwealth.[69]

To shield the Canadian Government from possible political embarrassment the British High Commissioner forwarded another letter to the Prime Minister which was prepared with

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68 Directorate of History, H.Q. S-1-6, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 1, Air Ministry Aide - Memoir, 1 January, 1941.

69 H.Q. 45-9-1, vol. 1, Macdonald to King, 8 April, 1941.

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the help of Canadian officials. Later, when news of the British-American air training proposals appeared in Canadian newspapers and prompted a member of the House of Commons to ask what effect they would have on the B.C.A.T.P., the Prime Minister was able to dispose of the matter in a few moments. "I have been expecting for some days that a question like this would be raised, and I have in my portfolio a letter which I have received from the high commissioner of the United Kingdom in reference to the matter...."[70] He then proceeded to read the letter which in part ran as follows:

> The United Kingdom Government are grateful for the Canadian Government's co-operation in the consultations on the subject which have proceeded between the two Governments since, and are glad that there is agreement that the proposal offers advantages that we should unhesitatingly accept. The United Kingdom Government wish me to repeat at the same time that plans will in no way reduce the scope of the Joint Air Training Plan in Canada, which, together with those other measures of assistance in the field of air training so generously afforded by the Canadian Government, are being developed much beyond the maximum degree originally planned and at a pace which is far ahead of the original schedule. This constitutes a remarkable achievement by the Canadian authorities who are mainly responsible for this scheme, which will, we believe, be one of the most weighty and decisive factors in gaining victory for our arms.[71]

Training for the British forces was subsequently carried out under four main programmes in the United States. In

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70 Debates, House of Commons, 1941-1942, vol. 4, p. 3355.

71 Ibid.

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two of these, instruction was given in civilian schools following a syllabus provided by the R.A.F.; in the others British personnel were trained alongside of American aircrew. Training space allotted for the United Kingdom, a portion of which was for the Fleet Air Arm of the Royal Navy, could accommodate 5,000 trainees including air observers and wireless operator-air gunners as well as pilots.[72] When the United States came into the war the question of shifting the British training to Canadian schools naturally arose, but the opportunity for the R.A.F. and the Fleet Air Arm to draw recruits from among British subjects resident in the United States provided a good argument for disturbing the programme as little as possible. Three of the civilian schools, engaged solely in training American citizens who volunteered to fly with the R.A.F., were turned over immediately to the Army Air Corps but no sizeable reduction in the overall programme was made until the beginning of 1943. Training of British personnel in American schools continued in a reduced form until 1944 and on termination of the arrangement an estimated 12,500 aircrew had been trained in the United States.[73] On completing their courses the flyers left for England though a few were sent to Canada for service with the R.A.F. schools associated with the B.C.A.T.P.

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72 Air Ministry, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training 1939-1944, Air Member for Training, January, 1940, p.136-138.

73 Craven and Cate, op. cit., p. 694.

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The Canadian Bureau of Aviation and the Dominion Aeronautical Association Limited continued in existence until September 1944 but with a considerably reduced budget and staff. After the recruiting of Americans for the R.C.A.F. came to an end with the entry of the United States into the war, Smith, Fowler and Knight assisted in recruiting British subjects in the United States for the American training scheme or for service with the R.C.A.F. When the activities of the Dominion Aeronautical Association were at last wound up the Air Minister conveyed his thanks to those who had shared the main burden of the task at a time when the R.C.A.F. was seriously lacking in aircrew and the B.C.A.T.P. was faced with an almost insurmountable obstacle.[74]

In looking back at the position of the United States in respect to the B.C.A.T.P. up to the end of 1941 one is apt to be struck most of all by the change in attitude from friendly co-operation to a more active and purposeful participation. The turning point was marked by the Lend-Lease Act of March 1941 and the related Presidential pronouncements, so significant for the allied war effort as a whole, which made the provision of men and aeroplanes a matter of government policy. The mere fact that such assistance was considered necessary, and notwithstanding that to a certain degree it

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74 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 3, p. 609.

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was a mutual arrangement, underlines both the size and the significance of the B.C.A.T.P. pointing to the strain it placed on Canadian resources and the important place it occupied in British strategy.

In 1941 the gaining of air supremacy was still vital to the survival of the United Kingdom, not only for local protection but for hunting submarines and providing a counterpoise to German land power. In building its air strength Great Britain counted heavily on the aircrew output of the B.C.A.T.P. and it was in this sense that the United States Government viewed the Plan. Moreover, as the United States moved ever closer to the brink of war, unity in air strength, which was so obvious in the Commonwealth military effort, began to take shape within the rapidly developing Anglo-American alliance, though co-operation in this direction was not carried through to the same extent as prevailed among the air forces of the Commonwealth countries. As keepers of the world's main aeroplane arsenal the Americans were concerned that their allies were doing their fair share in producing aircraft and training aircrew. Consequently the success or failure of the B.C.A.T.P. was not without meaning for them and as Administrator of the Plan Canada's responsibilities increased in proportion.

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CHAPTER XI

THE OTTAWA AIR TRAINING CONFERENCE MAY - JUNE 1942

The negotiation of a new agreement in May and June of 1942 was one of the most significant developments in the history of the B.C.A.T.P. The main reason why a new agreement had to be drawn up was that the old one was due to expire on 31 March 1943. But connected with the continuation of the Plan were other questions of policy which in the Canadian view became more urgent with the passing of time. If the Plan was to be continued, and there was every indication that it would be, aircraft would have to be procured on a larger scale. Any major changes would involve manpower, a question of great concern to Canadian politicians and military leaders throughout the war. The provision of equipment for the R.A.F. schools in Canada called for some adjustment and so too did the financial arrangements for carrying on the B.C.A.T.P. Another matter which the Canadian Government wished to discuss was the organization and administration of the R.C.A.F. in theatres outside the Western Hemisphere where Canadian graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. were scattered throughout the R.A.F.

The first agreement had hardly been signed when it was outdated by the pace of events. Canada, it will be recalled, had had to provide some of the equipment which it was expected would come from Great Britain. Airfields had

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to be found for R.A.F. schools. On the whole the latter presented no great problem and the schools adjusted to their new environment quite well, getting down to the business of training within a few weeks of their arrival. But the equipment they brought with them soon wore out. It could, if the material was available, be replaced from B.C.A.T.P. stocks, but if the items in question had to be purchased on the open market Canada was not free to take any action until the United Kingdom Treasury had given its approval. This procedure was annoying and embarrassing to the Canadian Government in discharging its responsibilities towards the R.A.F. schools and another matter which it wished to have remedied.

During a visit to England in July and August of 1941 Power had raised the question of continuing the Plan beyond 31 March 1943. He asked for an early decision as the Canadian authorities had not ordered aircraft beyond those required up to that date. To this Sinclair replied that Britain would most certainly desire to continue the Plan but suggested that the longer the question of continuing it could be put off the easier it would be to relate purchases of aircraft to training needs. How long the question of renewal should be put off Sinclair did not say but it was agreed that "the United Kingdom Government should initiate preliminary discussions in regard to the continuation of

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the Air Training Scheme beyond 31st March, 1943.[1]

There were a number of reasons why the United Kingdom was not in a hurry to get to the conference table. In the first place it was quite satisfied with Canada's direction of the B.C.A.T.P. and saw no good reason for disturbing the existing arrangements. Changes in the Plan could be made as the occasion arose. This had been done in the past and there seemed no reason why it could not be done again. To the British, extending the termination date of the Plan was a relatively simple matter, almost a routine thing that could be accomplished by an exchange of notes. Everyone knew that the war would go on and that the B.C.A.T.P. would be carried on too. After all, arrangements between members of the Commonwealth were very flexible and the B.C.A.T.P. was no exception. Britain, conscious that it was contributing valuable intangibles to the war effort, such as military leadership, the fruits of scientific research and a major proportion of "blood, sweat and tears", preferred to keep its relations with Canada and the other members of the Commonwealth on an informal basis. The offerings of the latter on the other hand, were mainly in the form of manpower, raw material, manufactured goods and weapons. Such contributions had to be accounted for to Parliament and demanded

1 Directorate of History, H.Q., S-1-6, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 1, Sinclair to Ralston, 7 January, 1941.

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formalities of some sort. Although Canada was not hesitant about extending credit to the United Kingdom, in 1941 it had not yet adopted the principle of mutual aid and showed little sign of doing so. Everything going to Britain was being carefully listed and accounted for. Moreover, the Canadian Government had hinted from time to time that the principle of contributing in kind, which enabled Britain to pay for its share of the B.C.A.T.P. with aeroplanes, engines and spare parts, should be abandoned, with Britain making some kind of cash contribution. Thus no matter how the British looked at it there was no point in rushing into a new settlement. As Sinclair intimated, their interests would best be served by postponing a formal meeting as long as possible.

The entry of the United States into the war created fresh problems. On 20 December, about two weeks after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Canada-United States Permanent Joint Board on Defence discussed the problem of air training and at the suggestion of the American members adopted the following resolution as its Twenty-Third Recommendation:

> That the Canadian and United States Governments should consider the advisability of arranging for meeting of appropriate representatives of Great Britain, Canada and the United States to make appropriate recommendations for co-ordination of the entire aviation programs to be conducted in Canada and the United States.[2]

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2 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q. 9-26, Co-ordination of Aviation Training Programme: - Canada-United States, (23rd Recommendation: Permanent Joint Board on Defence), Stark to Little, 20 February, 1942.

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This recommendation was approved by the President of the United States on 31 December, 1941 and by the Government of Canada on 14 January, 1942. Shortly thereafter suggestions began to emanate from both the United States Naval Department and the United States Army Air Corps for a conference of British, Canadian, and American representatives to discuss air training and matters related thereto. The main pressure came through General Arnold and the Air Corps. On 14 February the American War Department issued the Chief of the Air Corps with the following directive:

1. It is desired that you make a study of aviation requirements and facilities for the Army Air Forces.

2. It is desired that representatives of your office contact Canadian aviation training representatives in order that they may be assembling the same information in regard to Canada.

3. When this data has been prepared you should arrange a meeting with Canadian representatives.

Upon completion of this action, Arnold proposed to arrange a meeting of representatives of his department, the United States Navy and "British aviation training people".[3] A month later, when the survey of air training needs had presumably been made, Arnold wrote Breadner that it was desired to take immediate action to implement the 23rd recommendation:

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3 Ibid, Heakes to Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, 2 March, 1942.

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> A conference will be held on April 15, 1942 in Room 501 of the Maritime Building, Washington, D.C., under the chairmanship of Major General Barton K. Yount, United States Army Air Force and it is desired that a representative of the Royal Canadian Air Force be present at this conference. If this meets with your approval, please advise this office by wire, and if it is found to be impracticable...this office will be pleased to be advised of the place and date which is found convenient to your activities.[4]

In the meantime the Canadian Government was, without much success, trying to determine through its Washington Legation just what requests the Americans were likely to present. The situation was complicated by the fact that Admiral Stark of the United States Naval Department was, on the basis of the resolution of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence, discussing with British naval authorities an ambitious scheme for the joint training of the British and American naval air arms either in Canada, the United States or both, and this without consultation with the Army Air Corps, let alone the Canadian Government or the R.C.A.F.[5] On 7 March, R.C.A.F. Headquarters, admitting it was completely at sea as to what was going on, instructed the Canadian Air Attache in Washington to acquaint the American and British authorities that if a conference were contemplated and Canadian representation desired, it should be propsed to "the Canadian Government by the U.S.

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4 Ibid, Arnold to Breadner, 2 April, 1942.

5 Ibid, R.C.A.F. message A116, to A.F.H.Q. Ottawa from CANAIRAT Washington, 4 March 1942.

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Government through formal channels".[6] About a week later the air attache was further instructed to determine what the Americans had in mind when they put forth the resolution at the meeting of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and in particular to ascertain if they were concerned about "locating schools in this country or...obtaining...a quota of pupils in our schools".[7]

With Washington in a state of turmoil and with American military leaders faced by an array of serious problems it is hardly surprising that American air training policy continued to present an outward picture of confusion with a bewildering series of suggestions reaching Canada, each overtaking the other before the previous one could be assessed. It was variously reported that the American Army Air Corps wished to make use of available training facilities in Canada, that it wished to have the R.A.F. relinquish the training space allotted to it in the United States and that the American Naval Department and the British Admiralty were contemplating the concentration of allied naval air training in North America. At one time it appeared that the Army Air Corps would be hard pressed for air training space and at another that the construction of new schools would take

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6 Ibid, R.C.A.F. Message C116, To Air Attache from R.C.A.F. H.Q., 7 March, 1942.

7 Ibid, R.C.A.F. Message G 179 from R.C.A.F. H.Q. to Air Attache, 19 March 1942.

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care of plans for air expansion. Through it all the urgency of holding an air training conference was kept to the fore.[8]

In Ottawa the Canadian Government appears to have placed its own interpretation on the trend of events. Fully expecting that the United States would have some favours to ask in regard to air training, the Department of External Affairs and the R.C.A.F. visualized a pooling of North American training facilities, in somewhat the same fashion as aircraft production and natural resources were being pooled. In this, the B.C.A.T.P. which had already won a great deal of acclaim for Canada, would undoubtedly serve as a model or might well become the nucleus for a sort of world wide air training organization providing air training facilities for all nations engaged in air operations against the Axis powers. This grandiose conception, though it eventually vanished into thin air as the American air training plans and policies crystallized, cannot be dismissed as an unreasonable deduction in view of the twenty-third recommedation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and the repeated requests from below the border for an air training conference.

In thinking to make itself an allied as well as a Commonwealth air training centre the Dominion was not motivated solely by vainglorious ambition. Because the United

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8 Ibid, various correspondence.

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States was the main allied producer of aircraft and the United Kingdom the foremost allied air power it was natural for Canada to assume that there would be a happy marriage of American and British air strength with the R.A.F. as the dominant member of the union. Moreover, as the Americans themselved had suggested, there were obvious advantages to be derived and danger to be avoided in co-ordination of air planning. By the end of 1941 the B.C.A.T.P. had come to the point where the emphasis was changing from quantity of output to quality of training. Presumably the Americans, who already had a good start in air training would soon reach the same stage and, in the Canadian view, combining experience and planning would produce better trained aircrew and help to prevent over-building of training establishments.

Even in 1941, mainly because of the shortage of operational aircraft, the operational training units in the United Kingdom could not absorb aircrew as fast as they were being turned out by the air training schools in Canada, the other countries of the Commonwealth and the British schools in the United States. Temporary surpluses of aircrew were already building up in reception centres in the United Kingdom where B.C.A.T.P. graduates were waiting their turn to begin operational training and move on to one of the front line squadrons. There were times when it appeared as if the R.A.F. had more aircrew, especially pilots, than it knew what to do

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with but the United Kingdom gave assurance that this situation would right itself with the expansion of air operations. Without immediate access to the inner councils of air strategy Canada was in no position to judge whether the output of the B.C.A.T.P., plus that of other training schools scattered over four continents, matched the planned expansion of the R.A.F. or not, or whether the entry of the United States into the war would lead to an expansion or contraction of the B.C.A.T.P. Consequently, it was of considerable importance to the Dominion that both its allies could be brought to make their plans known at a general air training conference in Ottawa.

By 10 March the British Government, after considerable nudging from the Canadian External Affairs Department, stated that it was prepared to send representatives to Ottawa to initiate negotiations on the continuation of the B.C.A.T.P.[9] In regard to a further proposal from the Canadian capital that the conference between the United Kingdom and Canada would provide a suitable opportunity for the examination by the governments concerned of ways and means of securing the most effective utilization in the interests of the United Nations of air training facilities of Canada and the United States ,[10] the United Kingdom expressed agreement in principle.

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9 Ibid, Robertson to Duff, 24 March 1942.

10 Ibid.

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Although the Canadians at this stage favoured holding one conference to which the United States, as well as Australia and New Zealand would send representatives, the United Kingdom suggested that the conference should be held in two parts. The first, purely a family affair, would deal with B.C.A.T.P. problems and the second with the question of co-ordinating training programmes in Canada and the United States.[11] The Canadians, not wanting to give the appearance of holding anything back from the Americans, continued to press for one large conference, or failing this, a general conference followed by a meeting of the Commonwealth partners. The two governments finally agreed to proceed with the latter course, the two-part conference to be held in Ottawa early in May.

Having secured British approval for an inter-government conference the Canadian Government next sought to interest the Americans in this project. Breadner, outlining the situation in a message to Arnold, explained that the air training question was to be dealt with on the diplomatic level and "I expect that my Prime Minister will acquaint your President...of the Canadian Government's wishes".[12] In lieu of the conference which Arnold had scheduled for 15 April, Breadner suggested that the American general himself pay a

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11 Ibid, Duff to Robertson, 4 April 1942.

12 Ibid, R.C.A.F. Message C206 Breadner to Arnold, 11 April 1942.

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visit to Canada to examine the B.C.A.T.P. at first hand. Arnold, who at the time was deeply involved in discussions with British officials on the question of aircraft allocation, declined the invitation but arranged for Major General B.K. Yount, who commanded the United States Air Force Air Training Command, to go in his place. Yount and his party arrived in Ottawa on 22 April for a hurried three day tour of schools in the Ottawa area and a round of talks on air training with officers at R.C.A.F. Headquarters. What the Americans learned of the B.C.A.T.P. in their brief sojourn it would be difficult to say. It was undoubtedly helpful to some degree but more pertinent to the immediate future of Canadian aspirations was the fact that Yount, shortly before he had left for Ottawa, informed the Canadian Air attache that, "he did not think the U.S. Army Air Forces would be badly off for training facilities as they were making rapid headway in this direction".[13]

The climax in the pre-conference negotiations came with Prime Minister King's visit to Washington in mid-April in response to an invitation from Roosevelt to attend a meeting of the Pacific Council, a body composed of representatives of countries at war with Japan. King arrived in Washington on 15 April and went immediately to the White House. In the

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13 Ibid, R.C.A.F. Message A 37 CANAIRAT to C.A.S. 14 April 1942.

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evening he dined with the President and the two leaders then spent about three hours in conversation ranging over major aspects of the war including air training and the B.C.A.T.P.:

> Mackenzie King...told the President that the Commonwealth Air Training Plan would expire in March 1943, and that the Canadian Government felt it might be a good time to include the United States in a conference on air training programmes. "The President at once said that he thought that was a good idea, and I then suggested possibly South Africa in addition to Australia and New Zealand. The President then spoke of some other countries of the United Nations who were training pilots on this continent. He referred to Norway, the Netherlands and China. He made notes on the cover of a brown envelope, and said he would take up the matter in the morning."[14]

The next day, after the Canadian Legation had sent an explanatory message to the United Kingdom, the President and the Prime Minister issued a joint communique to the press:

> The Prime Minister of Canada and the President announce ...that at the invitation of the Prime Minister, a conference in which all of the United Nations with air training programmes will be invited to participate will be held in Ottawa early in May.
>
> The purpose of the meeting lies along the lines of further military efforts. The meeting in Ottawa will extend the air programme to take in the training of personnel to operate the military aircraft to the end that the most effective use will be made of all resources of personnel.
>
> Great progress has already been made in pooling the aeroplane production of the United Nations.
>
> Hence the Conference developed out of the recognition of the desirability of more closely co-ordinating the British Commonwealth...Air Training Plan with the

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14 J.W. Pickersgill, The Mackenzie King Record, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1960, p. 409-410.

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> greatly extended Air Training Programme undertaken by the United States and the other of the United Nations. In addition these will include China, Norway, the Netherlands, and several others which are already at war with the Axis.[15]

Thus Canada suddenly found itself out in front leading the band.

This unusual state of affairs did not last long. Canadian officials were the first to express concern over the step that had just been taken. In reporting the text of the press communique to Ottawa the Canadian Minister in Washington observed that, "we are questioning the wisdom of the last sentence but it may be too late to secure its change".[16] Whether the Minister had in mind the problems of security, protocol or accommodation attending a large conference it would be difficult to say. In view of later developments it is perhaps unfortunate that the scope of the conference had not been more restricted. But the die had now been cast and the message to Ottawa stated that invitations ought to include Poland, Czechoslovakia, South Africa, Yugoslavia, India and the U.S. S.R. "We shall consult the United States about invitations to Latin American members of the United Nations, and suggest you might ascertain from London which of

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15 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q. 55-1-10, Air Training Conference, May 1942, message WA-675, Canadian Minister in United States to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 16 April 1942.

16 Ibid.

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the other United Nations have embarked on air training programmes".[17] All the nations invited did not attend but the conference, at one time conceived as strictly a Commonwealth affair, evolved as a meeting of the United Nations embracing in all fourteen of the great and lesser allied powers. These included the United Kingdom, the United States, China, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, South Africa and Free France.

At Whitehall, eyebrows arched at the thought of information on secret or confidential matters such as aircraft production, aircrew output and manpower requirements being bandied about at the large gathering of delegates planned in the Canadian capital. Through the Office of the British High Commissioner in Canada the British Government informed Ottawa that while it was not opposed to a free exchange of information between Commonwealth partners and the United States it did not feel that much of the information to be discussed in Ottawa could be of any real help or interest to all the Allies:

> The United Kingdom authorities earnestly hope that it is not too late to abandon the idea of exchanging secret information between all the Allied Governments represented at the Conference...on security grounds they would regard such an exchange as undesirable in the extreme. If the information desired were to be circulated at a Conference of this size and character

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17 Ibid.

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> there will inevitably be a considerable danger of leakage. As you may be aware, the United Kingdom authorities have been stressing recently the importance of exercising great restraint in the matter of publicity for several aspects of air training on account of the value to the enemy of information in these connexions....[18]

Another possibility that worried the United Kingdom authorities was that the Russians, usually tight lipped as to their own plans, would make embarrassing requests for details concerning British and American air training programmes.[19] On this contingency the British delegates were kept in suspense. To their relief the opening day of the conference arrived without any response from the Russians despite frequent reminders of it sent through the office of the Canadian High Commissioner in London to the Soviet Ambassador in the Court of St. James.

In the interval between the announcement from Washington and the opening of the conference, scheduled for 22 May, the Department of External Affairs with the assistance of the R.C.A.F. officers was busily engaged with planning Canada's role as host. The subjects which it hoped to place before the delegates reflected to some degree the problems which Canada was experiencing in its air relations with its two powerful allies. The proposed agenda included such general subjects as

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18 Ibid, Duff to Robertson, 4 May 1942.

19 Ibid.

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the necessity of relating training capacity of the United Nations to the output of operational types of aircraft; the balancing of training capacity between the United Nations with a view to ensuring a continuous flow of trainees; the adequate provision of trainer aircraft and other necessary equipment; the practicability and desirability of adopting standard systems of training; and the changing requirements in the composition of aircrews.[20]

The task of programme planning did not go altogether smoothly. To begin with, the British demand for security had an overall dampening effect on the scope of the discussion. On top of this the British requested that the allocation of operational aircraft be left off the agenda.[21] This topic was essentially an Anglo-American affair and it was intended to keep it that way. Moreover, while the Canadians were busy planning for the air training conference the British and American Chiefs of Staff were deadlocked in discussions dealing with the distribution of American aircraft production. In the balance hung the allocation of some 2,200 aircraft which the British needed if the R.A.F. was to expand according to plan.[22]

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20 Ibid, Note on Ottawa Air Training Conference, May-June 1942.

21 Ibid.

22 John Slessor, The Central Blue, Recollections and Reflections by Marshal of the Air Force Sir John Slessor, London, Cassell, 1956, p. 404-413.

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The issue was still in doubt at the time the delegates were assembling in Ottawa and it was hardly a matter which the British or Americans wished discussed.

Another factor which was to have some bearing on the outcome of the air training conference was the changing attitude of the Americans who were showing a determination to have a status at least equal to that of the R.A.F. By the time the conference was to assemble the United States had recovered from the initial shock of the Pearl Harbor attack. Air force officers, having made a more thorough examination of American air training facilities, were no longer talking of making use of Canadian schools nor of immediately disturbing the air training programmes previously arranged for the British. Indeed, no one could be found who would admit to having put the Twenty-Third Recommendation on the agenda of the Permanent Joint Board of Defence in the first place.

While Prime Minister King was in Washington he apparently observed something of American self-assertiveness for he informed a member of the British Embassy staff that he found a definite feeling that on military operations the American forces did not want to serve except as complete formations under American Command.[23] To the British, this reassertion of American nationalism seems to have come as a mild

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23 H. Duncan Hall, North American Supply, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1955, p. 363.

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surprise. As a late comer into the war, the United States Air Force, so it was thought, should accept a role second to that of the more experienced R.A.F. The Americans themselves, however, foresaw this possibility and were determined to avoid it. As an American writer has put it, "they feared... that the more experienced and better-organized British would come to dominate the military relationship between the two countries, leaving the American military services with less freedom of action than they wanted."[24]

This attitude was distinctly prevalent during the British-American discussion on aircraft allocations which went on almost continuously during the first six months of 1942. It seems also to have been the overriding factor in the question of co-ordination in air training, notwithstanding the Twenty-Third Recommendation of the Permanent Joint Board on Defence and the pronouncements of the President and Prime Minister. In training, as well as in operation tactics, the Americans had already learned a good deal from the R.A.F. by American military observers touring R.A.F. schools in the United Kingdom and British officers inspecting American training operations in the United States. American officers had also visited B.C.A.T.P. schools where they observed training

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24 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate, Men and Planes (The Army Air Forces in World War II, vol. 6) Chicago, University of Chicago, 1955, p. 4067.

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methods and examined syllabi.[25] The Americans had no intention of playing an auxiliary role either in operations or training. By the time the Ottawa Air Training Conference met, their interest in the co-ordination of air training programmes was distinctly on the wane.

Representation at the Ottawa Conference was on a relatively high level. In a setting of pomp and ceremony the Canadian Prime Minister welcomed the delegates in the Senate Chamber of the Parliament buildings on 19 May. The Canadian delegation proper included C.G. Power, Minister of National Defence for Air, unanimously voted conference chairman, J.L. Ralston, Minister of National Defence, L.B. Pearson, assistant Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs, A.D.P. Heeney, Clerk of the Privy Council and Air Marshal L.S. Breadner, the Chief of the Air Staff who was flanked by a representation of a dozen or more air force officers and department officials. The United States delegation, consisting of eleven members of the War Department and seven from the Navy Department was led by R.A. Lovett, the Assistant Secretary of War for Air who brought personal greetings from President Roosevelt heralding Canada as "the Airdrome of Democracy".[26]

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25 Ibid, p. 481.

26 Directorate of History, Ottawa Air Training Conference Minutes and Agreement May-June 1942, volume 1-VII, p. 17 (Future reference will be cited as Ottawa Air Training Conference Minutes and Agreements.)

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Sir Archibald Sinclair, the British Secretary of State for Air, was unable to attend and in his place was sent the Under Secretary, Harold Balfour, prominent in Canadian and British air negotiations throughout the war. Balfour's contingent included Sir John Abraham, Deputy Under-Secretary of State for Air, several senior members of the United Kingdom High Commissioner's Office and the Air Liaison Mission, three high ranking officers of the Air Ministry, a few naval officers and a bevy of technical and secretarial personnel. The British delegation was a particularly strong one and clearly portrayed the determination of the United Kingdom to safeguard its interests at the conference. By contrast the delegations of the other nations, South Africa, Belgium, China, Greece, Norway, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Free France consisted of one, two or three members, and in the case of Australia and New Zealand, four.[27]

While the array of uniforms and display of flags presented a dazzling front, the numbers of representatives, as the British had foreseen, complicated the problem of reaching major policy decisions. A diplomatic solution was sought in advance by the leading Canadian, American and British delegates. Meeting hurriedly before the main group assembled, they organized the important committees around membership

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27 Ibid, p. 1-6.

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from the Commonwealth countries and the United States and attempted to satisfy the other nations with membership on less important bodies. For instance, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the United States were the only countries seated on the committees dealing with standardization of air training, composition of aircrew, co-ordination of training capacity, manpower resources and personnel problems.[28] This procedure caused little concern to some countries, for example, South Africa, which had little interest in air training in either Canada or the United States. But others, such as Poland, Norway, Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands, who were striving against great odds to build up their air forces in exile were not pleased with being thus excluded. Belgium, Poland, Czechoclovakia and Greece did manage to get themselves seated on the General Training Committee, and the Netherlands and Norway were given places on the North American Training Committee.[29] Nevertheless, these countries could not have derived much satisfaction from the Conference the first part of which boiled down to a round of discussions between the delegates of the Commonwealth countries and those of the United States.

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28 Ibid, p. 65, 91, 112, 118, 126.

29 Ibid, p. 41, 42.

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In these sessions it was revealed that there was a great deal of similarity in the general approach to air training in the B.C.A.T.P. and the rapidly expanding American programme.[30] Both sides agreed that further exchange of ideas and information would be helpful and Air Marshal G.O. Johnson of the R.C.A.F. put forward a resolution calling for the establishment of a permanent Combined Committee on Air Training in North America, a step in which Canadians had expected the Americans would take the initiative. In making his proposal Johnson expressed the thought that with training plans forging ahead in the United States and with the United Kingdom about to increase training capacity in Canada there was a possibility of over expansion unless some machinery was set up to co-ordinate training programmes on both sides of the border. In this view the American and British delegates concurred, and the latter emphasized the advantages to be derived from a continuous free exchange of information. After further discussion the Conference adopted Johnson's resolution in the following form:

> That there shall be a committee to be known as the Combined Committee on Air Training in North America , to consist of representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. A United States representative will be the Chairman of the Committee.[31]

30 Ibid, p. 91-117.

31 Ibid, p. 43.

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The Committee, to have advisory powers only, was to have headquarters in Washington and though membership was to be limited to the United Kingdom, the United Sates and Canada, other countries might appear before it to present requests or seek solutions to air training problems. This resolution was the main achievement of the first part of the Ottawa Air Training Conference which Power was later to describe as "a big show".[32] The final session was followed by a publicity statement expressing more what the Conference had hoped to accomplish than what it actually achieved:

> The Conference has given most careful thought to the means by which the training capacity of the United Nations can be co-ordinated. Alterations in requirements, some of which cannot even be foreseen at present, may alter the position at any time, thus involving training adjustments of considerable magnitude. With this probability in view, and with the further object of insuring a rapid and effective interchange of information regarding training generally, the Conference has approved the formation of a Combined Committee on Air Training.[33]

Since the Committee was to sit in Washington under American Chairmanship the British and Canadians felt that the initial move in its establishment should come from the United States. After a month had gone by without any word being received , the Supervisory Board of the B.C.A.T.P. decided to make inquiries through the Canadian Legation in Washington.

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32 Ward, op. cit., p. 235.

33 Canada, Directorate of History, Ottawa Air Training Conference May 1942, Ottawa, King's printer, 1942, p. 24.

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In August it was learned that the appointment of a chairman was "awaiting the approval of the U.S. Report of the Air Training Conference by the Secretaries of War and Navy Departments and finally by the President of the United States."[34] It eventually evolved that Major-General Yount was appointed to set up the Committee but further delay was encountered while the War Department drafted the necessary instructions. After much prodding from the Canadian side of the border Yount called the first meeting in April, 1943.[35] Thereafter the Committee met every two months alternating between the United States and Canada. In spite of its belated formation it provided a valuable link in air training between the United Kingdom, the United States and Canada permitting "the development of air training on the soundest lines and on approximately a common basis in the three countries concerned."[36]

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34 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 18 August, 1942.

35 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q. 15-9-58, Combined Committee on Air Training in North America, Secretary of State for the External Affairs to the Canadian Minister in Washington, 8 August, 1942; Moffat to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 28 September, 1942; Leckie to the Minister, 11 January 1943; Walsh to Smith 11 January 1943; Clark to the Secretary of State for External Affairs, 12 March 1943. H.Q. 15-9-58A, Combined Committee on Air Training in North America:- Agenda and Minutes of Meetings, Minutes of Combined Committee on Air Training in North America, April 26-27, 1943.

36 United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, History of the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, January 1940 to 31 March 1945. Ottawa, (no publisher) 1945, p. 8.

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The achievements of the Commonwealth part of the Air Training Conference, which sat from 22 May to 5 June, are easier to assess than those of the preceding general session. The Commonwealth delegates from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand were seeking answers to concrete issues on which they were well briefed and on which they were prepared for a certain amount of give and take in the traditional method of Commonwealth bargaining. The two dominant figures at the meeting, and its joint chairmen, were Power and Balfour. Power, the author of the main proposals which the Canadian Government wanted to place before the delegates, was well able to present the Canadian point of view while Balfour, a diplomat of whom Power said "one could argue fiercely and vehemently without leaving any feeling of frustration or discontent", was most capable of keeping British interests to the fore.[37] Flanking the two chairmen was a competent group of air officers, technical advisers and a few specially selected civil servants who collectively had a detailed knowledge of the matters under consideration.

The major items on the agenda included the continuation of the B.C.A.T.P., the status of the R.A.F. transferred schools, the supply of manpower, the commissioning of aircrew, the provisioning of training aircraft and equipment, composi-

37 Ward, op. cit., p. 233.

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tion of bomber crews and financial arrangements for the continuation of the B.C.A.T.P. Not all of these were contentious matters. There was unanimous consent that a new agreement should be drafted extending the termination date of the B.C.A.T.P. from 31 March 1943 to 31 March 1945. The only question in this regard was whether Australia and New Zealand wished to continue to participate in the Plan in view of the extension of war to the Pacific area. The threat from the Japanese had at first halted the flow of aircrew trainees from the two southern Dominions to Canada. It was almost immediately resumed and at the Conference the representatives of Australia and New Zealand stated that their respective governments desired to continue to participate in the Plan.[38]

The question of the R.A.F. transferred schools was also settled with little difficulty. Under the new agreement these units were to be included within the framework of the B.C.A.T.P. and administered by the R.C.A.F. in the same manner as units constituted under the original agreement. The British units affected included six elementary flying training schools, ten service flying training schools, one bombing and gunnery school, four operational training units one radio school, a personnel depot and any other R.A.F. training

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38 Ottawa Air Training Conference Minutes and Agreement, p. 140.

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schools that might later be transferred to Canada.[39] The R.C.A.F. undertook to preserve the British identity of the R.A.F. schools and to continue to consult with the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission on matters connected with their administration and operation.[40] Outwardly, the position of the R.A.F. units was unchanged but the new arrangements worked to the advantage of both the United Kingdom and Canada. The former was temporarily relieved of the financial worries in connection with the provisioning of these units, though it still had to meet the payroll expenses quarterly, while the R.C.A.F. was able to use a greater measure of discretion than had been the case previously in such matters as allocating aircraft and equipment to these schools.

The training scheme emerged from the Ottawa Conference basically the same but in a much enlarged form. With the existing B.C.A.T.P. schools, the R.A.F. transferred units and additional capacity called for in the new Agreement the whole embodied seven initial training schools, twenty-two elementary flying training schools, thirty service flying training schools,

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39 Canada, Directorate of History, Agreement Amending and Extending the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Agreement of December 17, 1939 Relating to Training of Pilots and Aircraft Crews in Canada and Their Subsequent Service Between the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, Ottawa 5 June, 1942. (Future reference will be as Agreement Amending and Extending the B.CA.T.P.)

40 Ibid.

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thirteen air observer and air navigator schools, ten bombing and gunnery schools, two general reconnaissance schools and eight operational training units. At the summit of the flying training organization, giving it direction and cohesion were three flying instructor schools, a central flying school and a central navigation school.

In the Agreement, and for some time after it had been signed the name, "combined training organization" was used to distinguish between the B.C.A.T.P. as it existed prior to July 1942 and the enlarged scheme embracing the R.A.F. schools. In February 1943, the Supervisory Board, after considering a suggestion that a new title should be used to designate the enlarged scheme, ruled that it would continue to be known as the B.C.A.T.P.

On the financial side it was becoming ever more difficult to arrive at a fair and equitable apportionment of the cost of the training scheme. The United Kingdom, which it must be remembered was bearing the cost of paying and maintaining thousands of Canadian graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. serving in operational theatres, plus the expense involved in equipping and servicing the squadrons in which they were fighting, would have preferred a more general financial settlement with less detailed accounting than the one it eventually agreed to. The Canadian Government was not in a mood to make large financial concessions and the United Kingdom did not press the matter unduly for it was thankful that

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Canada could keep the Plan going financially, leaving the settlement of major expenses until the end of the war. On its part, Canada preferred to cling to the complexities of inter-government accounting with all expenses being duly reckoned and the costs properly apportioned. But it was evident to a number of officials, including the Canadian Minister of National Defence for Air, that this was becoming a giant, and perhaps futile, exercise in bookkeeping. Speaking in the House of Commons just before the Ottawa Air Training Conference, Power remarked:

> Personally I think we should call the accounts all square, say that we have spent here so much, and that they have spent there so much, and let it go at that. ...I don't think it would hurt anybody, but of course that is unorthodox finance.[41]

The Canadian Minister of Finance was also becoming concerned over Britain's financial indebtedness to Canada and the economic problems that would result from this after the war. To reduce the debt, a large part of which stemmed from Britain's expenses in connection with air training in Canada, Ilsley had arranged Canada's so-called billion dollar gift to Britain in March 1942.[42] The Department of Finance was also considering further changes in policies of international finance which resulted in the Mutual Aid Programme of

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41 Débates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1942, vol. 3, p. 2410-2411.

42 Ibid, vol. 2, p. 1417-1418.

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May 1943 and in connection with it a decision to assume the cost of equipping and maintaining the R.C.A.F. squadrons and all of Canada's B.C.A.T.P. graduates serving with the R.A.F. These measures, however, were barely on the horizon when the Commonwealth delegates met in Ottawa.

For purposes of financial reckoning, 30 June 1942 was taken as the final date of the old agreement and 1 July 1942 as the starting of the new.[43] The financial arrangements of the latter were drawn up by the Committee on Finance consisting of representatives of the four partners sitting under the chairmanship of H.G. Norman, the financial adviser of the B.C.A.T.P. The Committee estimated that from 1 July 1942 to 31 March 1945 the cost of the combined training organization would amount to about $1,446,310,000.[44] Australia and New Zealand elected to pay for their future air training in Canada on a per capita basis instead of accepting a cut and dried percentage of the overall costs as they had in 1939. Britain's share, as expressed in the phraseology of the Agreement was to be "a liability for the sum of seven hundred and twenty-three million dollars Canadian...less payments received by the Government of Canada from the Governments of Australia and New Zealand". Since the United Kingdom knew it would

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43 Ottawa Air Training Conference, Minutes and Agreement, p. 224.

44 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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have to back the other governments in their payments to Canada, it is fair to say that under the new agreement Britain accepted responsibility for meeting one half of the cost of the combined training organization and Canada the other. Britain's share was to be paid in kind, in so far as this was possible, and supplies obtained on lend-lease, including aeroplanes, spare parts and petroleum products, could go towards liquidating it. It was of course impossible to begin estimating the value of these various items until they had come into use but it was understood that any balance owing in the British account when all was totalled at the end of the war was to be paid in Canadian dollars.[45]

The question of manpower, though less complicated than that of finance was a cause of more concern to both the United Kingdom and Canada. Australia and New Zealand did not anticipate any manpower problems until the end of 1943 but in the United Kingdom and Canada the future was not so clear. Representatives of the United Kingdom on the Committee on Manpower Resources reported that the R.A.F. had a six months' supply of aircrew on deferred service but expected that some shortage would arise in 1943. Canada was in much the same position. Air Commodore E.B. Middleton, the Acting Air Member for Personnel, reported to the Committee that a supply of

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45 Ottawa Air Training Conference, Minutes and Agreement, p. 120.

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aircrew recruits sufficient to meet Canada's quota of pupils for the B.C.A.T.P. for the next few months was already on hand but stated that by early in 1943 the reserve of eligible manpower would be nearly exhausted. To maintain the flow of manpower after that the R.C.A.F. would have to make full use of the Air Cadet Organization and of the War Emergency Training Plan which provided courses for those potential recruits who were lacking in educational requirements. There was also the possibility that "eligible young men would have to be drawn from industry or elsewhere". Women were being employed in some of the R.C.A.F. ground trades which allowed more ground tradesmen to transfer to aircrew duty.[46]

The manpower contributions were also arranged on a fifty-fifty basis, or nearly so. The United Kingdom accepted a responsibility to keep filled "not less than 40 per cent of the training capacity in the combined training organization."[47] Australia was allotted places for 1300 pilots, 676 observers and 946 wireless operator-airgunners while New Zealand's annual intake quota was set at 450 pilots, 676 observers and 715 wireless operator-air gunners, the two Southern Dominions thus providing 4,753 pupils. In addition, the number of of pilots from New Zealand was to be increased by about 350

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46 Ibid.

47 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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per annum when conditions would allow.[48] Canada's quota, which does not appear in the Agreement, was 34,600, close to half of the Plan's estimated annual intake of 68,419.[49] The actual intake of the Plan in 1943 reveals that Air Commodore Middleton and the British delegates were not mistaken in their pessimistic outlook. The records show that only 53,995 pupils entered the training stream in that year. Of these Canada contributed 28,083 instead of 34,600; Great Britain sent 20,919, far under its quota; Australia provided 3,032 and New Zealand 2,150.[50]

The discussions on manpower revealed that while the R.A.F. had a surplus of pilots on hand a shortage of other aircrew categories, navigators, air bombers, wireless operator-air gunners and air gunners, was likely in the coming year unless special measures were taken to train more candidates for these branches. The main factor contributing to an accumulation of pilots was the R.A.F. decision to discontinue the use of co-pilots in medium and heavy bombers. This move came close to halving the number of pilots required in bomber squadrons. For example, a squadron of medium or heavy bombers having some sixteen front line aircraft formerly had twenty

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48 Ibid.

49 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q.S.45-1-35, Manpower, vol. 1 Breadner to the Minister, 13 August, 1943.

50 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 8, Minutes of Meeting Held Monday 17 January, 1944, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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crews and forty pilots. In future such a squadron would have twenty-six pilots, the additional six forming a reserve to train incoming crews and provide a pool for special long range missions.[51] This change in policy meant that the R.A.F. would require fewer but better trained pilots. There was a possibility that fewer flying training schools would be required but the reduction if warranted was to be effected first by closing down some of the flying training schools in the United Kingdom.[52] Britain was also under pressure to relinquish some of its air training space in the United States and early in 1943 discontinued its air training south of the border except for that being carried out in civilian schools.

There was, however, an element of danger in cutting back pilot training too far and too fast. The United Kingdom and the United States were jointly planning a large scale offensive in North Africa for the autumn of 1942 and hoped to be able to invade the continent of Europe in 1943. A vast air armada was required for these operations as well as for the bombing offensive against the cities of Germany already under way but to be greatly expanded in scope early in 1943. To ensure a continuing supply of pilots for these operations and also to provide for lengthening the period of pilot train-

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51 Ottawa Air Training Conference Minutes and Agreement, p. 99.

52 Ibid, p. 190

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ing the R.A.F. estimated that it would be necessary to add four service flying training schools and two elementary flying training schools to the B.C.A.T.P.[53] Thus in 1942 pilot training for the R.A.F. came to be concentrated in Canada to an even greater degree than it had before.

Parallel with the decision to do away with the position of co-pilot in medium and heavy bombers it was found necessary to increase the number of other crew members, particularly air gunners, and to add the position of air bomber. The general trend in aircrew training in 1942 was thus towards specialization and quality with slightly less emphasis on quantity.

A question in which there was a great deal at stake for all the partners in the Plan was the distribution of American aircraft production. The R.A.F. was dependent on the United States for about thirty percent of its operational aircraft needs, and the Dominions, in their home based operations, a slightly higher proportion.[54] If these planes were not forthcoming, Commonwealth plans might well end up with an abundance of aircrew without aircraft to match. The allocation of American aircraft production for 1943 was still under discussion in London and Washington while the Ottawa Air

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53 Ibid.

54 Slessor, op. cit., p. 409.

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Training Conference was being held. Balfour, who had visited Washington en route to Canada, felt that the R.A.F. would obtain the aircraft it needed. In the end his optimism proved justified but a satisfactory agreement was reached only after a good deal of hard bargaining in which the persuasive power of the British Prime Minister was brought to bear. Even then the United Kingdom, not to mention the other Commonwealth countries, did not get a long term guarantee on aircraft needs and the allocation of planes beyond 1943 proceeded on a month to month basis with an aura of uncertainty overhanging future allotments. However, at the Ottawa Training Conference the British pointed out that even if the Commonwealth allocation of American aircraft were reduced and a contraction of training capacity became necessary the maximum affect on the training organization in Canada would be a re-organization to include the conversion of some pilot training schools to operational training units and the re-assignment of a few air observer schools to air gunner schools.[55]

Although most items on the conference agenda were settled with little difference of opinion the Commonwealth allies found themselves at odds over the question of granting commissions. The difficulty lay in the original B.C.A.T.P. Agreement and subsequent modifications which provided that

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55 Ottawa Air Training Conference, Minutes and Agreement, p. 190.

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commissions were to be granted on a quota basis: thirty-three per cent of the pilots and observers, ten per cent of the wireless operator-air gunners and five per cent of the air gunners were to receive commissions on graduation and a further seventeen percent of pilots and observers, ten per cent of wireless operator-air gunners and fifteen per cent of the air gunners were to be awarded commissioned rank at a later date. There is little point in tracing the course of the arguments or listing the pros and cons of the quota system. It should be noted, however, that Power disliked the method intensely feeling that it was anomalous, unjust, and an obstacle to recruiting. He had argued these points with the Air Ministry before and told the House of Commons in Ottawa in May 1942 that at the forthcoming conference, "one of the matters...I hope to take up is the advisability and the absolute justice of making every member of air crew an officer."[56]

Although Power found that some of the high ranking officers of the R.A.F. were in agreement with the proposal the Air Ministry was not inclined to accept it or even to entertain a watered down suggestion that all pilots and air observers should be given officer status. In the end, Canada adopted its own commissioning policy for pilots, observers, navigators and air bombers but compromised in maintaining the

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56 Debates, House of Commons, 1942, vol. 3, p. 2346.

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quota system for other aircrew categories. The new B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, which made no reference to the commissioning of aircrew other than Canadians, said that all pilots, navigators and air bombers who were considered suitable according to the standards of the Government of Canada and were recommended for commissions "will be commissioned".[57] Air gunners and wireless operator-air gunners, who shared the same hazards as the other crew members but whose training was less intensified and had more to do with the defence of the aircraft than its operation, did not fare so well. Commissioning in these branches was left subject to the quota system but the agreement promised that "Some flexibility will, however, be permitted to ensure that airmen in these categories who have the necessary qualifications are not excluded from commissioning on account of the quota."[58] The adoption of a separate policy on commissioning, however justified, pointed up rather than solved a problem inherent in the B.C.A.T.P. To the end of the war the commissioning of B.C.A.T.P. graduates remained a contentious matter.

Another controversial issue was the status of the R.C.A.F. in the United Kingdom and other theatres of war.

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57 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P. The air bomber was a new member of bomber crews introduced as an assistant to the observer, v. infra, Chapter XIII. p.408.

58 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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Since taking office in 1940 Power had been working steadily to extend government control over R.C.A.F. personnel serving with the R.A.F., and to obtain a national grouping of R.C.A.F. squadrons scattered throughout the framework of the R.A.F. During a visit to the United Kingdom in July and August 1941, he had won some concessions from the Ministry but the situation from the Canadian point of view was still far from satisfactory. Ironically, although both the United Kingdom and the United States were ever ready to applaud Canada for what it was accomplishing in the development of the B.C.A.T.P, neither of the larger allies seemed aware of the Dominion's immediate contribution to air operations. At the beginning of 1942 over 7,000 Canadian aircrew and 3000 ground personnel had been posted to the United Kingdom for service with either R.A.F. or R.C.A.F. squadrons. This was about three times the number of aircrew required to man the twenty-five R.C.A.F. squadrons formed under the Sinclair-Ralston Agreement of January 1941.[59] But to Power's chagrin the British found it next to impossible to separate the flow of trainees into national components. The result was that squadrons which were R.C.A.F. in name were made up of a mixture of Commonwealth personnel while R.A.F. units continued to receive a liberal sprinkling of Canadian

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59 Directorate of History, H.Q. 2-1-2, Organization, B.C.A.T.P. Squadrons in U.K., vol. 1, Message 118 X 73, Breadner to Edwards, 3 February, 1942.

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graduates. The entry of the United States into the war, and the determination of Arnold to obtain for the American Air Force a status at least equal to that of the R.A.F. despite the great prestige of the British force, gave Power increased incentive to make the R.C.A.F. overseas more nationally representative. In May 1942, shortly before the Ottawa Air Training Conference, the Canadian Minister of National Defence for Air explained his problem and his views to the House of Commons.

> ...another representation which I made while in England, and which I propose to make again at the conference, is that even apart from these squadrons it should not be very difficult to keep Canadians together. There is undoubtedly the feeling both in this country and beyond it, that it is to the general good to mix people from all parts of the empire. To that theory I subscribe, to a certain extent.
>
> On the other hand, I maintain that these men in squadrons are a team, and it is easier to play on a team with men you know, men of your own kind, men from your own home town, than to play on a team with men from another town, even though you may be the best of friends and have the greatest respect for one another.[60]

In regard to the Americans Power said:

> The Americans are over there, in fewer numbers than we are. They have some kind of independent command, though they operate with the R.A.F., and, I take it, are pretty well under the general command of the R.A.F..... But I am hoping to attain pretty well the same status that the Americans have attained with respect to internal operations, always of course under the command of some supreme British authority

60 Debates, House of Commons, 1942, vol. 3, p. 2399.

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> with regard to operations generally...but I doubt if we could ever achieve a completely independent command.... Our international relationships with groups, commands, and so on are so close that it would be almost impossible to have what might almost be called an independent air force, but it would be possible to have a better grouping and a greater grouping of Canadian squadrons working together.[61]

At the Air Training Conference the British delegates, although they preferred the idea of one big Commonwealth air force, were unable to refute the logic in Power's argument or shake him in his determination that in recognition of Canada's overall air effort the R.C.A.F. must be granted a greater voice in the administrative control of Canadian units and individuals working within the general structure of the R.A.F. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that the new Agreement differed materially from the old in spelling out the conditions of service abroad of R.C.A.F. personnel. In the 1939 Agreement this subject was covered in two short paragraphs which specified that the B.C.A.T.P. graduates"on completion of training will be placed at the disposal of the Government of the United Kingdom", and that the latter would undertake to see that "the pupils of Canada, Australia and New Zealand shall, after training is completed be identified with their respective Dominions, either by the method of organizing Dominion units and formations or in some other way".[62]

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61 Ibid, p. 2400-2401.

62 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, 17 December 1939.

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These paragraphs, or ones of similar intent, were repeated on the 1942 Agreement. But the latter document also included an appendix on commissioning, an appendix of five pages entitled "Control and Administration of the R.C.A.F. Overseas" and another, one page in length on "Repatriation Policy". In particular, the Air Ministry was to consult the R.C.A.F. on important administrative decisions affecting Canadians, the R.C.A.F. Headquarters was to have general supervision over R.C.A.F. personnel attached to the R.A.F., a separate reception centre commanded by an officer of the R.C.A.F. was to be established in England. Subject to operational expediency the R.C.A.F. was granted the right to recall individual Canadians attached to the R.A.F., and was to be consulted in the selection of commanding officers for R.C.A.F. squadrons. Other important concessions to Power's persuasiveness included an increase in the number of R.C.A.F. squadrons from twenty-five to thirty-eight and the proposed formation of a Canadian bomber group on air bases to be commanded by Canadian officers. Also a closer grouping of the R.C.A.F. fighter units scattered throughout the R.A.F. was to be made.[63] In achieving official sanction for this programme Power no doubt felt relief. But he was to find that it was one thing to have his policy approved but quite another to have it implemented.

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63 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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There were still many practical difficulties in the way of achieving the Canadian goals. The struggle of the R.C.A.F. to become a fighting force in its own right was still far from over.

Although Canada may not have obtained all that it had hoped for in calling the Ottawa Air Training Conference of May and June 1942, it did emerge greatly strengthened in its position as administrator of the Plan and also in the degree of control it exercised over the R.C.A.F. outside of the Western Hemisphere. In the long run this enhanced position did not arise so much from hard bargaining as from the growth in strength, confidence and prestige within the country itself, a development in which the B.C.A.T.P. was one of the dominant factors. However, the Plan was still very much a Commonwealth affair to which the other Dominions were contributing men and money and in which the United Kingdom, as was traditional in Commonwealth military enterprises, was leading the way and making the important decisions. In summarizing the result of the Ottawa Conference little need be added to the words of Prime Minister King in reviewing the Agreement before Parliament:

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The new agreement reaffirms and reinforces the determination and capacity of the nations of the British Commonwealth to maintain the training of aircrews on a vast and increasing scale.... The original training agreement was conceived in a spirit of vigorous enterprise. The agreement concluded this morning will be carried through in the same spirit and will play its part in building up with certainty and with speed air forces of overwhelming and terrifying strength.[64]

64 Debates, House of Commons, 1942, vol. 3, p. 3098.

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CHAPTER XII

PILOT TRAINING

In examining the pilot training programme of the B.C.A.T.P. it is perhaps best to proceed by considering the various stages in the making of a military pilot from manning depot, where he was indoctrinated, to service flying training school where he received his pilot badge. In tracing these steps one should keep in mind that the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. had made considerable progress in pilot training before the war and thus had a better and broader base to build on than was the case with other aircrew categories. On the other hand it must also be remembered that the mass training of pilots and the development of new aircraft presented new problems and challenges. The main aim of the B.C.A.T.P. pilot training programme was to turn out pilots who were competent to fly elementary and advanced trainer aircraft and who could master more complicated operational types with a minimum amount of additional training.

To put the problem in its simplest form, the R.C.A.F. as administrator of the B.C.A.T.P. had to turn out a given number of pilots in a limited period of time. The two main variables were quality and quantity. How far one could be sacrificed to the other was a critical factor that was always present in the training programme.

Canadian pilots trained under the B.C.A.T.P. received their introduction to air force life at a manning depot,

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simply a large base where newly enrolled personnel, both air and ground, were received from recruiting centres. The R.C.A.F. established seven main manning depots and a number of temporary ones during the war. The largest of these was No. 1 Manning Depot in Toronto which was located in the Coliseum Building at the exhibition grounds. Other buildings in the city were later taken over and in January 1942, No. 1 Manning Depot had accommodation for 7,282 recruits. The next in size was No. 2 at Brandon, Manitoba which could house 2,800. No. 3 Manning Depot, not quite so large, was located at Ottawa, No. 4 at Quebec City and No. 5 at Lachine (Montreal). The other two Manning Depots, Nos. 6 and 7, were located at Toronto and Ottawa respectively and were reception centres for women.[1] It was at Manning Depots that aircrew and ground personnel made their first adjustments to military procedure. Here they received the R.C.A.F. uniform with instructions how to wear it, were taught the basic movements of foot drill and were inculcated with the importance of good deportment and the need for implicit obedience.

In the first years of the war, aircrew recruits were sorted into specific categories at recruiting centres on the basis of a personal interview and entered manning depot as

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1 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, (unpublished material), vol. 4, p. 794-802.

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potential pilots, air observers or wireless operator-air gunners. In 1941 a changing manpower situation forced the R.C.A.F. to review this simple method of aircrew selection. In the first place the supply of men with the minimum formal education requirement of junior matriculation was falling off, in the second the B.C.A.T.P. had reached a point where a greater flow of trainees was required. Also a sharp increase in pilot failures indicated that there was room for improvement in the selection procedure. In 1941 the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Manning instituted a programme of objective testing under the direction of Professor N.S. Chant of the Department of Psychology of the University of Toronto which eventually led to the use of ability to learn and aptitude tests as supplements to the personal interview technique. Chant, who was in touch with similar work being done in the United Kingdom and the United States, came into the R.C.A.F. in November 1941 as head of the Directorate of Personnel Selection and Research and took charge of the testing programme.[2]

In the following months a number of innovations were made in the selection procedure. Formal education requirements were discarded. Youths who had left school without completing junior matriculation but who showed up well on

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2 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, The History of the A.M.P. Division, [unpublished material], p. 42-59.

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learning ability tests might be accepted for pilot training even if they could produce nothing more than a grade eight certificate. Conversely, a boy who had finished high school might be considered unsuitable for pilot training if the tests showed him to be a plodder. The interviewing procedure was also made more uniform by introducing a few standard questions designed to elicit answers that would assist examining officers to assess a candidate's motivation in joining the R.C.A.F. For instance a boy who wanted to fly merely because some of his friends were enrolled as pilots, but who himself appeared to have little interest in aviation might well be selected as an air observer or wireless operator-air gunner.

In October 1942 the Directorate of Manning relieved the already overburdened recruiting officer of the task of aircrew selection and entrusted it to Aircrew Selection Boards established at the various manning depots. Henceforth, applicants who were elegible for aircrew training were enrolled initially into one broad category, standard aircrew, and were selected for specialties at the manning depots. A candidate who was chosen for pilot training could expect to spend about four weeks in a manning depot and then move on to an initial training school. If found to be lacking in formal education with a compensating above average learning ability he might be retained at the manning depot for a

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refresher academic course given by the manning depot education officer or sent to one of the war emergency training plan schools for a more extensive course lasting for up to twelve weeks. For French speaking recruits there was a course in English of approximately two months' duration given first at No. 4 Manning Depot in Quebec City and after June 1942 at No. 1 in Toronto.[3]

The initial training school was the first stage in the training of pilots, navigators and air bombers. It corresponded to what the British call the initial training wing and the Americans more aptly termed pre-flight school. The original course at initial training school was designed for all aircrew specialties but in 1941, following a practice already established in the United Kingdom, wireless operator-air gunners and air gunners, and later flight engineers, were sent directly from manning depot to specialty training, bypassing the initial training school.

The B.C.A.T.P. Agreement made provision for four of these schools where courses of four weeks' duration were to be given. However in July 1941 Air Commodore Leckie informed the Supervisory Board that the overall expediting of the Plan made it necessary to form three additional schools. The

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3 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 4, p. 794-802.

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locations of the various initial training schools indicates something of the extent to which the war atmosphere penetrated Canadian society. No. 1 was established on property formerly owned by the Eglinton Hunt Club in North Toronto; No. 2 used premises offered by Regina College and the adjacent Regina Normal School; No. 3 was housed in Sacred Heart College in Victoriaville, Quebec; No. 4 occupied the residence buildings of the University of Alberta with administrative offices in the Edmonton Normal School; No. 5 took over the Ontario Provincial School for the Deaf at Belleville; No. 6 opened in buildings leased from the Toronto Board of Education; and No. 7 had its living quarters and some classrooms in the Saskatoon Normal School with more classrooms at the Bedford Road Collegiate. The output of potential pilots from each of these units is shown in Table VII.

TABLE VII[4]

Output of Pilot Trainees at Initial Training Schools

School	Output
No. 1 Toronto	8,444
No. 2 Regina	8,711
No. 3 Victoriaville	6,761
No. 4 Edmonton	5,182
No. 5 Belleville	4,586
No. 6 Toronto	3,824
No. 7 Saskatoon	3,944
Total	41,452

4 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D 89 A) British Commonwealth Air Training Plan - Flying Training, [unpublished material], Section 1, Initial Training Schools. (Future references will be cited as Flying Training).

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Extensive revisions were also made in the initial training school course which was extended from four weeks to five in January 1941, lengthened to seven weeks in July, to eight in November and finally to ten weeks in October 1942. With each revision more work was piled into the curriculum. During their ten weeks students received about 300 hours of lectures. The subjects fell into two main categories, academic and military. The former included navigation, mathematics, armament, meteorology, morse code, aircraft recognition and aerodynamics. Drill and physical instruction made up the larger portion of the military training but some lectures on military law, anti-gas precautions, and hygiene were included.[5]

Until 1943 the initial training schools were one of the most neglected areas of pilot training, rather poorly equipped aircrew kindergartens in which higher authorities took little interest. R.C.A.F. Headquarters, and the various command headquarters as well, at first were inclined to regard the initial training schools as convenient holding units where pilots and observers could be held in readiness for entry into elementary flying schools and air observer schools. In 1942, when the B.C.A.T.P. programme was working reasonably well, the R.C.A.F. got around to taking a serious look at the initial training schools and found that these units were not

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5 Ibid, Initial Training Schools, Syllabus of Instruction.

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functioning as they should. Supervision was lacking and the staff, consisting mainly of administrative personnel assisted by a few frustrated pilots, were vainly trying to cope with the syllabus. Although the course called for several hours of instruction in navigation no properly trained navigation instructors were supplied to the initial training schools until November 1941. In 1942, following a series of reports and inspections, Air Commodore Leckie proposed that instruction in the initial training schools be turned over to the Education Branch whose members, teachers from across the country, served the R.C.A.F. in a variety of ways such as training instructors, conducting courses in mathematics at technical and flying training schools, organizing libraries and generally providing educational service. After Leckie's proposal was accepted a number of education officers were posted to the Central Navigation School at Rivers, Manitoba to take courses in navigation, meteorology and the principles of flight. Thus prepared, the education officers moved off to their newly appointed tasks in the initial training schools in the spring of 1943.[6]

Until 1943 the syllabi of initial training schools provided for a few hours of instruction on the Link trainer. This device, said to have its origin as a midway attraction,

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6 Ibid, Quality of Instruction.

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could simulate the motions of an aircraft and was used to teach the theory of flight and also to measure a candidate's potential as a pilot. Trainees who obtained low marks on their Link test usually were re-selected for another category even though already enrolled for pilot training. Thus initial training schools exercised the final voice in determining who would go onto elementary flying training school and who would not.

In using the Link trainer as a pilot selector a few devoted members of No. 1 Initial Training School, assisted by the Department of Educational Research of the Ontario College of Education achieved a noteworthy measure of success. By comparing pupils' Link training scores with their later performance at elementary flying training school, the Toronto staff produced a battery of Link trainer tests which, provided they were properly administered and marked, gave a good indication of a recruit's flying ability. For instance, an officer at the Norwegian Air Training Centre in Toronto, reported with satisfaction that in comparing the Link training marks of a class with its later results in elementary air training it was found that "every one of the students who had obtained under 45 points in visual Link, had been 'washed out' by the ...more expensive method of testing in the air."[7]

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7 Public Archives of Canada, R.G.24, H.Q. 231-6-1, Training Policy, Royal Norwegian Air Force Personnel, vol. 1, Olafson to Burt, 21 December, 1942.

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In spite of this promise of success the Link testing programme ran into a maze of difficulties. Pupils objected to taking the tests for they held out the possibility of elimination from pilot training. Pilots, who disliked their tour of duty at initial training schools anyway, were frustrated and bored with the task of administering and marking the tests. Instructors at elementary flying training schools, who liked their pupils to come to them with a fresh open mind about flying, complained that even those who scored high on their Link trials picked up bad flying habits during the few hours they spent in the simulated trainer. To overcome the resistance to the Link training programme instructors from the six other initial training schools were called to Toronto in the autumn of 1942 for a series of lectures and demonstrations of the system in use at No. 1 Initial Training School. But in spite of this effort the problems of obtaining uniformity in the administration and marking of the tests was not overcome and the success achieved at No. 1 was not duplicated elsewhere.[8] Early in April 1943 Air Commodore Leckie felt compelled to address a strong letter to all Training Commands on the subject:

> As a result of almost complete ignorance of existing instructions, the Visual Link standardization programme is only 50% effective after being authorized

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8 Flying Training, Synthetic Training, The Visual Link Trainer, p. 1-37.

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> for seven months. It is therefore the responsibility of each Command concerned to see that this situation is corrected immediately.[9]

Even before this letter was written a new policy was in the making. Later in the month the commands were informed that the Link testing programme was to be moved from the initial training schools to the manning depots and placed under the jurisdiction of the aircrew selection boards where it logically belonged. The work begun by No. 1 was carried on under the administration of the Directorate of Personnel Selection and Research which continued to add refinements to the selective programme for the duration of the B.C.A.T.P.[10]

In the R.A.F., pilot selection was done through a system known as grading which was more reliable and in some ways simpler than the method being employed in Canada. Before beginning flying training proper, personnel provisionally selected at initial training school, or initial training wing to use the British term, were given a short preliminary course at an elementary training school. After receiving twelve hours of flying instruction they were given a practical flying test on the basis of which potential pilots were chosen.

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9 Ibid, p. 19, quoting Leckie to Air Officers Commanding No. 1 Training Command, No. 2 Training Command, No. 3 Training Command, No. 4 Training Command, 2 April, 1943.

10 Ibid, p. 20-21.

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Those who rated low were selected into other aircrew categories.[11] In 1944 the flight grading procedure was incorporated into the R.C.A.F. programme of pilot selection.[12] By this time the B.C.A.T.P. was in the process of being reduced and few of those who were selected in this way were to reach the front lines. Nevertheless, the benefits of the experiments in pilot selection were passed on to the post-war Air Force.

The move from initial training school to an elementary flying training school was a momentous step for a pilot candidate for he now came face to face with his first aeroplane and the instructor who would teach him to fly it. As mentioned earlier, elementary flying training in the R.C.A.F. in the immediate pre-war years had been contracted out to various flying clubs which had further agreed to accept the responsibility of operating the elementary flying training schools for the B.C.A.T.P. In their pre-war programme the clubs were following a syllabus based on R.A.F. publications which was carried over into the B.C.A.T.P. with minor alterations. When the first two elementary flying training schools opened on 24 June 1940, the syllabus in use provided for a course of eight weeks' duration including fifty hours of air

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11 Air Ministry, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training 1939-1944, Air Member for Personnel, p. 53-56.

12 Flying Training, Part Two, Section Two, The Elementary Flying Training Schools, Chapter Seven, The Grading School Program.

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training accompanied by 126 hours of ground instruction. Twenty-five hours of the air time was to consist of dual instruction, in which the student was accompanied by an instructor and twenty-five were to be given to solo flying. The time of the first solo flight was left to the discretion of the instructor but a pupil was expected to be ready for the eventful flight after about eight hours of dual instruction. Each pupil was to be tested by his instructor when he had completed ten hours of flying and by an air force examining officer when he had accumulated twenty hours.[13] At the end of the course the examining officer expected the students to be able to carry out "accurately and confidently" all normal aircraft manoeuvres, to land consistently well, to fly by the aid of instruments alone, to perform simple aerobatic manoeuvres, to pass a map reading test in the air and carry out a satisfactory cross-country flight.[14] Although only fifty hours flying time was allotted, this could be stretched to sixty-five if the extra time was devoted to useful instruction and not used to help slow learners to pass their final test. A letter from Leckie to the Commands stressed the point that the yardstick was not, "Can the individual be taught to fly elementary

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13 Ibid, Chapter Three, Syllabus of Instruction, p. 1-3.

14 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting Held 11 March, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix F.

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aircraft?" but rather, "Will the individual become an efficient Service pilot?" On no account was a student to be coached along simply "because he is such a nice fellow".[15]

In June 1940 the period of training was reduced from eight to seven weeks.[16] This change with no accompanying reduction in the syllabus kept instructors and students working at a steady pace. When bad weather kept the planes on the ground students were at work in classrooms, hangars or practising instrument flying in the Link trainers which were used extensively in both the elementary and service flying schools. The ground instruction included lectures on airframes, theory of flight, airmanship, navigation, morse code and radio. Question papers on these subjects were set by the R.C.A.F. and written during the sixth week of training.

Comparatively few changes had to be made in this syllabus but the problems connected with mass training of aircrew and the military situation dictated alterations from time to time. During the first year that the B.C.A.T.P. was in operation the time spent on navigation, armament training,

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15 Directorate of History, J.M. Hitsman, Report No. 67, Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Air Force During the Second World War, [unpublished material], January, 1954, p. 43, quoting H.Q.S. 306-100-A65-1, vol. 1, Leckie to No. 1 Training Command, 20 January, 1941.

16 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 2, Minutes of Meeting Held 5 August, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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including aircraft recognition, instrument flying and night flying, was increased and, to the students' approval, correspondingly less time was spent on the monotonous morse code practice.

Under the first B.C.A.T.P. Agreement the pupil capacity of the elementary flying training schools was set at forty-eight with each school graduating a class and taking in a new class every four weeks. Thus it was customary for each school to have two classes undergoing instruction at all times. In keeping with the accelerated pace of training adopted in 1940, elementary schools were gradually enlarged and came to be classified as single schools or double schools according to size, the former having a capacity for ninety students and the latter one hundred and eighty.[17] By the end of 1941 there were only four double schools but Treasury approval had been given to increase five more single schools to double size.[18] When the whole air training programme was enlarged by the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement of 1942 the trend was toward fewer but larger schools. A few were then disbanded, the size of some increased from a capacity of ninety to 180 trainees

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17 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 10 November, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

18 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 15 December, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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and others expanded to accommodate 240 pupils.[19]

In any discussion of elementary flying training one is naturally inclined to ask how the programme fared under civilian management. This question can perhaps best be answered by pointing out that when the new B.C.A.T.P. Agreement was drawn up in 1942 the arrangement with the civilian companies was renewed without question. Moreover, the Air Ministry requested that the six elementary flying training schools transferred to Canada in 1942 be put under civilian management.[20] The relations between the civilian and military personnel who had to work side by side at these units seem to have been satisfactory. Although students were under military discipline while at the elementary schools they found the atmosphere more relaxed, and the food better, than at the larger bustling service schools. From the taxpayers' point of view a further point in favour of the civilian organization was that the elementary training was carried out at less expense than if it had been done at a service operated school. Although no comparative sets of figures have been found it is generally conceded that because of the great variety of duties that have to be performed at military institutions and the

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19 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 18 January, 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix A.

20 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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necessity of providing clothes, medical treatment, pensions and special allowances, elementary flying training would have cost considerably more if it had been conducted by the R.C.A.F.

The greatest problem faced by the managers of the civilian operated schools was in obtaining and keeping a good staff of flying instructors. At the start of the war there was no shortage of pilots willing to serve. Most of the applicants were bush pilots, crop dusters and First World War flyers all of whom were put through a flying instructors' course at the R.C.A.F. Central Flying School at Trenton. This source of instructors was soon exhausted and in May 1940 when it became necessary to look further afield and recruit American pilots, the Chief of the Air Staff ruled that flying instructors hired by the companies were to be either well experienced civilian flying instructors or else civilian pilots with a minimum of 150 hours flying to their credit.[21] Those in the latter group were sent to the R.C.A.F. Central Flying School for four weeks. The instructors thus trained at government expense were first to be enlisted in the R.C.A.F. and after qualifying were to be sent back to the elementary flying schools as sergeant pilots on leave without pay, a measure designed to discourage them from leaving their instructor

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21 Flying Training, Part Two, Section Two, The Elementary Flying Training Schools, Chapter V, Instructor Policy, p. 1-2.

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posts for more lucrative employment with American airline companies.[22]

The supply of civilian pilots with the prerequisite 150 hours of flying who were willing to enrol in the R.C.A.F. under these conditions was not equal to the demand. To make up the deficiency the R.C.A.F. encouraged the managers of the civilian schools to select likely candidates who had completed the fifty hours of flying required for a private licence and give them an additional one hundred hours training in their own schools at government expense. The pilots would then be enrolled in the R.C.A.F., put through the flying instructors' course and sent back to the nominating schools under the same conditions as for those previously trained by the R.C.A.F. This scheme was terminated in July 1941 when a small surplus of instructors for the elementary training schools had been accumulated.[23]

Although the immediate shortage had been overcome by the summer of 1941, a number of other problems concerning elementary training instructors now arose which were never completely solved. The R.C.A.F. was far from satisfied with the situation. The need of the moment had compelled the Service to produce an instructor who was qualified for elementary

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22 Ibid.

23 Ibid, p. 3.

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training only, whose knowledge of aircraft was generally restricted to Tiger Moths and other elementary trainers and whose limitations the young pupil was quick to sense.[24] To remedy this the R.C.A.F. proposed to recall the instructors to air force duty, complete their flying training and then give them the choice of instructing or of serving in some other capacity. They were to be replaced by fully trained R.C.A.F. instructors who would, it was hoped, volunteer to serve on leave without pay whilst so employed. Where volunteers were lacking instructors would be posted on a compulsory basis.

This policy was stoutly opposed by the civilian schools who objected to the withdrawal of their experienced instructors. For instance, the Manager of the Windsor Flying Training School Limited which operated No. 7 Elementary Flying Training School at Windsor, Ontario, protested vigorously against the Air Force proposal:

> This school has a contract with His Majesty's government to train pilots...and we should not be called upon to procure and train our own instructors and then have them raided by the R.C.A.F. If such a system is to be inaugurated I can foresee nothing but disaster for this school....[25]

Undoubtedly the policy generally worked a hardship on the schools some of whom stood to lose their best instructors.

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24 Ibid, p. 5.

25 Ibid, p. 6.

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But the overall advantages were so obvious that the scheme was not reversed. A second proposal that all civilian instructors be required to enlist in the R.C.A.F. or find other employment roused considerably more opposition. If implemented it would not have affected many personnel as there were only about thirty civilian instructors left on the payrolls of the elementary flying training schools by July 1941. But the managers resented this unnecessary interference in their operations and notwithstanding strong support from certain quarters of the R.C.A.F. the proposal was abandoned.[26]

Although the schools objected to the policy of rotating their instructors, the latter looked forward hopefully to the opening up of new horizons and criticized the Air Force for being so dilatory in putting the new scheme into effect. At the start of their engagement the pilots had been told that they would be employed as instructors for an indefinite period and had accepted this condition. But for most of them the enchantment soon wore off and few were content with their lot. Some of those who were genuinely interested in teaching others to fly were becoming aware of their own limitations and wanted to improve their qualifications, a number of others were anxious for postings to combat duty, and a few who were overly conscious that their experience had

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26 Ibid.

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a high cash value, continued to look with covetous eyes on aviation opportunities in the United States. A few instructors are said to have found escape from their predicament by flying one of the training biplanes under a bridge or engaging in other low flying misdemeanours.[27]

Both the R.C.A.F. and the civilian managers were pleasantly surprised to find that over half of the instructors who were removed from the schools, given further flying training and awarded the R.C.A.F. pilots' badge, volunteered to return to their parent unit. Although back again to the position of being on leave without pay they were now given permission, previously denied to them, to wear the R.C.A.F. uniform complete with pilot's badge during off-duty hours. This enabled them to escape the stigma often attached to civilians in time of war. A policy of rotating instructors every twelve months, though it never came fully into effect, was adopted in 1941 and further alleviated the situation.[28]

To sum up, there were two methods by which the R.C.A.F. supplied instructors from its own ranks for the elementary flying training schools. In the first, which was the general policy, the instructors went out on an indefinite period of leave without pay. For all practical purposes they were civ-

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27 Ibid, p. 8-9.

28 Ibid.

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ilians and hired by the company as such. On duty they wore an instructor's garb designed by the civilian company and sometime referred to unkindly as a "prairie admiral's uniform".[29] Off duty they were entitled to wear the R.C.A.F. uniform and could be recalled by the service at any time. Instructors serving under these arrangements did so on a voluntary basis. However, when volunteers were not forthcoming the R.C.A.F met primary instructor requirements by posting personnel on air force duty. Those chosen in this arbitrary manner served at the civilian schools on service rates of pay, which were lower than those paid by the companies, wore air force uniforms at all times and remained subject to military discipline. At the request of the Air Ministry all the instructors at R.A.F. elementary flying training schools in Canada were service instructors.[30]

The two elementary training aircraft most closely associated with the B.C.A.T.P. were the Tiger Moth, one of the world's best known biplane trainers, and the Cornell, first primary trainer monoplane to be used in Canada. The Tiger Moth, produced in Canada by the de Havilland Company had been in use in the R.C.A.F. since 1937. The flying clubs were using Tiger Moths at the start of the war and they were already

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29 Ibid.

30 Agreement Amending and Extending the B.C.A.T.P.

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in production in Canada when the B.C.A.T.P. came into existence. In December 1939 the R.C.A.F. placed a demand for 404 for the B.C.A.T.P.[31] Another 230 were ordered at the end of the year and 150 more in October 1941.[32] Tiger Moths were also ordered for the six R.A.F. elementary training schools in the spring of 1942. In March 1942, when advising the Supervisory Board that a final order for 350 Moths was being negotiated for the B.C.A.T.P., the Chief of the Air Staff noted that a total of 1,034 of these aircraft had been received to date for the B.C.A.T.P. and the R.A.F. schools.[33] The last of the Tiger Moths was delivered in September 1942 when the number on inventory, including, no doubt, a few damaged ones, was 1,384.[34]

The Moth, an aircraft of British design, was built to take a British engine, the Gypsy Major. By and large the flow

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31 Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, vol. 1, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 February, 1940, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix A.

32 Ibid, vol. 3, Minutes of Meeting Held 13 January, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff; vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 10 November, 1941, Report by Chief of the Air Staff.

33 Ibid, vol. 5, Minutes of Meeting Held 16 March, 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

34 Ibid, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 16 November 1942, Report of Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C.

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of engines from the United Kingdom kept pace with manufacture of the air frames in Canada making the Tiger Moth production one of the happier aircraft stories of the B.C.A.T.P. However, as insurance against a possible interruption in engine delivery the Aeronautical Division of the R.C.A.F. successfully tested the Tiger Moth with an engine manufactured by the Menasco Company of Burbank, California. When the supply of British engines faltered momentarily in 1941 the R.C.A.F. fitted about 135 Moths with Menasco engines.[35] Only ten of the Menasco Moths were used as elementary flying trainers, the remainder being employed at wireless training schools.[36]

Two other biplane trainers saw service in the B.C.A.T.P. Before the war the R.C.A.F. was experimenting with a new trainer, the Fleet Finch, produced by Fleet Aircraft Limited of Fort Erie, Ontario. The Finch was in production when the war began and a contract for 404 was negotiated at the same time as the first Tiger Moths were ordered. The B.C.A.T.P.

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35 Ibid.

36 On 10 November, 1941 Leading Aircraftman (LAC) K.M. Gravell, a wireless operator-air gunner trainee at No. 2 Wireless School, Calgary, Alberta lost his life while trying to rescue a pilot from a burning Menasco Moth. For his display of heroism he was posthumously awarded the George Cross.

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Agreement of 1939 specified that "Moths and/or Fleets" would be used for the B.C.A.T.P. but no further order for Fleets was placed.

Fearing that there would be a shortage of elementary trainers when the R.A.F. moved its elementary training schools to Canada, the R.C.A.F. took the precaution to obtain about 300 Stearman biplanes from the United States. The Stearman, widely used by the American forces as an elementary trainer, was an open cockpit machine and quite unsuited for flying in cold weather. Although practically all aircraft imported from the United Kingdom or the United States had to be modified for use in Canada it was found that because of the structural design of the Stearman the cost of providing canopies would be prohibitive. Consequently, although all 300 of the Stearman trainers were delivered, only a few, about eighteen, were used and the other machines, which had been acquired under lend-lease were returned to the United States.[37] From beginning to end the Stearman project was a costly mistake.

In the fall of 1940 the R.C.A.F. decided that sooner or later it would have to replace the Tiger Moths with monoplane trainers, a logical move since operational aircraft were mainly of the monoplane type. Specifications for a low-

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37 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 15 February, 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix C.

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wing primary trainer were prepared by the R.C.A.F. Tests and Development Section, and after a number of different monoplanes had been tested the R.C.A.F. selected the PT (Primary Trainer - 19A designed by the Fairchild Airplane Corporation of Hagerstown, Pennsylvania as the one which most nearly met the needs of the B.C.A.T.P. In February, 1941 200 of these were ordered.[38] They were officially designated as PT-26 and familiarly known as Cornell. A second order for 500 of the new trainers was placed in December 1941 with the Fleet Aircraft Limited at Fort Erie, Ontario.[39] In August 1942, to meet the long term requirements of the B.C.A.T.P., a programme was drawn up to obtain 1,600 of the monoplane trainers manufactured in Canada under lend-lease arrangement.[40]

Winning the pilot's badge was by no means an easy achievement. Of the 58,644 trainees who entered the elementary flying training schools only 45,628 were successful in

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38 Ibid, vol. 3, Minutes of Meeting Held 14 April, 1941, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff. When this aircraft was selected the R.C.A.F. chose to call it the Freshman. For some reason this name did not appeal to the British Purchasing Commission in the United States who re-christened it the Cornell. Power took exception to the renaming but the British had their way and Cornell became the accepted name.

39 Ibid, vol. 4, Minutes of Meeting Held 14 April, 1941, Report of Chief of the Air Staff.

40 Ibid, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 21 September 1942, Report of Chief of the Air Staff.

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passing the course and of the service flying school intake of 58,105 only 49,850 graduated.[41] These wastage figures caused no surprise, for the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement signed in December 1939, estimated that sixteen and two thirds per cent of those who started elementary flying training would not complete the course and another fifteen per cent would drop out during service flying training.[42] This forecast corresponded quite closely with the actual turn of events though the loss to training, which included casualties as well as course failures, turned out to be somewhat higher than predicted at the primary level, about twenty-two per cent as compared to sixteen and two thirds per cent predicted, and somewhat lower than anticipated at the service flying training schools where the loss, or wastage, turned out to be just under fourteen per cent compared to the predicted fifteen per cent.

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41 Flying Training, Part Two, Section Two, Chapter Two, The Civilian Operated Schools, Appendix A; Ibid, Section Two, Part One, Service Flying Training, Appendix A. The apparent discrepancy between the number of candidates completing elementary training, 45,628, and the number entering service flying training schools, 58,105, is explained by the fact that the Australian, New Zealand and a large proportion of the British pilot trainees completed the elementary phase in their homeland. The intake of the elementary schools in Canada was made up of 38,471 Canadians and 20,173 pilot candidates from the United Kingdom, the latter figure including some European nationals. The service school intake was made up of 29,636 Canadians, 4,777 Australians, 2,503 New Zealanders and 21,189 trainees from the United Kingdom, the latter figure including trainees from other allied nations.

42 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, 1939.

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At the end of 1940, the Chief of the Air Staff presented statistics to the Supervisory Board showing that the wastage rate at elementary flying training schools was twenty-five per cent and succeeding reports indicated that the loss would likely remain in this range. Although R.C.A.F. Headquarters and the Supervisory Board would have welcomed a reduction in pilot wastage no attempt was made to compromise pilot skill in order to meet the urgent requirement for trained flyers. On the contrary, schools were continually impressed with the importance of eliminating unpromising pupils before they got to the service flying training schools.

A high rate of aircrew wastage, like failures among college students, could result from a number of factors. It might indicate that a large proportion of the pupils were below average ability, that the instruction was not up to par or that pass standards were too high. In the B.C.A.T.P. all of these factors were considered from time to time. In the first year or so of the war, when there was no shortage of eligible pilot trainees, there was little hesitation in weeding out unpromising pupils. However, as manpower problems began to emerge and the urgent demand for pilots continued, more attention was given to the possibility of reducing wastage by improving the techniques of selecting pilot candidates and by refining the training methods.

In the first eighteen months of warfare, wastage in R.A.F. schools in the United Kingdom approximated that in the

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B.C.A.T.P. But in 1941 the Training Research Branch of the R.A.F. carried on a series of experiments in selecting and training pilot candidates which demonstrated that wastage could be reduced without sacrificing high passing standards. The good results of the British efforts in this field became obvious on the transfer of six R.A.F. elementary flying training schools to Canada in 1942. The wastage rate for R.A.F. pupils selected in the United Kingdom and trained in Canada, was much lower than that among Canadians, the overall rates being nineteen per cent for the R.A.F. and almost twenty-four per cent for the Canadians.[43]

The better showing by the British pupils led No. 3 Flying Instructor School at Arnprior, Ontario, organized in June 1942 to train instructors for elementary flying training schools, to do some experimenting based on the R.A.F. measures. The end result was the production of an elaborate flying test designed to give a more accurate measurement of student proficiency. A rating scale of 3,500 marks was devised to cover step by step all the various manoeuvres the student pilot was required to perform. The great advantage over previous testing methods, which too often amounted to a pass or fail assessment at the end of the course, was that the instructor was able to analyse his pupil's performance much more objectively.

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43 Flying Training, Part Two, Section Two, Chapter Two, The Civilian Operated Schools, Appendix A.

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By reviewing the record together, student and instructor could see where the weaknesses lay and what exercises required special attention and practise. To ensure uniformity in administering and marking the test a series of special courses was arranged at Arnprior for flying instructors from all elementary schools. At each school testing flights of five or six pilot instructors were organized and were themselved examined regularly by representatives from the Central Flying School which kept the whole programme under close supervision.[44]

In conjunction with the new system of testing, the British practice of grading was also adopted in the B.C.A.T.P. This was simply a practical method of selecting potential pilots on the basis of a preliminary air test which involved twelve hours of flying. Candidates who performed poorly were eliminated from further pilot training. The others began their training anew, entering initial training school and proceeding to an elementary training school in due course. After the adoption of the flight grading programme, which did not become universal until 1944, pilot trainees were selected on the basis of their marks on the various aptitude tests, their performance on the Link trainer and their showing on the preliminary flying test. This more careful screening and

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44 Ibid, Chapter Six.

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the more rigid control of training and testing cut wastage at the elementary level to approximately one half. What was of equal significance was that R.C.A.F. Headquarters could now adjust the wastage rate to almost any point it wished between approximately thirty and ten per cent knowing that the pupils being held back were those nearest the bottom of the scale. Such an adjustment was made in the latter part of 1944, the wastage rate at elementary school being arbitrarily raised from around fourteen per cent to thirty per cent in order to restrict the pilot flow and make more pupils available for training as navigators and air gunners. Such adjustments could be made without seriously affecting student morale since under the revised rating method students were made aware of their weaknesses soon after they entered elementary flying training. Those taken off training or those who failed on the final examination could seldom claim with any justification that they had not been given a reasonable chance to succeed.[45]

It was only to be expected that accidents would occur during the course of the Plan. On the first pilot training course at No. 1 Service Flying Training School at Camp Borden some sixteen pupils were involved in mishaps of one kind or another. Fourteen escaped with minor scratches or severe shakings but two members of the course were fatally

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45 Ibid.

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injured.[46] Casualties continued to take their toll and by the time the Plan had come to an end 856 candidates had been killed or injured during training.[47] The vast majority of these casualties occurred at pilot training schools. Of the elementary and service training schools the former had the lower fatal accident rate registering less than one fatal accident for every one thousand hours of flying time, whereas just over one fatality occurred at the service flying training schools for the same number of hours flown. As one might imagine, accidents at the elementary schools, involving light planes, were on the whole less serious than those which befell students flying Harvards, Ansons and other advanced training aircraft. In contrast with the service schools, however, which showed a marked improvement from year to year, there was only a slight improvement in the fatal accident rate at the primary level, the novices tending to repeat the mistakes that others had made in learning to fly.

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46 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, No. 1 Service Flying Training School, Camp Borden, vol. 1, entries for 22 July 1940 to 30 September, 1940.

47 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Headquarters, Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Air Force Publications, Ottawa, p. 55.

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Table VIII summarizes the accident situation in each fiscal year that the B.C.A.T.P. was in operation:

TABLE VIII[48]

All Accidents, Rate per 1000 Hours Flown

	B.C.A.T.P.	Elementary Flying Training Schools	Service Flying Training Schools
1940-41	1.363	.904	1.948
1941-42	1.302	1.330	1.429
1942-43	.906	1.054	.907
1943-44	.694	.824	.776
1944-45	.523	.408	.589
Fatal Accident Rate per 1000 Hours Flown			
1940-41	.089	.044	.118
1941-42	.071	.044	.092
1942-43	.056	.037	.059
1943-44	.048	.036	.052
1944-45	.044	.039	.034

A large proportion of the fatal accidents did not come in the normal routine of flying training but were the result of unauthorized escapades by pilots whose skill did not match their daring. Unauthorized low flying was the most common of such practices and one which woeful example, lectures and courts martial seemed unable to curb completely. The

48 Ibid, p. 40-41.

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temptation to startle a sleepy village, to pass low over the house of a friend or relative or to stampede grazing herds was too much for some exuberant spirits. Leaves or bits of wire caught in the undercarriage or entangled with the propeller were sometimes telltale marks of such madcap pranks but often the end result was much more serious. Between January and August of 1941 thirty-eight training aircraft were destroyed, twenty-one pupils and instructors killed and a number of others injured through illegal low-flying activities.[49]

In all, during 1941,170 fatalities were reported. Forty of these resulted from low aerobatics and low flying, thirty-seven were caused by aircraft stalling, thirty-one occurred during night flying exercises, twenty were the consequence of collisions, fifteen were connected with faulty instruments or propellers, and twenty-seven were attributed to obscure and miscellaneous causes.[50]

Although an accident prevention programme had been in effect from the beginning of the B.C.A.T.P. it was intensified as a result of the large number of fatalities occurring in 1941. Early in the new year the Chief of the Air Staff addressed an open letter to all personnel of the B.C.A.T.P.

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49 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D.4761) B.C.A.T.P. Accident Reports, Air Member for Training Division, "Mentioned in Despatches", Edition No. 5, 6 January, 1941, p. 1-2.

50 Ibid, Edition No. 6, 14 January, 1942, p. 4.

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expressing his deep concern at the number of fatal flying accidents "which are occurring to trained personnel due to the utter disregard of the most elementary safety precautions... such as neglecting to carry parachutes, neglecting to use the safety harness and the aerobating [sic] of aircraft that are not aerobatic".[51]

At the unit level each new class at service flying training schools received a lecture from the chief flying instructor on accident prevention. If and when an accident befell any member of the new group the class was assembled to hear a stern warning delivered on the absolute folly of disregarding flying orders and instructions. Pamphlets recounting the more serious accidents and foolhardy exploits from which object lessons might be drawn were issued monthly. Units that could report a month free from accidents were given special mention and a finger of accusation was pointed at those which had more than their share of unfortunate incidents.

One of the most significant steps taken in accident prevention was the formation of the Accident Investigations Branch in March 1942. At the start of the B.C.A.T.P., accident investigations were carried out according to peace time R.C.A.F. regulations which required a court of inquiry to be

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51 Ibid, Edition No. 7, 25 February 1942, quoting Breadner to All Personnel of the B.C.A.T.P. (no date).

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convened to determine the cause and affix the blame of each investigable accident. The proceedings and recommendations of these courts were approved or disapproved at the appropriate Command and reviewed again at R.C.A.F. Headquarters. Before the formation of the Accident Investigations Branch, which was established with the assistance of an officer of the R.A.F., no comprehensive effort was made to compare one accident with another or to analyze the information gained by the various courts of inquiry with a view to recording data which might be useful in the prevention of further accidents. In effect, this was the purpose of the Accident Investigations Branch. The new institution functioned under the direction of the Chief Inspector of Accidents who was assisted by trained investigating officers including pilots and aeronautical engineers. From its office at R.C.A.F. Headquarters the Branch issued meaningful data on aircraft accidents and accident prevention.[52]

Information supplied by the Accident Investigations Branch was sometimes the starting point for alterations in flying regulations, training methods and modifications to aircraft in the interest of safety. For instance, in the early months of 1943 a long series of engine failures in Bolingbroke aircraft was dealt with and finally remedied. The Bolingbroke,

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52 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 39.

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which earned a bad reputation among pilots, was also subject to catching fire on landing. This was found to be due to the breaking of a small copper fuel pipe which when modified ended the epidemic of fires. The same aircraft also had a defect in the air surface control system which led to accidents until it was discovered by the Accident Investigations Branch. After a rash of fatal accidents involving Cornells, aserious structural weakness was remedied with the result that the Cornell became known as a safe aircraft to fly and was to end its days as a trainer with an accident record that was even better than the fabulous Tiger Moth.[53]

The analysis of crashes by the Accident Investigations Branch showed up the prevalence of accidents due to unauthorized low flying and led to a tightening up in flying discipline. Prior to 1942, as against the Air Ministry policy of cashiering pilots found guilty of unauthorized low flying, the Canadian practice, was to impose penalties of only moderate severity. The maximum punishment was usually removal from flying duties for a period of six months.[54] The comparatively light sentence was apparently due to the demand for pilots. Early in 1942 the Air Council reviewed the situation

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53 Directorate of History, "Accident Investigation" in Air Force Historical Section, Miscellaneous Sectional Histories, [unpublished material], p. 8.

54 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 21 December 1942.

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and took a firmer approach to flying discipline. As a result of courts martial dealing with unauthorized low flying, ten officers were dismissed from the Air Force in 1943 and twenty-nine others were given less severe punishments. Sixty-three sergeant pilots were sentenced to detention and removed from flying duties and twenty received other punishments.[55]

Certain aircraft had their own story to tell. For instance Tiger Moth serial No. 4080 at No. 5 Elementary Training School at High River, Alberta, became well known to the mechanics for its trips into the hangar for repairs. The aircraft was first flown at the unit on 28 July, 1940. After it had been in service for 158 hours a student damaged one of the ailerons in a taxiing mishap. On 3 January 1941 it came in for a hard landing but the damage was found to be slight. In April 1941 a pilot ran the machine into a barrier damaging the propeller. In July another pupil came in for a hard landing and almost wiped off the undercarriage. No. 4080 was again repaired and flown until the spring of 1943 when it was replaced by a Cornell. During its service it was estimated that this Tiger Moth had flown a total of 2,359 hours, had carried at least 200 different pilots and used up 16,000

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55 Ibid, vol. 8 Minutes of Meeting Held 28 February 1944, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix E.

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gallons of gasoline.[56]

Something of what life was like for a pilot trainee in the B.C.A.T.P. has been sketched by L. Morgan in a booklet entitled The AT-6 Harvard of the Famous Aircraft Series. Morgan, an American, was nineteen years old when he came to Canada in 1941 with one idea in mind, to learn how to fly. After enlisting in the R.C.A.F. and proceeding through manning depot he endured a few weeks of guard duty at Trenton, Ontario pending his assignment to No. 1 Initial Training School at Toronto. On 3 July, 1941 he was posted to No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School at St. Catharines with a group of forty other trainees made up of American, Canadian, Australian and British hopefuls. Arriving in a convoy of trucks the anxious airmen were greeted by a drill sergeant with the brusque announcement that before they learned to fly they would have to be taught how to march "and make no mistake about it".[57] On the same day the new course, No. 32, arrived, the graduating course of thirty-four pilots left St. Catharines for No. 1 Service Training School at Borden and and another course was still under training.[58] Morgan's

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56 R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary, No. 5 Elementary Flying Training School, "30 for 4080", in Flip, vol. 1, No. 3, February, 1943, p. 3-4.

57 Len Morgan, The AT-6 Harvard (Famous Aircraft Series), New York, Arco, 1966, p. 1.

58 R.C.A.F.Diaries, Daily Diary, No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School, entry for 3 July, 1941.

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group, after having scrubbed and waxed their barracks floor to the sergeant's satisfaction made their way to the hangar to watch "the upper classmen fly".[59]

Morgan's first flight with his instructor left him "exhausted, somewhat discouraged and absolutely determined to learn how it was done".[60] Ten days later he had made his first solo flight, a memorable day. On 20 August, when course No. 32 had completed elementary training Morgan's log book showed sixty-five hours and fifty minutes of flying time. He and his classmates received instruction in navigation, engines, meteorology and related subjects. They had smashed their "fair share of wingtips, shattered a few props and wrote off one plane completely".[61] In spite of this they suffered no casualties though before the time for final examinations twelve trainees had been withdrawn from the course for lack of flying proficiency and posted to the Composite Training School at Trenton where it would be decided whether they would continue in another aircrew category, be selected for a ground role or be released from the service.[62] Three more failed in

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59 Morgan, op. cit., p. 2

60 Ibid., p. 3

61 Ibid., p. 4

62 Before March 1941 those who had to discontinue aircrew training were sent to No.1 or No. 2 Manning Depot for reselection. But it was found harmful to morale to mix these trainees, many of whom were disgruntled at their failure, with new recruits. Consequently, a separate reselection centre was established at Trenton. In 1943 a further change in policy gave local unit boards authority to reselect trainees removed from aircrew courses.

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the ground subjects. Of the forty-three original members of Course 32, twenty-nine graduated, the course having a wastage of 32.56 per cent.[63]

The successful members of the class were divided into two groups. Fifteen went to No. 5 Service Flying Training School at Brantford, Ontario for instruction on Ansons. The remaining fourteen, of whom Morgan was one, reported to No. 14 Service School at Aylmer, Ontario, for training on Harvards.[64] They now found themselves in an atmosphere quite different from the one at St. Catharines. No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School had consisted of a quiet little grass field with one small hangar and a row of wooden barracks. Aylmer, on the other hand, boasted a long line of hangars, concrete runways and a sprawling camp area. "The place was strictly air force and all business".[65]

Like other service flying training schools No. 14 was organized in three wings or sections including a headquarters or administrative wing, a maintenance wing with servicing, salvage, repair facilities and miscellaneous shops, and a training wing. At the start of the B.C.A.T.P. the training wing of service flying training schools had consisted of two

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63 R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary, No. 9 Elementary Flying Training School, Miscellaneous entries, 3 July to 20 August, 1941.

64 Ibid, entry for 20 August, 1941.

65 Morgan, op. cit. p. 5.

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squadrons one of which conducted intermediate training and the other advanced instruction. When pilot training was accelerated in December 1940 and the service flying course reduced from twelve to ten weeks the distinction between intermediate and advanced training was reduced to a minimum. The two squadron organization gave way to one of six flights. In this system each intake, the output of two elementary flying training schools, perhaps fifty or sixty students in all, was divided between two flights who retained their pupils for the entire length of the course.[66] The group whom Morgan trained with at Aylmer was made up of fourteen R.C.A.F. pupils from No. 10 Elementary Flying School at Pendleton, Ontario, twenty-one R.C.A.F. students from No. 20 Elementary Flying School at Oshawa, Ontario and the group from St. Catharines.[67] A few others, who had been removed from earlier courses for sickness or other reasons, were added and in all the new course totalled fifty-five trainees.[68] They were divided between "C" and "F" Flights, Morgan being assigned to the former. Two other courses of approximately the same size were under training in the four other flights when Morgan arrived.

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66 Flying Training, Section Two, Part Two, The Service Flying Training Schools, Organization and Administration.

67 R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary, No. 14 Service Flying Training School, vol. 1, entry for 1 September, 1941.

68 Ibid, entry for 30 November, 1941.

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At their first opportunity Morgan and his companions paid a visit to "C" hangar. Confronted with the Harvard they suddenly realized that they had a lot to learn about aviation. Compared to the Fleet, the new machines looked massive, rugged, heavy and complex. Clambering up on a sturdy wing the students peered into the front cockpit and caught their breath:

> The wide spaces on each side of the aluminum seat were crammed with handles, wheels and levers of all shapes, sizes and mysterious uses. The broad instrument panel contained a hopeless confusion of black-faced dials and toggle switches. More handles protruded from beneath the instrument panel and between the big rudder pedals.[69]

Could they master this machine? Were they supposed to watch all these instruments, manipulate the handles and switches and fly at the same time? "Fly this ship properly", their instructors told them, "and you can fly anysingle-engine type we've got...."[70] Thus encouraged the students prepared themselves for an intensive ten weeks of training and the opening up of new vistas of aviation.

Training began on 3 September with introductory lectures at ground instructional school and familiarization flights for some members of the course. Morgan had his first ride in a Harvard. For thirty minutes he sat in the back seat watching the instruments and listening through the speaking

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69 Morgan, op. cit., p. 6.

70 Ibid, p. 9.

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tube to the sergeant instructor's running description of the aeroplane's operation. A good part of the afternoon was spent in "C" hangar seated in a stationary Harvard learning the pre-take-off drill "H-T-M-P-C-G-T for hydraulics, trim, mixture, pitch, carburetor heat, gas and throttle",[71] terms which the learners repeated over and over until they mumbled them in sleep. The next day Morgan took the front seat and flew the Harvard under the instructor's guidance. After four hours of such dual instruction, spread over an eight day period Morgan went aloft with the officer commanding "C" Flight.

> He kept me in the circuit thirty minutes, chewed me out as I'd never been chewed before - and I had it coming - then signed my solo permit. Then I flew the howling monster alone for the first time or, to be more honest about it, I hung on tight while it took me for a wild ride through the sky. Somehow I got the thing back to "C" Flight hangar unscratched.[72]

The chief defect of the Harvard was a tendency to swing out of control on landing, a characteristic apparently due to the design of the tail wheel. Before they learned to land properly many students ended up in an embarrassing position off the runway. Morgan watched others, instructors as well as students, caught in this predicament and did not escape it himself. Landing in a cross-wind he felt the nose of the aircraft swing suddently to the left. In trying to

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71 Ibid, p. 6.

72 Ibid, p. 7.

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correct for this he caused the tail wheel to swing loose.

> Around we rushed in a slewing one-wheel ride, one wingtip pointing at the sky, the other dragging through the grass alongside the runway.... Finally we slumped back on three wheels, facing across the runway, engine still ticking over.... I taxied in feeling like an utter fool. The fact that everyone else was doing it didn't help. The mechanics came out, pulled the grass from the wingtip light and pronounced the ship intact.[73]

While Morgan was at Aylmer, from approximately 1 September to 21 November 1941, the training syllabus in effect at service flying training schools included about 135 hours of ground lectures and seventy-five hours of flying time. During thirty-five hours of his time in the air the student was accompanied by an instructor, though sometimes, due to the shortage of instructors, advanced pupils gave mutual instruction. On solo flights the young flyers were assigned certain exercises to perform. These might emphasize navigation, aerobatics, or instrument flying, landing and take-off or cross-country flights. On solo flights the students were required to put their aircraft deliberately into a spin and recover from this attitude in the prescribed manner. Before receiving their wings they had to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Chief Flying Instructor their ability "to take off and land without damaging His Majesty's property,...to navigate by day or night, to fly on instruments and handle

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73 Ibid.

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our ships in any average situation".[74]

Although flying training was "strictly no nonsense", Morgan related that time was often left over from the routine flying practices; it was expected that the students would experiment and that "we would wring the ships out and make ourselves more or less at home in any aerial situation".[75] The young pilots knew how far they could go without breaking the rules though some were inclined to push their freedom to the limit. Engaging in mock aerial combat was "discouraged but not exactly forbidden.... The main thing was not to get caught".[76] On more than one occasion Morgan and one of his friends arranged a rendez-vous high above Aylmer and chased each other about the sky pressing imaginary firing buttons as they came in for the kill then breaking away sharply to escape the return fire from the other's likewise non-existent guns. Although instructors usually turned a blind eye to such activities it was quite a different matter if a trainee was caught diving out of the clouds in a mock attack on an unsuspecting Anson which happened to be flying in the vicinity of Aylmer or one of the commercial airliners plying between Detroit and Buffalo. Such incidents usually brought

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74 Ibid, p. 13-14.

75 Ibid, p. 13

76 Ibid, p. 9.

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complaints and telegrams to the unit commanding officer but unless the identification number of the offending aircraft had been taken in the act, and it usually wasn't, it was difficult to single out the perpetrator.[77]

Morgan's class graduated on 21 November. On their air tests and ground examinations they showed up slightly better than the course which preceded them. During the twelve weeks of instruction one pupil was taken off course because he was temperamentally unsuitable for flying and another because of unsatisfactory progress. Two "F" Flight pupils failed the final flying test. Of the fifty-one who graduated, eight were posted to the Central Flying School, three went to No. 2 Air Navigation School, two went to No. 31 General Reconnaissance School at Charlottetown for training in ocean patrol, and thirty-eight, of whom Morgan was one, were to report to No. 1 "Y" Depot, an embarkation unit at Halifax, from whence they would take ship for England.[78]

In the United Kingdom Morgan continued his flying training at one of the fighter operational training units of the R.A.F. Here graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. learned to fly operational aircraft, were taught the tactics used in aerial

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77 Ibid, p. 9-12.

78 R.C.A.F. Diaries, Daily Diary, No. 14 Service Flying Training School, vol. 1, entries for 21 November and 30 November, 1941.

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combat and given practice in gunnery. They also received additional instruction in navigation, instrument flying and the use of radio. After spending about six to eight weeks at an operational training unit during which they entered one hundred hours or more of flying time in their log book they were considered qualified fighter pilots and posted for squadron duty.

Among Morgan's most vivid recollection of the days at Aylmer were, the intense drill on the fundamentals of flying, the heavy aroma of gasoline, the banter of the students as they teased one another, delight in the fact that "F" Flight had caused $20,000 worth of aircraft damage while "C" Flight had chalked up a much lower total, and the sobering news that two students of course 35 had "spun in" while on a mutual instruction instrument training flight.[79]

Although there was little change in the organization or in the patternof life at service flying training schools from the time No. 37 Course graduated at Aylmer until the B.C.A.T.P. came to an end, a number of noteworthy alterations were made in the training syllabus. In May of 1942 the greatly increased output of pilots and the demand for better trained pilots made it possible and desirable to extend the course. Consequently, a revised syllabus issued by R.C.A.F. Head-

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79 Morgan, op. cit., p. 9.

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quarters in that month increased the service flying course from ten to twelve weeks. Ground school time was extended from 165 hours to 223 and flying time from seventy-five to 100 hours.[80]

One of the major difficulties confronting those who were involved in flying training in Canada lay in the gap between teaching a pupil to fly and teaching him to become a good military pilot. Where did the one stop and the other begin? It was generally conceded by officers involved in air operations that pilots trained under the B.C.A.T.P. were given a sound basic course but that their training was not sufficiently oriented towards conditions encountered in operations. It was true, of course, that before being posted to a front line squadron B.C.A.T.P. graduates passed through an operational training unit. Here they were expected to learn how to fly an operational type of aircraft and become familiar with tactics of air combat, fighter, bomber or coastal as the case might be. However, the instructors at the operational training units frequently complained that while the newcomers were capable flyers they often had to be retrained in such basic practices as landing approaches, turns, formation flying and the proper use of radio before operational training proper could begin. Instructors at B.C.A.T.P.

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80 Flying Training, Section Two, Part Three, Syllabus of Instruction.

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schools were also conscious that the syllabus they followed was not properly co-ordinated with that of the operational training units. It was for this reason that they sometimes permitted some of the advanced students to experiment on their own and improve their flying ability by manoeuvering about the sky in pairs or, as Morgan expressed it, to "wring the ships out and make ourselves at home in any aerial situation". This was not the most desirable way to prepare student pilots for the operational phase of training but with a heavy load on the instructors, a limited amount of time and a lag between procedures and practices in the United Kingdom and those in Canada it was an understandable one.

Major changes in the B.C.A.T.P. training syllabi were usually handed down by the Air Ministry either to the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission, or directly to the R.C.A.F. Training Division. Occasionally they were initiated within the R.C.A.F. In October 1942, R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters in London conducted a survey of R.C.A.F. squadrons with a view to determining how the war aspect of instruction given at service training schools in Canada could be improved. Squadron commanders were directed to discuss this problem with pilots who had passed through the B.C.A.T.P. Not surprisingly, their comments coincided closely with the complaints raised by the operational training units. In general the experienced pilots felt the B.C.A.T.P. syllabus did not contain enough material

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of a war nature. Several expressed the opinion that their introduction to operational training would have been smoother had their training in Canada given more emphasis to formation flying, aerobatic manoeuvers, low-level flying and enemy aircraft recognition. Fighter pilots were inclined to feel that B.C.A.T.P. school should spend more time on cross country map reading exercises and radio procedures and give less attention to morse code which they seldom used. Bomber pilots suggested that more time should be devoted to night flying and instrument flying.[81] One squadron came to the conclusion that "formation flying is most outstandingly lacking in the average pilot when he comes overseas" and recommended that practice flying in twos, threes, fours and even higher formations should be given in Canada.[82] Another thought that more cloud flying practice was essential: "Pupils should be thoroughly familiar with flying in cloud for periods up to ½ hour and also be fully capable of climbing steeply into clouds, converting onto instruments, turning and popping out again".[83] One squadron commander, noting that the B.C.A.T.P. graduates could fly well enough but were not inclined to observe flying

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81 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D2746), R.C.A.F. File 12-10-1, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, Training - Aircrew General Policy - 21 May 1942 to 20 January 1944, various correspondence.

82 Ibid, Bretz to Campbell, 23 October, 1942.

83 Ibid, Begg to Campbell, 20 October, 1942.

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regulations, claimed that the need to practice the art of flying skillfully and the importance of observing regulations at all times, on the ground as well as in the air, "should be pounded into them from the start".[84]

In January 1943 a new edition of the service flying training syllabus was compiled incorporating some of the points raised by the R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters. The navigation section was completely rewritten and more emphasis was placed on instrument flying, cross country flights and low level navigation flights. At twin-engine schools a new system of bombing training was introduced to give bombing pilots more instruction and practice on their actual operating duties. The adjustment made in the service flying school at this time provided for eighty-eight hours of dual instruction and sixty-six of solo flying.[85]

Another major adjustment was made to the flying training syllabus in March 1944 when plans were already under way to curtail pilot output. There was now a return to the two stage system in the service flying training schools as had existed at the very beginning of the B.C.A.T.P. Pupils coming in from the elementary schools were first put through

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84 Ibid, Hodson to Campbell, 13 October, 1942.

85 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 10, Minutes of Meeting Held 15 February, 1942, Report of Chief of the Air Staff.

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an intermediate course in which they learned to fly the Harvard and earned their badge. They then moved up to an advanced course during which they carried out an unspecified number of composite exercises involving instrument flying, navigation, formation flying, fighter interception, radio practice and bombing. In June the service flying training course was extended to twenty-eight weeks and in the advanced course formal lectures gave way to seminars on flying problems. Throughout these changes from May 1942 to 1944 the training at twin-engine and single-engine schools remained almost parallel, the main difference being that pilots at the Anson schools, who were being trained for bomber and transport operations, received more practice in bombing and navigation.[86]

From the foregoing it will be observed that in the last two years of war those involved in the B.C.A.T.P. flying training programme were at last given a chance to catch their breath. The gap between what was required of a front line pilot and what he was taught in his early days of training was being overcome. In 1943 and particularly in 1944, more operationally experienced pilots were available as instructors, equipment was no longer a major obstacle, the problems connected with military aviation were better analyzed and the lessons applied in the training programme. There was also a

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86 Flying Training, Section Two, Part Three, Syllabus of Instruction.

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freer flow of information, ideas and people between the United Kingdom, the centre of operations, and Canada, the scene of training. Perhaps most important of all was the wider acceptance of the principle, sometimes lost sight of in the emphasis given to technology, that successful operations depended on sound training. This axiom was valid in all types of military undertaking, but failure to apply it to the full was nowhere more obvious, disastrous or costly than in air operations.

Apart from taking account of new development in air operations and altering the B.C.A.T.P. accordingly, the R.C.A.F. had also to consider how training itself could be improved. The development of the standardized testing programme for elementary flying training schools was an example of what could be achieved in this direction. In May 1944 experiments in flying testing were carried on at No. 2 Service Flying School at Uplands under the direction of Wing Commander Bailey, who had directed the development of the elementary testing programmes. This work resulted in the standardization of training and testing in the service flying training schools.

Another experiment carried out at Uplands was designed to determine the feasability of training pupils from the beginning to service graduate standard on a single aircraft

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type and in one stage of training.[87] The aircraft selected for the purpose was of course the Harvard. The project was carried on from June 1944 to January 1945 and consisted of a preliminary investigation followed by a full scale experiment. All the instructors employed for the purpose had at least 400 hours of teaching experience. During the trial experiment and the full scale project seventy-three pupils, one of them a psychologist, were taught to fly on the Harvard and their performance compared with pupils who received their training in the regular programme, passing through the elementary and service school stages. The results indicated that the Harvard could be used as an elementary as well as an advanced trainer, and that such training produced capable pilots in a minimum period of time. It could be carried out with limited facilities and at less expense than a programme based on the use of both elementary and advanced training aircraft.[88] This announcement came too late to affect the B.C.A.T.P. but it bore fruit in the immediate post-war period when the R.C.A.F. came to adopt the Harvard as its basic trainer. The R.A.F. and the United States Air Force , building on the Canadian

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87 Minutes of the Supervisory Board vol. 10, Minutes of Meeting Held 16 April, 1945, Appendix Three, "Final Report of Investigation into Ab Initio Training on Harvard Aircraft at No. 2 Service Flying Training School, Uplands, Ontario".

88 Ibid.

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experience, did the same.[89]

The possibility of using pilots trained in the B.C.A.T.P. schools to ferry aircraft from Canada to the United Kingdom had early appealed to the Air Ministry and in June 1941 the R.A.F. formed No. 31 Operational Training Unit at Debert, Nova Scotia for this purpose. The staff for this unit were sent out from Great Britain. The aircraft used were Lockheed Hudson twin-engine bomber reconnaissance aircraft, the first American operational aircraft to see operational service in the R.A.F. where they were used for coastal patrols and anti-submarine operations. In 1941 the R.A.F. urgently needed the Hudsons and as quickly as the crews could complete their training at Debert they were sent to Dorval Airport at Montreal where Ferry Command of the R.A.F. had its Canadian headquarters.

Pilot training at No. 31 Operational Training Unit proceeded in two stages covering a period of eight weeks and providing for about seventy-two hours of flying. In the first month the pilots learned to fly the Hudson and in the second carried out operational exercises such as bombing, photographic reconnaissance and long range navigation. Wireless

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89 Flying training is a subject that is constantly under review with old theories being re-examined and new ones propounded. With the development of the Chipmunk by the de Havilland Company of Canada in the late 1940's light trainers again came into favour and the Harvard again became an advanced trainer.

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operator-air gunners also underwent eight weeks of instruction at the operational training unit and observers or navigators considerably less. For the last half of the course, crews, usually consisting of a pilot, an observer and two wireless operator-air gunners were made up and trained to work together.[90]

As part of their training the crews were assigned to carry out anti-submarine patrols. For the most part this work went on without much excitement but on 4 July 1943, a crew consisting of a British pilot, an Australian navigator and two Canadian wireless operator-air gunners sighted and attacked a submarine in the general area of Sable Island. From their observance the crew members believed the U-boat to have been badly damaged. Their report, plus aerial photographs, convinced Air Ministry that this was the case and the pilot was later awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal for the action.[91]

In addition to the crews from No. 31 Operational Training Unit who were used to ferry Hudsons to England, some crews made the journey across the Atlantic by boat. In either case they were able to take their place with coastal squadrons. Crews for duty with R.C.A.F. home based squadrons were also

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90 Directorate of History, Flying Officer Hodgins, History of Operational Training Units, [unpublished material], No. 31 Operational Training Unit, p. 8.

91 R.C.A.F. Diaries, No. 31 Operational Training Unit, vol. 1, entry for 4 July, 1943.

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trained at Debert.

Six other operational training units were organized in Canada. Three of these, Nos. 32, 34 and 36, were formed as R.A.F. units and, like No. 31 were later absorbed into the B.C.A.T.P. The other, Nos. 1, 5 and 6 were provided for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement signed in June 1942.[92] The main purpose of these units was to train crews for service with the R.A.F. in overseas theatres with secondary functions being to ferry aircraft across the Atlantic and also to provide combat ready crews for R.C.A.F. squadrons in Canada. Generally speaking the operational training units in Canada used aircraft which were in great demand on the other side of the Atlantic including Dakota transports, Canso flying boats, long range Liberator bombers from American factories and Mosquito twin-engine fighters made in Canada. These aircraft and the crews that flew them did not necessarily end up in the United Kingdom but might be despatched to the Middle East, North Africa or to any spot on the globe where the R.A.F. was conducting air operations. For example the Liberator crews who were trained at Boundary Bay, British Columbia, were practically all destined for India and Burma and flew their aircraft to these countries via the United Kingdom.[93]

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92 The Agreement made provision for four operational training units but only three were formed.

93 Hodgins, op. cit., passim.

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The output of the operational training units in Canada was comparatively small. From 1 July 1942 to 31 March 1945, 2,636 pilots were processed through these units. In the same period the records show that 38,394 pilots graduated from the B.C.A.T.P.[94] The vast majority of these received their operational training in the United Kingdom in operational units which formed part of Fighter Command, Bomber Command or Coastal Command. They were then posted by the Personnel Division of the Air Ministry to where they were most needed, some going to Canadian squadrons, but most to British units. One of the happier aspects of the aircrew muddle that developed in the United Kingdom[95] was that all or nearly all of the aircraft in R.C.A.F. squadrons were piloted by Canadians. This was not true of the first years of the war, nor was it then altogether desired by Canadian authorities for it was necessary to leaven newly formed squadrons with experienced British pilots. However, by the beginning of 1942 most of Canada's single seat day fighter squadrons, in which pilots were the only aircrew required, were almost completely Canadian. By the end of 1944 nearly all aircraft in Canadian squadrons operating within the structure of the R.A.F. were being flown by Canadian pilots though in bomber and coastal

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94 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 48-53, 57.

95 V. supra, p. 220-221.

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squadrons other members of the crew, such as navigators, wireless operator-air gunners and air gunners might be of various nationalities.

Throughout the war Canadian pilots were also to be found in British squadrons. The continuous movement of personnel from one unit to another and one air force to another makes it impossible to calculate with any degree of accuracy the number of Canadian pilots employed with R.A.F. units, but it may be safely said that Canadian pilots were to be seen in nearly every squadron of the R.A.F.

By and large, the pilots produced under the B.C.A.T.P. were well selected and well trained. Inevitably, some were taken into the training stream who, though anxious to win a pilot's badge, were not suited for flying, and in the early days of the scheme the urgent demand for pilots meant that some were sent into battle without the full training they deserved. One of the greatest difficulties encountered by those in charge of training, and one which was never completely overcome, was the establishment and preservation of a strong link between the training organization in Canada and the operational programme in the United Kingdom. In spite of these problems high standards of flying training, which demanded much from both pupil and instructor, were established at the beginning of the B.C.A.T.P. and maintained throughout the war. Because of the soundness of his training and the unique con-

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ditions under which it took place the B.C.A.T.P. pilot graduate could fit into a British or American squadron, as easily as he could into a Canadian one. Wherever he went he was almost bound to meet others who had won their wings on Canadian flying fields.

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CHAPTER XIII

NAVIGATION TRAINING UNDER THE B.C.A.T.P.

Until the end of 1941 the number of pilots trained in the B.C.A.T.P.exceeded the combined total of all other aircrew graduates but with the launching of the allied air offensive in 1942 attention came to be focussed on the training of other aircrew categories, particularly navigators. At the Ottawa Air Training Conference of June 1942 the Air Ministry asked the R.C.A.F. to expand the capacity of the air observer schools by approximately ninety per cent. At the same time the British announced a new policy for crews of medium and heavy bombers, deleting the position of co-pilot, replacing the air observer with the more accurately styled air navigator and adding a new member to the crew, the bomb aimer who was also to serve as assistant navigator. The shift in emphasis from the defensive to an offensive type of air warfare presented the administrators of the B.C.A.T.P. with two problems of major proportions which must now be discussed. One of these was to enlarge and improve the existing establishments of navigation training schools, instructional staff and equipment, the other was to impress potential recruits and the public generally that in offensive air warfare the pilot did not bear the brunt of the fighting alone and unassisted. This may have been true in the Battle of Britain but in bomber attacks and ocean patrols other aircrew categories shared the same hazards and also had an important role to play. From the point of

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view of recruiting and morale it was essential that this fact was brought home to the public and to the trainees who from the very beginning had to learn that all crew members must work together as a team.

A discussion of the problems connected with navigation training may best begin with reference to the role of the air observer. The name itself is misleading and requires some comment. It had its origin in the First World War when the observer made his debut and won renown by manning the moveable gun in the second seat of the two-place single-engined fighter and scout aircraft. He also operated the wireless set and in quiet moments observed the observable such as the movement of enemy troops or the effectiveness of artillery fire. Between the wars the time spent on observer training in the R.C.A.F. may be dismissed as negligible though occasionally, during air exercises in support of the Army, ground tradesmen were taken aloft in the capacity of observer. When the R.C.A.F. was formed in 1924 four of the officers enrolled were observers but subsequently all were retrained as pilots and employed as such.[1] In March 1938 plans were made to train observers but were not carried through until the advent of the B.C.A.T.P.[2]

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1 Public Archives Records Centre, H.Q. 825-15, Personal Badges, Adoption of and Regulations Re Aircrew Wings, vol. 1, R.C.A.F. Weekly Order 4/25, 10 February 1925, copy attached to Johnson to D.A.F., 5 January, 1925.

2 Ibid, Draft Administrative Order attached to Anderson to A.S.O., 21 March, 1938.

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In the R.A.F. the training of observers was continued in an irregular manner until 1937 when observers were re-introduced as regular members of the crew. They were employed in a role that comprised navigation and bombing duties with most observers being destined for bombing operations.[3] Thus when the first class of observers trained under the B.C.A.T.P., arrived in the United Kingdom in November 1940 most of them were selected for service in Bomber Command.[4]

Much was asked of the observers turned out under the B.C.A.T.P. Their main task was to navigate to the target area, drop the bombs and then navigate back to base. In an emergency they might have to take over the duties of the wireless operator or man the guns. As a rule, however, air observers were fully preoccupied with their maps, charts and instruments making the necessary calculations to keep the aircraft on track. If the pilot asked for the position of the aircraft the observer was expected to provide the answer without undue delay. How completely different the work of the air observer of the Second World War was from that of his namesake in the First and how illogical was his title, may be understood from the following account of his duties:

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3 Great Britain, Air Ministry, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training, 1939-1944, Air Member for Training, 1945, p. 87-90.

4 R.V. Manning, "The First Observer Course, B.C.A.T.P.", in The Roundel, vol. 12, No. 8, October 1960, p. 14-15.

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> In many respects the air observer has the most responsible and exacting task in a bomber aircraft. Successful bomber navigation depends, in the first instance, on the amount of care taken by the air observer in his pre-flight planning, thence upon his ability to assess the value of navigational aids so as to be able to seize every opportunity of using the aid most appropriate to the particular period of flight. Thus upon a sound basic plan is superimposed a judicious use of all the available aids and only by this means can the success of a bombing sortie be assured. First and foremost, therefore, the air observer must be possessed of sound common sense. Mentally he must always be on the alert.... He must estimate and plot the course, be able to take snap map readings, judge weather conditions, look out for ice and keep alternative objectives and landing grounds in the back of his mind.... He must show a marked ability to handle figures, and be sufficiently skilled in signals to take a portion of work off the wireless operator. Above all he must never make mistakes. In most types of aircraft he has considerable exercise in getting astro sights and taking up a bomb aiming position, and this may involve temporarily disconnecting his oxygen apparatus at great altitude. Thus his fatigue is great. He is a wise and considerate pilot who appreciates the difficulties of his air observer.[5]

Since mathematics was fundamental to navigation, air observer trainees were most likely to be selected from among those recruits whose records and tests revealed high academic ability even though the candidate may have enlisted with a strong motivation to become a pilot. It is hardly surprising that Canadian school teachers provided the R.C.A.F. with a good proportion of its observers and navigators. The choice

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5 Public Archives Record Centre, H.Q. 927-1-1, The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, vol. 6, Air Ministry Pamphlet 133, Air Member for Training, "Aircrew Training, Abridged Report of the Conference held in the United Kingdom, January/February 1942", May 1942, p. 13.

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of vocation having been made, either by the individual himself or, what was more likely, by an aircrew selection board whose members based their decision on the candidate's background and the needs of the service, the observer began preparing for his arduous task in a pattern of instruction that took him to four different schools. In the classroom at one of the seven initial training schools his knowledge of high-school mathematics was refreshed and then he was introduced to three standard methods of aerial navigation. This part of the course included navigation by deduced or "dead" reckoning, a method in which the course and position of the aircraft is determined from a fixed position on the ground, astro-navigation, in which calculations are based on celestial observations and finally radio navigation involving special aids such as direction finding equipment, beacons, radio ranges and radar. At the end of eight weeks,[6] having learned to solve simple classroom problems in navigation, the air observer moved on to one of the ten air observer schools for twelve weeks of intensive training at the end of which he was expected to be able to navigate an aircraft to a designated target and direct the pilot back to base under various

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6 Originally of four weeks' duration the period of training at initial training schools was increased to eight weeks in November 1941 and to ten weeks in October 1942.

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weather conditions.[7]

In undertaking its obligation to train air observers under the B.C.A.T.P., the R.C.A.F. was handicapped by having fewer qualified personnel in this field than in any other area of aircrew training. This situation naturally reflected itself in the quality of instruction in the first two or three years of the training programme. The most highly qualified observers were retained at the two air navigation schools at Rivers, Manitoba and Pennfield Ridge, New Brunswick, which kept the whole air observer training programme under surveillance and turned out instructors for the air observer schools. At the request of the R.A.F. no rigid passing standards were set for it was often difficult to determine whether an error in navigation was the fault of the observer or the pilot for the latter may not have steered according to the observer's instructions. Observer trainees were to be rated on their general performance but newly trained instructors, lacking operational experience, were often unsure just how much to demand of their pupils. Up to the end of August 1942 approximately 900 observers or about twelve per cent of the total

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7 Directorate of History, Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff to the Members of the Supervisory Board, British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, A Summary of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan from its inception 19 October, 1942 to Termination on March 31, 1945, 16 April, 1945, p. 17. (Future reference will be cited as Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff).

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intake had been taken off course for having failed to keep up with their classmates.[8] But this was considerably below the sixteen and two thirds per cent of wastage allowed for in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement of 1939, indicating that standards were not so high as they should be. One of the chief complaints coming from the Air Ministry was that Canadian navigation instructors tended to be too lenient. Consequently, observer schools were reminded from time to time of the need to improve the quality of instruction.

For training in air gunnery and bomb aiming the air observer proceeded to a bombing and gunnery school for a period of six weeks of theory and practice in these subjects. The first air observers, like the wireless operator-air gunners, flew about seven hours on gunnery exercises during which they fired some 1,000 rounds from an obsolete Lewis or Vickers gun mounted on the rear cockpit of a Fairey Battle aircraft in much the same fashion as air firing was done in the First World War. In 1941 gunnery training facilities were improved by the introduction of the more up to date Browning guns and the arrival of a number of hydraulically operated turret gun mounts from Great Britain. By the summer of 1942 turrets and Browning guns were being mass produced in Canada. These im-

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8 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 6, minutes of Meeting Held on 21 September, 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix D.

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provements led to a higher standard of marksmanship on the part of air observers as well as of the regular air gunners. On the whole, however, air gunnery does not seem to have been taken seriously by the air observer trainees and none appear to have been held back because of a poor showing in this part of their work.

On the bombing side, training was at first elementary but rapid strides were made with the expansion of facilities and improvements in techniques. Of the first class of air observers each student flew an average of thirteen hours on bombing practice during which he dropped about thirty-six bombs with an average error of 274 yards. By the summer of 1942, air observer trainees at bombing gunnery schools were flying an average of twenty-three hours, dropping eighty bombs with an average error of 120 yards.[9] Their performance compared favourably with the pass standard of 150 yards recommended by the Air Ministry in January 1942.[10] Few, if any, of the trainees were held back because of a poor showing at bombing and gunnery school despite a proposed wastage rate of three per cent in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement.

On completing the course at bombing and gunnery school air observers were promoted to sergeant rank. They

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9 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 17.

10 Air Ministry Pamphlet 133, Air Member for Training, op. cit., p. 33.

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were ceremoniously presented with the air observer's badge, composed of a single upturned wing attached to a large "O", which was worn on the left breast in the same manner as a pilot's badge.[11]

The training of air observers was completed at an air navigation school. The first class of observers to graduate under the B.C.A.T.P. were awarded their observer's badge at No. 1 Air Navigation School at Trenton, Ontario on 24 October 1940. In November this unit was moved to Rivers, Manitoba. In 1941 No. 2 Navigation School was opened at Pennfield Ridge in New Brunswick. At these schools the trainees were brought abreast of recent developments in navigational instruments and techniques. It was here too, at the end of the course, that one third of each class was selected for promotion to commissioned rank. From the point of view of the staff and those who had designed the navigation training programme the four weeks had its own importance for one of the functions of the navigation schools was to bring a measure of standardization into air observer training.

On leaving air navigation school the observers, with the exception of those retained for instruction duty in the B.C.A.T.P., or posted to one of the home-based squadrons, embarked for the United Kingdom. After another ten to twelve

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11 V. infra, Figure II.

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weeks spent at an operational training unit, where pilots, air observers, wireless operator-air gunners and air gunners were brought together and trained to work as a team, they were posted for front-line operations with squadrons of Bomber Command or Coastal Command of the R.A.F.

When night bombing operations got under way the R.A.F. discovered that it was impractical for the air observer to serve both as navigator and air bomber. Being enclosed in a well lighted section of the aircraft pouring over his maps and charts, reading his instruments and making computations en route to the target it took him some time to adjust to the darkness of the bomb aimer's compartment when bombing time came. Because of the delay encountered in eye adaptation he frequently experienced difficulty in locating the target on the first approach. A second run was thus required which involved the possibility of collision with friendly aircraft and also increased the risk of falling prey to anti-aircraft fire or enemy fighters. Paradoxically, the introduction and improvement of navigational aids using radio and radar principles tended to increase rather than lessen the load of the already over-burdened observer. Though these inventions tended to simplify the work of aerial navigation many of the aids had only a limited range. Others, for reasons of security could be used for only certain portions of the flight while all were subject to interference or jamming by counter measures.

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In any case, if the apparatus carried in the aircraft were damaged by enemy fire or became unserviceable the navigation devices were of no use whatsoever. Consequently, while the air observer had to be familiar with the function and operation of a growing number of instruments, dead reckoning, with all the computation it involved, remained the basis of his training and his work.

To enable the observer to concentrate on aerial navigation the Air Ministry, in March 1942, decided to add a new member, the air bomber, to the crews of medium and heavy bombers.[12] In effect, the air bomber became the navigator's assistant. His principal task was to aim and release the bombs, but during the flight, visibility permitting, he was responsible for map spotting and passing to the navigator what visual information he could. During the last few miles of the flight he guided the pilot on the run over the target and chose the precise moment at which to drop the lethal load. At first the bomb aimer was given a minimum of instruction at the controls of the aircraft, just sufficient to keep the the plane on a steady course if the pilot became a casualty. Later on this training was reserved for the flight engineer, a crew member whose main task was to make minor adjustments

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12 Air Chief Marshall Sir Arthur T. Harris, Despatch on War Operations, 23rd February, 1942, to 8th May, 1945, Air Ministry, October 1945, p. 163.

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to the engine or airframe while the aircraft was in flight.

The training of air bombers in Canada began in August 1942.[13] The general course followed by personnel in this category was not unlike that taken by air observers though there was less emphasis on navigation. Recruits were chosen for the new category by a selection board and, like pilots and air observers, began their training at initial training school. From there they moved to bombing and gunnery school and thence to air observer school. The total period of training was gradually extended from twenty-four to thirty-two weeks in an effort to improve the accuracy of bombing. There is some evidence of American example here as in 1942 American bombadiers dropped 200 practice bombs as compared to approximately ninety by air bombers trained in B.C.A.T.P. schools.[14] At both air observer school and bombing and gunnery school, air bombers devoted their time to the study and practice of bombing and navigation. To facilitate training, bombing ranges had to be found in areas close to air observer schools. This arrangement enabled air bombers and air observers to fly together on practice exercises in which the two learned to work together as part of an aircrew team.

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13 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 19-20.

14 Ottawa Air Training Conference, Minutes and Agreement, p. 84.

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The introduction of the air bomber course was merely one aspect of the extensive rearrangement that came about in the navigation training programme in 1942 and 1943. By far the most significant development was the curtailment in air observer training and the inauguration of the specialist air navigator. In Canada, training of this order began in June 1942 when some recruits already under training as air observers were re-mustered as air navigators. During the remainder of the summer, training of air observers continued much the same as before but recruits with the desired qualifications were henceforth selected as navigators rather than as air observers. By the end of October 1942 practically all air observers had either passed out of the training stream or had been reselected as navigators. The training of observers as such had come to an end. The total number trained under the B.C.A.T.P. up to this time was just over 6,000.[15] The old nomenclature stayed on and the observer's badge with the distinctive "O" and single wing continued to be a familiar sight on flying fields in Canada and elsewhere. The air observer schools continued to be so named though for all intents and purposes they were navigation training schools with secondary emphasis being given to bombing.

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15 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 48

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The trend toward specialization in aircrew duties together with the development of new types of aircraft gave rise to two new categories of navigator, the navigator bomber and the navigator wireless. As the name implied, the navigator bomber was a navigator who was also qualified as an air bomber. In Bomber Command of the R.A.F., navigator bombers were employed on light and medium day bombers and in Coastal Command on flying boats and torpedo bombers. The sequence of training for navigator bombers was very similar to that laid down for navigators but included a six weeks course at bombing and gunnery school.[16]

The history of navigators wireless was closely associated with the development of long range twin-engine fighter aircraft such as the Bristol Beaufighter and de Havilland Mosquito which came into use following the Battle of Britain. Carrying a crew of two these planes first came into prominence as night fighters during the winter of 1940-41. The pilot's companion on the night fighting sorties was designated as radio-observer, or sometimes as observer (radio), in either case an intentional misnomer chosen to avoid making any reference to the sensitive radar apparatus, then on the secret list, with which these aircraft were equipped. During the greater part of these flights interceptors were directed on their

16 Ibid.

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course by a ground station but when the enemy aircraft became visible on the radar screen the radio-observer took over and guided the pilot to within firing range.

In many cases the radio-observers were wireless operator-air gunners who were given a training course in operating the radar set with which the night fighters were equipped.[17] When twin-engine aircraft came to be used as long-range day fighters the pilot required the assistance of someone who could navigate and also operate the wireless set and thus the position of navigator wireless emerged. Air observers with additional training in radio operation were sometimes employed in this capacity but experience showed that it was simpler to train a competent wireless operator to become an air navigator than to reverse the sequence. Potential navigators wireless were consequently chosen from among the top students at wireless school. In other words, a navigator wireless began his service as a wireless operator-air gunner but received very little training in gunnery. On completing the twenty-eight week course at wireless school he was posted to one of the air observer schools for the regular course in navigation which for navigators wireless was extended by two weeks, from twenty to twenty-two, to enable them to keep up

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17 Because the radar equipment was high on the secret list and in short supply the training of radio-observers for the R.A.F. and for R.C.A.F. squadrons with the R.A.F. was carried out in the United Kingdom, none being trained under the B.C.A.T.P.

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their proficiency as wireless operators. Thus navigators wireless were among the most highly trained personnel in the R.C.A.F., their course in Canada running to approximately a year with another two months of instruction at an operational training unit in the United Kingdom. If selected for coastal operations they were required to spend an additional six weeks at a general reconnaissance school, perhaps in Canada, perhaps in the United Kingdom, learning to navigate over large expanses of water.[18]

Navigators, or 'plain navigators' as they sometimes were called to distinguish them from navigators bomber and navigators wireless, were employed on heavy and medium bombers and long range transports. In preparing for the operational assignment they followed a course which closely resembled that previously described for the air observers but the bombing and gunnery portions were removed. After leaving initial training school, navigators went directly to air observer school where their syllabus dealt with all methods of aerial navigation but was devoted mainly to the problems connected with precise dead reckoning computation. The navigation course was extended from eighteen to twenty weeks in October 1942 and was conducted entirely at air observer school.[19] On bombing operations

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18 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 19.

19 Ibid.

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navigators received assistance from the air bomber in map reading and from the wireless operator-air gunner in using radio and radar aids to navigation; consequently the syllabus for the latter two categories included a certain amount of instruction in navigation.

A word must now be said about the place of the Central Navigation School in the overall navigation training programme. This institution was formed in May 1942 when the navigation school at Pennfield Ridge was moved to Rivers, Manitoba and amalgamated with the navigation school located there. The Central Navigation School stood at the apex of the navigation training organization of the B.C.A.T.P. Its main function was to promote a high standard of navigation training throughout the R.C.A.F. In this role it provided air observer schools, bombing and gunnery schools and flying training units with up to date navigation precis and syllabi. It gave courses for instructors and maintained a team of navigators who regularly visited air observer schools, flying training schools and miscellaneous units where aerial navigation was taught. Early in the war it was customary for air observers to complete their training either at Pennfield Ridge or Rivers. After the amalgamation of the two schools this practice was discontinued though on occasion, for instance if the air observer classrooms were filled to capacity, some trainees were routed through the Central Navigation

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School. As a matter of policy, however, navigator candidates received their training at air observer schools and the facilities at Rivers were reserved for instructor training and special courses for staff officers connected with navigation training.[20] The School carried on a limited amount of research in examining and testing new equipment. For the most part, however, it used research done by the Central Navigation School of the R.A.F. at Cranage, Cheshire, after which the Canadian School was modelled.

At the Ottawa Air Training Conference in June 1942 the United Kingdom representatives estimated that an ouput of 300 navigators per month would be required by May 1943 in addition to the 400 or more already being turned out under the Plan. This increase, which was apparently intended to ensure an adequate supply of reinforcements for the squadrons of Bomber Command, was to be provided by doubling the size of nine of the existing air observer schools from a student capacity of 126 to 252.[21] The R.C.A.F. took steps to expedite the expansion but the project went forward under difficult circumstances. The first problem encountered was a shortage of labour and construction material. Nevertheless, a limited

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20 Directorate of History, Flight Lieutenant W.G. Goddard, History of Navigation Training, (unpublished material), p. 41-43.

21 Ottawa Air Training Conference, Minutes and Agreement, p. 189-190.

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increase in capacity was achieved by doubling the size of No. 8 Air Observer School in Quebec City and adding additional classroom space to others. In this way the number of navigators under training was augmented from 2,500 in October 1942 to approximately 3,200 in November.[22]

This growth in pupil population did not result in a proportionate increase in the production of trained navigators. For one thing the winter of 1942-43 was unusually severe, causing classes to be set back and generally slowing down the training programme. Moreover, in December the Air Ministry advised that navigation standards had to be raised. In future, borderline students were to be weeded out and those who tended to be air sick, no matter how capable they otherwise might be, were to be dealt with more strictly than in the past for while they could sometimes cope with this malady during training the strain of operational flying was apt to prove too much.[23] These instructions were passed on from R.C.A.F. Headquarters to the four Training Commands with directions that instructors must place more emphasis on mental alertness during air exercises and on speed as well as accuracy in computing, plotting

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22 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 6, Minutes of Meeting Held 16 November 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff; Minutes of Meeting Held 21 December 1942, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

23 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 18 January 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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and instrument reading. The visiting flight of navigators from Central Navigation School inspected the air observer schools periodically to advise instructors in implementing these measures. As a result the attrition rate among navigation trainees rose from about eleven to seventeen per cent in March 1943 and seldom fell below this figure during the remainder of the war.[24]

The enlargement of the navigation training programme meant an increase in the instructional staff. Fortunately, by 1942 the B.C.A.T.P. had reached a point where this could be accomplished without noticeably slowing down the output of students. The most promising graduates were selected from each class, sent to Central Navigation School for what was known as the Short Navigator Instructors' course and posted back to an air observer school to impart their knowledge to new trainees. A general weakness in the system was that it did not provide instructors who had the benefit of operational experience. Although a few operationally experienced aircrew had filtered back to Canada by 1942 they were too thinly scattered throughout the R.C.A.F. to make an impression on the training programme. For the most part they were used to stimulate recruiting and the purchase of war bonds. Some were posted to staff positions in the Home War Establishment

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24 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 April 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, Appendix D.

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and few, if any, were available in an instructional capacity until well into 1943. On the other hand, the emphasis which the public gave to operational flying made it difficult for the R.C.A.F. to keep an instructor in Canada for more than a year without seriously affecting his morale. Under these conditions the goal of building up a well organized instructional staff of navigators was never really attained and it was only through the best effort of Central Navigation School that any semblance of continuity in the teaching was achieved. It is quite understandable that from time to time the Air Ministry raised the observation that Canadian trained instructors tended to be too academic in their approach to navigation training.

The civilian pilots who flew the planes used in navigation training, though not classed as instructors, played an important part in the success of the programme. During the twenty week course some thirty-four flights were scheduled for each student. There were both day and night missions, increasing in complexity as the course went on. For these exercises the pilot was usually accompanied by two student navigators, a wireless operator-air gunner and often one or more air bombers. Instructors were not available for every flight and in their absence the pilot was required to report on the general performance of each student and to review the plotting and logs with the instructor after the flight. In

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the air he was expected to steer according to the instructions given by the pupils even though they might be obviously in error. In the event that the novices directed him hopelessly off course, the pilot was responsible for bringing the aircraft and crew safely back to base. As the air observer schools increased in size the civilian companies encountered difficulty in procuring sufficient numbers of experienced pilots. To overcome this problem the R.C.A.F. arranged for service pilots who were so inclined to volunteer for this type of work. Those who did so were placed on leave without pay for an indefinite period and taken on the payroll of the civilian operating company. On the whole, however, the role held little appeal for air force flyers and in the end the R.C.A.F. found it necessary to assign pilots to the air observer schools for a limited tour of duty.

The standard navigation training aircraft used in the B.C.A.T.P. air observer schools was the Anson. Although the Canadian made Anson, the Anson 11, was in full production by 1942 the vast majority of these planes went to the service flying schools and the air observer schools had to be content with the Anson 1 with its high unserviceability rate. In 1942 it became evident that an improved navigation and bombing trainer would be needed and the Anson V was the result. Its special features included two navigator compartments each fitted with an instrument panel, hot air jets to prevent the

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astro-dome from icing over and, what especially appealed to the students, an air conditioned cabin where they could work in comparative comfort. The first Anson V was flown in January 1943. The production programme went smoothly enough but due to the fact that the Canadian aviation industry was engaging more and more extensively in the manufacture of operational aircraft, including Lancasters and Mosquitoes, it was not until early in 1944 that the air observer schools began to trade in the Anson I's for the V's, another instance of training having to take a back seat to operational requirements.[25]

By far the greater part of navigation training time, approximately 700 out of a total of 900 hours, was carried on in classroom situations.[26] Under these conditions it was difficult for students to appreciate fully the mental and physical strain involved in aerial navigation under conditions encountered on war operations. To introduce a greater aspect of realism, films were made available and various types of synthetic trainers were tried out. One of the most widely used was the dead reckoning trainer which was built like the navigation compartment of a heavy bomber and equipped with all the instruments required for navigation work. A number

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25 Ibid, vol. 8, Minutes of the Meeting Held 15 November, 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

26 Goddard, op. cit., Syllabus for the Training of Navigators at the Air Observer Schools and Central Navigation School, Edition No. 1, July, 1944, [enclosed].

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of these were installed in one room and from a control panel the instructor could change instrument readings such as airspeed, wind direction, simulating conditions that might be encountered in flight while the trainees plotted a hypothetical course. Such devices were not available in any quantity until after the middle of 1943 and instructors faced the increased student population in 1942 without their benefit. Moreover, even when dead reckoning trainers and similarly designed astro-trainers came into use it was found that they produced beneficial results only when employed by instructors who urged their students on to achieve greater speed and accuracy in plotting and who were conscientious enough to observe each pupil's work with the objective of helping him overcome his weaknesses.[27]

In 1942, navigation training in Canada, as elsewhere, was complicated by the fact that a period had been reached when the development of new types of aircraft was progressing very rapidly. For example the four-engine Halifax bomber was just coming into its own in quantity in the first few months of 1942 and the more famous Lancaster was not far behind. Furthermore, the potential of the light but fast twin-engine Mosquito as a bomber as well as a fighter was being realized

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27 Public Archives of Canada, RG 24, S 45-9-60, R.C.A.F. Navigators - Training of, Watts to Air Officers Commanding No. 1 Training Command, No. 2 Training Command, No. 3 Training Command, 19 October, 1944.

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about the same time. The increase in range, speed and bomb load and the ever increasing importance of hitting the target necessitated a progressively higher standard of navigation. The implications which these changes held for those concerned with training were at first not grasped in Canada, far as it was from the battle front. Consequently, it is hardly surprising that reports continued to come back from the United Kingdom that B.C.A.T.P. graduates, though strong in their understanding of navigation theory, often showed a lack of proficiency in the practical aspects of their work. This deficiency was remedied at operational training units in the United Kingdom where navigators spent from ten to twelve weeks under the tuition of operationally experienced instructors before being assigned to squadron duty.

If the importance of the navigator was not at first fully comprehended by those connected with training it was much less appreciated by the general public, a fact which had a consequent effect on morale and recruiting. The crux of the matter was that without exception Canadian aviation heroes were pilots, notably fighter pilots, and other aircrew personnel, if not considered as being inferior, were certainly not looked to as being on the same level as the man who flew the aircraft. Early in the war, air gunners had acquired the nickname of "Tail-End Charlie" for it was well known that they attracted their share of the enemy's fire. The role of the observer,

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however, was but vaguely understood. From the point of view of those connected with recruiting and instructing, this attitude presented a definite problem for with few exceptions the men who volunteered for aircrew duty wanted to wear the pilot's badge or none at all.

The difficulty is well illustrated in a controversy concerning aircrew badges that arose following the introduction of new aircrew categories. When aircrew training began under the B.C.A.T.P., the R.A.F. recognized only three aircrew badges, the double wing badge of the pilot, familiar the world over, the single wing observer badge and the air gunner's badge which, like that of the observer consisted of but one wing. These badges, like diplomas of proficiency and achievement, were presented to successful candidates on graduation and worn on the left breast. Wireless operator-air gunners, for whom no separate badge had been designed, received the same one as worn by air gunners though it was not long before unauthorized badges acquired from commercial sources, began to appear. In the latter part of 1941 reports began to filter in to R.C.A.F. Headquarters that the badges worn by air observers and air gunners were not distinctive enough to give the public a proper indication of their role in air warfare. As a result, a suggestion that a double wing badge, similar in design to that worn by pilots be awarded to all aircrew categories began to gain credence within the Air Personnel

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Division. After a general survey of air force units indicated that discontent "does widely exist, and not only in isolated instances",[28] the Air Member for Personnel, Air Commodore J.A. Sully, submitted the matter for the attention of the Air Council:

> The proposed addition of the two new categories of Navigator and Air Bomber into aircrew suggests the time would appear to be opportune to introduce a long felt want into the Service; namely a Flying Badge common to all aircrew categories. A feature of the present system of different badges for each category is that the pilot has the most distinctive badge. When teamwork in aircrew is essential it is not considered equitable to glamourize one category in aircrew to the detriment of others.[29]

Some of the major advantages which Sully believed would be derived from the use of a common badge were, that all members of aircrew would feel they were performing an equally important task, that the public would realize that modern aerial warfare was not confined to the pilots' role, and that recruiting would be stimulated. Summing up his arguments Sully claimed that, "A common flying badge will raise the morale and promote a camaraderie among Aircrew which will not be without its effect on the general esprit de corps of the Service".[30]

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28 H.Q. 825-15, vol. 2, McPherson to A.M.P., 11 May, 1942.

29 Ibid, Precis entitled, Aircrew Flying Badge, not dated

30 Ibid.

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The matter was discussed in Air Council on 12 May and "not favourably considered", though no decision was reached other than the matter should be explored further with members of the R.A.F. during the forthcoming Ottawa Air Training Conference.[31] But there, too, it remained an open question. The R.A.F. had not yet decided what action it would take in regard to badges for the new aircrew categories and the R.C.A.F. did not press the case for a common badge. As a result the first groups of navigators and air bombers to graduate under the B.C.A.T.P. were awarded air observer badges.

In August, Air Marshal H.E. Edwards, commanding the R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters in London, advised R.C.A.F. Headquarters in Ottawa that the Air Ministry was in the process of designing single wing badges for navigators, bomb aimers, and flight engineers which would denote the appropriate aircrew branch by the letters "N", "B", or "E". No alteration was planned for the pilot's badge. It is interesting to note that Edwards, who was striving to make the R.C.A.F. stand out as being distinctively Canadian, reminded his colleagues in Ottawa that the decision as far as the R.C.A.F. was concerned rested with the Canadian Air Council and added that he personally favoured a double wing badge for all air-

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31 Ibid, note attached to MacLean to Booth, 12 May 1942.

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crew personnel.[32]

The R.C.A.F. did not immediately fall in line with Air Ministry policy but with the other air forces of the Commonwealth adopting badges of the R.A.F. pattern, it was perhaps inevitable that Canada would follow suit. Nevertheless Sully, supported by Edwards, continued to press for the double wing badge and in September the Air Council agreed to canvass aircrew members of the R.C.A.F. for their opinion before making a final decision.

The result of the survey was not surprising. In general, those who had not yet qualified for a badge of any kind expressed a preference for a double wing badge similar to that worn by pilots, while those who had won their badges, whether pilots, air gunners or observers, favoured retaining the type of wing they were wearing and for which they seemed to have developed considerable sentiment. Instructors, who undoubtedly attached considerable importance to the flying badge as an instrument of student motivation, were generally in favour of adopting the double winged badge for all members of the aircrew. Pilots, particularly older pilots, showed an overwhelming partiality for the retention of the double winged badge for their branch only, with other aircrew categories to be awarded the single winged badge. However, there was some

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32 Ibid, R.C.A.F. Message, ROYCANAIRF to CAS, 24 August, 1942.

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diversity of opinion at all levels and even among fighter pilots, perhaps because this group had adopted customs of its own such as the wearing of scarves and the leaving of the top button of the tunic undone, there were some who were not averse to sharing the prestige of the pilot's badge with other aircrew categories. In summarizing the results of the survey for the benefit of the Air Council, the Director of Personnel wrote:

> It would appear...that the retention of the present types of badge or new ones similar to the proposed R.A.F. badges are favoured by most Command Headquarters, Senior General List Officers and trainees at single engine schools. It is also considered by many that all R.C.A.F. badges should be uniform with R.A.F. flying badges. The majority of the present wearers of any type of flying badge feel that to change now would detract from past sentiment.
>
> The double winged badge is favoured by training instructors at Bombing and Gunnery Schools, Air Observer Schools, and Wireless Schools, also the staff at these types of schools feel that if the double winged badge were adopted it would prove not only beneficial to the trainees, but also assist in the recruiting of all aircrew trades.
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> ...from the actual opinion received it appears that the double winged badge is preferred by a very slight margin....[33]

Even though adopting a double winged badge for all aircrew categories might have given a needed boost to recruiting, the Air Members for Air Council found it hard to turn their backs on tradition or to depart from the pattern already

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33 Ibid, Mackell to A.M.P., 19 November, 1942.

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set by the R.A.F. When the Members met on 11 December they decided that since "both at home and overseas great diversity of opinion exists, the matter should be dropped." It was then agreed that single winged badges similar in design to those adopted by the R.A.F., but incorporating the letters "R.C.A.F." in a laurel wreath surmounted by the Crown, a symbol that was lacking in the R.A.F. versions, should be designed for issue to future graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. It required one more meeting to dispose of the matter. On 11 January 1943, the Air Members met and approved the badge designs submitted by the Air Member for Personnel and instructions then went forward for the single winged badges to be manufactured and distributed to the air training schools. The badges authorized in this way included, in addition to that of the air gunner, a navigator's badge, a wireless operator-air gunner's badge and a flight engineer's badge. These comprise all the non-pilot aircrew categories trained under the B.C.A.T.P. During 1943, the year in which the B.C.A.T.P. reached the peak of expansion, thousands of these insignia were presented to successful aircrew graduates on wing parades across the country.

As the air war grew in intensity and casualties mounted, the public, and air force recruits themselves, came to have a better appreciation of what the various flying badges stood for. The prestige of the pilot and the preference for pilot training remained, but as stories filtered back

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to Canada of the exploits of bomber crews, the public came to see more of the role played by the various members of the crew. Occasionally complete crews were brought back to Canada and through public appearances were able to give first hand information. As a result, recruiting officers and aircrew selection boards found it somewhat easier to explain to new entrants why aircrew other than pilots were needed. Recruits occasionally made the selection board's task less arduous by volunteering to serve in any capacity, but usually pilot training was chosen first and the role of navigator was a favourite second choice. To many trainees this selection was no doubt due to the fact that as a navigator they had a fairly good chance of obtaining a commission. Even without this embellishment, a navigator enjoyed a reputation high among aircrew and public alike for it was realized by all that the success of each mission and the safety of the crew depended not only on the skill of the pilot but also on the ability of the navigator.

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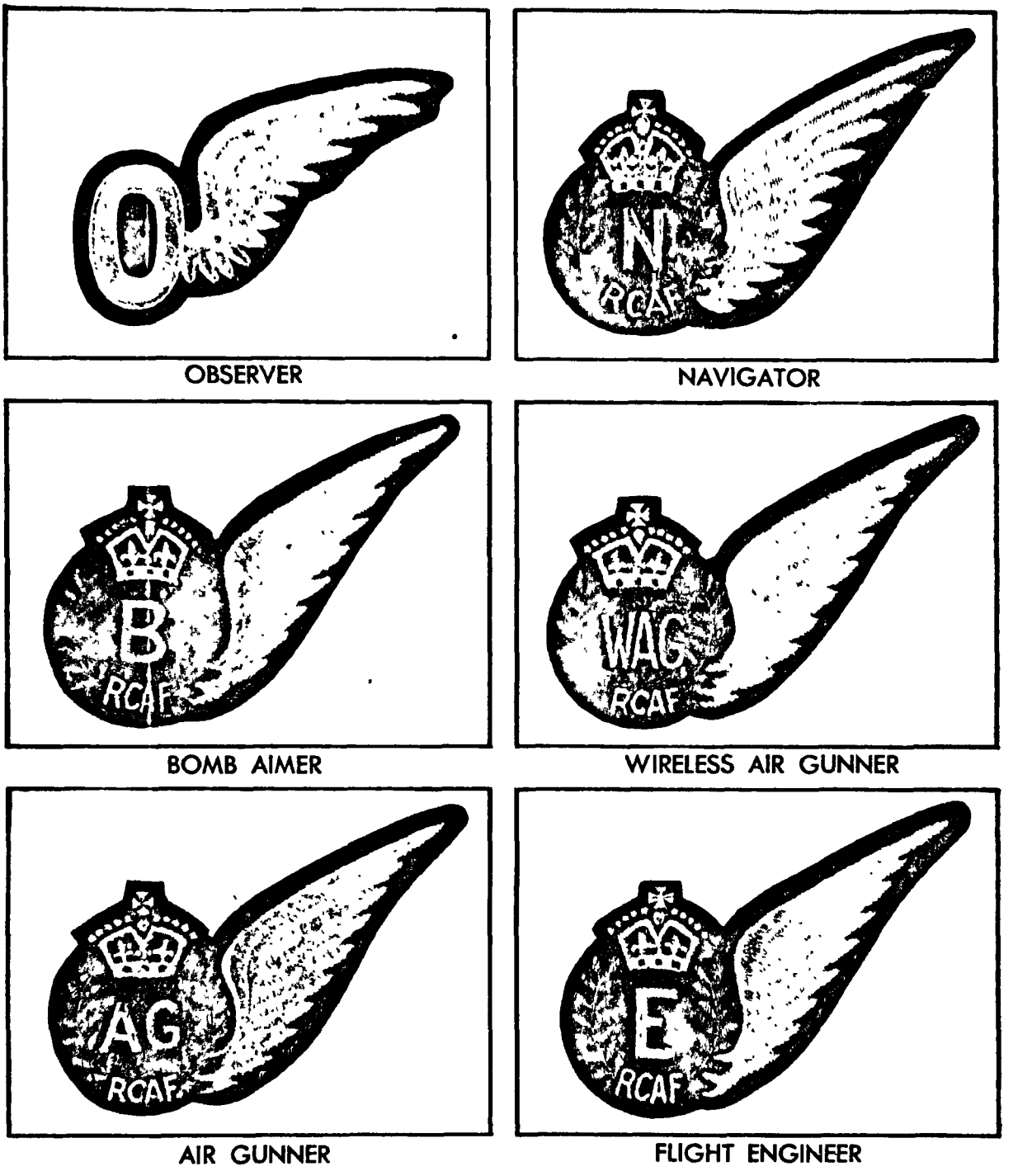

Aircrew Badges (Single Wing)
worn by
Canadian Graduates of the B.C.A.T.P.
FIGURE II [34]

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34 Directorate of History, Air Force Headquarters, Dress Orders for the Royal Canadian Air Force, Ottawa, Air Publications, 1952, Plate 36.

CHAPTER XIV

AIR TRAINING OF ALLIED NATIONALS

An unobtrusive clause in the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement signed in Ottawa in June 1942 provided that the number of pupils sent to Canada by the United Kingdom might include pupils "from any part of the British Commonwealth...and also pupils of Allied Countries". Under this arrangement about 4,000 allied nationals were trained in Canada, the greater majority of them receiving their training in the R.A.F. transferred schools.

To understand fully the conditions under which the air training of European nationals developed it is necessary to refer briefly to the situation in the United Kingdom just after the fall of France in June 1940. About 15,000 exiled air force personnel, mainly Poles, Czechoslovakians, Dutch, Norwegians, Belgians and Free French, anxious to get back into the fighting, had assembled in the British Isles.[1] Some of the pilots had managed to fly aircraft out of Europe but most of the refugees, both flying and non-flying personnel, owed their escape to the efforts of British seamen. In offering its allies an opportunity to fight again, Britain adopted a policy that was both charitable and purposeful and in some

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1 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q.C. 15-1-49, R.A.F. Schools, Training of Foreign Forces, vol. 1, Letter to Chief of the Air Staff, 29 Jun, 1942, and Secretary Memorandum.

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ways comparable to the American plan of lend-lease. The governments concerned were invited to pool their air resources within the framework of the R.A.F. and each was allotted a battle line of squadrons in keeping with its manpower potential and given corresponding training space in R.A.F. schools. These squadrons increased in number from fifteen in October 1940 to thirty-six in April 1945. To identify them the R.A.F. used a block of numbers ranging from 300 to 350. A list of the squadrons is given in Table IX.

TABLE IX[2]

Allied Squadrons

The table shows the number of national squadrons in the R.A.F. at the end of the war. The bracketed letters indicate the type of squadron, F standing for fighter, B for bomber and GR for general reconnaissance. The italicized letters indicate nationality Belgian, Czechoslovakian, Dutch, French, Polish or Norwegian.

No. 300(B) *P*	No. 311(B) *CZ*	No. 332 (F) *N*
No. 301(B) *P*	No. 312(B) *CZ*	No. 333(GR) *N*
No. 302(F) *P*	No. 313(F) *CZ*	No. 340(F) *Fr*
No. 303(F) *P*	No. 315(F) *P*	No. 341(F) *Fr*
No. 304(B) *P*	No. 316(F) *P*	No. 342(F) *Fr*
No. 305(B) *P*	No. 317(F) *P*	No. 345(F) *Fr*
No. 306(F) *P*	No. 320(GR) *D*	No. 346(B) *Fr*
No. 307(F) *P*	No. 322(GR) *D*	No. 347(B) *Fr*
No. 308(F) *P*	No. 329(F) *Fr.*	No. 349(F) *Bel*
No. 309(F) *P*	No. 330(GR) *N*	No. 350(F) *Bel*
No. 310(F) *CZ*	No. 331(F) *N*	

2 Peter Lewis, Squadron Histories, R.F.C., R.N.A.S., and R.A.F., 1912-1959, London, Putnam, 1959, p. 92-97.

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Although the allied forces in their new alignment were integral parts of the R.A.F. the arrangements worked out during 1940 and 1941 provided that, in so far as was practicable, during operations and training the various groups would preserve their national and military identity with the ultimate objective of creating independent national air forces for future use. In the interest of uniformity R.A.F. rates of pay and conditions of service were accepted. During the Battle of Britain the links in this alliance of air forces were firmly welded together and in the days that followed the administrative details were worked out. With the removal of most of the R.A.F. schools from the United Kingdom this grouping was maintained, the only difference being that the recruits were now sent to Canada for training.

There was one outstanding exception to this arrangement in that Norway established and maintained a training base of its own in Canada in conjunction with, yet quite separate from, the B.C.A.T.P. This singular measure, which reflects both the prosperity of the Norwegians and their determination to free their homeland, arose from the circumstances in existence at the time Norway was overpowered. During the fighting in Norway in April and May the Norwegian Air Forces, then consisting of two separate organizations, the Royal Norwegian Army Air Force and the Royal Norwegian Naval Air Service, with about one hundred operational aircraft in all, main-

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tained their ability to operate in spite of the fact that the enemy had thrown a force of over 1,500 aircraft into the action. When the struggle had to be given up the remnants of Norway's armed forces were withdrawn across the North Sea to Great Britain. Many of the Norwegian aircraft, most of them of obsolete design, were too damaged to fly out but the Government had an order in the United States for a number of up to date fighters and bombers which the Norwegian pilots hoped to obtain and with them return to the fray using bases in France for training and operations. The turn of military events put an end to these plans. The Norwegians next considered re-equipping in Britain but on learning what a large part of the training for the R.A.F. was to be carried out through the B.C.A.T.P. and taking stock of the fact that the American planes on order could be delivered in Canada more easily than in Great Britain, it seemed to them that Canada was the best place to go.

Consequently, the Norwegian Government in exile in London discussed the air training problem with the Canadian High Commissioner and also instructed the Norwegian Consul General in Montreal to approach the Canadian Government for permission to establish a training base in Canada. In a letter to O.D. Skelton, the Canadian Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Consul General, Daniel Steen, explained that before the war the Norwegian Government had contracted

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for some ninety-six aircraft from the United States and "disposes of the necessary number of trained personnel to establish the nucleus of a Norwegian Air Force and have the necessary funds for the full equipment of such a force."[3]

Considering that the Canadian Government really had no policy yet in regard to the training of foreign nationals, but perhaps because of this, events moved rather swiftly, helped along no doubt by the Norwegian's ability to pay for what they were asking. In Ottawa, meetings were held between government officials and R.C.A.F. officers to determine whether the granting of the Norwegian request would conflict with R.C.A.F. commitments under the B.C.A.T.P. Following upon these discussions Duncan, the Deputy Minister of National Defence for Air, informed Skelton on 26 June that the R.C.A.F. had no objection to the proposal.[4] This decision cleared the way for the Norwegians to go ahead with their plans though official approval of the Canadian Government was not given until 10 August, 1940.[5]

Working with the assistance and advice of the R.C.A.F. and the Department of Transport the Norwegians selected Toronto as their centre of operations. A headquarters was set

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3 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, H.Q.C.,15-17-1, Royal Norwegian Air Force, Organization and Establishment, Steen to Skelton, 3 June, 1940.

4 Ibid, Duncan to Skelton, 26 June, 1940

5 Ibid, Steffens to Skelton, 31 August, 1940.

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up at 341 Church Street and an advance party of Norwegian officers negotiated with the Toronto Harbour Commission to lease the Toronto Island Airport and other property adjacent to it. Here, on the shores of Lake Ontario, the Norwegians established a training centre known officially as the Royal Norwegian Air Force Training Centre but nostalgically referred to as Little Norway.[6]

Little Norway consisted of two parts, an airfield proper with hangar, workshops and warehouse buildings and, on a nearby piece of land at the foot of Bathhurst Street behind the Maple Leaf Stadium, an administrative area comprising a ground school, office buildings and living quarters. In addition a few buildings were rented in Toronto for miscellaneous purposes. In the late spring of 1941 land for a recreation area in the picturesque Muskoka region north of Toronto was purchased with funds provided by the Norwegian Government.[7]

Compared to the vast and complex B.C.A.T.P. the Norwegian training scheme appeared modest enough. The general

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6 Public Archives of Canada, R.G. 24, D.N.D.C.,15-7-2, Royal Norwegian Air Force, Liaison With, vol.2, MacDonald to the Secretary of National Defence for Air, 22 September, 1941, and attached Historical Brief, "Norway - Royal Norwegian Air Force, Activities and Development" dated 22 September, 1941.

7 Directorate of History, Magazines about Free Norway at War, Gunhild Tegen, "Little Norway", in Wings for Norway, The Swedish-American Drive, Wings for Norway, Inc., [no date, no number], p. 14-25.

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plan which was modified as time went on, was to train personnel for three squadrons to serve with the R.A.F., namely a naval reconnaissance squadron, No. 330, intended for duty in Iceland, and two fighter squadrons, Nos. 331 and 332, appointed to fly with Fighter Command from bases in the United Kingdom. A fourth squadron, No. 333 General Reconnaissance Squadron was subsequently added to the force.[8]

Although Little Norway was not completed until November 1940, flying training for the first elements of the naval squadron and one of the fighter squadrons, got under way in September. In order to let the Norwegians get on with their plans without delay the Toronto Flying Club placed planes and accommodation at their disposal and these facilities were used from September 1940 to May 1941 to provide elementary training for naval pilots.[9] During this same period the Island Airport was the busy scene of elementary training for Norwegian fighter pilots and advanced flying instruction for both naval and fighter personnel. To expedite the formation of the operational squadrons the first course of eleven naval flyers were transferred to R.C.A.F. Station Jericho Beach near Vancouver, British Columbia for the final phase of their training. This group graduated on 3 April.

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8 Lewis, op. cit., p. 95.

9 Directorate of History, H.W. Loosely, History of the Royal Norwegian Air Force in Canada, [unpublished material], 1945, p. 99-101.

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It then returned to Little Norway where the ground and air elements of No. 330 Squadron, embodying in all 140 personnel including several war experienced aircrew, were making ready for the move to Iceland which was completed on the 25th.[10]

In their Canadian environment the Norwegians, with at first a minimum of advice and guidance from the R.C.A.F., proceeded on a trial and error basis. From the start, owing to lack of facilities at Little Norway, it had been necessary to have Norwegian navigators and wireless operator-air gunners trained in B.C.A.T.P. schools. The wisdom of contracting all advanced training to the larger training organization gradually made itself felt on General W. Steffens, head of the Norwegian Military Mission in Canada. For one thing, Little Norway soon became too crowded to carry on both elementary and advanced flying training. For another, it was easy to obtain elementary training aircraft either in Canada or the United States but the Norwegians found it impossible to purchase Harvards, Ansons or other suitable advanced trainers from any source. The planes the Norwegians began to use for this purpose, Douglas 8-A-5 attack bombers and Curtiss P-36 fighters, were really operational aircraft, unsatisfactory for instructional purposes and hazardous for novices to fly.[11]

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10 Ibid, p. 114.

11 Ibid, p. 77-78.

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As the British policy to accept allied nationals in R.A.F. schools became established, the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission arranged for Norwegian pilots to be trained at No. 32 and No. 34 Service Flying Training Schools located at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan and Medicine Hat, Alberta, respectively. Some of the pilots for No. 331 Fighter Squadron, practically all of those for No. 332 Fighter Squadron and most of the reinforcement pilots for these and other units passed through these two schools to which Norwegian instructors were attached.[12]

After the three squadrons had left Canada the main purpose of Little Norway was to keep them supplied with reinforcements. Besides housing an elementary flying training school the small complex contained a basic training centre, an initial training school for aircrew and a technical school where a variety of courses were offered for both air and ground personnel. It also served as a reception centre for recruits and as an embarkation depot for air and ground personnel selected for service with the combat squadrons abroad. The unique national character of Little Norway and the fact that it was something more than a training centre were perhaps best illustrated by the formation of the Royal Norwegian Women's Auxiliary Air Force in September 1943.[13]

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12 Ibid, p. 186.

13 Ibid, p. 52-54.

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As activities increased in variety and extent the Island Airport became too small for the purposes of the Royal Norwegian Air Force. In January 1942 the Norwegian Government entered into a contract with the Canadian Department of Transport for the use of the Muskoka emergency airport about 10 miles from Gravenhurst, Ontario. Elementary training was transferred to this location in May 1942. The Norwegians had other property in this area and the question of moving the entire training camp there was taken up with the Canadian Government in the summer of 1942. It so happened that the R.C.A.F. was interested in obtaining the Island Airport for additional manning depot accommodation. Negotiations turned on this point and in January 1943 the Canadian Government purchased the buildings erected by the Norwegians at the Island Airport. On 7 April, in proper ceremony, the Canadians marched in, the Norwegians marched out and the name Little Norway was transferred to the Muskoka site where the Norwegian flag continued to fly alongside the Canadian Ensign until March 1945.[14]

The uncertainty with which the Dominion viewed its responsibilities towards its new ally was reflected in despatches to London and Washington. Explaining the position of the Norwegians to the Canadian High Commissioner in the United Kingdom the Secretary of State for External Affairs stated that

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14 Ibid, p. 17.

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the programme was subject to the regulations of the Civil Aviation Division of the Department of Transport with the Canadian Air Force merely co-operating in certain respects with the Norwegian officers in charge of the training plan.[15] The Canadian Legation in Washington was similarly informed that the scheme, although sanctioned by the Dominion Government, was in no way connected with the Department of National Defence but was regarded as purely a separate organization with the R.C.A.F. affording it a minimum of facilities.[16]

In January 1941 the increased training activities of the Norwegians, their recurrent requests for help and advice, and their continued strong backing from their government in exile, prompted the R.C.A.F. to adopt a more definite policy regarding the assistance that could be given. Following a meeting of the Air Members for Air Council, Air Commodore G.E. Brookes, in charge of No. 1 Training Command with headquarters at Toronto, was advised that Norwegian aircraft, which had hitherto been treated as civilian planes and restricted in their movements and entitlements at R.C.A.F. aerodromes should henceforth be accorded the same treatment as other military aircraft, that air force publications, other than those clas-

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15 H.Q.C., 15-17-1, Secretary of State for External Affairs to High Commissioner for Canada, 23 September, 1940.

16 Ibid, Johnson to Air Attache, Canadian Legation Washington, 11 October, 1940.

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sified as secret or confidential could be loaned to Little Norway and that Norwegian staff officers should be free to visit B.C.A.T.P. schools to observe training methods and procedures. With the equipment situation becoming more difficult Brookes was further advised that while items of personal accoutrement could be issued to the Norwegians by supply depots located in the Toronto area, all requests concerning aircraft equipment, accessories and tools were to be referred to R.C.A.F. Headquarters.[17] The Norwegians readily accepted these conditions and under the authority of the War Appropriation Bill of April 1941 a standing credit of $15,000 was extended to the Royal Norwegian Air Force.[18] This account was used to cover the cost of minor items obtained through R.C.A.F. sources, other material being purchased through the Canadian Department of Munitions and Supplies or else bought on the open market for cash. The repair of Norwegian aircraft, when it was beyond the resources of the workshops at Little Norway was carried out under contract with private firms at Norwegian expense.

In order to provide a regular channel of communication with the Norwegian training centre the R.C.A.F. in February 1941 appointed a liaison officer who carried on his

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17 Ibid, Johnson to Air Officer Commanding No. 1 Training Command, 30 January, 1941.

18 Canada, P.C., 2914, 28 April, 1941.

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duties from the Norwegian Headquarters. This officer, who kept in touch with the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission as well as with R.C.A.F. Headquarters, arranged for all flying training given to Norwegians in R.A.F. or B.C.A.T.P. schools, obtained syllabi and publications used throughout the B.C.A.T.P. and generally assisted the Norwegians to co-ordinate the training given at Little Norway with that of the B.C.A.T.P. Requests for material, and the scheduling of visits and inspections were other matters which fell within the sphere of duty of the liaison officer.[19]

The recruits for the Norwegian squadrons came mainly from those men who escaped from Norway. A contingent of 111 personnel, practically all of whom had left their homeland immediately after the brief struggle with the Nazis, sailed from England for Canada on 21 July 1940. Thereafter small numbers of Norwegians continued to arrive in Canada from time to time having made their escape from Norway by either of two routes. One, referred to as the "hard way" was across the North Sea to England, the journey often being made in an open boat, and thence to Canada. The other, the "easy way", led east through Sweden where transportation to England could be arranged. Before Canada was at war with Japan some escapees continued east through Siberia, eventually reaching

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19 Looseley, op. cit., p. 22-26.

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Canada by way of Tokyo.[20] An officer of the Canadian Army who had occasion to visit Little Norway in October 1941 noted that, "the morale in the camp is high, as would seem to be natural in view of the source of recruitment". As an instance he pointed out that "training seems to be kept up in the Camp at a high pitch of intensity. The Link Trainers...are in use from the beginning of the day until midnight".[21]

Some Canadian citizens of Norwegian descent, and a few who were not, also volunteered their services. In August 1940 General William Steffens asked the Canadian Government for a ruling regarding the enlistment of Canadians of Norwegian parentage.[22] The answer was negative but in December 1941, when other allied nationals were requesting similar recruiting privileges, the Canadian Government modified its policy to permit Canadian naturalized ex-Norwegians to enlist in the forces of Norway or, if already in Canadian uniform, to transfer from the Canadian forces. It was also agreed that Norwegian nationals would not be accepted for service in the Canadian Air Force, Army or Navy without the

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20 Tegen, op. cit.

21 Directorate of History, 314.009 (D210), Recruiting, Foreign Military Missions, October, 1941, Brown to Litson 10 November 1941 and attached report, "Report of Visit to Norwegian Military Mission Headquarters in Toronto on 30 October, 1941". (Future references will be cited as, Report of Visit to Norwegian Military Headquarters, 30 October, 1941.)

22 P.A.C. 15-7-1, Steffens to Skelton, 31 August, 1940.

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consent of Norwegian authorities.[23]

In authorizing the formation of the Norwegian training centre the Dominion Government was using the authority granted it under the War Measures Act but as the Norwegian force grew in size and as the training of other allied nationals, for land warfare as well as in the air, was contemplated, the need for more specific legislation governing the status of foreign forces in Canada arose. This was accomplished through the Foreign Forces Order, an order-in-council enacted in April 1941, which enabled the forces of certain allied countries to establish their own internal military administration and administer military discipline for their forces in Canada.[24] The Foreign Forces Order was similar to the Visiting Forces (British Commonwealth) Acts in purpose in that it provided for the allied governments in question to follow their own regulations and procedures in the administration of their forces stationed in Canada. At the same time, of course, the foreign nationals were subject to Canadian civil and criminal law. It was made clear in the Order that the measure of compulsion did not apply in any sense to foreign nationals domiciled in Canada who did not desire to enrol for military service.

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23 Ibid, Robertson to Consul General of Norway, 6 December, 1941.

24 Canada, P.C. 2546, 15 April, 1941.

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The operation of the Royal Norwegian Training Centre in Canada and the maintenance of the miscellaneous establishments connected with it required the expenditure of 14,198,393.55 over the five years from July 1940 to July 1945. With revenue derived mainly from its merchant fleet the Norwegian Government managed to balance its budget during the difficult war years and every quarter settled its accounts in Canada, including the cost of training aircrew in B.C.A.T.P. and R.A.F. schools and for material obtained either through R.C.A.F. sources or on the open market. In the matter of lend-lease goods the Norwegians obtained a total of $1,303,800 worth of material including fifty Fairchild PT-26 primary trainer aircraft, motor vehicles, petroleum products and various miscellaneous items.[26] On the personnel side these expenditures represented the training of 426 pilots, 172 navigators, 70 air gunners and 9 air bombers.[27] In addition to aircrew a total of 244 technicians for service either in Canada or abroad were trained at Little Norway.[28]

Although no other country followed Norway's example in establishing an air training centre in Canada in conjunction with the B.C.A.T.P. the thought of doing so held considerable appeal for General Charles de Gaulle in the organiza-

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26 Looseley, op. cit., p. 8-12.

27 Ibid, p. 185.

28 Ibid, p. 96.

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tion of the Free French Air Force after the fall of France. But de Gaulle, unlike the Norwegians, had to negotiate from a weak and uncertain position. In the end nothing came of his proposals which in retrospect are of more interest for their political implications than their military significance though their study provides a background for understanding the position of the Free French Air Force and the conditions under which some of its aircrewwere trained in Canada.

In the days of confusion just prior to the signing of the armistice between Hitler and the newly formed pro-German French Government headed by Marshal Philippe Petain and Pierre Laval on 22 June, most members of the French Armee de l'Air succeeded in making their way to North Africa in the belief that France would continue the war from colonial bases. A small number, including about 150 partially trained pilots, followed de Gaulle to England where the Free French movement was founded and the Free French Air Force organized.[29] It appeared to de Gaulle that the best place for his untrained pilots to continue their instruction would be in Canada, either in a self-contained training organization such as Little Norway, but located in Quebec, or else distri-

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28 Ibid, p. 96.

29 Public Archives of Canada, H.Q.C., 15-21-2, Free French Personnel: Training in Canada of:- Policy Governing, High Commissioner for Canada in Great Britain to Secretary for External Affairs in Canada, 8 July, 1940.

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buted throughout the B.C.A.T.P. schools. Enquiries along these lines were submitted to the Canadian Government through the High Commissioner's Office in London. De Gaulle expressed himself in favour of the first scheme but was prepared to accept the second if it was found to be agreeable to Canadian authorities.[30]

Neither of the proposals were welcomed in Ottawa. As yet the Free French movement had nothing resembling a government to guide and control it and de Gaulle, as always, was a controversial figure. The British, though prepared to give the French leader whole-hearted co-operation in establishing a new Free French Air Force in the United Kingdom or North Africa, were sometimes embarrassed by his tendency to regard himself as an independent power. The Americans, pinning their hopes on winning the friendship of the new Vichy regime headed by Marshal Petain, were not disposed to recognize de Gaulle and disliked his Joan of Arc posturing. Canada had its own reasons for not recognizing de Gaulle. Fearful that the fall of France would cause the interest of Canada's French speaking minority to wane, the Dominion Government entered into diplomatic relations with the Vichy Government. To bolster the morale of French speaking Canadians the Prime Minister declared that Canada, "the second French-speaking

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30 Ibid.

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nation in the world", had a role to play in upholding "the traditions of French culture and civilization and the French passion for liberty".[31] For the benefit of English speaking Canadians he explained that Canada's recognition of Vichy would help to prevent Petain and Laval from taking France completely within the German camp.[32] The de Gaulle movement, which Mackenzie King told the House of Commons, "is not a government, nor is it a country", Ottawa chose to ignore.[33] In Quebec, where the English speaking Canadians expected to see some reaction, the rank and file showed little interest in either the de Gaullist or Petainist cause though the clergy and elite, and hence the Canadian Government, were in sympathy with the latter.[34] Under these circumstances it was impossible for a Free French military mission to be organized in Canada. The nearest thing to it was a Free French organization established, ironically enough, in Toronto with the support of English speaking Canadians who were in sympathy with de Gaulle and the Free French movement. The Toronto group does not appear to have been a success. An observer at one of its meetings reported that, "The total effect

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31 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1941, vol. 1, p. 60.

32 Ibid.

33 Ibid, p. 1000.

34 Mason Wade, The French Canadians, 1760-1945, London, Macmillan, 1955, p. 936-937.

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was that of a haphazard, casual, and ill-directed movement." It did not seem well calculated to arouse enthusiasm or collect adherents. [35]

De Gaulle's request was thus a source of embarrassment for the Canadian Government until the response of the R.C.A.F. offered a convenient way out of the predicament. The Air Force was opposed to accepting any of the French trainees on the grounds of the language training problem which the scheme would involve and the Chief of the Air Staff expressed himself to the Deputy Minister in the following terms:

> All of our instruction is given in English and a real sound knowledge of that language is essential before a pilot can begin to absorb his training. Up to the present we have been unable to find a satisfactory means of handling the training of French speaking Canadians. Therefore, I cannot recommend that Canada accept any of the partially trained pilots from France who are presently in England.[36]

While the Canadian Government was still pondering the situation the R.A.F. had the training of the Free French pilots under active consideration in the United Kingdom and was working out a plan whereby forty or fifty of the more advanced could take their training at R.A.F. Station Odiham.

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35 314.009 (D120), Recruiting - Foreign Military Missions, October, 1941, Browne to Litson, 10 November, 1941, attached report, "Meeting of the Free French Organization in Toronto, 30 October, 1941".

36 H.Q.15-21-2, Breadner to Deputy Minister (Air), 18 July, 1940.

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Presumably both French and British instructors were going to be employed on the task. Concurrently with the air training English was to be taught to enable the pilots to proceed to R.A.F. operational training units for training on combat aircraft before taking their place in the Free French Air Force.[37]

The school at Odiham met the most urgent training needs of the Free French Air Force but there was the possibility that more aircrew recruits would emerge either from France itself or its colonial empire which de Gaulle, at first without much success, was trying to woo to his Free French movement. Quebec was also looked to as a bastion of French liberty and de Gaulle did not abandon the project of training aircrew in Canada. In August he wrote to the Canadian High Commissioner, possibly to clarify his original request, asking for permission to organize an air training programme "sur le sol canadien, avec l'aide d'officiers et d'instructeurs francais".[38] Captain Chevrier, acting Chief of Staff of the Free French Air Force wrote in much the same vein offering to place twenty flying instructors at the disposal of the R.C.A.F. "soit pour instruire nos propres pilotes, soit pour tout autre emploi qu'il serait possible de leur

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37 Ibid, Garner to Mayrand, 30 September, 1940.

38 Ibid, de Gaulle to the Canadian High Commissioner, 8 August, 1940.

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confier".[39] The year ended with the air training problem still dangling in the air. In February de Gaulle again approached the Canadian High Commissioner with the expressed hope that the project would not have to be abandoned.[40]

In March a de Gaulle emissary, Commandant Thierry D'Argenlieu, a distinguished French naval officer, came to Canada to arouse interest in the Free French movement and the Free French Air Force.[41] His mission was at least a partial success. He was well received in Quebec and left Ottawa wavering between the Petainist and the de Gaullist sympathizers. But Canada's policy toward the Free French remained a highly complicated affair, as the seizure of the islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon in December 1941 so well demonstrated. There was little likelihood that de Caulle would get his schools. On 13 May the members of the Cabinet War Committee agreed to advise the United Kingdom Government that sufficient flying training facilities were not available to undertake the training of Free French airmen in Canada but that there would be no objection to the conducting of this training in R.A.F. transferred schools.[42]

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39 Ibid, Chevrier to Mayrand, 19 September, 1940.

40 Ibid, de Gaulle to Canadian High Commissioner, 24 February, 1941.

41 Ibid, Robertson to Carteret, 28 April, 1941.

42 Ibid, Carteret to Assistant Under Secretary of State for External Affairs, 26 September, 1941.

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This decision settled the issue, at least for the time being. The question of special schools being established in Canada to train French aircrew lay dormant for another two years. In the meantime de Gaulle, preoccupied with organizing Free French forces in the Middle East and equatorial Africa, was apparently satisfied with the co-operation he was getting from the R.A.F. as well as with the arrangements under which Free French aircrew trainees would be accepted in Canada. In January 1942, with the gradual transfer of more R.A.F. schools to Canada the training of allied airmen was also gradually shifted to Canada, and the United Kingdom Government informed Canada that the first to be sent will be "Czechs and Free French and they will be accompanied by suitable national instructors".[43] Thus while French aircrew were to train in Canada there was to be no French establishment comparable to Little Norway, and while aircraft with Norwegian markings were familiar on airfields in the Toronto area the Cross of Lorraine was not to be seen in Canadian skies.

Most of the allied nationals trained in Canada during 1942 were pilots who had taken elementary flying training in the United Kingdom and were sent to Canada to complete their training in the R.A.F. transferred schools. They began to arrive in February in small numbers, seldom more than seven

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43Ibid, Hudd to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 14 January, 1942.

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or eight a month of any one air force. After a short stay at No. 31 Personnel Depot at Moncton, New Brunswick, a reception centre for members of the R.A.F., they were sent to one of the R.A.F. Service Flying Training Schools, the majority going either to No. 32 at Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan or to No. 34 at Medicine Hat, Alberta. As these schools were also used for training British, Canadian and other pupils, they soon took on a cosmopolitan character. For example, Course No. 53 which began training at Moose Jaw on 12 April 1942, included eighteen Norwegians, fourteen Canadians, eight members of the R.A.F., four Americans, three Czechoslovakians, three Free French, one Pole and one Belgian.[44] The course that followed was but slightly less representative in its national make-up including Free French, Polish, Belgian, Danish, Dutch and Czechoslovakian student flyers.[45]

All that the 1942 B.C.A.T.P. Agreement had to say about the training of allied air forces in Canada was contained in a sub-paragraph of Article nine which confirmed that the United Kingdom's quota of pupils might include "pupils of Allied Countries". This simple phrase, which merely gave formal substance to what had already been worked out in correspondence between the United Kingdom and Canada,

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44 Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, Diary of No. 32 Service Flying Training School, [R.A.F.]

45 Ibid, entry for August 28, 1942.

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was sufficient to encompass all the air training of European allies carried out in Canada during the war, with the exception of the Norwegians who had made their own arrangements with the Canadian Government. All other European nationals were accepted as part of the R.A.F. quota. The cost of their training was charged to Britain's share of the overall expense and their assignment to schools and courses was arranged between the United Kingdom Air Liaison Mission and the R.C.A.F. Directorate of Air Training. The legal status of the visiting nationals was governed by the Canadian Foreign Forces Order which gave to those governments who requested it the right of administrative and disciplinary control over their own forces with the proviso that when attached to R.C.A.F. units for instructional purposes they came under R.C.A.F. jurisdiction.[46]

All foreign students were expected to meet the same standards of proficiency as Canadian, British or other Commonwealth aircrew. Their own government authorities carefully watched their progress and where possible appointed qualified pilots on attachment to B.C.A.T.P. schools to fly with their own countrymen, assist them with ground subjects and generally supervise their training. The greatest single handicap faced by foreign trainees was the language problem.

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46 Canada, P.C. 2546, 15 April, 1941.

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Although students selected for Canadian training were supposed to be proficient in English this requirement was often disregarded, very likely because most allied air forces faced a severe manpower shortage. The usual remedial measure was to send them to the School of English at No. 1 Manning Depot or to one of the schools operated by the War Emergency Training Plan which offered courses in English as well as pre-aircrew training in mathematics and science. Even so, mastery of English could seldom be obtained in this way and the untrained or partly trained aircrew, anxious to get on with the main business of learning to fly, could not be held back for an overly long period. Occasionally, pupils who demonstrated exceptional ability in the practical aspects of their training were allowed to take their written examinations in their own language but only when translators were available. For several students lack of English proved a handicap. It is worth noting in passing, that the morale of the European trainees was high and there were a number of occasions when they stood at the top of their class.

The air forces of the governments-in-exile accepted without question the wastage rates imposed by the R.C.A.F. When pilot trainees were taken off course they were reselected for training in another aircrew category. If deemed unsuitable for employment as aircrew they were assigned to a non-flying trade or transferred for training to their own army or navy.

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To man the squadrons allotted to them in the R.A.F., most of the governments-in-exile depended largely on those who succeeded in making their escape from Europe before or during the German occupation. By the end of 1942 this source of recruits was already drying up and the governments were running into difficult recruiting problems.

The French position, however, was quite different. The successful allied invasion of North Africa in 1942 and the realignment of political forces following it brought the colonial empire into the war on the side of the Free French. The headquarters of the Free French Air Force was transferred from London to Algiers and thousands of young Frenchmen, eager to fight, provided a ready source of recruits. With the assistance of British and American authorities new units were formed in North Africa to take part in operations in the Mediterranean. A subsidiary command remained in the United Kingdom to look after French squadrons within the R.A.F. framework which assisted with air operations in Western Europe.

In April 1943 Leckie was informed by the United Kingdom Air Liaison Officer that twenty-five French naval air arm candidates would be sent to Canada every six weeks as part of the R.A.F. quota of twin-engine pilots.[47] In January

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47 H.Q.C. 15-21-2, Leckie to Liaison Officer in Chief, 19 April, 1943.

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the R.A.F. announced that this quota was to be increased to a monthly intake of approximately sixty-seven pilots, sixteen navigators, five navigator-bombers and fourteen air bombers per month.[48] In April the airmen of the first draft under the increased quota were on their way to Canada.[49] They were to be reinforcements for seven day-fighter units, two heavy bomber squadrons, one light bomber squadron and two coastal reconnaissance squadrons which were operating under the R.A.F.

The French pilot candidates were sent to No. 31 Elementary Flying Training School, De Winton Alberta, and thereafter to No. 32 and No. 34 Service Flying Training Schools and, on the closing down of these units, to No. 6 Elementary Flying Training School at Prince Alberta and No. 4 and No. 13 Serice Flying Training Schools at Saskatoon and North Battleford. The navigators and air bombers were scattered throughout a number of schools but most received their training at No. 9 Air Observer School at St. Jean, Quebec and No. 2 Air Navigation School at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island.

The first groups of French trainees were accompanied by a few French flying instructors who were employed at elementary flying training schools. To supplement their work

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48 Ibid, Liaison Officer in Chief to C.A.S., 7 January, 1944

49 Ibid, Kendrick to Air Member for Personnel, 19 April, 1944.

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the R.C.A.F. posted a number of bilingual instructors to units where the French flyers were being trained. It was not intended, however, that flying instruction be given in French. Although the aircrew were being trained for service with French squadrons they were working as part of the R.A.F. and it was essential that they have a good grasp of English terminology.

The training of European nationals under the B.C.A.T.P. continued until the Plan was terminated on 31 March, 1945. By that time some 2,000 French aircrew had won their wings in Canadian skies. Flying badges were also awarded to approximately 725 Norwegians, 450 Poles, 260 Czechoslovakians and slightly smaller numbers of Belgians and Dutch.[50] On 29 March 1945 the flying training schools that were still in existence had their final wings parade with an added measure of pomp and ceremony. In most instances European flyers were among those receiving their badges. No. 2 Service Flying Training School at Ottawa gathered the greatest number of dignitaries but No. 13 at North Battleford, presented the greatest international aspect. With flags of all the United Nations flying and 5,000 citizens from the Battlefords and the historic surrounding area looking on, 132 pilots formed up in a hollow square to receive their wings. The group included forty-two

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50 Directorate of History, Jackets to Wise, 3 May, 1968.

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French, forty-one Australians, thirteen Belgians, nine members of the R.A.F., eight Canadians, seven Netherlanders, two Hindus and one Pole.[51] Canada had indeed become "the Air-drome of democracy".

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[51] Directorate of History, R.C.A.F. Diaries, Diary of No. 13 Service Flying Training School, entry for 30 March, 1945.

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CHAPTER XV

THE BALFOUR-POWER CONFERENCE AND THE REDUCTION OF THE B.C.A.T.P.

The outstanding theme in the final years of the B.C.A.T.P.'s existence was a change from an anticipated shortage of aircrew in 1943 to an embarrassing surplus in the following year. The shortage, or supposed shortage, was ascribed to a number of factors including the unknown extent of air operations, the stubborn resistance put up by the German Air Force and a delay in the full development of American air power. There were also several reasons for the accumulation of the surplus: a reduced casualty rate as the Luftwaffe was worn down; a ruling that aircrew for the invasion of France were to be on hand well in advance of the invasion date; and a decision to delete the position of co-pilot in bomber aircraft. The resurgence of air strength among European powers in exile was another factor in the over production of aircrew. When it became obvious that a big surplus of aircrew was on hand and that the B.C.A.T.P. had outrun the capacity of the R.A.F. to absorb aircrew, Power and Balfour met in Ottawa to initiate measures to curtail the output.

In the history of the B.C.A.T.P. the year 1943 is best remembered as the time when the Plan reached its peak of production. The output of aircrew rose from 1,574 in January 1943 to 5,157 in October and thereafter began to taper off. The total output for the year was 39,354 including 15,802 pilots, 8,187 navigators, 6,462 air bombers, 5,051 air

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gunners and 3,852 wireless operator-air gunners. The number of aircrew turned out in this year represented something over a quarter of the total trained in Canada during the life of the Plan.[1]

From a recruiting standpoint the year was one of ups and downs. Aircrew enlistment showed a steady decline during the first six months and a healthy improvement thereafter. In April the Chief of the Air Staff attributed the downward trend to seasonal factors and told the Supervisory Board that "the situation is being carefully studied with a review to remedial action".[2] He assured the Board that in the meantime the Canadian quota of trainees could be met from the pool of airmen on leave without pay awaiting entry into the Plan. In May he took a more pessimistic view of the situation reporting to the Board that,"A continued low volume of enlistments of aircrew in Canada and a reduction in the number of Canadian aircrew awaiting training are giving this Service deep concern".[3] These sentiments were echoed by Air Minister Power and comments from other members of the Board indicated that manpower difficulties were being experienced

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1 Directorate of History, Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 44-53.

2 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 7, Minutes of Meeting Held 19 April, 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

3 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 28 June, 1943, Report of Chief of the Air Staff.

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by all other partner countries.[4]

The dwindling of aircrew recruits was among the problems discussed by the British and Canadian Chiefs of Staff at Quebec on 11 August prior to the Quadrant Conference at which allied plans for the invasion of Europe were to be discussed. Summarizing his conversation with Breadner, Portal noted that Britain was counting on Canada for twenty-five per cent of its aircrew requirements and "the prospective shortage of Canadian entrants causes us the most serious misgivings".[5]

Sir Charles Portal was not only the Chief of Staff for the R.A.F., thus responsible for the overall direction of the British Air Force, he was also charged with the responsibility of directing the combined bombing offensive against Germany. This operation, officially launched in January 1943 had as its primary objective the annihilation of the German Air Force. On the allied side the two major components were the British Bomber Command, and the United States Eighth Air Force. On the enemy side the German fighter force fought back savagely taking heavy toll of the American bombers sent over by day in precision attacks against the factories that supplied the Luftwaffe with oil, aircraft

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4 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 28 June.

5 Public Archives of Canada, H.Q.S., 45-1-35, Manpower, vol. 1, Portal to Breadner, 12 August, 1943.

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and accessories, and the bases from which it flew. Slightly less damage was inflicted on the planes of Bomber Command that took off under cover of darkness to level the German towns supporting the air industry. Midway through 1943 the combined bombing offensive was at a critical juncture. German air strength remained a threat to its success and hence to the allied plans for the invasion of Europe tentatively set for the spring of 1944. One of Portal's main causes of concern lay in the fact that the American Eighth Air Force was behind in its scheduled building up of men and machines. He was also apprehensive about a continued supply of aircrew for Bomber Command which was now engaged in its greatest trial of strength. In spite of the high priority assigned to the bombing offensive, some bomber units, including a Canadian wing of three squadrons, had been withdrawn from the United Kingdom for operations in North Africa. In keeping its bombing squadrons up to strength the R.A.F. depended mainly on the graduates of the B.C.A.T.P., British, Canadians, Australians and New Zealanders. Many of the fighter pilots assigned to accompany the American bombers on daylight raids were likewise products of the B.C.A.T.P. In August, Portal was of the opinion that the battle with the Luftwaffe would be won or lost within the next few months.[6] It was no time

6 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate Ed., Europe: Torch to Pointblank August 1942 to December 1943, (The Army Air Forces in World War II), Chicago, University of Chicago, 1949, vol. 2, p. 713-714.

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to falter. How much longer the war would go on nobody knew and as supplier of about twenty-five per cent of aircrew for the R.A.F. Canada came under close scrutiny.

In contrast to the first half of 1943 the months of August through November showed good recruiting returns. A fresh appeal was made for recruits for the Women's Division to permit more ground tradesmen to transfer to aircrew duty. Boys of seventeen were enlisted as aircrew but those accepted were not called up until they were seventeen and a half. Their progress through the training stream was so controlled that they did not begin active air training until they had reached their eighteenth birthday.[7] Aircrew enlistments rose from 1,133 in July to 1,883 in August and continued in good volume until October when over 2,700 candidates were enrolled. In December the number dropped to 1,713 but this was still well above the average of 330 per week in the first part of the year.[8] The upswing was supplemented by the transfer of approximately 1,000 air force members from ground to air duties each month. The Air Member for Personnel, Air Commodore J.A. Sully, advised Breadner that the R.C.A.F. had sufficient ground personnel of aircrew fitness to maintain

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7 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 7, Minutes of Meeting Held 20 September, 1943, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

8 Directorate of History, Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 2, p. 367-296.

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this rate of transfer until the end of the year providing the upward trend in recruiting of airwomen replacements continued. Breadner passed this news on to Portal with the assurance that the situation was being watched closely and that two months' notice would be given if it appeared that Canada could not meet its requirements. In reply Portal expressed his approval:

> I am delighted to hear that your supply of aircrews is assured until the end of the year. The two months' notice of any change...will be most helpful to us in affording us time to consider measures to meet any deficiency.[9]

A Canadian proposal to transfer six fighter and reconnaissance squadrons of the Home War Establishment to the United Kingdom was also welcomed by Portal but it was the supply of personnel for the bomber squadrons, particularly navigators, air bombers and wireless operator-air gunners that was worrying the British Chief.

Negotiations between the Army and the R.C.A.F. in regard to a common manpower policy had been begun in 1941 but after a promising start had made little headway.[10] In 1942 competition rather than co-operation had been the rule with each service making its own distinctive appeal to youth. In September 1942 the R.C.A.F., foreseeing a shortage of aircrew

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9 H.Q.S. 45-1-35, vol. 1, Portal to Breadner, 15 September, 1943.

10 V. supra, p. 371

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had begun to demand the same high standards of physical fitness for ground personnel as for aircrew. This policy, which explains why the R.C.A.F. was able to remuster so many more from ground duties to an aircrew category, was continued until September 1943 when government pressure was brought to bear on the two services to take a more co-operative approach in their efforts to meet their manpower quotas. The Army and R.C.A.F. then agreed to conduct an experiment whereby Army recruiting officers would refer to the R.C.A.F. all prospective recruits qualified for aircrew training and also those deemed suitable for air force ground duty but who were not physically acceptable for combat duty in the Army. As its part of the bargain the R.C.A.F. undertook to refer to the Army all those recruits who could not qualify for aircrew but who might be acceptable for a role in ground warfare. To facilitate co-operation combined army and air force recruiting centres were established.[11] How successful this experiment was, or might have been, it is difficult to say for it was in effect only a short time when the urgent need in aircrew recruiting was suddenly deflated.

The need for another high level meeting of the partners in the B.C.A.T.P. had been mooted as early as May 1943. In his report to the Supervisory Board in that month the

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11 I.Q.S. 45-1-35, vol. 1, various documents.

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Financial Adviser, R.G. Norman, suggested that if the Plan was to be continued beyond 31 March 1945 a decision would soon have to be made in order to allow advance procurement action to be taken in regard to aircraft and other items. In June the R.C.A.F. Air Member for Supply, T.M. Sheard, suggested that a meeting should be held early in the new year. The British High Commissioner referred the matter to the United Kingdom Government which agreed in principle to a meeting for January 1944 to discuss the problems which might arise if it proved necessary to continue the Air Training Plan beyond 31 March 1945.[12]

In November a new factor entered the situation. Returning from London, where he had a talk with government representatives relating to the proposed conference, the United Kingdom High Commissioner reported to the Supervisory Board that "the War Cabinet is engaged in a very close examination of the whole manpower situation".[13] No facts and figures would be forthcoming from this deliberation for another six weeks but it was pointed out that the United Kingdom was proposing certain reductions in R.A.F. training in Canada.

In spite of Portal's gloomy outlook in August 1943, the possibility that the R.A.F. might well end up with an ex-

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12 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 7, Minutes of Meetings Held 19 July, 1943 and 28 August, 1943.

13 Ibid, vol. 8, Minutes of Meeting Held 15 November, 1943, Appendix II.

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cess of aircrew, especially pilots, had been foreseen for some time. The effect of the decision to delete the position of co-pilot in bomber aircraft has already been mentioned as a factor in creating a pilot surplus.[14] Delays encountered in the United Kingdom in getting aircrew through operational training units and interruptions in shipping schedules also made it difficult to get a clear picture of the aircrew situation. From the end of 1942 aircrewwere waiting in the United Kingdom to proceed to more distant theatres while others, newly arrived from Canada and elsewhere were waiting to enter operational training units. On 10 December 1943, just after the United Kingdom High Commissioner returned to Canada from London, 10,605 aircrew were waiting to proceed with their training in England while about half this number, having passed through operational training units, were earmarked for duty in more distant theatres of war.[15] There were also pockets of aircrew scattered here and there in various quarters of the globe and it is doubtful if the Air Ministry knew with any degree of accuracy how many aircrew it had.

The United Kingdom High Commissioner said that one of the main reasons for the surplus was that casualty rates had been lower than was expected. Because of the allied bomb-

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14 V. supra, p. 325.

15 Great Britain, Air Ministry, Notes on the History of R.A.F. Training, 1939-1944, Air Member for Training, 1945, p. 66.

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ing offensive the main strength of the German Air Force was concentrated on the German homefront. It had been able to provide much lighter resistance in North Africa than the allied leaders had anticipated. This was also true of the air fighting in Sicily and Italy. In Western Europe the aggressive allied fighter pilots sweeping over the country side could not entice the Luftwaffe pilots into battle, for the Germans, wisely enough, were shepherding their air resources for the protection of the homeland against bombing attacks. In their bomber offensive the Allies were slowly grinding down their stubborn adversary. After some set backs the American Eighth Air Force was beginning to surmount its organizational and administrative difficulties. A decisive factor in the success of the daylight bombing raids was the long range Mustang fighter which came into use at the end of the year. Equipped with extra fuel tanks these aircraft could accompany the daylight bombers to Berlin and back. Luftwaffe pilots, who had previously played havoc with the unescorted bombers, now had to fight their way through a protective ring of fighter planes flown by American and Commonwealth pilots. Challenged in its own air space by better equipped, better trained and numerically superior forces, the German Air Force lost much of it potential to inflict damage. [16]

16 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate, Ed., Europe: Argument to V-E Day, January 1944 to May 1945 (The Army Air Forces in World War II), Chicago, University of Chicago, 1951, vol. 3, p. 3-13.

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Canadian authorities, including Power, Breadner and Air Marshal H.C. Edwards, in charge of the R.C.A.F. Overseas Headquarters in the United Kingdom, seem to have been slow in sensing the existence of an aircrew surplus. It must be admitted that they were handicapped in not being invited to the inner councils where matters of high policy were discussed and settled by the British and Americans. But they did know, or must have known, that large numbers of Canadian aircrew were waiting in the United Kingdom to be admitted to operational training units and a back log of graduates was being held in Canada due to limitations in shipping. They must also have known that the Americans, who had encountered manpower problems parallel to those of the Commonwealth countries, experiencing a shortage of aircrew in the summer and a surplus later in the year, were taking steps in November to curtail aircrew production.[17] Moreover, it will be recalled at the Ottawa Air Training Conference of June 1942 Air Commodore G.O. Johnson of the R.C.A.F. had suggested that unless the Commonwealth and the United States co-ordinated their air training programme there was a clear possibility of over expansion.[18] It might be that the very success of the B.C.A.T.P., the importance attached to it by the United King-

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17 W.F. Craven and J.L. Cate, Ed., Men and Planes (The Army Air Forces in World War II), Chicago, University of Chicago, 1956, vol. 6, p. 521-522.

18 V. supra, p. 314.

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dom and the prestige it was bringing to Canada caused Canadians to lose perspective of the strategical picture. At any rate, it was not until February 1944 that steps were taken to restrict the output of aircrew in Canada.

In place of a conference of the four partners which had been mentioned in the meetings of the Supervisory Board, a meeting between Air Minister Power and the British Under Secretary of State, H.H. Balfour, was held in Ottawa in February 1944. The former was accompanied by Leckie, then Chief of the Air Staff succeeding Breadner, while Air Marshal Sir Peter R.M. Drummond, the R.A.F. Air Member for Training, assisted Balfour. The main item for discussion was the reduction of the B.C.A.T.P. Preliminary talks held by the Supervisory Board had suggested that the number of schools might be cut by twenty-five per cent but the Balfour-Power Agreement signed on 16 February provided for a forty per cent reduction to be made effective by 31 March 1945.[19]

The reduction was so planned that existing output would be maintained until about the end of 1944, when it was anticipated that the war in Europe would be ended, and then

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19 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D878), agreements and decisions recorded as the result of discussions held in Ottawa February 7th to February 16th, Between: Capt. the Rt. Hon. H.H. Balfour and Air Marshall Sir Peter R.M. Drummond representing the United Kingdom and the Honourable C.G. Power and Air Marshal R. Leckie representing Canada, Appendix A.

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drop to a lower level sufficient to meet the aircrew needs of Canada and the United Kingdom for the prosecution of the war in Asia. At the request of the United Kingdom it was agreed that where convenient, R.A.F. schools would be closed first, reduction beginning about mid-summer and continuing into the next year. There were many factors to be considered such as costs of operation, disruption to the economy and geographical location. Where property leased by the Air Force was required for civilian purposes it was to be vacated at as early a date as possible. The most immediate effect was a temporary suspension in air force recruiting pending a review of future requirements. But there was no intention at this time of bringing the B.C.A.T.P. to an end. The record of agreement and decisions arrived at by Power and Balfour provided that:

> ...irrespective of any participation by the Australian and New Zealand Governments, the Joint Air Training Plan will be continued beyond 31st March, 1945 to cover such aircrew training requirements as may be necessary to cope with the probable future war situation.[20]

Although the main purpose of the Balfour-Power meeting was to discuss proposals for decelerating the training programme the status of the R.C.A.F. as an operational force entered into the discussions. As usual when Power and Balfour met the questions of commissioning R.C.A.F. personnel, Canadianizing R.C.A.F. squadrons and extending Canadian control

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20 Ibid.

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over R.C.A.F. personnel serving in R.A.F. squadrons, proved to be important talking points. On all these matters Power gained significant concessions. In general the Agreement provided that such matters as recall of R.C.A.F. personnel to their parent force, repatriation, length of tours of operational duty, the commissioning of all categories of Canadian aircrew and ground personnel were to be determined by the Canadian Government. A saving clause provided that there was to be no interference with operational efficiency. But this, in theory at least, did not affect Canadian rights for where operational efficiency was or was not a factor was to be determined jointly by the R.A.F. and the R.C.A.F. authorities whereas the Agreement signed in June 1942 had specified that "The final decision as to operational expediency rests with those responsible for the conduct of operations", in other words, the R.A.F.

On 16 February, the day on which his discussions with Balfour were terminated, Power made a statement in the House of Commons outlining in general terms what had been agreed upon:

> During the three years which followed the signing of the plan agreement in 1939, the principal preoccupation of Canada and the other partners was to create a training organization on which could be built fighting air forces equal in size and superior in quality to those of the enemy. Today...it can be said that this objective has been reached, and we have increasing air superiority over the enemy in every theatre of war....behind the front line squadrons, there are thousands of aircrew being put through operational

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> training units...and farther back again there are tens of thousands of young aircrew going through the schools of the British Commonwealth air training plan in Canada and in similar schools in other parts of the world.[21]

Balfour and Drummond had barely got back to England when it was revealed that the forty per cent reduction was far too modest. As a result in the latter part of April, Air Minister Power received a request through the High Commissioner for Great Britain for further drastic rearrangements in the aircrew training programme. The most urgent matter was to curtail the number of pilots to be trained in Canada and to completely stop the flow of pilots to the United Kingdom for at least two months. This reduction was to be effected by extending the course at service flying training schools from twenty weeks to twenty-eight weeks. There were sufficient aircrew graduates in the personnel reception centres in the United Kingdom to occupy the operational units over the next few months and it seemed possible that the surplus might not be dissipated by operational demands.[22] In short, there was every indication that the Air Ministry had got things into a muddle.

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21 Debates, House of Commons, Ottawa, Kings Printer, 1944, vol. 1, p. 535.

22 Directorate of History, J.M. Hitsman, Report No. 67, Manpower Problems of the Royal Canadian Air Force During the Second World War, [unpublished material], January, 1954, p. 23, citing H.Q.S. 20-1-18: MacDonald to Power, 26 April, 1944.

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In a personal letter to Air Marshal Leckie, dated 20 May 1944, Air Marshal Drummond drew a clearer picture of the situation. In order that the R.A.F. would be ready for the opening of the Second Front in North-West Europe, originally scheduled for 1 May, every squadron was "bulging" with crews and the supporting operational training units and advanced flying units were stocked with reserves.[23] As soon as it had become apparent that the opening of the Second Front would be delayed, a survey of aircrew held further back in the personnel reception centres had been made and a large surplus uncovered. Almost apologizing for the possibility that air casualties would be lighter than anticipated, Drummond wrote:

> My great anxiety is that when Second Front operations do start we shall not experience anything like the high wastage rates for which we have provisioned, so that the picture later in the year will be even worse than that shown in this appreciation.[24]

Reflecting on another possiblity he revealed the great responsibility carried by the men in charge of air operations: "Nobody knows what the Air Forces might not have to do should Overlord fail!" [25]

But Overlord, the code name for the allied invasion of Hitler's European fortress, did not fail. On 27 June,

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23 Hitsman , op. cit, quoting Drummond to Leckie, 20 May, 1944.

24 Ibid.

25 Ibid.

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Drummond again wrote Leckie in regard to the surplus and the means of dealing with it:

> I thing that you will agree that we have gone as far as possible in extending courses and arranging special courses and that if further surpluses occur, due to one reason or another, then we can no longer hold the surplus but must transfer it to...where it can be readily used, or even to ground duties in or outside the air forces....[26]

In Canada the Chief of the Air Staff told the heads of the various divisions of Air Force Headquarter on 19 June that the Air Minister had issued orders to stop all recruiting until 1 October, 1944.[27] Recruiting of ground personnel had already been suspended and on 21 June recruiting offices were closed. Transfers from the Army to the R.C.A.F. were suspended. July enlistments were only those already committed to cover special cases including a small number of air cadets to meet existing needs for air gunners. In August existing recruiting centres were disbanded with the exception of about six that were retained with limited staffs to take care of any future requirements.

The uncertainty about training more aircrew was soon brought to an end. As of 6 October, 1944 the B.C.A.T.P. had approximately 40,000 trained aircrew in all categories to which would be added 3,500 in post-graduate training courses

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26 Ibid, quoting Drummond to Leckie, 27 June, 1944.

27 Air Member for Personnel, Personnel History, vol. 2, p. 412.

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and nearly 13,000 anticipated graduates from current courses. After allowing for estimated casualties in the European war and the possible necessity of the R.C.A.F. having to participate in the war in Asia and replacing 18,000 tour expired personnel, the R.C.A.F. would have 10,500 trained aircrew surplus to all needs.[28] Since the R.A.F. was also faced with a surplus and Australia and New Zealand were considering withdrawing from the B.C.A.T.P. it was pointless to continue the Plan beyond 31 March, 1945. Despite the Power-Balfour Agreement of February the Canadian Government, on 19 October, decided to cancel all R.C.A.F. aircrew intakes for courses which could not be completed before 31 March, 1945 and bring the B.C.A.T.P. to an end on that date.[29]

Tremors of enormous magnitude ran through the training organization as the brakes were applied. The morale of students and instructors was badly shaken by the abrupt change in policy making them feel that they were not needed even though the war was raging on. The most bewildered of all were those who were about to begin their training. But a demand still existed for air gunners and flight engineers and there were still some flying chores to be done within the B.C.A.T.P. Aircraft had to be flown from schools that

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28 Hitsman, op. cit, p. 24, citing H.Q.S. 20-1-15, Power to MacDonald, 20 October, 1944.

29 Ibid, citing Gough to the Chief of the Air Staff, 24 October, 1944.

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were being shut down to other units which were kept open or ferried to central storage points. Staff pilots had to be provided for air observer schools as replacement for civilian flyers. But in many cases the young air force pilots, uncertain of what the future held for them, carried out their duties with an ill grace. Their attitude appears to have some connection with a rash of flying accidents that occurred toward the end of 1944 and early in 1945.[30]

Aircrew who were in the training stream were to be allowed to complete their courses but many were left nonplussed by the hastily imposed measures taken to reduce the surplus. About 4,200 pre-entry aircrew were slated for discharge and subsequent compulsory enrolment or voluntary enlistment in the Army. Wastage rates at the elementary flying training schools, which had been reduced to about fifteen per cent at the end of 1943 were arbitrarily raised to around thirty per cent to curtail the numbers undergoing training.[31] Students who successfully completed elementary flying training were faced with a number of choices none of which held too much appeal. If they wanted to get a posting to the United Kingdom they could remuster as air gunners or transfer

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30 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 61-63.

31 Minutes of the Supervisory Board, vol. 9, Minutes of Meeting Held 16 October, 1944, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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to the Army. If they wished to continue with flying training they faced a period of waiting, for the service flying training schools were filled due to the closing of some units and the lengthening of the course. In the interval the partly trained pilots had to accept whatever useful ground employment the Air Force had to offer. Trainees in service flying training schools were somewhat better off as they were kept hard at work in a revitalized programme. But on graduation they faced the prospect of being placed on an aircrew reserve from which they might or might not be recalled for active duty. Those who through lack of interest or proficiency could not keep up with the pace of the work were given the option of taking their discharge or transferring to the Army.[32]

Despite the surplus of pilots that existed in the United Kingdom, Canadian aircrew continued to move overseas throughout 1944. For the most part these were flying instructors, commanders of flying training schools and experienced aircrew from Canadian home based squadrons. They were earmarked for positions of command within the growing R.C.A.F. organization in the United Kingdom or as aircrew for the R.C.A.F. squadrons that were being formed for support roles in connection with the invasion of Europe. R.C.A.F. flyers

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32 Ibid, Minutes of Meeting Held 21 December, 1944, Report of the Chief of the Air Staff.

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experienced in air transportation duties were sent to the United Kingdom to assist in the formation of three air transport squadrons, two of which were for employment in India and Burma and the other for work with Canadian forces in North-West Europe. To the chagrin of the recently graduated B.C.A.T.P. aircrew they were by-passed in these arrangements. The reduction of the B.C.A.T.P. also threw large numbers of ground personnel into action in the United Kingdom where the R.C.A.F. was gradually taking on the aspects of a national force.

Despite the reduction of the B.C.A.T.P., the R.C.A.F. continued to have a training commitment. In December 1944 the Air Ministry stated that it wished to arrange to have British aircrew trained in Canada after 31 March, 1945. Pending the working out of a satisfactory agreement the Canadian Government agreed to accept one hundred R.A.F. pilot cadets and one hundred and four navigator cadets every two weeks.[33] A few hundred aircrew trainees from Australia and New Zealand who had left for Canada while the reduction of training was in progress were also taken into the schools, and training continued for members of the French Armee de l'Air and Aeronavale.

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33 Ibid.

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The closing down of units and schools of the B.C.A.T.P. begun in April 1944 went on throughout the succeeding months. By the end of 1944 three elementary flying training schools, fifteen service flying training schools, eight bombing and gunnery schools, six operational training units and one ground reconnaissance school were still in operation with various supporting units. The last of the R.A.F. schools was disbanded in December though there were still about 500 R.A.F. personnel, graduates of the B.C.A.T.P., serving in Canada as instructors or in other capacities. Approximately forty Australians and a smaller number of New Zealanders were similarly employed. On 29 March, 1945, graduation parades were held at fourteen service flying training schools, four air observer schools and one bombing and gunnery school when the last classes of aircrew to be graduated under the B.C.A.T.P. received their wings. Air training continued at a few of these units which were absorbed into the reduced structure of the R.C.A.F. Most of the schools, along with units already closed, were placed on a care and maintenance basis awaiting arrangements for the final disposition of the property. A shadow plan, consisting of a few schools that could be brought into operation on short notice if hostilities took an unfavourable turn, was maintained until the end of the war.

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TABLE X [34]

SUMMARY OF AIRCREW GRADUATES

October 1940-March 1945

	Pilot	Nav B	Nav W	Nav	Air Bomb	WOAG	AG	Naval AG	Flt Eng	Total
RCAF	25,747	5,154	421	7,280	6,659	12,744	12,917	-	1,913	72,835
RAF	17,796	3,113	3,847	6,922	7,581	755	1,392	704	-	42,110
RAAF	4,045	699	-	944	799	2,875	244	-	-	9,606
RNZAF	2,220	829	30	724	634	2,122	443	-	-	7,002
Total	49,808	9,795	4,298	15,870	15,673	18,496	14,996	704	1,913	131,553

Figures do not include 407 B.C.A.T.P. pilots who received training in R.A.F. transferred schools prior to July 1942 including 332 R.C.A.F., 9 R.A.F. and 66 R.N.Z.A.F. nor 5296 Fleet Air Arm personnel (United Kingdom) who received training in R.A.F. transferred schools prior to July 1942.

34 Final Report of the Chief of the Air Staff, p. 53

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CHAPTER XVI

CLEANING THE SLATE

It now remained but to count the cost, settle outstanding accounts and close the books on the B.C.A.T.P. For two reasons this work had to be done as expeditiously as possible. One was that the accounts were so detailed, numerous and replete with amended entries that if left for any length of time they would become unintelligible. The other was that there was general agreement among the Allies that international ledgers must be set in order as soon as possible and the way prepared for the resumption of peace time economic activities. Such unproductive entries as war debts were to be expunged and not allowed to clog the channels of world trade as had happened after the First World War. Canada was a leading advocate of this policy. As one of the world's principal suppliers of foodstuffs and raw materials it had emerged from the war as a creditor nation. It still wanted to sell to its Commonwealth partners but commerce could not flow freely until the old accounts were settled and a new set of ledgers opened.

It was not too difficult to estimate the cost of the B.C.A.T.P. As administrator, Canada had made a financial outlay of $2,346,957,474 on behalf of itself and its partners.[1]

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1 Department of National Defence, Report of the Department of National Defence For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31 1947, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1947, p. 80.

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In addition the United Kingdom had provided equipment valued at $162,260,787.[2] Equipment and petroleum products furnished under lend-lease amounted to $283,499,362.[3] The total cost, therefore, was approximately $2,892,717,623.

Part of the money spent by Canada was recoverable from its partners in the Plan and one of the problems facing the United Kingdom and Canada after the war was to determine what portion of the Canadian expenditure was sharable. Australia and New Zealand, having settled their accounts with Canada either monthly or quarterly, were not directly involved in the post-war settlements. Payments received from Australia totalled $65,181,068 and from New Zealand $48,025,393.[4] Between Canada and the United Kingdom, however, there were many claims and counter claims to be disposed of. These had become so complicated that Air Minister Power had, with tongue in cheek, predicted that it would take two or three generations of accountants to untangle the snarls.[5] Nevertheless, a team of experts, working under the direction of H.G. Norman, the financial adviser of the B.C.A.T.P. and F.C. Fayers of

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2 Debates, House of Commons 1946, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1947, vol. 1, p. 357.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid.

5 Debates, House of Commons 1942, vol. 2, p. 2410-2411.

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the United Kingdom, and making frequent use of the element of estimate, produced a balance sheet in September 1945 that was acceptable to both Canada and the United Kingdom. For purposes of accounting the B.C.A.T.P. was divided into two parts, Plan No. 1 and Plan No. 2. Plan No. 1 was considered to have come to an end on 30 June 1942. At that time a fresh ledger had been opened and accounts entered according to the agreement drawn up in Ottawa earlier in the month. In Plan No. 1 Britain's share of the cost was to have been paid for entirely by contribution in kind but because of problems arising from the unexpected turn of events in the European war she had been unable to maintain the scheduled shipment of aircraft, spare parts and accessories. To make up the deficiency, Canada was obliged to purchase equipment to the extent of $136,367,391. During the Course of Plan No. 1 the United Kingdom Government was granted authority to transfer several R.A.F. schools from Great Britain to Canada. Although these orphaned units were outside the scope of the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement, and remained the direct financial responsibility of the United Kingdom Treasury, Canada, in the role of host and administrator, was obliged to make cash outlays in connection with them amounting to $75,476,869. Thus when Plan No. 1 came to an end on 30 June, 1942 Canada held a claim against

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the United Kingdom for approximately $212,000,000.[6] As a result of adjustments made through deducting British payments and miscellaneous counter claims against Canada this amount was reduced to $202,634,867. To round out the figure Canada waived $2,634,867 leaving a balance of $200,000,000 as an amount recoverable from the United Kingdom.[7]

The shareable cost of Plan No.2, from 1 July,1942 to March 1945, was estimated at $1,434,226,236[8] twice that of Plan No.1. Under the B.C.A.T.P. Agreement of June 1942 the cost of Plan No.2 was to be shared between the United Kingdom and Canada. The United Kingdom's share was to include payments received by Australia and New Zealand, equipment furnished directly by the British Government and items supplied through lend-lease.[9] Any balance left over was to be in the form of a cash settlement. When the books were bal-

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6 Directorate of History, 181.009 (D2784), Summary Re 607-608 Committee, ledger sheets, labelled "British Commonwealth Air Training Plan".

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid. In Plan No. 1 and Plan No. 2 the cost of recruiting Canadian aircrew and processing them through manning depots and initial training schools was not shareable as facilities involved were used for Canadians only. In Plan No. 1 the elementary flying training schools in Canada were used by Canadians only and the entire cost was therefore chargeable to Canada.

9 V. supra, p. 322-323.

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anced after the war the contributions credited to the United Kingdom are shown in Table XI.

TABLE XI

Contributions Credited to the United Kingdom on Account of Plan No. 2.

Equipment furnished by the United Kingdom	$ 74,895,755.67
Equipment furnished through lend-lease	243,030,799.72
Petroleum products furnished through lend-lease	37,469,562.94
Payments received from Australia and New Zealand	51,205,461.70
Mutual aid extended to Australia and New Zealand by Canada	28,000,498.85
	$434,602,078.88 [10]

When the above amount was deducted from the United Kingdom's overall liability of $717,113,118.13 a balance of $282,511,039.25 was owing. Sundry credits to the United Kingdom reduced this figure to $225,682,811.64. Canada waived $682,811.64 leaving an outstanding settlement of $225,000,000.[11] Thus between Plan No. 1 and Plan No. 2, $425,000,000 was outstanding when the books were balanced by Norman and Bayers in September 1945.

When the Second Session of the first post war Parliament met on 14 March, 1946, the Governor General's speech included a reference to a Canadian loan to the United Kingdom

10 181.009 (D2784), Summary Re 607-608 Committee, Ledger sheets labelled, "British Commonwealth Air Training Plan".

11 Ibid.

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to help maintain the British market for Canadian food products and other exports. Subsequently, on 29 March the Minister of Finance introduced Bill No. 28 providing for a loan of $1,250,000,000. Included on the Bill, as Article 7, was a clause cancelling the $425,000,000 owing by the Government of the United Kingdom to Canada under the B.C.A.T.P. Agreements of 1939 and 1942. On 7 May the Bill was passed on a division of 167 to 6 and the books were closed on the B.C.A.T.P.

There was a second and more colourful anticlimax before the curtain was finally drawn. On 30 September, 1949, representatives and visitors from Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, the United States and other nations that had in one way or another taken part in the B.C.A.T.P., gathered at Trenton, Ontario in an atmosphere of military pomp and splendour to evoke proud memories of the air training plan. The highlight of the occasion was the presentation to Canada by the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, of a set of wrought iron gates. Intended as a permanent memorial to the B.C.A.T.P. and a symbol of Commonwealth friendship and unity, the gates, bearing the coats of arms of the four partner countries, looked down on the parade square where members of the first class of air observers to graduate under the B.C.A.T.P. had received their wings at No. 1 Air Navigational School on 24 October, 1940. In accepting the Memorial Gates Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent remarked:

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> We are to-day dedicating an enduring monument to the vision of those who conceived the air training plan, to the energy of those who organized it and to the trained airmen from its schools who fought and won victory in the air.[12]

An equally impressive part of the ceremony was the presentation by Canada of silver plaques to the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and the United States in token of the assistance and co-operation rendered in the organization and development of the Plan. As a memento of his work on behalf of the Air Training Plan, C.G. Power, no longer a member of the Canadian Cabinet, received a gold key to the Gates. At the conclusion of the programme the dignitaries and visitors passed through the Gates. As they did so they could read on the flanking limestone walls an epitaph to the thousands of B.C.A.T.P. graduates who lost their lives in the war:

> Their shoulders held the sky suspended: They stood, and earth's foundations stay.

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12 R.C.A.F. Headquarters, The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan 1939-1945, An Historical Sketch and Record of the Ceremony at R.C.A.F. Station Trenton, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1949, p. 39.

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

What, then, is to be made of the B.C.A.T.P.? One might say, without much fear of contradiction, that it was the most outstanding example of Commonwealth co-operation either in war or in peace, and one of the greatest episodes in the history of Canadian aviation. It brought prestige and renown to Canada, and gave a lasting reputation to the R.C.A.F. for the high standard of its training. Although this thesis may lend support to these contentions, it was undertaken with other questions in mind, namely, to trace the origins of the B.C.A.T.P., to determine how Canada, though unprepared for war, was able to put such a large scheme into operation in a relatively short time, to examine the problems involved in carrying the Plan through and to assess its military effectiveness. These questions must now be considered in review.

The factors which made Canada strategically important as an air training centre appear easy enough to grasp. The country lay reasonably close to the United Kingdom yet distant enough from the main scene of military operations to enable air training to be carried out without interference from marauding aircraft. The great Canadian expanse precluded any danger of overcrowding such as existed in the United Kingdom; Canada more than any other part of the Commonwealth had access to the industrial resources of the United States which was then, as it is now, the world's principal supplier of aircraft.

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Yet, if this was all that Canada had to offer, the United Kingdom might have gained the same advantages by having its aircrew trained in the United States. While there may have been some obstacles to such a course it is not inconceivable that suitable arrangements could have been made. To point out this possibility, however, merely underlines the fact that the main consideration which made Canada so important to the British as an air training centre was the supply of manpower. This is clearly evident in the pre-war correspondence between the Canadian Air Liaison Officer in London and the Chief of the Air Staff of the R.C.A.F.; in the willingness of the R.A.F. to assume the cost of maintaining all the graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. employed on air operations outside the Western Hemisphere; and in the nature of the air training agreements under which Canada, along with Australia and New Zealand, was asked to contribute a definite quota of aircrew for service with the R.A.F. Although Canada and the other junior partners in the Commonwealth had their own national air forces and even after war broke out thought of sending national air contingents into battle, the Air Marshals at the British Air Ministry had already discounted the Canadian Air Force, and other Commonwealth Air Forces, as possible partners in air warfare. As the British viewed the coming struggle they thought in terms of one big air force, the R.A.F., to which Canada and the other Commonwealth countries

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would contribute aircrew. It is within this concept that the B.C.A.T.P. had its origin.

There is another side to the question involving certain constitutional and political overtones. Given that Canada had traditionally and consistently spoken out against centrally organized Commonwealth military organizations, that it had stoutly advocated national autonomy within the Commonwealth relationship, that it had developed an air force of its own, it might have been expected that in the Second World War Canadian airmen would have gone into combat in their own squadrons, led by their own officers with the Canadian Government maintaining a large measure of control as in the case of the Army. Instead, air co-operation developed as a one sided affair with the British very much in control. The war had scarcely begun when Canada signed an agreement to place a large portion of its manpower, literally all of its potential pilots, navigators and wireless operator-air gunners at the disposal of the British Air Ministry with a very slim guarantee that some semblance of a national air force would be maintained. There is no single explanation for this reversal of policy and if one asks where, in fact, did it begin, it is to the complex events preceding the Second World War that we must ultimately look. The explanation lies partly in the pattern of air co-operation wherein Canada and other of the Commonwealth countries entered into agreements with the United

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Kingdom to supply recruits for the R.A.F., partly in the weakness of the R.C.A.F. and other Commonwealth air forces other than the R.A.F., and partly in the knowledge and fear that the United Kingdom, the heart of the Commonwealth, lay exposed to air attack. Although the British proposal cut directly across Canadian national aspirations the idea was militarily sound and the Canadian Government had no satisfactory alternative to offer. In this respect the B.C.A.T.P. affords a good illustration of the extent to which trends of defence policy can give way before the harsh realities of fear and force.

For the student of military affairs perhaps the most striking aspect of the B.C.A.T.P. may be that a programme of such gigantic proportions was undertaken by a country whose air force consisted in the main of a handful of experienced pilots lacking in knowledge of many of the problems involved, and, having been undertaken was carried out with a good measure of success. How this was accomplished is now a matter of record and the answer is simply that the Air Training Plan was conceived and developed as a national enterprise not unlike the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway or the construction of the St. Lawrence Seaway. Two factors loom large. One was the employment of large numbers of civilians some of whom were taken directly into the Air Force and given appointments of responsibility. Of equal significance was the degree

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of co-operation between the military and civilian elements of aviation. Between the wars military and civil aviation had often worked hand in hand and the culmination of this co-operation came rather unexpectedly in the B.C.A.T.P. It will be recalled that the Air Board, in recommending the establishment of an air force, had suggested that in a country like Canada military and civil aviation must be developed interdependently. In this, the Board was stating an axiom rather than a policy and it was in this sense that aviation developed in Canada. That there was both truth and common sense in the Board's statement was borne out in the B.C.A.T.P. Whether the principle is valid today, or the extent to which it is valid, is a question which could be worthy of further study.

The problems involved in the course of the B.C.A.T.P. were many and varied. From the beginning of the Plan to the end of the war there was never a time when it was really stable. As soon as one crisis passed a new one appeared. Most of these difficulties would have emerged even if Canada had limited its air effort to the training and organization of its own air force but because of the mass training programme the problems assumed immense proportions. Yet herein lay one of the great strategic advantages of the B.C.A.T.P. - it provided a common organization through which trainees from several countries could be funnelled. Without it each of the

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participating countries would have had to sustain similar but smaller organizations with considerable duplication in effort and expense. The military advantages of of the B.C.A.T.P. over smaller national air training programmes compare to the economic advantages of the mass production method of manufacture over small scale operations. The output, aircrew, could be maintained at a higher rate and with more scope for standardization and specialization that in smaller programmes. If the production of aircrew in assembly line fashion did get out of hand in 1943 and 1944 this was really the fault of the users of the product, the R.A.F. and the administrators, the R.C.A.F., and points more to the success of the Training Plan than to any inherent weakness. It would appear, however, that military training on a mass international scale lends itself better to air forces than to other military services. For instance, it is extremely doubtful if allied armies, which are much more rigid in their organization than air forces, could have been trained in this manner. Another important ingredient of an international training programme, which was inherent in the B.C.A.T.P., is a common feeling of purpose and outlook of the countries involved.

While it would be something of an exaggeration to say that the war could not have been won without the Air Training Plan, it is certain that the Plan was an important factor in the success of allied arms. It was not the only source of

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aircrew for the R.A.F. but it was the main source. From the time the first B.C.A.T.P. graduates arrived in the United Kingdom in November 1940 the British Air Force was assured of a supply of aircrew. Graduates of the B.C.A.T.P. were to be found on every front and in every part of the world where Commonwealth forces were involved and in as much as the gaining of air supremacy was the first consideration in the ultimate success of all military operations the B.C.A.T.P. was a vital factor in determining the outcome of the war. Not everyone will agree with the statements of King, Power and Breadner that it was Canada's most important contribution to the war but few will deny that in its origin, its problems and its achievements it was the most remarkable.

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This thesis is based primarily on documents in the Public Archives of Canada, the Public Archives Record Centre and the Directorate of History, Canadian Armed Forces Headquarters. Considerable use was also made of the secondary sources listed, though they often provide only a few pages, and in some cases a few lines, of background material.

In general the procedures outlined in the guide provided by the University of Ottawa have been followed.[1] In the citation of primary sources, however, it has sometimes been found necessary to use special devices. Headquarters (H.Q.) files are shown by the file numbers and the exact title of the file since this is the way these files are listed in the finding aids at the Public Archives of Canada and the Public Archives Record Centre where the bulk of these files are located. A more difficult problem is presented in citing from the wide variety of material located in the Directorate of History. Most of this material is organized and arranged in a Kardex file system in which the various items have a special Kardex call number and in addition are cross-referenced according to the nature of the documents or collection of documents. Consequently, files and records from the Directorate of History are generally listed in the bibliography according to the call number followed by a general description rather than an exact title.

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Air force war diaries.
These include daily diaries of all units of the Air Training Plan. They represent a reliable and invaluable source of information though their usefulness varies according to the conscientiousness of the person assigned to keep the diaries.

Minutes of the Meetings of the Supervisory Board, 10 vols.
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7 Private Papers

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These files were created while Power was Minister of National Defence for Air but contain some material on the negotiations concerning the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan which, of course, took place before the Department of National Defence for Air was organized. Some of the material is duplicated in the files of the Public Archives of Canada and those of the Directorate of History.

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A reliable description of Norwegian air training activities in Canada during the war. The author was a member of the Royal Canadian Air Force who served as Air Liaison Officer at the Norwegian air training establishment. In compiling his history he had access to files some of which are now located in the Public Archives of Canada and others which were apparently retained by the Royal Norwegian Air Force.

British Commonwealth Air Training Plan, Flying Training, (arranged and paginated by topics)
A very helpful guide to pilot training under the Air Training Plan. Covers the training of pilots from entry into initial training school through to service flying training school. Includes statistical tables, diagrams and major changes in syllabi.

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APPENDIX I

ABSTRACT OF

The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan[1] 1939 - 1945

The British Commonwealth Air Training Plan is generally considered to have been one of Canada's most important contributions to the success of allied arms in the Second World War. The purpose of this thesis is to trace the origins of the Air Training Plan, to delineate its problems, to assess its military significance and to determine why Canada, though unprepared for war was able to put the Plan into operation on rather short notice.

The origin of the Air Training Plan may be traced back to the troubled years between 1930 and 1939. In bringing the Royal Air Force up to strength the British Government began to recruit pilots from different countries of the Commonwealth including Canada. In addition it arranged to have some pilots trained in Canada. When war began the the United Kingdom asked to have the air training programme in Canada enlarged and also suggested that aircrew from Australia and New Zealand be trained in Canada. This proposal was accepted and the end result was the organization of the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan . Foreseeing that as a result many Canadians would end up serving in

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1 Fred J. Hatch, doctral thesis presented to the Department of History of the University of Ottawa, January 1969, xiii - 510 p.

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the British Air Force, Prime Minister King, before signing the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan Agreement in December 1939, secured from the British Government a promise that at least some distinctive Canadian units would be formed.

To launch the Plan and keep it going the Canadian Air Force asked for and received the support of the civil air organization including the Department of Transport and the commercial aviation companies. The Government also decided to create a new department - The Department of National Defence for Air to administer the Plan. In 1942 the British Commonwealth Air Training Plan was almost doubled in size and came to include a number of schools transferred on bloc from the United Kingdom. Some of the allied governments in exile also made use of the Air Training Plan.

The Air Training Plan reached its greatest expansion in 1943. In that year production averaged over 3000 aircrew graduates per month. The Plan was not the only source of aircrew for the Royal Air Force but it was the main source. It was one of the principal factors which enabled the Allies to attain air supremacy. However, it made it virtually impossible for Canada, Australia and New Zealand to develop national air contingents comparable to their army and naval contingents. The Plan brought wide recognition and prestige to Canada but by the same token the part played by Canadians in air operations was lost sight of in the folds of the British Air Force. Over half the number of Canadian who flew on air operations served with the British Air Force.

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