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# Policy Options

## Opportunities and Policy Options for Pierre and Miquelo



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# Relations, Opportunities and Policy Options for St. Pierre and Miquelon

*Policy Recommendations*

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11 Jim Mayo, Marytown Council

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14 Kathleen Parwick, Executive Director of the Schooner Regional Development Board

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7. Dr. Gunther Hartmann, Professor, Political Science
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# Introduction and Recommendations

The International Programmes Office of Memorial University in conjunction with several other university departments, the Frecker Institute, the College of the North Atlantic, Federation des Francophones de Terre-Neuve et du Labrador, Franco Jeunes, representatives from three levels of government, the private sector, and interested students participated in a one day conference that focused on regional cooperation between the Atlantic Provinces, and the French Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

The project examined some international treaties, agreements (bilateral/multinational) affecting Canada's position with St. Pierre and Miquelon. The focus was on coastal zone management, environmental protection, trade, investment, cultural exchanges, and priorities and activities of the countries concerned. The survey incorporated a review of objectives for the coordination of initiatives between various levels of government and the private sector.

The following recommendations were made:

- Improve the transportation infrastructures on the Burin Peninsula.
  - Winterland airport requires an expansion of the runway, and the introduction of appropriate instrumentation;
  - Negotiate mutual landing rights between Winterland and St. Pierre and Miquelon;
  - Road service needs upgrading;
- Identify specific products that would be available and could benefit the Atlantic Provinces in transshipment and value added exports;
- Investigate the subsidized transshipment structure in St. Pierre and Miquelon;
- Coordinate cooperation between Customs Canada, and representatives of St. Pierre and Miquelon to provide information on trade information and products;
- Examine the terms and repercussions of establishing a duty free zone between the two islands;
- Include Memorial's Frecker Institute in the National French Bursary Programme;
- Establish a programme giving Canadian Business' French language training;
- Establish an international student exchange (billet) programme that focuses on language training and cultural exchange;
- Produce a catalog of what is being done in the areas of cultural exchanges and sports activities between the Atlantic Provinces and St. Pierre and Miquelon;
- Subsidize school boards to hire french teachers in the areas that border (are



influenced) by french culture or opportunities;

- Produce an environmental disaster agreement between Canada and St. Pierre and Miquelon.
- Coordinate an international conference to initiate a joint examination of the coastal resource inventory;
- Establish a clearing house/referral system to allow for the exchange of environmental information and technology.

## Rationale

This review of Canada's policy options takes place against a backdrop of the worst marine environmental demise in Canadian history- the collapse of the cod stocks. Both Newfoundland and St. Pierre and Miquelon have recently undergone significant economic change as a result. The moratorium has caused both Islands to examine new economic opportunities. It is hoped that both parties build on an already well established cultural and historic foundation.

The long informal association between Canada's Atlantic region, and the French Islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon has been based on similar socio-economic and linguistic ties. In the past, relations have been complicated by competing economic interests. In an effort to resolve this contention, the Government of Canada and the Government of the Republic of France negotiated an understanding for issues relating to fisheries matters. Resolved to build on the existing informal relationships between the Atlantic neighbors, Canadian and French authorities collaborated on the creation of a regional cooperation accord. This agreement focused on building closer cultural, economic and scientific ties between Canada's Atlantic Provinces and the French collectivity of St. Pierre and Miquelon.

There is significant interdependence in this region particularly in the areas of trade and recreational activities. Expanding the existing relationship may cause some strain due to the recent fisheries collapse. Citizens on the Burin Peninsula are particularly sensitive to the perception of losing jobs to St. Pierre. The people of St. Pierre and Miquelon on the other hand are fearful of cultural assimilation and economic exploitation. Any new developments between Canada and France must build on the theme of regional cooperation, and the already existing relationship between the two islands. Considering this, Canada's foreign policy must incorporate a win-win philosophy.

It is important to note that the communities on the Burin Peninsula reside near an international boarder. Canada's foreign policy should first recognize this and then "zone in" on regional development issues. Economically, Newfoundland's prosperity will increasingly be dependent on international trade, especially trade with the European Community. Canada's foreign policy must recognize this and the needs of the other Atlantic Provinces, and set forth to improve the global capabilities of the maritime region.

There is little contrast between Canada's foreign policy and the Atlantic



Provinces domestic policy; what is done domestically has an impact on foreign policy (especially with reference to St. Pierre and Miquelon), and vice versa. The country's foreign policy must function with an effective domestic foundation, and that domestic foundation must rest on the meaningful projection abroad of the fundamental qualities of regional life, specifically the social and economic elements.

There was unanimous agreement, among all who took part in the conference, that Canada should focus on short term project, opportunities and build on these. The Federal Government should improve on projects and activities that already exist. It is often been the experience of Atlantic Canada to participate in "mega projects". The central challenge of this review was to reassess this particular way of thinking. Canada's foreign policy in relation to St. Pierre and Miquelon must initially pinpoint immediate opportunities and expand on programmes that are already successful.

## Discussions

### Trade and Investment

International trade is blurring the line separating foreign from domestic policy, since increasingly more of the domestic policy agenda becomes subject to the forces of global competition. Business is done by entrepreneurs, not the government, but the government can set forth the framework for greater private sector competitiveness and export market development by encouraging a commitment of resources to training, regional cooperation and transportation infrastructure.

St. Pierre and Miquelon's unique position with the European Community presents an enormous opportunity for the private sector in Atlantic Canada. The French islands are able to set their own tariffs on trade, in addition customs duties done at St. Pierre and Miquelon are considerable lower than other EU countries.

Atlantic Canadian business should be encouraged to increase their export efforts, and play a greater role in trade promotion. There have been steps made in this direction. Currently, the Joint Cooperation Commission (JCC) and other 'working groups' are allowing for more coordination between governments at all levels and the private sector. However, even with these efforts there exists a basic infrastructure and transshipment problem for the manufactures and exporters of Newfoundland and Labrador.

**The Conference recommends that the federal government, in consultation with the province of Newfoundland and Labrador improve the transportation infrastructure on the Burin Peninsula. Road service requires upgrading to accommodate increased freight traffic. Also, the docking facility at Fortune needs to be developed in order to accommodate vehicular traffic, and the loading of freight.** It is estimated by ACOA Newfoundland that shipments to St. Pierre and Miquelon would quickly increase to eight containers every seven days (from the current level of three containers every 15 days) if an improved, reliable, year round freight service were introduced on the island.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Paul Parsons ACOA Newfoundland 1994. Unpublished report.



There are significant opportunities for businesses on the Burin Peninsula if a reliable passenger service were developed between the Marystown area and St. Pierre and Miquelon. **The Conference recommends that a federal government and private sector cooperative venture be established to develop the capabilities of the Winterland Airport.** The airport would require appropriate instrumentation and the runway would need to be expanded to provide the increased passenger service between St. Pierre and Miquelon and Burin Peninsula. Also, mutual landing rights would have to be negotiated between the two locations. Increased passenger traffic would bring considerable economic spin offs in the areas of retail sales and duty free shopping.

Regional development agencies, working groups, and the JCC have done important work in finding opportunities for Atlantic Canadian Business. The predominant selling point of St. Pierre and Miquelon is their access to the European market. Transshipment to St. Pierre and Miquelon has initially been problematic and costly for Atlantic Canadian (especially Newfoundland) small and mid sized businesses. **The Conference recommends that the federal government develop, as a part of an overall integrated trade strategy, a long term plan for promoting an international orientation for businesses in Atlantic Canada. The government should coordinate representatives from Customs Canada, Revenue Canada, and officials from St. Pierre and Miquelon to provide information on export and import regulations. A detailed list of potential exports (value added) needs to be developed and promoted for small and mid sized businesses in Atlantic Canada.**

Freight transportation that is now available is expensive, and Newfoundland businesses are not interested in sending their products to St. Pierre and Miquelon even if there is a market for their products. Ferry transportation is administered and subsidized by St. Pierre and Miquelon. Currently there is no equal subsidy on the Newfoundland side. **The Conference recommends that the federal government in partnership with the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador provide transshipment subsidies for small and medium sized businesses in Newfoundland and Labrador.**

Establishing and fostering and international orientation for business in Atlantic Canada should be a priority of all levels of government and the private sector. Building such an orientation involves making an effort to initiate awareness of new markets abroad, and their linguistic and cultural qualities. As part of an more integrated trade policy, and to coincide with the domestic goals of the federal government. **The Conference recommends that the national french bursary programme be extended to provide language training to interested entrepreneurs on the Burin Peninsula.**

The most immediate economic opportunity for the people of Newfoundland and St. Pierre and Miquelon, is the growing tourism industry. There is an agreement between the Atlantic Provinces and St. Pierre and Miquelon for the development of joint tourism initiatives. Currently, this involves the organization of joint tours, and the distribution of information through their respective tourism promotion agencies. A new airport is in construction in St. Pierre and should be operational by 1998. This will allow for larger planes to land, and directly connect St. Pierre to the European continent. Also, there have been negotiations with various cruise ship lines to visit the French islands during the next few years. In an effort to further promote this area, **the Conference recommends that the federal government move to negotiate an agreement with officials from St. Pierre and Miquelon to improve the tourism infrastructure (signs, tourism chalets,**





gift shops, ferry terminals) on both the Burin Peninsula and St. Pierre.

## Culture

The historic and cultural linkages between St. Pierre and Miquelon and the people of Newfoundland (South Coast and Burin Peninsula) are well established. These areas share more than a common economic base, they share a common way of life. Canadian foreign policy objectives must be focused on elevating this already unique relationship. The presentation of Canadian culture should be viewed as a basic dimension of Canada's foreign policy.

The fundamental distinction between Newfoundland and St. Pierre and Miquelon is one of language. Canada's foreign policy should celebrate the cultural richness of the South Coast, as well as promote linguistic training as an important way of advancing our interests abroad. Memorial University's Frecker Institute should be used as a key component of initiating any such strategy.

The institute is responsible for Memorial University's French language instruction in St. Pierre. Twenty five to thirty students enrol in the programme in each of the fall and winter semesters, accounting for 40 percent of the French immersion education for Memorial's French students. The cost of this programme can be prohibitive for many students, and with the new reality placed by financial constraints this program is susceptible to cancellation. It is key that the federal government view foreign policy as being inextricably linked to the educational and cultural opportunities of youth. **The Conference recommends that Memorial University of Newfoundland's Frecker Institute be included in the National French Bursary Programme. The existing programme should be developed to be an international student exchange (billet) programme that focuses on language training and cross cultural exchange.**

There is an additional reason why some conference delegates believe that culture and learning is relevant to foreign policy; it establishes valued business contacts. The establishment of a linguistic school in Newfoundland which would be promoted to people not only from St. Pierre and Miquelon but from all over the world to come and study English as a second language. **The Conference recommends that the federal government increase resources for bursaries programmes for people who want to study a second language- whether it is French or English.**

The current French education programme in Newfoundland and Labrador schools requires expansion. More french courses should be offered at the high school level to keep students interested in going further with French education when they finish high school. Presently, there is no incentive for parents to encourage their children to attend French immersion because the current programme is diminishing. **The Conference recommends that increased federal resources be directed to the management and offering of this programme.**

There are numerous other opportunities for Canada to interact with our French



neighbors. Recreational activities of St. Pierre and Miquelon residents are supported by the French government. This allows for teams to travel from St. Pierre and Miquelon to Newfoundland to participate in sporting events. Currently, organizations from Newfoundland do not enjoy the same kind of support from their government, and as a result rarely travel to the French islands. **The Conference encourages the government to support the travel of Atlantic Canadian sports and recreational organizations to local events in St. Pierre and Miquelon.**

Delegates at the conference were sometimes unaware of the numerous informal cultural and social links presently established between Atlantic Canada (particularly Newfoundland) and St. Pierre and Miquelon. These activities provide countless spin-offs to the local community through food services, retail sales, accommodations, and business contacts. Unfortunately, most communities, like many of the delegates are incognizant of these activities, and as a result the activities go unnoticed. There was unanimous consensus at the conference for the need to promote these existing links, and move towards creating new ones. **Taking into account that foreign policy is an area of federal jurisdiction, that culture and tourism are areas of share jurisdiction with the provinces, the Conference encourages the government to seek the collaboration of interested provinces to identify and promote all existing cultural activities with St. Pierre and Miquelon.** This information should be shared between the provinces, and used to build new relationships.

## Marine Environment

The final area to be strengthened is perhaps the most important of all: the protection of the marine environment. Conference delegates have experienced how imprudent management in the past by all concerned with the cod fishery, threatened not only the livelihood of the residents of St. Pierre and Miquelon and Newfoundland, but also the traditional lifestyle and distinctive culture that has developed here.

Although the Conference did not examine fisheries issues, particular interest was placed on other issues relating to the marine environment marine pollution, and coastal zone management issues. The situation facing the Newfoundland fishery resulted in large measure from a failure to apply the principles of sustainable development. Now Newfoundland is developing new resources found in the ocean. Offshore oil presents tremendous economic benefits and potential hazards for the islands of Newfoundland and St. Pierre and Miquelon. In addition, aquaculture is being promoted as an industry that could supplement current inshore and shellfish quotas. Unfortunately, many potential sites for aquaculture farms are contaminated by land based pollutants.

The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon are positioned 20 kilometers southwest of Newfoundland's Burin Peninsula. The government of Canada and France must cooperate in order for more accurate determination and measurement of problems in this region. Such cooperation strengthens regional and national capabilities and offers an important avenue for synchronizing measures to match the needs of both nations. Additionally, regional cooperation supports efficient and cost effective implementation of the suggested programmes of action.



Particular attention was placed on the United Nations Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities. The governments of Canada and France have a monumental opportunity to negotiate an arrangement for a model regional cooperation agreement. Given the relative proximity and size of this region, negotiations may be considerably less contentious and more effective compared with possible agreements between other bordered countries.

**The Conference recommends that the government more to immediate negotiation with France to initiate objectives found within this document.** Specifically, the government should work urgently with St. Pierre and Miquelon to identify problems, establish priorities for action, develop comprehensive management approaches, strengthen existing agreements and encourage the cooperation between regional environmental organizations.

The recent developments in offshore oil exploration off the coast of Newfoundland brings with them reasonable hazards. Increased shipping in the area, along with dangers to the oil platforms themselves significantly increases the possibilities of major oil spills. Now, there are even no agreements between St. Pierre and Miquelon and Canada to coordinate efforts to protect against the bilge waste of ships. **The Conference recommends that both governments produce an environmental disaster agreement to specifically deal with oil pollution.** Special attention should be devoted to ensuring that whatever plans are put in place, that they are effective through international waters.

Scientists in Atlantic Canada, and St. Pierre and Miquelon should cooperate to insure that the most up to date information, experience and technical expertise with respect to coastal zone management be shared. Scientific equipment and room for research should be made available to interested marine scientists of both countries, to study areas of mutual interest. The Conference recommends the establishment of an informational clearing house or referral system to allow for the exchange of environmental information and technology between research authorities and France and Canada.

Given the new emphasis of aquaculture development placed by both countries, an accurate international environmental assessment needs to be established. The islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon and Newfoundland are subject to the same environmental pollution introduced by the St. Lawrence. In addition, there exists a significant problem of sewage flow into sensitive ecosystems affecting the french islands and Newfoundland. **It is recommended that the government coordinate an international conference to examine the coastal resource inventories of both islands.**



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