

Mahan's day is said to have desired a base in Newfoundland but there could have been no possibility of obtaining the concession except under the pressure of a great emergency, such as occurred on the fall of France. The unconditional British grant of the Newfoundland bases therefore represents something far larger than the mere panic of the moment; these bases seem to be part of a coherent, consistent pattern of American defence now of many years standing. This pattern works itself out bit by bit, either by conscious action based on long-range policy or by empiric processes enjoined by the circumstances of the moment and as opportunity offers, opportunity being political events of sufficient magnitude to scare the American public out of its ordinary indifference to matters of defence.

American expansion, of which schemes for defence form an aspect, has been continuous from the days of the first settlements and the doctrine of isolation has had little to do with it.... Since World War I at least, the motive in most of this expansion has been plain — to add to the security of the continental United States.... The east coast, far the most important, for some curious reason, has been the most neglected — perhaps because of a half-conscious perception of Great Britain as a barrier against predatory Europe. Yet it must have been evident to keen students that the United States sooner or later would have to have Atlantic offshore defences comparable with those it possesses in the Pacific. That process was begun in the summer of 1940 with the acquisition of bases in Bermuda and Newfoundland and extended in 1941 with the moves into Greenland and Iceland. The United States has thus very consistently throughout its history followed a policy of securing control of all outposts from which threats to its security might be made. Its conception of outposts has grown with the increase in the range and effectiveness of the instruments of war. Where the conception will eventually lead American arms, is anyone's speculation....

Whatever the temporary problems of adjustment yet unsettled, it is impossible to go about Newfoundland today without feeling that something big has occurred; something as big as the

previous American advances eastward along the coast in 1745 and 1758. This advance has cut that much more of the continent out of the dominion of a non-American power. Actually, perhaps, out of the dominion of another power into whose possession the island came many generations ago.

The nation whose fortunes are most intimately bound up with Newfoundland is Canada. It is abundantly clear that it must be a major aspect of Canadian policy to ensure the retention of Newfoundland in friendly hands and to see that even the friendliest of hands do not arrange things to her disadvantage. So long as Newfoundland was a simple British possession and there was no doubt of Great Britain's sea supremacy in the Atlantic, issues of sovereignty did not arise. Canadians were slow to grasp the changing position of Great Britain in sea power and the way in which that change might affect them. The whole issue was focused sharply in June, 1940. The fall of France and the possible fall of Great Britain was quickly reflected in Canada's assumption of responsibility for the defence of Newfoundland and in her increase of her forces there. This was the first direct Canadian intervention in Newfoundland.

Canada is as yet politically an immature country that is only slowly realising its own individuality; it is therefore not to be expected that it would have as clear-cut a policy as has the United States. Until June 1940, it was impossible to secure much attention to arguments urging that Canada should assume responsibilities in Newfoundland.

I move now that the committee rise and report progress.

**Mr. Chairman** The committee report that they have considered the matter to them referred, made some progress and ask leave to sit again tomorrow. The motion is that the report of the committee be received and adopted. Motion carried.

**Mr. Hollett** Notice of closure: I beg to move that immediately before the orders of the day are called on Wednesday, 14 January, 1948.

*[The Convention adjourned]*