

# Canada's Plan to Torch St. John's During the Second World War:

## Upper-Canadian Arrogance or Tabloid Journalism

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## RESEARCH NOTE

# Canada's Plan to Torch St. John's During the Second World War: Upper-Canadian Arrogance or Tabloid Journalism

PAUL COLLINS

IN MAY 1998, JOURNALIST Daniel LeBlanc of the *Ottawa Citizen* created something of a stir when he published a series of articles exposing "Canada's plan to torch St. John's" during the Second World War. LeBlanc based this claim on the then newly declassified documents which supposedly revealed that, in the event of an invasion, military authorities planned to burn St. John's to the ground rather than let the Germans occupy it. Indeed, the centrepiece of the plan was, apparently, to dump the fuel in the large tanks overlooking St. John's into the harbour and ignite it. This would produce, "a mushroom of fire and smoke over the city," and transform St. John's into a "version of hell." Even more scurrilous, according to Leblanc, neither the Newfoundland public nor their government was to be informed until the very last moment.<sup>1</sup> Not surprisingly, the *Ottawa Citizen* articles, reprinted in the St. John's *Evening Telegram*, caused an uproar in Newfoundland's capital city.<sup>2</sup> St. John's mayor Andy Wells, a self-avowed anti-Confederate, considered it "Upper-

Canadian arrogance at its best.”<sup>3</sup> Well-known Newfoundland historian Patrick O’Flaherty suggested that it was typical of Canada’s attitude towards Newfoundland, and that Canada’s “interest in the place was really only to defend Canada.”<sup>4</sup> Over the next several days, letters and editorials appeared in several local and national newspapers either justifying Canada’s “Scorched Earth Policy” or condemning it.<sup>5</sup> Eventually, the uproar subsided but not the belief in the charge that Canada secretly planned to burn St. John’s. In fact, this belief most recently appeared in a book on the wartime Royal Newfoundland Constabulary.<sup>6</sup> This essay shows that, while military planners did develop a plan to deny the Germans military facilities and supplies if they captured St. John’s, not only did Canadian authorities have absolutely no intention of destroying the city in the event of an attack, but the very idea for such a plan actually originated with the Newfoundland government.

The winter of 1942 was one of the darkest periods of the Second World War. The Japanese had smashed the American fleet at Pearl Harbor and were advancing unchecked throughout the western Pacific. Rommel had the British on the ropes in North Africa, and Hitler’s U-boats had moved across the Atlantic and were now sinking ships within sight of land from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico. By this time, Newfoundland was an armed camp; it hosted both American and Canadian forces. Through an August 1940 agreement, Britain gave the United States the right to construct bases on British territory in the Western hemisphere in return for fifty surplus destroyers. As an attachment to this agreement, Britain also offered the US bases in Bermuda and Newfoundland, “freely and without consideration.” Ultimately, the United States stationed forces at St. John’s, Torbay, Argentia, Gander, Stephenville and eventually Goose Bay, Labrador. The first Americans arrived in St. John’s aboard the *Edmund B. Alexander* in January 1941. By war’s end, tens of thousands of American servicemen had been stationed in Newfoundland and Labrador, and hundreds of thousands of US military personnel and passengers had passed through the various US facilities throughout the colony.<sup>7</sup>

Although less vivid in popular memory, the Canadians had arrived earlier — in 1940 — but in much smaller numbers. Ottawa had made a commitment to defend Newfoundland even before Canada entered the war against Germany. Canada considered its neighbour an “essential Canadian interest,” and an important part of the “Canadian orbit.” Despite the rhetoric of fraternity, the reality was that Newfoundland possessed a number of military targets that were important to Canada: the airport at Gander, the trans-Atlantic seaplane base at Botwood, the iron ore mines on Bell Island which provided one third of the ore for the steel mills of Cape Breton, the numerous cable and wireless stations along the coast, and of course, the city of St. John’s, the economic and political centre of Newfoundland. Furthermore, thanks to its geographical position, Newfoundland was the “key to the gulf of Canada,” and, “in many ways [its] first line of defence.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed, Newfoundland Governor Humphrey Walwyn prefigured O’Flaherty’s sentiments that it was, “quite apparent that Newfoundland [was] being considered only in so far as the defence of Canada

[was] concerned.”<sup>9</sup> During the “Phoney War” in Europe, the Canadian government did not act upon its commitment. Upon visiting Ottawa to discuss Canada’s defence plans for Newfoundland, the Newfoundland-born Commissioner for Justice and Defence, L.E. Emerson, was surprised to discover that no preparations at all had been made.<sup>10</sup> In meetings with the Chief of the General Staff Major-General T.V. Anderson, the head of the navy Rear-Admiral Percy Nelles, and RCAF Chief Air Vice Marshal G.M. Croil, Emerson discovered that no instructions had been issued relating to Newfoundland other than for the defence of Bell Island and those parts of the coast that were important to the defence of Canada. No provisions had been made to base anything in Newfoundland to protect the populous yet vulnerable coast stretching from Cape Freels at the head of the Bonavista Peninsula to Cape Race at the southern tip of the Avalon Peninsula. Emerson suggested basing reconnaissance seaplanes at Bay Bulls or Trepassey on the Southern Shore, or even somewhere in St. Mary’s Bay or Placentia Bay. The Canadians regretted that “they did not have any planes to spare,” but did offer to train men to man the guns on Bell Island.<sup>11</sup>

That changed as the German *Blitzkrieg* swept through Western Europe. Ottawa dispatched the 1st Battalion of the Black Watch of Canada to Botwood and stationed five Douglas Digby bombers from RCAF No. 10 Squadron at Gander. By the winter of 1942, the Canadian army had set up camp at Lester’s Field in St. John’s. With the arrival of the Royal Canadian Navy and the creation of the Newfoundland Escort Force under the command of Commodore Leonard Murray in May 1941, St. John’s became an important naval base. During the course of the war, over 500 warships were stationed at St. John’s. During the same period, the number of naval personnel serving at St. John’s rose from less than 1,000 in 1941 to more than 5,000 at war’s end.<sup>12</sup> This figure does not include the thousands of sailors that crewed the 25 to 30 warships that were alongside the pier on any one day.

At about the same time that Canada decided to establish a naval base at St. John’s, Ottawa also approved the construction of a Royal Canadian Air Force base near the community of Torbay. Forces stationed there would provide harbour protection for St. John’s and Bell Island, and patrol the convoy routes east of Newfoundland. During the summer of 1941, Group Headquarters was established at St. John’s under the command of Group Captain C.M. McEwen, and RCAF Station Torbay opened in October 1941. Patrols were started when four Hudson bombers from No. 2 (British) Squadron arrived from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia the following month. From this point on, convoys were offered air cover as far as 600 kilometres east. For anti-submarine sweeps and reconnaissance patrols using both Hudson and Digby anti-submarine bombers, this was stretched to 1000 kilometres.<sup>13</sup> In light of the dramatic increase in passenger traffic between Newfoundland and Canada, in February 1942, the Newfoundland government approved the Canadian Government’s request to open the Torbay airbase to a regular Trans-Canada Airline service between the two dominions.<sup>14</sup>

It is not surprising that, after the German declaration of war on the United States, local commanders became very concerned about a German raid on Newfoundland. Indeed, the commander of the American ground forces in Newfoundland, Major-General G.C. Brant, felt that such an attack was “not only possible at present, but very probable.”<sup>15</sup> Even before this, US President Roosevelt expressed his concerns to British Prime Minister Churchill as to the security of Newfoundland. In April 1941, he proposed sending an additional half battery of 8" guns, one squadron of 3 medium and 3 heavy bombers, and 57 officers and 575 men to Newfoundland to bolster defences.<sup>16</sup> The fear was that, should the Germans get a foothold on the island, the whole east coast of Canada and the United States would be open to naval and air attack. U-boats operating from Newfoundland could sever the convoy routes between North America and Great Britain, and the war in Europe would be in jeopardy.

It did not take long for the U-boats to make their presence felt in the waters around Newfoundland. In early February 1942, the Americans attacked “definite sound contacts” in Placentia Bay, not far from their base at Argentia, and suspected that two U-boats were patrolling the bay.<sup>17</sup> On 1 March, a patrol plane from Argentia sighted and sank a U-boat forty kilometers south of Trepassey, the first American U-boat kill of the war.<sup>18</sup> Two days later, the residents of St. John’s experienced three heavy explosions in quick succession coming from the Narrows. That the explosions were the result of torpedoes being fired at the entrance to St. John’s Harbour was confirmed several days later.<sup>19</sup> Over the next six months, four ore carriers were sunk off Bell Island, and the Sydney to Port aux Basques passenger ferry *Caribou* was lost to a U-boat attack, all with heavy casualties.<sup>20</sup> Even though the battlefields of Europe were thousands of miles away, there was no doubt that Newfoundland was on the front lines.

Shortly after the Americans entered the war, local Canadian and American service heads met with select Newfoundland Commission of Government members to discuss defence arrangements for Newfoundland. The group concluded that any attack would have to come from seaward and would take the form of air attack and/or shore bombardment. Consequently, a comprehensive blackout regime was planned. Commissioner of Defence Emerson proposed that a two week continuous blackout be tried at the end of January 1942. Notice would be given in newspapers and the regulations would cover the whole of St. John’s and surrounding area, including Conception Bay. During the blackout, local radio stations would be asked to suspend their broadcasts, so enemy forces could not use them to home in on their targets. The committee concluded that air raid shelters were impractical. First of all, an effective shelter needed to be at least 9 metres underground to provide protection against high explosive bombs, and St. John’s, for the most part, sits on solid rock. Furthermore, any air assault would be seaborne and thus limited in size, and consequently a sustained air attack was not anticipated. As radar had not yet been installed, the raid would probably be over before anyone could take shelter anyway.

Thus, the committee felt that the main cause of casualties would be falling debris and splinters. Experience in Britain showed that the best defence against this danger was for people to stay in their homes, under stairs or in cupboards or pantries, and to tape or board up windows. However, the committee thought that any attacking forces would probably use incendiaries as opposed to high explosives, so fire posed the biggest danger.<sup>21</sup>

Any attack on St. John's would concentrate on shipping and harbour facilities. However, as the city was built up around the harbour with mainly wooden buildings and homes, any attack, especially with incendiaries, would pose a serious fire hazard to the whole area. To combat this threat, the committee had at its disposal the local Auxiliary Fire Service, the RCAF Fire Unit at Torbay and the US Fire Unit at Fort Pepperell. In addition, homes and businesses would be encouraged to take their own fire precautions including the provision of stirrup pumps and bags of sand. Fire wardens would also be organized and called out in the event of an attack. One could anticipate that any serious incursion would leave several thousand people homeless. The Americans offered Camp Alexander as emergency accommodation for up to 2000 people, as well as their facilities at Torbay and Argentia. Evacuees would need to be fed and US military authorities also offered to furnish mobile kitchens to feed both firefighters and those forced to evacuate their homes. To this end, food supplies would have to be stockpiled. The committee hoped that the merchants of St. John's could be organized to arrange for the storage and distribution of foodstuffs. In the meantime, homeowners would be asked to obtain several days worth of essential supplies for an emergency. The meeting adjourned with arrangements apparently well in hand.<sup>22</sup> Nevertheless, in February 1942, the British government released copies of its secret Scorched Earth Policy to the governments of its various colonial dependencies and dominions.<sup>23</sup>

Faced with the very real possibility of an invasion of the United Kingdom in 1940, the British planned to leave nothing of value for the Germans. Their Scorched Earth Policy called for the destruction of all Naval, Army, and Air Force installations, plus cable and telegraph stations, oil and gasoline stocks, food and raw materials, transportation facilities including harbour installations, mine workings and equipment, plus all supplies of currency, stamps, securities and other valuable documents. The British plan stressed total destruction without consideration for recovery after the enemy withdrew. Measures had to be "rigorously applied in practice" and emphasized that the decision to implement them against private property, "should not, repeat not" be left to the individuals involved. Large property owners would be taken into the government's confidence and assured that such a plan was a worst case scenario only and that their properties would be destroyed only as a last resort. On the subject of compensation, the instructions suggest that any sort of award would have to wait until after the war had ended. On the other hand, in the event that small property owners were uncooperative, provisions were made to

requisition such properties before they were destroyed. This would allow payment without setting a precedent of immediate compensation.<sup>24</sup>

As had the other colonies and dominions, the Newfoundland Government received a copy of the British plan. On 10 March 1942, a week after the torpedo attack against St. John's, Commissioner Emerson sent copies of a condensed version of these instructions to all military commanders in St. John's, plus the Director of Civil Defence, Leonard Outerbridge. At the same time, he requested a meeting to discuss formulation of a similar plan for Newfoundland.<sup>25</sup> This was a full ten days before the Canadian War Cabinet approved its own release of the plan. Indeed, instructions were not forwarded to the Joint Services Sub-Committee Newfoundland, or any other JSC, until 18 April.<sup>26</sup> Admiral Murray ordered his staff, under the chair of Captain E.R. Mainguy, to draft a proposal for the destruction of the RCN facilities in Newfoundland. In May 1942, a committee composed of senior base officers met in Mainguy's office to discuss a general Scorched Earth Policy. It was decided that as most of the RCN buildings in St. John's — the hospital, barracks, administration and officers' accommodation buildings — were made of wood, the quickest way of destroying them would be fire. Similarly, fire was proposed for most of the wharves, machine shops, dockyard and buildings on the South Side — all except the buildings on the Marine Agencies wharf. The committee warned that if these buildings were still being used as a magazine, the non-explosive material should be smashed because fire could result in "the whole of St. John's [being] flattened if the explosives were detonated." For the same reason, the underground magazines would just have their roofs blown in. The valves on the South Side fuel oil tanks would be opened, or their pipes would be smashed, and burned. There is no mention of letting the fuel flow into the harbour, as was reported by *The Ottawa Citizen*. All naval stores, stock, vehicles and harbour craft would also be burned. The committee recommended that any merchant shipping that could not be evacuated would be scuttled or burned, "taking into cooperation any other authorities as necessary."<sup>27</sup>

The committee consulted throughout the summer and in September, Captain Mainguy, now acting as interim Flag Officer Newfoundland Force, issued copies of "Denial Plans — Naval Installations, Equipment and Supplies" to the other Service heads. The title is very telling. Denial Plans are different from Scorched Earth Plans and Mainguy's instructions specifically referred to "Naval Installations, Equipment and Supplies." Nevertheless, the navy's plans were comprehensive and fraught with danger. Fire was still to be the main means of destruction. The RCN buildings in St. John's would be burned, the dockyards demolished using depth charges, naval vehicles driven off wharves, and the harbour entrance sealed with blockships. The authors repeated their concerns as to how best to destroy the naval fuel and ordnance facilities on the south side of the harbour. The proposal for the Imperial Oil fuel tanks was equally worrisome. The easiest and most effective means of destroying the fuel stocks was simply to open or smash the valves and ig-

nite the leaking fuel. However, the authors cautioned that if this were done, it could "result in a fire, the extent of which cannot be gauged." Even if the fuel was not ignited and was simply contained behind the concrete retaining walls surrounding the tanks, the authors cautioned, fire danger would still be great.<sup>28</sup>

The RCN's plan was primarily concerned with military assets. Indeed, instead of planning to destroy St. John's, the documents specifically warn of dangers to the town and offered alternatives. A clear case of this was the destruction of the hundreds of tonnes of ordinance stored in bunkers dug into the Southside Hills. The navy's plan stated that the easiest and most efficient means of destruction was to simply blow it up. However, recognizing that the ensuing explosion would demolish the city, the authorities advised that the time-consuming process of removing and destroying the fuses and/or pistols would accomplish the same end with less risk to the city.

Some in the military establishment doubted the need for a Scorched Earth Policy at all. Eastern Air Command Chief of Staff, Air Vice Marshall F.V. Heakes argued that, "while the present scales of attack warrant a Denial Scheme, they do not warrant a Scorched Earth Policy." He further advised that "the less said about 'Scorched Earth' on the east coast, the better."<sup>29</sup> The captain of the Port of St. John's, Captain C.M.R. Schwerdt, felt that other than the vital installations such as the dockyards, workshops, and fuel and ordinance depots, there was really no "particular object in destroying the shore establishment." While he recognized that confidential documents should not fall into enemy hands, he felt that the "Naval Accommodation, Administration and other buildings might just as well be left." As a matter of fact, Schwerdt felt that preventing an enemy landing and acts of sabotage by Fifth Columnists was "more important than the completion of an effective Scorched Earth Policy."<sup>30</sup>

Canadian authorities did not intend to burn St. John's to the ground. A reading of the archival record shows that the naval authorities only intended to deny the naval facilities to the Germans should they try to occupy the city. This was a prudent and time-honoured tactic. The plans suggested the best ways to do this, but also clearly stated the consequences of some of these measures. Neither was the plan developed nor introduced behind the backs of the Newfoundland government and civil authorities. In truth, copies of notes on the British Scorched Earth Plan were distributed to local service heads by the Newfoundland government a full month before the Canadian government sent copies to its various commands. Furthermore, the local Director of Civil Defence was informed at the same time as the service heads, and both the British plan and the Newfoundland government instructions clearly state that it was "necessary to take into confidence [the] representatives of companies or other interests involved." Ultimately, the policy was rescinded shortly after D-Day when "the improved strategic situation" prompted the Chiefs of Staff Committee in Ottawa to cancel the Scorched Earth Policy for both the At-



lantic and Pacific coasts.<sup>31</sup> All copies of the policy were ordered destroyed, but some survived to become the source of controversy fifty-four years later.

In fairness to LeBlanc, he probably did not actually read the Scorched Earth documents, but instead relied on a piece by Kerry Badgley that appeared in the Libraries and Archives Canada magazine *The Archivist*.<sup>32</sup> Deliberately or not, Badgley's article does give the impression that Canadian authorities planned to torch St. John's in the event of a German threat during World War Two. Indeed, the smoking gun, so to speak, as to Canada's nefarious intent is a quote that appears in the article whereby officers conclude that "owing to the large amount of wood used in the buildings in St. John's," fire would be the best expedient to their destruction.<sup>33</sup> This quote is taken — in isolation — from the minutes of the initial meeting in Capt. Mainguy's office in May 1942, and it is clear from the documents that the officers involved were referring to the RCN buildings only.<sup>34</sup> Furthermore, when the quote appeared in the *Ottawa Citizen*, it had changed slightly to the "building in St. John's" which evolved into "the building of St. John's" by the time it appeared in *The Evening Telegram*.<sup>35</sup> Thus, the RCN's intentions of only destroying their own facilities in the event of an attack transformed to encompass the whole of the city.

Whether the result of "Upper-Canadian arrogance" or tabloid journalism, the reaction to Canada's Second World War Scorched Earth Plan for St. John's says more about Newfoundlanders' sensibilities and our relationship with Canada than any chicanery on the latter's part. Why else would a half-century old plan, hatched during a very frightening period in history, cause such vitriol? No doubt every important maritime centre in the country had similar plans in place. Would the discovery of those for Halifax, Sydney, St. John, NB or Vancouver cause a similar outrage? Probably not. And why was it that so many people — not only in Newfoundland — believed the *Ottawa Citizen*'s report at face value? Neither Wells nor O'Flaherty probably saw the actual documents, or even Badgley's *Archivist* article. Indeed, all the letters and editorials dealt with whether Canadian authorities were justified in developing the plans, not whether the newspaper reports were accurate. The worst of motives was accepted as truth because it validated the long held impression that Canada has continually been duplicitous in its dealings with Newfoundland. Perhaps LeBlanc and Badgley, along with the editors at *Archivist*, the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Evening Telegram* were doing no more than exploiting the sensationalism of the story without checking the facts. There are instances in Newfoundland's history when its neighbour to the west has acted less than convivially, but "Canada's plan to torch St. John's" is not one on them.

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## Notes

<sup>1</sup>Daniel LeBlanc, "Canada's plan to torch St. John's," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 30 May 1998.

<sup>2</sup>Daniel LeBlanc, "Scorched Earth," *The Evening Telegram*, 30 May 1998.

<sup>3</sup>Daniel LeBlanc, "Upper Canadian Arrogance," *The Evening Telegram*, 31 May 1998.

<sup>4</sup>Daniel LeBlanc, "Canadian plan shocking: Wells," *The Evening Telegram*, 1 June 1998.

<sup>5</sup>"Torching St. John's sparks hot debate," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 6 June 1998. See also "Torching towns in wartime," *The Evening Telegram*, 4 June 1998.

<sup>6</sup>Gary Browne, "*To serve and protect*": *The Royal Newfoundland Constabulary on the home front World War Two* (St. John's: DRC Publishing, 2008).

<sup>7</sup>Peter Neary, "Newfoundland and the Anglo-American Agreement of 27 March 1941," *Canadian Historical Review*, LXVIII: 4 (December 1986), 508-14. See also John N. Cardolis, *A friendly invasion: the American military in Newfoundland 1940 to 1990* (St. John's: Breakwater Press, 1990.) And Stetson Conn, Rose C. Engelman and Byron Fairchild, *Guarding the United States and Its Outposts* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1964.)

<sup>8</sup>*The Mackenzie King Record*. Vol. I, 1939-1944 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960), 202; and Minutes of a Meeting of War Cabinet Committee, 17 September 1940, in Paul Bridle (ed.), *Documents On Relations Between Canada and Newfoundland* (2 vols., Ottawa: Department of External Affairs, 1974-1984), I, 99. See also Minutes of a Meeting of War Cabinet Committee, 10 June 1941, in Bridle (ed.), *Documents on Relations*, 571; High Commissioner in Newfoundland to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 3 December 1941, in Bridle (ed.), *Documents on Relations*, 115; Secretary of State for External Affairs to Dominions Secretary, 2 March 1941, in *Documents on Relations*, 103. For an examination of Newfoundland's strategic importance, see A.R.M. Lower, "Transition to Atlantic Bastion," in R.A. MacKay (ed.), *Newfoundland: Economic, Diplomatic, Strategic Studies* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1946), 484-508.

<sup>9</sup>Public Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, GN 38, S4-1-2, File J12(a)-40, Governor to Secretary of State For Dominion Affairs, 17 September 1940.

<sup>10</sup>PANL, GN 38, S4-1-2, File 2: J12-49, Memorandum for Commission, 23 March 1940.

<sup>11</sup>PANL, GN38, S4-1-4, File 5: J12-40, Memorandum for Commission, 23 March 1940.

<sup>12</sup>Gilbert Tucker, *The Naval Service of Canada* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1952), 203, 531.

<sup>13</sup>WAB Douglas, *The Creation of a National Air Force* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 387, 484-485.

<sup>14</sup>"Airline Facilities For Newfoundland: Northeast and Trans-Canada Airlines To Operate," *The Evening Telegram*, 5 March 1942.

<sup>15</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 951, Brant to Admiral Commanding Newfoundland, 24 December 1941.

<sup>16</sup>LAC, RG 24, Vol. 11, 956, Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to Governor, 8 April 1941.

<sup>17</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 951, CTF 24 to FONF, 3 February 1942.

<sup>18</sup>Michael Hadley, *U-Boats Against Canada* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 77.

<sup>19</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 953, File 1-1-1, Vol. 1, Report of Proceedings by Maintenance Captain, Captain of the Port in FONF Monthly Report, March 1942.

<sup>20</sup>Michael Hadley, *U-Boats Against Canada* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1985), 113-14, 146, 137-43.

<sup>21</sup>PANL, GN38, S4-1-6, Files 8, Minutes of Meeting between the Commission of Government Members and local Armed Services Commanders, 15 December 1941.

<sup>22</sup>PANL, GN38, S4-1-6, Files 8, Minutes of Meeting between the Commission of Government Members and local Armed Services Commanders, 15 December 1941.

<sup>23</sup>LAC, RG24, Vol. 11927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, "Instructions Issued To Certain Colonial Dependencies On 'Scorched Earth Policy'."

<sup>24</sup>LAC, RG24, Vol. 11927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, "Instructions Issued To Certain Colonial Dependencies On 'Scorched Earth Policy'."

<sup>25</sup>LAC, RG 24, Vol. 11927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, Emerson to FONF, 10 March 1942.

<sup>26</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 5256, File HQS-22-1-13, Memo to CGS on "Scorched Earth Policy," 22 June 1944.

<sup>27</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, Draft copy of Minutes of Meeting on "Scorched Earth Policy," 22 May 1942.

<sup>28</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, Denial Plans — Naval Installations, Equipment and Supplies, 23 September 1942.

<sup>29</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 5256, File HQS-22-1-13, Acting/Air Member for Air Staff to Chief of Air Staff, 8 October 1942.

<sup>30</sup>LAC, RG 24, Vol. 11, 927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, Schwerdt to FONF et al. "'Scorched Earth Policy' Newfoundland," 14 March 1942.

<sup>31</sup>LAC, RG24, Vol. 5256, File HQS-22-13 "Extract From Minutes Of Meeting Of Defence Council Held On July 7, 1944."

<sup>32</sup>Kerry Badgley, "'Rigorously applied in practice': A scorched earth policy for Canada and Newfoundland during the Second World War," *Archivist*, No. 116, 1998, 38-43.

<sup>33</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup>LAC, FONF, RG 24, Vol. 11, 927, MS 1400-4, Vol. 1, Draft copy of Minutes of Meeting on Scorched Earth Policy, 22 May 1942.

<sup>35</sup>Daniel LeBlanc, "Canada's plan to torch St. John's," *The Ottawa Citizen*, 30 May 1998.