

**LOCAL POLITICAL INITIATIVES IN FRENCH
IMPERIALISM**

THE CASE OF LOUISBOURG, 1713-1758

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and Research in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the
Ph.D degree in History**

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation illustrates the role of Louisbourg in the enunciation and implementation of French imperial policies in the colonies of Isle Royale (Cape Breton), Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward Island) and the British colony of Nova Scotia between 1713 and 1758. It explains imperialism in the framework of the relations between the colonising nation and the colony and from the perspective of colonial or local initiatives. Based on an examination of the functioning of the government of Louisbourg under the control of the governor and *commissaire ordonnateur* and the pattern of the evolution of policies and decisions with regard to colonial administration this study demonstrates that French imperialism in the North Atlantic littoral was more a product of local political initiatives than that of metropolitan policies and programmes. The management of the fishery, commerce, and military affairs, as well as French relationships with the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis, the influence of the missionaries and Catholicism in Amerindian societies, the Native peoples' part in resisting Anglo-American colonial expansion, the distinct political and cultural position of the Acadians of Nova Scotia in favour of French imperial interests, and the nature of Anglo-French contest for empire substantiate this thesis. In brief, French imperialism in the context of Louisbourg and its seaboard empire was characterised by four principal aspects: first, the absence of large-scale successful combined land and naval operations designed to "conquer" the Amerindians and expel the British from Nova Scotia; second, the absence of the imposition of a centralised metropolitan policy of imperialism; third, the formation of an imperial power structure in the colony based on a linkage of colonial forces and facilities, and fourth, the formulation and implementation of imperial policy with, or without, the collaboration of the mother country. In general, policies, strategies, tactics, and military operations of France's imperial system in Isle Royale and the "informal empire" (a zone of political influence without a recognised territorial base) in Nova Scotia were directed from within the colony. This process of empire building is defined as "imperialism from below" in this study.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

CONSIDERATIONS ON IMPERIALISM IN THE COLONY

The imperialism of the colonial period on which this study focuses was essentially the acquisition and administration of an overseas empire as part of general commercial, military and territorial expansion. The principal purpose of an imperialistic policy was to establish a hegemonic system in which the colonies would strengthen the power and prestige of the mother country. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the establishment and expansion of overseas colonies were crucial to the development of the European economic system. The exploitation of the colonial wealth and human resources through devastating warfare and conquest as well as through mercantilist policies fortified European capitalist structures; it raised Western Europe to the position of a "core" in the capitalist world system. The transoceanic trading companies played an important role in bringing the overseas "peripheries" under European control and exploitation. According to Immanuel Wallerstein's world system theory, colonies were away from the core, or controlling centre of the economy and military organisation, in the context of global power and international competition.¹ He postulated that economic and political influence - or penetration in Wallerstein's model - flows in one direction from the core or *métropole* to the peripheral colony, an argument

¹ Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World-System*. 3 vols. (New York: 1974, 1980, 1989).

which echoed a fundamental theme of the majority of previous studies on imperialism. The present thesis will illustrate that, in the context of Louisbourg, local political initiatives played a significant role in the creation and maintenance of metropolitan influence in the colony and imperialism was a product of dependant relations between the mother country and the colony.

The Marxist school of writers stated that “imperialism” was an essential and inherent part of capitalist expansion which inevitably led to colonialism. Colonial policies were intended to develop a mechanism for the accumulation of profit and, hence, to maintain the capitalist system. Marxist theory considered imperialism one of the formative stages of capitalism, purely an economic phenomenon.² This approach ignored non-economic motives such as national aggrandisement, racism, and the pursuits of institutional power by the army, bureaucracy, and church. It does not offer a satisfactory explanation of the formulation of imperial policy either in the colony or at the *métropole*.

In 1740, C.R. Fay in re-conceptualising “imperialism” introduced the theory of formal and informal empires.³ “Formal empire” can be defined, in brief, as an empire based on the possession and domination of a foreign territory. “Informal empire” is an empire which has no territorial base, but has established its domination over foreign peoples through hegemonic diplomacy, commercial and technological exchanges and military alliances. It is a concept to which we shall have occasion to return. In 1753 John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson used this model to argue that imperialism

² R. Hilferding, *Finance Capital: A Study of the Latest Phase of Capitalist Development* (London: 1981), pp. 364-370.

³ C.R. Fay, “The Movement Towards Free Trade, 1820-1853” in J.H. Rose, *et.al.*, eds., *The Cambridge History of the British Empire* (Cambridge: 1940), vol. II, p. 399.

had become chiefly a political policy and practice rather than merely a capitalist instrument of colonisation and economic exploitation. They said:

imperialism may be only indirectly connected with economic integration in that it sometimes extends beyond areas of economic development but acts for strategic protection . . . imperialist phenomena . . . is determined not only by factors of economic expansion, but equally by the political and social organisations of the region brought into the orbit of the expansive society, and also by the world situation in general.⁴

Thus they suggested an inter-disciplinary approach which was indispensable to the study of imperialism.

It is both beneficial and enlightening to examine imperialism from “below”, or in the framework of local initiatives, because the idea of metropolitan imposition of imperial policy and programmes on colonies left much of historical realities untouched. The colonies were, in some cases, the real source of imperial power. As sources of raw materials and as markets for manufactures, the contributions of the colonies were invaluable. The Robinson-Gallagher theory of political and informal imperialism demonstrated the significance of a broader empirical, conceptual and interpretative framework of the subject although it is grounded only in the historical developments during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Is it possible to discuss imperialism, an idea that implies conceptual coherence, when there are as many definitions of the term as there are scholars studying the subject? Instead of concentrating on some specific aspects it is necessary to study the subject in a wider scheme as a concept, as a policy and as a practice. Imperialism was not a phenomenon of a particular period, but it appeared in different forms and structures at different times in various geographical regions.

⁴ J. Gallagher and R. Robinson, “Imperialism of Free Trade.” *Economic History Review*, vol. II, no. 6 (1953), p. 6.

These different manifestations reflected political, economic, social, cultural and other factors that caused (and justified) conquest and hegemony. In terms of this theoretical approach, imperialism may be defined as a dominant political system created by a nation or a state over foreign lands, peoples, and institutions. A.P. Thornton defined it as follows:

an imperial policy is one that enables a metropolis to create and maintain an external system of effective control. The control may be exerted by political, economic, strategic, cultural, religious, or ideological means, or by a combination of some or all of these.⁵

The establishment of this dominant system was dependant upon the effective use of two important instruments of power at the local level.

The first of these was force and diplomacy. There were essentially five ways in which a political organisation exercised force and diplomacy: (1) territorial conquest with or without the annexation of the territories; (2) interference in local politics and restriction of political freedom; (3) compulsory military service; (4) confiscation of lands by removing the Natives through treaties, the creation of "reserves," or forcible removal to make way for the immigration of settlers from the imperial state; and (5) other means of exploitation and subjugation such as mercantile policies and collection of tribute.⁶ An overview of the history of European overseas expansion illustrates the use of military force and treacherous diplomacy in the making of colonial empires. The British used political oppression, tribute and monopoly trade in India. The Spaniards resorted to the brutal killing of the Native peoples for the acquisition of land and power in South and Central America. The French were no exception in using force and diplomacy on occasion to gain power and

⁵ A.P. Thornton, *Imperialism in the Twentieth Century* (London: 1978), p. 3.

⁶ Except for the modifications of these points, I am indebted to M.I. Finley, "The Fifth-Century Athenian Empire: A Balance Sheet" in P.D.A. Gamsey and C.R. Whittaker, eds., *Imperialism in the Ancient World* (Cambridge: 1978), pp. 103-126.

dominion. At the outbreak of the War of Austrian Succession the French colonial government at Pondicherry, in violation of official French policy, embarked on a policy of empire building including interference in the local politics of the Coromandal region rather than just maintaining trading posts. British negotiations and treaties with the Native peoples of America during the colonial regime, and the American "treaty system" after independence, vividly exemplify the power of diplomacy in the assertion of dominion.⁷

The second instrument of empire building was a carefully organised hegemonic ideology, or belief system, that could captivate the minds of people through education, religious conversion, acculturation and political indoctrination. This ideology was usually the product of the religious doctrines and political and secular principles of the imperial states. It upheld the view that colonised people were inferior and lived at a primitive stage of social evolution, whereas the colonisers were superior and civilised. It became official policy of the colonising nations that their "superior" ideologies were to be imposed on the colonies for the intellectual, cultural and moral "development" of the "uncivilised" inhabitants.

These two instruments of power - diplomacy and a hegemonic ideology - were at work in North America. The French understood very well that the pursuit of their economic and political interests in North America was dependent upon the support of the Amerindians. The fur trade, geographical exploration of the interior, stemming the advance of English settlement, transportation of merchandise and a large number of other activities required Natives' assistance. Circumstances, necessity and the profit motive induced the French to develop an ideology of Amerindian social

⁷ For details: Dorothy V. Jones, *License for Empire. Colonialism by Treaty in Early America* (Chicago: 1982).

regeneration and of “pacific” conquest. Having abandoned their sixteenth-century plan to use force to build an empire in America, the French considered the subordination of the Native peoples through ideological indoctrination based on the customs and doctrines of Roman Catholicism and the principles of political paternalism. This ideology propagated the philosophy of progress and “humanisation,” and it postulated the civilisation of the Natives through their conversion to Christianity and assimilation into French culture. When we examine the case of Louisbourg, we will see that force and diplomacy, on the one hand, and ideology on the other hand, played a complementary role in the establishment of French imperialism along the North Atlantic seaboard.

The present dissertation will explain imperialism in the framework of the relations between the *métropole* and the colony and from the perspective of colonial initiatives. The concept “imperialism from below,” *à partir de la base*, is about the exercise of power and the creation of policy from the lower, or local, strata of the political system in conjunction with local forces and facilities. This study does not claim that this interpretative outline is indispensable for understanding the history of French imperialism in other colonial settings. Imperialism being a product of the mother country’s organic relationship with the colony reflects the role of subaltern groups such as local officials, merchants, missionaries, fishermen, farmers and tribal peoples in its development. Emphasising this viewpoint, this study proposes that political history requires some revision instead of dismissing it as too traditional, conventional and even elitist. In the 1990s, we see a promising trend to study social and economic history “from below” in regional and local perspectives. Less attention has been directed to the political life of subaltern groups than to social and economic activities of everyday life.

The case of Louisbourg is not without parallels in other colonies. In general, the Portuguese and the Dutch avoided extensive hinterland expansion of the commercial counters they established overseas. Most of these trading posts were located in or near coastal settlements which facilitated maritime trade and the appropriation of natural resources. This type of colonisation resulted in what has been called seaboard empires. The French presence in Louisbourg and Isle Royale resembled this type of imperial expansion. Canada, by contrast, relied on the exploitation of a vast hinterland from a compact colony in the St. Lawrence valley in a process called *colonisation sans peuplement*. The Laurentian colony was a structured space, according to Serge Courville's analysis, a thin strip of settlements embedded in a geometric territory, while colonists outside that structured space were organised in keeping with a different logic, a different type of spatial organisation.⁸

When Bretons, Normans and Poitevins first settled in Acadia both England and France were greatly concerned with their own monarchical rights and stability. Domestic affairs were the primary concern and therefore the French colony on the Atlantic seaboard and Bay of Fundy developed slowly in an atmosphere that has been called salutary neglect. The economic value of the region did not rank high in national priorities of colonisation because the exploitation of the marine resources off-shore and pursuit of the fur trade with the Mi'kmaq and related groups did not require extensive year-round settlement. Yet the idea of colonisation in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries had some attraction largely due to a desire to copy Spain's example in order to implant "extensive areas of colonisation which could bring national prestige and personal prestige

⁸ *Colonisation sans peuplement* was a subject at an international conference "Espaces et sociétés induits par la colonisation française," Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier, France, 4-6 October 1991. On space, territory and culture in New France see Serge Courville, "Espace, territoire et culture en Nouvelle-France: une vision géographique," *RHAF*, vol. XXXII, no. 3 (1983), pp. 417-429.

to those directly involved.”⁹ Pierre du Gua de Monts at Port Royal and Samuel de Champlain at Quebec hoped to reap considerable economic gains from their enterprises. When no spectacular profits were secured the French and English monarchs were ready to settle their external differences through a treaty of neutrality in 1686. It was a treaty based, in the words of one historian of the region, “upon the European-centered belief that colonies were extensions of the monarch’s realms,” and had no valid political ambitions of their own.¹⁰

In many ways Acadia differed from the Canadian sector of New France. The Acadians, who lived from farming and fishing, endured little of the *encadrement* of the seigneurial system of landholding, the parochial system with resident curates, the militia organisation, and the nuclear village in the role of a service centre. Kinship ties were as important in Acadian communities as they were among the *Mikmaq* with whom they interacted on a friendly and co-operative basis, regardless of the negative tone of many official accounts. For fifteen years, from 1654 to 1670, they lived under British rule. All these factors indicated that Acadia in the context of New France was a “distinct society”.

The limited literature of the seventeenth century concentrating on this society gave confused and contradictory accounts of the imperial policy suitable for its governance and development. Marc Lescarbot, a Parisian lawyer who visited the colony, saw a prosperous future for the French

⁹ John G. Reid, *Acadia. Maine and New Scotland: Marginal Colonies in the Seventeenth Century* (Toronto: 1981), p. xiv.

¹⁰ Naomi E.S. Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784* (Montreal/Kingston: 1992), p. 12. For the text of “Traité de neutralité conclu à Londres entre les Rois de France et d’Angleterre touchant les limites des Pays des deux Rois en Amérique,” see *Édits, Ordonnances Royaux, Déclarations et Arrêts du Conseil d’État du Roi concernant le Canada* (Quebec: 1803), vol. I, pp. 267-274.

peasantry who would take up agriculture in a somewhat utopian New France. Twenty years later, in 1629, Pierre Bergeron maintained that missionary work was the sole justification for colonisation in the region. La Mothe le Vayer, informed by the writings of the cosmographers, Champlain, and the Jesuit Relations, strongly endorsed royal support of teams of voyagers and the already outdated proposition in 1654 of sending convicts as colonists.¹¹

These views were buttressed by theories of economic exploitation. Antoine de Montchrétien published a treatise in 1615 praising the agricultural potential of North America, underscoring its significance as a producer of cash crops as opposed to mineral wealth associated with Spanish colonisation. In addition, he offered sociological, religious and military propositions for colonisation. On the other hand, Jean Eon, who was closely associated with Breton and Nantais commerce, made a pessimistic assessment of the economic value of North American settlements given the climate and location of northeastern colonies. Several decades later, Jacques Savary's *Le Parfait Négociant* (1679), dedicated to Jean-Baptiste Colbert and his policies, stressed the economic value of overseas expansion in order to bolster the power and prestige of the monarch and his realm.¹² All these publications had a common theme that the initiatives and policy for successful colonisation could only originate in the *métropole*.

¹¹ Marc Lescarbot, *A History of New France Containing the Voyages, Discoveries and Settlements Made by the French in the West Indies and New France*, trans., W.L. Grant, 3 vols. (First published at Paris: 1609; Toronto: 1907); Pierre Bergeron, *Traité de la Navigation et des voyages de découverte et conquête modernes, et principalement des François* (Paris: 1629); François de La Mothe Le Vayer, *Oeuvres de François La Mothe Le Vayer* (Paris: 1654).

¹² Antoine de Montchrétien, *Traité de l'économie politique*, 3 vols., (Paris: 1892); Mathias de Saint Jean [Jean Eon], *Le Commerce honorable* (Nantes: 1646); Jacques Savary, *Le Parfait Négociant, ou Instruction générale pour ce qui regarde le commerce des marchandises de France et des pays étrangers* (Paris: 1679); see also Vincent Confer, "French Colonial Ideas Before 1789," *FHS*, vol. III, no. 3 (1969), pp. 338-359.

This interpretation has found its most recent support in Dale Miquelon's *New France, 1701-1744: "A Supplement to Europe"* (1987). He put forward the thesis that New France was a supplement to Europe, and that it was neither the frontier nor the North American environment but France itself which was the most important influence in the development of the colony. For our purposes here it is noteworthy that he conceded, without elaboration, that the colonies "had an influence upon the mother country, on the fortunes of its imperial policy and of its economy" and it was the colonial officials "who brought the imperial vision again and again to the attention of French ministers and bureaucrats and not the other way round."¹³

We must also take into consideration that the Acadian region, of which Isle Royale was a part, was the subject of British intrusion as well as French colonization. The end of the War of Spanish Succession and the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 ushered in fundamental changes in the seaboard region. The historic region of Acadia was divided between the British colony of Nova Scotia and the French territories of Isle Royale (Cape Breton), Isle Saint-Jean (Prince Edward Island), and the western region of the Bay of Fundy, the boundary between these two sectors remaining officially undefined and soon contested. The treaty provided for the cession of "all Nova Scotia or Accadie with its ancient boundarys [sic]." The Acadians were given option "to remove themselves within a year to any other place," while those who remained became British subjects guaranteed their property rights and the free exercise of their religion "as far as the laws of Great Britain allow the same." The Iroquois associated with the British through the Covenant Chain were

¹³ Dale Miquelon, *New France, 1701-1744: "A Supplement to Europe"* (Toronto: 1987), pp. 2, 262.

recognised but no similar mention was made of the Mi'kmaq who had been associated with the French.¹⁴

Robert Challes, who was personally acquainted with Acadia and had acted as an advisor to Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Minister of Marine and Colonies, greatly deplored the cession of Acadia to the British Crown. He believed that Acadia would have been very profitable to France as an agricultural region. In his opinion, France “without loosening the purse string” had the opportunity to establish a “kingdom as rich and flourishing as itself.”¹⁵

Modern historians have been less impressed by such utopian views. Although W.J. Eccles pointed out that the British were surprised to learn that the French governed their North American colonies with so few officials and at such a low cost, he argued that more attention was paid to local conditions and needs than was the case in the English colonies.¹⁶ Eccles justifiably assailed the long-standing Parkman thesis of oppressive French despotism and metropolitan imposition. Francis Parkman had written of the French as:

an ignorant population, sprung from a brave and active race, but trained to subjection and dependance through centuries of feudal and monarchical despotism, was planted in the wilderness by the hand of authority, and told to grow and flourish. Artificial stimulants were applied, but freedom was withheld. Perpetual intervention of government regulations, restrictions, encouragements sometimes more mischievous than restrictions . . .¹⁷

¹⁴ For the text of the treaty see Fred L. Israel, ed., *Major Peace Treaties of Modern History, 1648-1967* (New York: 1967), vol. I, pp. 177-239.

¹⁵ A. Augustin-Thierry, *Un Colonial au temps de Colbert; Mémoires de Robert Challes, Ecrivain du Roi* (Paris: 1931), pp. 77-78.

¹⁶ W.J. Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: 1987), pp. 137-138.

¹⁷ Francis Parkman, *The Old Regime in Canada* (Toronto: 1899), vol. II, pp. 197-98.

Eccles disclosed numerous local initiatives and greater benefits from colonial rule under the French regime in Canada. It was a quality which the British remarked upon in Acadia.

In Nova Scotia, the Acadians, a border people to Massachusetts, were subject to military rule until a Council was established in 1720 at Annapolis Royal [formerly Port Royal]. This form of rule has been called "garrison government."¹⁸ There was no question of establishing a legislative assembly but some form of consultation with the "new subjects" was required. In New France there was no parliamentary institution either but on important colonial affairs the governor and intendant consulted the militia captains in each parish, called a consultative assembly of the "leading habitants," or consulted the chief merchants of Quebec and Montreal organised as chambers of commerce on economic matters. The British asked the Acadians to elect delegates in each of the principal settlements whom the Council could consult on local affairs. During the first half of the eighteenth century these Acadians in Nova Scotia maintained close contacts with the Mi'kmaq and Isle Royale, the objects of immediate interest in this study.

The historiography of this period and region is important to contextualise our investigation. Studies of Canadian colonial history traditionally consider the theses of staples trade, frontierism and metropolitanism. The eighteenth century was a period of imperial expansion when economic motives were sometimes relegated to a secondary place by political, military and strategic considerations. Harold A. Innis, political economist at the University of Toronto, propounded the thesis of staples trade which traced the origins and growth of the colonies in terms of extractive

¹⁸ Stephen S. Webb, "Army and Empire: English Garrison Government in Britain and America, 1569 to 1763," *WMQ*, vol. XXXIV, no.1 (1977), pp. 1-31.

processes and primary industries in the interest of external markets.¹⁹ By the eighteenth century, the fur trade in New France was an instrument of French imperialism rather than just a means of capital accumulation.

In addition to the Innis proposal, it has also proved relevant to apply the metropolis-hinterland thesis to the present study of imperialism as experienced on Isle Royale and Louisbourg in particular. J.M.S. Careless in developing his metropolitan thesis, in contrast to the American frontier theory of Frederick Jackson Turner,²⁰ placed a great deal of emphasis on the communications system that carried metropolitan ideas and practices into the hinterland. What is pertinent here is that this communication system included the commercial, religious, administrative and military networks that carried metropolitan ideas and practices into the Isle Royale colony. Careless' work was not developed with a colony such as Isle Royale or a centre such as Louisbourg in mind, yet he delineated more than the exploitation of weaker region by the *métropole*. He argued for a degree of interdependence and mutually beneficial interaction.²¹ This study will demonstrate that policy and practice could and did have colonial as well as metropolitan origins. The colonial or environmental factors that reshaped and often redirected French imperial policies, it can be

¹⁹ H.A. Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: 1930); *Problems of Staple Production in Canada* (Toronto: 1933); and *The Cod Fisheries: The History of an International Economy* (Toronto: 1940).

²⁰ F.J. Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History," *Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1893* (Washington DC.: 1894), pp. 199-277.

²¹ J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities and Identities in Canada before 1914* (Toronto: 1989), p. 149.

proposed, included the geographical and topographical nature of Isle Royale,²² the proximity to Anglo-American colonies such as Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Massachusetts, the presence of Acadians and Mi'kmaq living under both British and French jurisdictions, local commercial interests, military and naval projects and the relative isolation from both Quebec and the French Atlantic supply centres.

The American sociologist John Law suggested an "association" of social, economic, political, technological and environmental components acting in concert to produce stability under metropolitan direction.²³ We will see that this "network" was influenced by local or colonial factors rather than by predetermined metropolitan policies. The Law thesis presumes that there will be conflictual interaction between the components, as well as between the metropolis and the colony. We will find there was often more co-operation than conflict.

Most of the studies of Isle Royale, which analyse imperial features, concentrate on the role of the fortress of Louisbourg in Anglo-French conflicts and the reasons for its fall.²⁴ Frederick Thorpe's study focuses specifically on the public works aspects of French policy.²⁵ The various

²² John Wadland has sensitised us to the idea that nature is more than the stage on which historical events are played. Nature is part of historical development, both influencing and shaping events. John Wadland, "Wilderness and Culture" in Bruce Hodgins and Margaret Hobbs, eds., *Nastawagan: The Canadian North by Canoe and Snowshoe* (Toronto: 1985), pp. 223-26.

²³ John Law, "On the Methods of Long-distance Control: Vessels, Navigation and the Portuguese Route to India" in John Law, ed., *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* (London: 1986), pp. 234-263.

²⁴ The following historiographical discussion examines only the important works pertinent to Louisbourg in the context of imperialism.

²⁵ Frederick J. Thorpe, *Remparts Lointains. La politique française de travaux publics à Terre-Neuve et à l'Isle Royale, 1695-1758* (Ottawa: 1980).

interpretations of the defeat of Louisbourg range from the "continentalism" of France, its neglect of the navy and the mediocre and corrupt administration of the colony, to strategic weakness of the fortress and the effectiveness of the troops defending it. These interpretations are constructed on the assumption that the metropolitan government, for one reason or another, had no interest in, or failed in, its imperial mission. George F.G. Stanley argued that "France met defeat in North America, because continentalism and its negative expression, anti-colonialism were the current economic faith of Frenchmen."²⁶ According to J.S. McLennan "the policy of cardinal ministers, Du Bois and Ficury, one to placate England and the other for peace, was to neglect the navy."²⁷ This, he said, along with other problems, such as inefficient garrisons and a weak fortress, resulted in the fall of Louisbourg. T.A. Crowley pointed out:

les faiblesses militaires de la ville fortifiée étaient liées autant aux carences de la France sur les plans colonial et naval qu'aux restrictions découlant de sa conception et son emplacement.²⁸

He further stated that "the administration of Louisbourg was mediocre," and France as a continental power gave foremost priority to the army over the navy and the colonies.²⁹ Bona Arsenault declared that colonial problems were responsible for the defeat:

En face de troupes anglaises aguerries et disciplinées, les défenseurs de Louisbourg offraient le spectacle de leurs rivalités.... En y ajoutant la pussillanimité dont ont fait preuve de trop nombreux officiers de la flotte française, en rade à Louisbourg en ses heures les plus

²⁶ George F.G. Stanley, *New France: The Last Phase, 1744-1760* (Toronto: 1968), p. 270.

²⁷ J.S. McLennan *Louisbourg from Its Foundation to Its Fall, 1713-1758* (London: 1918), p. 295.

²⁸ T.A. Crowley, *Louisbourg, Forteresse et Port de l'Atlantique* (Ottawa: 1990), pp.1-2.

²⁹ T.A. Crowley, "French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1745" (unpublished report, the Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1970), p. 169.

difficiles, ainsi que la médiocrité notoire des troupes de sa garnison, nous avons là les principaux éléments de deux défaites successives de 1745 et de 1758.³⁰

W.S. MacNutt added, "if Louisbourg failed in the role projected for it in 1713, it was because of the general failure of French government to co-ordinate and develop the resources of its great colonial empire."³¹ R.T. Naylor saw two local strategic problems which he identified as "undersupply of food and oversupply of liquor."³² These problems were related to local circumstances more than to metropolitan policies, although the latter were also implicated in the adverse situations.

The Anglo-American siege of Louisbourg in 1745 has been a major topic of debate in the historiography. G.A Rawlyk's study provides the best description of this event.³³ His approach has an extreme bias against the French however, especially Governor Jean-Baptiste-Louis Le Prevost, Seigneur Duquesnel. Rawlyk wrote: "Despite the embarrassing retreat of Le Loutre's force . . . He [Duquesnel] decided to gamble once again with a combined land and sea assault on Annapolis Royal. What had this dying old man to lose? He had neither a military reputation nor an administrative career to protect."³⁴ Another study of the siege of 1745 was done by Raymond Baker,³⁵ whose work adds little to our understanding of Anglo-French conflicts.³⁶ Julian Gwyn and

³⁰ Bona Arsenault, *Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (Quebec: 1971), pp. 223-24.

³¹ W.S. MacNutt, *The Atlantic Provinces, The Emergence of Colonial Society, 1712-1857* (Toronto: 1965), p. 27.

³² R.T. Naylor, *Canada in the European Age, 1453-1919* (Vancouver: 1987), pp. 111-12.

³³ G.A Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Orono: 1967).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

³⁵ Raymond Baker, *A Campaign of Amateurs: The Siege of Louisbourg, 1745* (Ottawa: (continued...))

Christopher Moore offer a critical evaluation of the 1745 capture of Louisbourg in the introduction to an edited French document: "Le Journal du 1er siège de Louisbourg . . . par Gilles Lacroix-Girard."³⁷ What they do not illustrate, as T.A. Crowley remarked, is "the historical value of this Journal except to note that Lacroix-Girard was a dispassionate observer."³⁸ The authors themselves do not refer to the Journal except once in a footnote.³⁹ Furthermore, they did not give enough attention to explore and explain the role of the Native people in defending Louisbourg, or Isle Royale, although the Journal mentioned it.⁴⁰

The majority of the studies and interpretations of the fall of Louisbourg, whether from a continental perspective or from a colonial perspective, implied theoretically that "imperialism" was solely a metropolitan product and imposition. The empirical and conceptual milieus of these studies are limited to the setting of Anglo-French conflicts along the North Atlantic seaboard, excluding the imperial significance of the colony.

Christopher Moore's *Louisbourg Portraits* is an imaginative reconstruction of colonial social conditions based often on fragmentary references culminating in useful discussion of family life, the

(...continued)
1978).

³⁶ See Barry Moody, "Acadia and Old Nova Scotia to 1784" in Brook Taylor, ed., *Canadian History: A Readers Guide vol. 1. Beginnings to Confederation* (Toronto: 1994), p. 90; T.A. Crowley, "Monument to Europe: Atlantic Forts and Fortifications," *Acadiensis*, vol. X, no. 2 (1981), p. 169.

³⁷ Julian Gwyn and Christopher Moore, *La chute de Louisbourg: Le journal du 1er siège de Louisbourg du 25 mars au 17 juillet 1745 par Gilles Lacroix-Girard* (Ottawa: 1978).

³⁸ Crowley, "Monument to Empire," *op. cit.*, p. 170.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 170, footnote 26.

⁴⁰ Gwyn and Moore, *La chute de Louisbourg*, pp. 81-82, 93.

fishery, siege warfare and commerce.⁴¹ It does not pretend to delve into policy-making and when it turns to motivations for regulations and their implementation or non-implementation it is extremely conjectural.⁴² In his work on Louisbourg and Havana in the eighteenth century John R. McNeil suggested the need to examine imperial policy in the light of local conditions:

The history of Louisbourg and Havana in the eighteenth century represents the interplay of imperial policy - conservative policy based on undue ignorance and an unexamined trust in traditional methods - with colonial conditions. The population, geography, and natural resources of Cape Breton and Cuba, together with financial and naval limitations, defined the boundaries within which imperial policy could determine colonial history.⁴³

Yet his study remains a proposition for comparative history.

Olive P. Dickason's study of Louisbourg explained a different facet of imperialism by throwing light on the historical importance of French-Amerindian relations on Isle Royale.⁴⁴ She underscored the relevance of studying imperialism from a cultural perspective. Explaining imperial race relations in the cultural setting, Dickason noted: "By the time Louisbourg was begun in 1720, the pressures of contact had been increasing for more than a century and a half. The Indians had

⁴¹ Christopher Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits. Life in an Eighteenth-Century Garrison Town* (Toronto: 1982).

⁴² In a short paragraph on p. 181 of *Louisbourg Portraits*, for example, there are no fewer than eight "seems to," "might have," "may have," "perhaps," "if such," etc. G.A. Rawlyk, "J.B. Brebner and Some Recent Trends in Eighteenth Century Maritime Historiography" in Stephen J. Hornsby, et al., eds., *The Northeastern Borderlands: Four Centuries of Interaction* (Fredericton: 1989), p. 55.

⁴³ J.R. McNeil, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain: Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill: 1985), p. 208.

⁴⁴ Olive P. Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians: A Study in Imperial Race Relations, 1713-1760* (Ottawa: 1976).

become important to the survival of New France.⁴⁵ In addition, she remarked that in the context of Isle Royale and Acadia Mi'kmaq warfare, their "guerre navale," against the English was a unique episode in Canadian history.⁴⁶ According to Dickason, the Natives considered themselves allies and not subjects of the French. In a 1993 article, Stephen E. Patterson echoed the viewpoint of Dickason: "cultural ties were a significant factor in Natives' decision to support the French in time of war," adding that "they were able to operate between the French and English with a measure of independence."⁴⁷

William C. Wicken's study of the Mi'kmaq, taking a different approach, concentrates on the dynamics of native political, social and economic structures between 1500 and 1760. He argued that in spite of the settlement of Acadia by French farmers and the influence of French political, military and religious organisations, "Mi'kmaq society retained its essential characteristics."⁴⁸ Although Wicken claimed that his methodology of analysing "European relations with Mi'kmaq society according to occupational group . . . has afforded a more subtle understanding of Mi'kmaq relations with European peoples," it did not lead us to any different interpretation but restated a generally accepted thesis, which in his own words, "has shown that the ability to communicate with

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

⁴⁶ Olive P. Dickason, "La guerre navale des Micmacs contre les Britanniques, 1713-1763," in C.A. Martijn, ed., *Les Micmacs et la Mer* (Quebec: 1986), pp. 223-48, see also Dickason, "Amerindians between French and English in Nova Scotia, 1713-1763" in J.R. Miller, ed., *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: 1991), pp. 45-67.

⁴⁷ Stephen E. Patterson, "Indian-White Relations in Nova Scotia, 1749-61: A Study in Political Integration," *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (1993), pp. 23-59.

⁴⁸ William C. Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: the Mi'kmaq Society, 1500-1760" (Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1994), pp. 443-44.

peoples of other cultures is not determined by nationality or ethnic identity but rather by particular historical circumstances. . .”⁴⁹ Furthermore, he argued that “the missionary’s influence in Mi’kmaq society was limited and Catholicism, as a system of thought, did not revolutionise Mi’kmaq cultural life.”⁵⁰ It appears from the present research that without the assistance of the missionaries France would not have sustained its military alliance with the Mi’kmaq and, hence, political hegemony in the region. In regard to his latter argument, this study finds that a “cultural revolution” did not occur because the process of evangelisation was not an imposition of one system of thought on the other, instead, it followed a path of cultural accommodation and relativism. This method of evangelisation enabled the Mi’kmaq to see in Catholicism what could be incorporated into their level of perception and practice. The insights noted by several historians in the relations between the French and the Amerindians of Canada and its upper country were at last being examined in the case of the Mi’kmaq. In spite of these and other studies⁵¹ Amerindian “alliance with the French” as noted

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 444-45. For the thesis of historical circumstances see Gary B. Nash, *Red, White and Black: The Peoples of Early America* (Englewood Cliffs: 1974); see also Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 126; Andrea Bear Nicholas, “Wabanaki and French Relations: Myth and Reality,” *Interculture*, vol. XXIV, no. 10 (1991) p. 19; Cornelius J. Jaenen, “Characteristics of French-Amerindian Contact in New France” in Howard R. Lamar, *et.al.*, eds., *Essays on the History of North American Discovery and Exploration* (Texas: 1988), p. 79, and *Friend and Foe: Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contacts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Toronto:1976).

⁵⁰ Wicken, “Encounters with Tall Sails,” pp. 374, 443.

⁵¹ L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists: Indian-White Relationship in the Maritimes, 1713-1786* (Vancouver: 1979); Bill Wicken, “26 August 1726: A Case Study in Mi’kmaq-New England Relations in the Eighteenth Century,” *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (1993), pp. 5-22; D.L. Schmidt and B.A. Balcom, “The Règlements of 1739: A Note on Micmac Law and Literacy,” *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no.1 (1993), pp. 110-27.

by A.J.B. Johnston was not fully understood, often being described as little more than a gift-exchange.⁵²

The current historiographical trend is to treat the Natives of Isle Royale and Nova Scotia as independent peoples, who as allies of the French had full freedom of thought and action in the eighteenth century. It seems that such a description overlooks the evidence that they were struggling for survival in the competition for empire between France and Britain. For a better understanding of French-Amerindian relationships in the region we need to develop a broader view of imperialism.

This study examines French imperialism in the total framework of political, economic, military, social, cultural and strategic functions of the colony as well as in the context of colony's relations with the metropolis. In other words it is about the various manifestations and dimensions of a hegemonic system over the span of Louisbourg's history from 1713 to 1758. This comprehensive approach is indispensable, because the effective exercise of power took place through diverse channels of colonialism and conquest.

Louisbourg was considered a failure in terms of the naval and military defence of the colony in 1745, and later in 1758. In contrast to this perception, the present study explains how for a forty-five-year period Louisbourg attained tremendous success in checking English expansion by rallying the support of the Mi'kmaq and other native groups, exploiting the regional resources, and ultimately by establishing a dominant influence over a North Atlantic region through forceful as well as "pacific" conquest. In the process of this conquest it was the colony of Isle Royale which, to a

⁵² A.J.B. Johnston, "Report of the Current Presentation on Aboriginal History at National Historic Sites Administered by Parks Canada and at National Parks," (Parks Canada: 1995), p. 56.

great extent, formulated policies, strategies and tactics of domination. The colonial government came to exert its independent authority for many reasons. These included the need for military and commercial alliances with the Native peoples, the necessity of reaching urgent decisions quickly in the face of delay in communication with Versailles, and reliance on colonial officers' superior knowledge of the local situation. Furthermore, since the French troops were insufficient to meet the military demands and they were unfamiliar with the local methods of warfare, the colonial government was forced to build on strength from within the colony in collaboration with the Native peoples. The Natives, as warriors and auxiliary servants provided invaluable help to the French. Without Amerindian assistance New France would probably not have survived into the eighteenth century. These characteristic features of colonial administration, military and cultural life indicate that imperial Louisbourg was a product of colonial factors as well as of metropolitan initiatives. We will see that it was also "imperialism from below" that facilitated the formation of French entrenchment on the North Atlantic seaboard, in a situation where it appeared that France had no consistent policy of imperialism.

French imperialism in the context of Louisbourg's seaboard empire generated its main energy by linking and exploiting relative inequalities in balance of resources and political and military power in the colony. These economic and political relativities determined the nature of colonial or local collaboration with the metropolis; such factors developed an indigenous imperial linkage which reflected colonial and metropolitan interests and elements. Consequently, as Ronald Robinson noted, the nature and structure of imperialism "with or without empire, can only be

defined in terms of local collaborative systems at the point of impact.”⁵³ On the North Atlantic seaboard, France’s hegemony during the eighteenth century was dependent upon the maintenance of imperialism without empire, or an “informal empire,” in Acadia (Nova Scotia). The real control of this empire lay in the apparatus of local power although the metropolitan government retained the threads of imperial policy. The hegemonic influence and power structure were, in fact, to be created internally, maintaining linkages of local factors, within the space of the “informal empire” instead of applying any external forces such as military power. This hypothesis refutes a commonly held view that it was Britain which invented and practised the strategy of “informal empire” and “indirect rule” in the nineteenth century while France acted according to its principles of assimilation.⁵⁴ The present thesis will demonstrate that as early as the first half of the eighteenth century France invented an “informal empire” and exercised “indirect rule” on the colonial region in question for the maintenance of France’s seaboard empire on the North Atlantic littoral.

Louisbourg has been chosen as a case study because in some respects it reflected the situation in other colonies in North America and also on account of its resemblance to French entrepôts in other parts of the world. This does not mean that the Louisbourg case is entirely applicable to the study of other French bases. It suggests that in the absence of coherent and consistent metropolitan policies, and due to the delay in communication between the *métropole* and the colonies, it was possible for colonial governments to develop their own imperialistic projects.

⁵³ Ronald Robinson, “The Excentric Idea of Imperialism with or without Empire” in W.J. Mommsen and J. Osterhammel, eds., *Imperialism and After, Continuities and Discontinuities* (London: 1986), p. 273.

⁵⁴ W.J. Mommsen, “The End of Empire and the Continuity of Imperialism” in *Imperialism and After. ibid.*, p. 334.

The French government in India under François Dupleix had a record of frequent conflicts with Versailles, because metropolitan policies were deemed unsuitable to the region.⁵⁵ The administration of the British colonies in South Asia and North America similarly indicated the formulation and exercise of imperial policy from below.⁵⁶

The methodology for developing this thesis of "imperialism from below" is founded on the qualitative analysis of historical facts from the perspective of the colony of Isle Royale. References have been made to the examples of imperialism in other French and European colonies in order to substantiate the arguments here. The nature of this study dictated, of course, that the sources consulted were the French colonial records of the eighteenth century. It has also been of some value to examine the British sources relating to Nova Scotia and Isle Royale during the same period. The British sources were less useful in the investigation into the evolution of a hegemonic system at Louisbourg although they assisted in achieving a better balance and refined judgment in the analysis of historical events. Most of the primary source material used for this dissertation is either archival, such as correspondence between colonial and metropolitan officials, letters, memoirs, reports and similar documents produced by merchants, missionaries, and other inhabitants in the colony, or published sources including minutes, edicts, ordinances, regulations, and correspondences. All these materials were collected from the National Archives and the National Library of Canada at Ottawa as well as the Archives at the Fortress of Louisbourg in Nova Scotia.

⁵⁵ V.M. Thompson, *Dupleix and His Letters, 1743-1754* (New York: 1933), pp. 793, 818-19, for Dupleix's letters on the matter.

⁵⁶ Peter J. Marshall, *Problems of Empire, Britain and India, 1757-1813* (London: 1968); W.A.B. Douglas, "Nova Scotia and the Royal Navy, 1713-1766" (Ph.D thesis, Queen's University, 1973); Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London: 1973), p. vii.

The unpublished documents are mainly copies of the original materials on microfilms and microfiches, which are also available in transcripts. These primary sources are serial collections based on chronological order and the nature of correspondence. Therefore, they have not required research initiatives such as determining their provenance, authenticity, periodisation etc. At the same time it has been important to interpret these documents and use them to construct a thesis sensitive to possible conflict and bias and thus to strive for objectivity.

The documents consulted, on occasion, do exhibit some nationalistic, religious, and cultural biases and prejudices, but this does not imply that such records should be dismissed as having no value. British evaluations of French relations with the Mi'kmaq, or other Amerindian groups, often portrayed the relationship as being more congenial to French interests than their own inter-cultural experience. The reason suggested for this supposed superiority of the French approach usually included reference to *métissage* and to the great influence of the Catholic missionaries. French documents made little mention of *métissage* in these circumstances and the missionaries never seemed certain of the degree of influence they wielded. As we shall see, a more relevant factor in the French-Mi'kmaq relations was the latter's identification of Catholicism as one of their group characteristics. In this case, the British interpretation may not have been entirely accurate, yet the perception remained historically significant since Catholicism was widely enough shared to be a factor in determining British policy and action *vis-à-vis* both the French and the Mi'kmaq. In the absence of documents created by the Native peoples we are forced to depend on the information provided by French and British records to study their role in the historical developments. As these records clearly showed European discrimination against the aboriginal peoples, prudence was exercised in using them. Further attempt has been made to examine the role of the Natives in the

competition for hegemony between the French and the British in the context of local political, economic and demographic situations.

These approaches constituted a research methodology aimed at a critical examination of historical facts and perceptions of the time. The use of primary documents requires an understanding and appreciation of their time and space, i.e., the historical conditions and issues which generated them, the motivations of their authors and their intended impact. In addition to this internal criticism, it has been necessary to judge the importance and relevance of the documents in relation to other documentation and to what is known about the subject in general from other scholarly investigations. Just as the sources employed must be understood in terms of their temporal and spatial contexts, so external criticism demands that they be judged in terms of the historical literature. They in some cases confirm the main historiographical trends and at times indicate a need for revision or refinement of accepted interpretations. It is commonplace to state that in historical research there are no identical situations, no laws, and no inevitability. We do find some useful parallels, however, along with some interesting tendencies. Secondary sources have also proved valuable to this aspect of the study.

This dissertation begins with a discussion of metropolitan views of Louisbourg in a second chapter. Following in the third and fourth chapters is an examination of the administration of the colony in which the main topics of discussion are the role of the colonial government in the formulation of policies and strategies with regard to the establishment of an imperial system on the North Atlantic, especially in terms of the control of the fisheries, colonial trade, foreign policy and military affairs. In the fifth chapter, this imperial system is further examined in the context of the enunciation of France's policy with regard to the Native peoples in terms of cultural imperialism

within the framework of local cultural, political, and strategic factors. Chapter six elucidates the evolution of an imperial power structure internally through the exercise of native protocols and gift diplomacy as well as the institutional perpetuation of power by the bureaucracy, military and the church. The seventh chapter delineates the part played by Louisbourg in influencing and employing the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis against the English so as to maintain a zone of "informal empire". In conclusion, this study presents the thesis that imperial Louisbourg was a myth in terms of "imperialism from above"; instead, in terms of historical reality, one should conceptualise "imperialism from below" as the most satisfactory description.

CHAPTER 2

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LOUISBOURG AN OVERVIEW OF METROPOLITAN OBJECTIVES

PART I

In May 1701, Louis XIV of France embarked on a policy of imperialism and territorial expansion in North America. He issued orders for the establishment of a new colony of Louisiana in the lower Mississippi valley and the settlement of Detroit between Lake Erie and Lake St. Clair. In the same year the French and some thirty allied Amerindian nations were able to bring an end to the long wars with the Five Nations Iroquois through the peace treaty of Montreal. The Iroquois agreed to accept a position of neutrality in possible future conflicts between the French and the English.¹ The peace treaty with the Iroquois was a diplomatic and strategic success attained by the French on the eve of another war between France and Britain. The main motive behind this new imperialistic drive was to prevent the expansion of the English colonies into the interior of North America and hence to strengthen the frontiers of the French empire. In 1702 the War of Spanish Succession broke out in Europe. In principal it was a European war concerned with dynastic affairs, yet it instigated the European colonies in the Americas to enter the conflict.

The English colonies were most aware of French imperialistic designs. Pierre de Troyes had led a successful expedition against the Hudson's Bay Company posts in 1686 and thereafter much

¹ Gilles Havard, *La Grand paix de Montréal de 1701. Les voies de la diplomatie franco-amérindienne* (Quebec: 1992).

of the trade of the Hudson Bay region was directed to France, thanks to the prowess of Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville. On the southern frontier Canadians and Native allies surprised the settlement of Deerfield in the Connecticut valley. They harassed Massachusetts and Maine in order to keep the Abenakis loyal to their alliance with them. In Newfoundland the French captured Bonavista in 1705 and St. John's in 1709 and ravaged most of the Avalon peninsula. The British responded with attempts to take Port Royal in 1704 and 1707, and finally succeeded in 1710. The following year, an imposing invasion fleet led by Admiral Sir Hovenden Walker hoped to take Quebec, but it was shattered on the reefs of Ile aux Oeuifs with heavy loss of life. France emerged from the war in North America a victor everywhere, except in Acadia, whereas on the European battlefields France exhausted itself and succumbed to the Grand Alliance of England, the Holy Roman Empire, Holland, Savoy, and Portugal.

By the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, France was forced to cede some of its North Atlantic colonial possessions - Placentia (Newfoundland) and Acadia - to Britain. In addition, France acknowledged the British claims to the Hudson Bay region and British control over the Iroquois. France also had to recognise the right of the English to trade with other Amerindian "nations". In return, France was given permission to catch fish off the Newfoundland waters and to dry it on the shore from Cape Bonavista to Pointe Riche.² Two small islands in the Gulf of St. Lawrence, Cape Breton (Isle Royale) and Prince Edward Island (Isle St. Jean), remained under the control of France

² See the Treaty of Utrecht in Fred L. Israel, ed., *Major Peace Treaties of Modern History, 1648-1967* (New York: 1967), vol. I, pp. 207-11, articles X-XV. For a chart and details of France's Newfoundland fishery see J. Mannion, *et.al.*, "The Newfoundland Fishery, 18th Century" in R. Cole Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada, vol. I, From Beginning to 1800* (Toronto: 1987), plate 25.

and the French claimed that the region west of the Isthmus of Chignecto in Acadia belonged to them (for illustration see map 1).³

How important was Louisbourg in metropolitan plans? Let us begin with historian Dale Miquelon's words:

France always had a clearer sense of its imperial mission in the Atlantic region and backed it up with money. The bulk of its North American defence spending went into Louisbourg, which clearly protected the fishery, and, arguably (such was the power of auto-suggestion), the continent.⁴

Governor-General Roland-Michel Barrin de La Galissonnière had taken the opposite position:

La perte de l'Acadie a obligé d'avoir une attention très particulière pour l'Isle Royale, ou l'on a bati et fortifié Louisbourg. L'Acadie faisoit autrefois partie du Canada, et c'est sans doute une des pertes des plus importantes que l'on ait fait à la paix d'Utrecht. L'Établissement de Louisbourg par où l'on a cherché à la réparer, autant qu'il étoit possible, n'est qu'un foible dédommagement... On a éprouvé [dans la dernière guerre] que le Canada pouvoit se soutenir sans cette place [Louisbourg].⁵

³ The boundaries of Acadia had always been a controversial issue throughout the period from 1713 to 1758. The English demanded "all Nova Scotia or Acadie with its ancient boundaries." The French argued that by the Treaty of Utrecht they did not cede the whole of Acadia, but, as La Galissonnière said, "according to the strict construction of the Treaties and the ancient descriptions of that province, the cession made to the English terminates at Port Royal and its liberty (banlieue) and at the part of the coasts which extends from the extremity of the Bay of Fundy unto Cape Canso." La Galissonnière, "Memoir on the French colonies in North America, December 1750," Y.F. Zoltvany, ed., *The French Tradition in America* (New York: 1969), pp. 158-65; MG 11, CO 221, vol. 37, pp. 10-11, Mémoire sur L'Acadie Remis par les commissaires François [La Galissonnière et De Silhouette] à ceux de Sa Majesté Britannique, 21 septembre, 1750. All MG citations are from the NAC (National Archives of Canada, Ottawa). MG 11, CO 217, vol. 39, pp. 269-275, Instructions for William Shirley and William Mildway..., 1750; *ibid.*, pp. 276-279, Proposals for Compromising the Disputes between the Crowns of Great Britain and France..., 1750; Corinne Laplante, "Le traité d'Utrecht et la question de limites territoriales de l'Acadie" in *Les Cahiers de la Société historique acadienne*, vol. VI, no. 1 (mars, 1975), pp. 19-24.

⁴ Dale Miquelon, *New France 1701-1744, "A Supplement to Europe."* (Toronto: 1987), p. 260-61.

⁵ MG 5, B1, vol. 2, pp. 52-53. Mémoire sur les colonies de la France dans l'Amérique
(continued...)

PART II

The year 1713 marked a turning point in the history of French imperialism. While France managed to retain its role as a continental power in Europe, its position in the colonial world began to show signs of decline. With the cession of Placentia and Port Royal, France lost its principal bases on the North Atlantic littoral. At this critical juncture, the establishment of a new colony and a new outpost of empire became indispensable for France so as to uphold the balance of power in the overseas theatre of operations. As Thomas Pichon later remarked: "toutes les puissances qui possèdent des colonies, ont autant d'intérêt de tenir la balance égale en Amérique qu'elles peuvent en avoir en Europe."⁶

The capture of Port Royal in 1710, and the subsequent fall of Acadia into the hands of the English, had already created serious concerns in the official circles at Versailles about the exercise of French power on the North Atlantic seaboard. Minister of Marine Jérôme Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain, proposed a reconquest of Acadia:

Si nous ne reprenons l'Acadie, il ne nous restera plus aucun endroit par où nous puissions soutenir quelque pesche, d'ailleurs ce pays est si proche du Canada qu'il y auroit tout lieu

(...continued)

septentrionale, décembre, 1750; E.B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany: 1858), vol. X, pp. 220-232.

⁶ MG 18, F12, vol. 3, p. 324; Thomas Pichon, *Lettres et Mémoires pour Servir à l'histoire Naturelle, Civile et Politique du Cap Breton* (London: 1760), p. 324. Pichon was secretary to the Governor of Isle Royale, Count Raymond. Later, when he became sub-delegate of the *commissaire ordonnateur* of Isle Royale at Beauséjour, Pichon spied for the English. See J.C. Webster, *Thomas Pichon, "The Spy of Beauséjour"* (Sackville: 1937). A.M. Wilson pointed out that the French foreign policy was limited to the maintenance of the balance of power after 1713. A.M. Wilson, *French Foreign Policy During the Administration of Cardinal Fleury, 1726-1743* (Cambridge: 1936), p. 4.

de craindre qu'il n'entraînat sa perte si les Anglois en restaient possesseurs. Voila deux objets qui sont pour l'État d'une importance très considerable, qui me touchent vivement et qui méritent une attention particulière.⁷

The minister's letter clearly indicated the need for a territorial base in the region although France was unable to retake Acadia. Since it appeared to him from the peace negotiations (1711-1713) that France would not be able to retain its colonies of Placentia and Acadia after the war, Pontchartrain began the search for a location for the establishment of a new base for what remained of the colony.

Pontchartrain was a strong advocate of French overseas colonisation for imperialistic and mercantile reasons. In 1701 he was instrumental in the establishment of Louisiana.⁸ As an ardent advocate of the economic policies of Jean-Baptiste Colbert, Pontchartrain believed that the colonies should be the source of raw materials and the market for finished goods. Ultimately, colonies were to support the economic development of the mother country by helping to conserve a favourable balance of trade, but he did not accept Colbert's view that colonial "self-sufficiency" was a precondition for economic development.⁹ Pontchartrain, instead, tried to develop intercolonial co-

⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 32, p. 509. à François Beauharnois, 24 décembre, 1710; *Collection des Manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 15.

⁸ John C. Rule, "Jérôme Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain and the Establishment of Louisiana, 1696-1715" in John F. McDermott, ed., *Frenchmen and French Ways in the Mississippi Valley* (Urbana: 1969), pp. 179-97.

⁹ Colbert's policy of the "compact colony" reflected the notion of colonial "self-sufficiency". In New France Colbert wanted the settlers to engage in cultivation and manufacturing and hence to develop a self-sustaining colony within a restricted geographical area rather than expanding the frontiers of the fur trade. W.J. Eccles, *Canada Under Louis XIV, 1663-1701* (Reprint, Toronto: 1978), pp. 59-76; C.W. Cole, *Colbert and A Century of French Mercantilism* (Hamden: 1964), pp. 74-82 and *French Mercantilism, 1683-1700* (New York: 1965), p. 65; Dale Miquelon, "Canada's (continued...)"

operation through commerce within the mercantile system of France. For this reason, he was convinced, France should continue its presence and influence on the North Atlantic region for commercial and strategic purposes and for the protection of New France.

As early as the 1670s administrators like Jean Talon and Jacques Demeulles had discussed the importance of Isle Royale for economic and strategic reasons.¹⁰ The officers of the Saint-Marie's company of the colonial troops had made a request for the grant of this island in 1700.¹¹ In August 1706, Antoine-Denis Raudot, Intendant of Canada, submitted a report to the Ministry of Marine on the advantages of Isle Royale.¹² Raudot wrote:

L'Isle du Cap Breton est située pour servir d'entrepote [sic] entre la france, le canada, l'acadie et plaisance. Cette isle produira de grands biens à ses habitans par la pesche de la morue. Le commerce que produira cette isle sera infini puisque celui du poisson et des huilles ne se peut limiter. Outre ces pesches cette isle a des mines de charbon de terre qui est une marchandise qui se débite parfaitement bien, elle a des mines des phosfire, de plastre, de mats et des bois de construction... L'Établissement de cette isle ne fera jamais aucun tort à la colonie de Canada, mais au contraire la soutiendra par la débouche de ses blés, bocufs, lards, pois et autres grains et menues denrées qu'elle fournira à la colonie de cette isle qui étant comme son magasin laquelle envoira en échange des marchandises de france...Ce ne peut estre que l'établissement du Cap breton qui puisse soulager cette colonie et la mettre en état de pouvoir subsister commodement.¹³

(...continued)

Place in the French Imperial Economy: An Eighteenth-Century Overview," *FHS*, vol. XV, no. 3 (1988), pp. 432-43.

¹⁰ *RAPQ*, vol. XI, p. 80, Talon au ministre, 27 octobre, 1667; *ibid.*, p. 178, Mémoire par Talon sur Canada, 1673. Robert Le Blant, *Un Colonial sous Louis XIV: Philippe de Pastour de Costebelle* (Paris: 1935), p. 166; T.A. Crowley, "France, Canada and the Beginning of Louisbourg: In Search of the Great Fortress Myth" in *Papers and Abstracts for A Symposium on Ile Royale During the French Régime* (Ottawa: 1972), pp. 45-72.

¹¹ J.S. McLennan, *Louisbourg From Its Foundation to Its Fall* (Toronto: 1983), p. 9.

¹² Donald J. Horton, "Raudot, Antoine-Denis" *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 549-554.

¹³ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, pp. 40-52, Antoine-Denis Raudot, Mémoire sur les affaires présentes
(continued...)

Raudot found that, since the fur trade was in a state of crisis, the colonisation of Isle Royale was crucial to economic development. By the end of the seventeenth century there was a surplus of beaver pelts which the market could not absorb. The metropolitan government gave orders for the temporary suspension of the Canadian beaver trade and the closing of the trading posts in the *pays d'en haut*. Raudot realised that Canada needed an alternate source of income. He believed that the economic growth of the colony was dependant upon the export of surplus products. Accordingly he conceived the colonisation of Isle Royale as a potential market for Canadian agricultural products.

In spite of the high priority attributed to economic and commercial matters in the memoir, Raudot explained that Isle Rcyale could play a prominent role as a base for the protection of the French empire in North America. He noted:

L'establisement de cette isle fera un grand tort à la colonie angloise à baston... qui en peu de tems deviendra considerable par le commerce...fera trembler les anglois...Cette Isle bien établie seroit la base et le fondement de puissance de sa Majesté dans l'amérique a portée de l'Isle de terre neuve, de l'acadie, du canada, et pas éloignée des îles du Misispy et de leurs donner tout le secours dont ils pouroient avoir besoin...¹⁴

In addition to Raudot's memoir which stressed colonial concerns and priorities, there was an anonymous report on the advantages of Isle Royale, dated 30 November, 1706, that reached the Ministry of Marine. This report underscored most of the same points mentioned in Raudot's memorandum, but it demonstrated the necessity of colonising Isle Royale more in terms of the

(...continued)

du Canada et l'établissement du Cap-Breton, 7 aoust, 1706, joint à la lettre au ministre, 25 octobre, 1706; MG 8, A1, vol. 5, pp. 1180-96.

¹⁴ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8. *Ibid.*, *idem.*

metropolitan and mercantilist perspective than the interests of the colony. This anonymous report began with an explanation of the principle that: "les colonies ne sont nécessaires qu'autant qu'elles sont utiles aux États dont elles tirent leur origine. Elles ne sont utiles qu'autant qu'elles procurent à ces États de nouveaux avantages et des moyens solides d'étendre leur commerce."¹⁵

These early reports based on colonial and metropolitan perspectives had already attracted the attention of Pontchartrain to Isle Royale. Raudot was asked to prepare a statement of the necessary funds for the implementation of these proposals. Nonetheless, due to the mounting costs of war, a monetary crisis and inflation in Canada no further step was taken by the Ministry of Marine until 1713.

Early in 1712, before the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht, Pontchartrain began to make plans for the establishment of a permanent base for the fishery, a port of call and the transfer of the

¹⁵ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, pp. 10-39, Mémoire à Monseigneur le Comte de Pontchartrain sur l'établissement d'un colonie dans l'Île du Cap-Breton, 30 novembre, 1706; see also MG 8, A1, vol. 5, pp. 1197-1236; MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 269-287. This document is partially published in McLennan, *Louisbourg*, pp. 22-31, and in Zoltvany, ed., *The French Tradition*, pp. 131-135. It was commonly believed that Raudot might be the author of this memoir, but Robert Le Blant argues that it was penned by Denis Riverin. Le Blant, *Un Colonial Sous Louis XIV...*, pp. 165-67; see also Crowley, "France, Canada and the Beginnings of Louisbourg," in *Papers and Abstracts*, p. 71. Riverin was secretary to Intendant Duchesneau from 1675 to 1685, and a member of the Conseil Souverain from 1698 to 1710. He returned to France in 1702 and became an agent of the Compagnie de la Colonie at Paris. See Cameron Nish, "Riverin, Denis," *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 574-76 and P.F.X. Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, trans., J.G. Shea (Chicago: 1870), vol. V, pp. 74, 75, 112. Riverin's long stay in Canada enabled him to acquire a profound knowledge to write a detailed and analytical report on Canadian affairs. This memoir was signed at Paris on 30 November, 1706, and Raudot was in Quebec as shown by his letter to Pontchartrain dated 25 October, 1706. It is doubtful whether Raudot could reach Paris in such a short time to submit another memoir, as he had already submitted one on the subject. Besides, the mercantilist and metropolitan viewpoints expressed in the anonymous memoir indicate that it was not Raudot who wrote from the perspective of the colony. Riverin was a critic of colonial administration under Governor-General Philippe de Rigaud Marquis de Vaudreuil and Intendants Raudot and Michel Bégon. See Adam Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance During the French Period* (Ottawa: 1925), vol. 1, p. 129.

habitants of Placentia and Acadia if these remained under British control.¹⁶ By February 1713 the final decision had been made on the creation of a new colony on Isle Royale. The Governor of Placentia Pastour de Costbelle was advised to take necessary measures for an exploratory expedition to Isle Royale, for which preparations were simultaneously started at Versailles.¹⁷ One of the king's vessels, the *Semslack*, was outfitted at Rochefort for the expedition. Joseph de Brouillan de Saint-Ovide, king's lieutenant at Placentia, was appointed the commander of the expedition. Jacques l'Hermitte, Major at Placentia, was appointed engineer at the new site for the colony. As Saint-Ovide was in France at this time, he began the expedition from La Rochelle. The ship arrived at Placentia on 26 June, 1713, where l'Hermitte, Louis Denys de la Ronde, fifty soldiers, and a few women and children accompanied the expedition. On 23 July the *Semslack* sailed for Isle Royale. In compliance with the order of the Minister of Marine, the Governor-General of Canada, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, prepared a detachment of forty Canadian soldiers under Jean-Baptiste Hertel de Rouville to go to Isle Royale in order to assist the troops of Placentia in the initial work of colonisation. Since the *Semslack* could not go to Quebec to pick up this Canadian detachment, Intendant Michel Bégon chartered a ship from Poupet de la Boularderie and sent the Canadian soldiers to Isle Royale.¹⁸

¹⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 3-4, Conseil, 1712.

¹⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 5-6, à Costebelle, 24 février, 1713; *ibid.*, p. 230, à Vaudreuil, 24 février, 1713.

¹⁸ Dale Miquelon, "Le Poupet de la Boularderie, Louis-Simon," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 234-36.

The main purpose of this expedition was to take possession of Isle Royale, and to find out a proper location for the new settlements, the fisheries and the principal port.¹⁹ On 2 September, 1713, the officers of the expedition signed a formal declaration claiming possession of Isle Royale for the king of France (map 2 shows the new colony and its principal centres).²⁰ After inspecting various locations on Isle Royale Saint-Ovide returned to France on 29 October leaving l'Hermitte, the soldiers, the craftsmen, and others to take up the initial works. The construction of shelters to escape from the forthcoming winter became their highest priority.²¹ In addition to constructing the shelter at Louisbourg, l'Hermitte explored other areas of Isle Royale. He sent la Ronde, Hertel de Rouville and Jean-Baptiste de Couagne to Port Dauphin (Stc. Anne) to examine that site. They

¹⁹ "C'est pour faire le choix d'un port dans l'Isle du Cap Breton pour pouvoir y transporter toute la garnison et les habitans de Plaisance ... et pour y Etablir une pesche solide et Sedentaire. Elle s'est déterminé à faire faire un Établissement de pesche à cet Endroit sur le Rapport qui luy a été fait de l'abondance du poisson qu'on trouve autour de cette Isle et pour procurer Toujours à ses sujets le commerce de la Morue qui forme un nombre infiny de matelots parmy ses peuples et apporte tous les ans un argent considerable dans son Royaume." MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 240-45, Instructions pour Saint-Ovide, 20 mars, 1713.

²⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 11, Prise de possession de l'Île du Cap-Breton, septembre 2, 1713; MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 566, à Beauharnois, 1 novembre, 1713; MG 18, A1, vol. 5, pp. 1267-68, Acte de prise possession du Cap-Breton, 2 septembre, 1713; McLennan, *Louisbourg*, pp. 11-12. Possession had been claimed over the region in 1524 by Da Verrazzano and in 1604 by du Gua de Monts.

²¹ Thomas Pichon had drawn a fascinating picture of Louisbourg's climate: "L'hyver est fort mauvais à Louisbourg. Les coups de vent y sont frequents, sur tout de la partie du sud. Le ciel est souvent obscurci par les nuages, les brumes ou brouillards trop fréquents surtout en été et fort nuisibles aux navigateurs, et par les pluyes et les neiges. La gelée ne cesse point depuis Noel, et ne forme qu'un corps dur de la terre et des eaux qui la couvrent et la pénètrent et la neige ne fond plus sur ce terrain propre à la conserver. Toute espèce de commerce dispaeroit alors et la ville ne présente qu'un tableau de tristesse bien different du spectacle que le concours des navigateurs y procure pendant l'été. L'air n'y est cependant pas mal sain, quoique l'hyver y est fort long. L'on n'y distingue, pour ainsi dire, que deux saisons, l'hyver et l'automne;" Pichon, *Lettres et mémoires*, pp. 5-6; MG 18, F12, vol. 3, pp. 5-6. See also MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 143-152, Instruction pour l'Hermitte, mars, 1713.

returned with a report that Port Dauphin had a good harbour, the land around the port was fertile for cultivation, and there was an abundance of woods, stone and lime for the construction of buildings. La Ronde described Port Dauphin as “le plus beaux port... vous trouverez toutes ce qui tant pour fortyfier et pour y bâtyr une superbe ville.”²²

Meanwhile, Saint-Ovide reached France early in December 1713. He submitted the report on the new colony, which suggested that Louisbourg (Havre à l’Anglois) was the best port for the establishment of the fishery and commerce.²³ Engineer l’Hermitte and others did not agree with Saint-Ovide’s choice. They preferred Port Dauphin on account of its better merits for cultivation and for the construction of the buildings. L’Hermitte pointed out that Louisbourg did not have the necessary materials for the construction of the buildings and the land was filled with rocks.²⁴ Despite l’Hermitte’s recommendations, Pontchartrain approved Saint-Ovide’s report because the fisheries and commerce were his main considerations.²⁵ There were different opinions frequently

²² MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp.26v-27, La Ronde au ministre, 9 octobre, 1713.

²³ MG 1, B, vol. 36, pp. 435, à Costebelle, 22 mars, 1714. The king and the minister were pleased with his service: “Il paroît mériter les grâces de Sa Majesté et de recevoir des marques de la satisfaction des services qu’il a rendus.” MG 2, C7, vol. 295, pp. 3-4, conseil, 15 mars, 1714; A memoir by le Sr. Bourdon also indicated the relative importance of Louisbourg. MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 111, s.d.

²⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 47-50v., à ministre, 25 aoust, 1714; MG 1, C11C, vol. 7, p. 223, Extrait de la lettre que j’ay [Costebelle] reçue de l’havre Anglois de monseieur l’Hermitte, 7 septembre, 1713. Port Dauphin had a drawback as Father Charlevoix wrote in his history of New France that “the only objection to Port Ste. Anne, universally admitted to be one of the finest in the New World, is its difficulty of access” to the main fishery. Charlevoix, *History....* vol. V, p. 296.

²⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 36., p. 419, à l’Hermitte, 26 janvier, 1714; *RAPQ*, vol. XXI, p. 439, à l’Hermitte, 26 janvier, 1714; *ibid.*, vol. XVIII, p. 244, Mémoire du Roy à Vaudreuil et Bégon, 19 mars 1714; *ibid.*, p.249, Ministre à Vaudreuil, 19 mars, 1714; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 11, à l’Hermitte, 26 janvier, 1714.

expressed concerning the selection of Louisbourg as the principal port and the capital of the colony. In November 1714, *Commissaire de Classes* at St. Jean de Luz, De Sarry submitted a proposal for the transfer of the main settlement to Port Dauphin, but Pontchartrain declined it advocating the supposedly comparatively better advantages of Louisbourg.²⁶

In the autumn of 1714, the governor of the new colony, Pastour de Costebelle, arrived in Isle Royale.²⁷ After inspecting the various locations on the island Costebelle wrote Pontchartrain that "Je n'ai plus que dire à vostre grandeur en peu de mots que le Port Dauphin doit estre la clef des toutes les ports de L'Isle Royale."²⁸ On 3 August, 1713, following a meeting with Captain Joseph Guion from Quebec, Costebelle had advised Saint-Ovide to examine Port Dauphin during his explorations of different locations on Isle Royale. Costebelle confided "Il [Guion] s'est obstiné à me persuader qu'il n'y en avoit point de s'y avantageux dans la ditte Isle que ccluy de la baye Ste. Anne."²⁹ He also had written to the minister concerning the advantages of Port Dauphin at that time.³⁰ Saint-Ovide did not pay any attention to Costebelle's advice, rather he unilaterally selected Louisbourg. He did not meet the governor or visit Placentia on his way to France before submitting

²⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 36 (4), pp. 179-81, Pontchartrain à Sarry, 30 novembre, 1714.

²⁷ G.C. Salagnac, "Pastour de Costebelle, Philippe," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 532-35.

²⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol.1., p. 43, Costebelle au ministre, 29 octobre, 1714. MG 1, C11C, vol. 7, pp. 219, 228, de Costebelle, 15 and 27 septembre, 1713; MG, B1, vol. 8., pp. 173-175, [s.d] 1716. Costebelle suggested that the population of the colony should be distributed in the various ports on Isle Royale for the proper economic growth of the colony, but the minister rejected this because the colony would not become "considerable et capable de resister aux forces de ennemis que par la quantité de habitans qu'il y aura." MG 1, B, vol. 36, p. 436v, à Costebelle, 22 mars, 1714.

²⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol.1., pp. 38-39, à St. Ovide, 3 aoust, 1713.

³⁰ MG 1, C11C, vol. 7, pp. 228-231v, au ministre, 27 septembre, 1713.

his report.³¹ These developments fostered tensions in the relationship between Costebelle and Saint-Ovide. In any event, after Costebelle's arrival in Isle Royale he launched a campaign against the site of Louisbourg; his disagreement with Saint-Ovide strengthening his resolve to promote the Port Dauphin site.

Costebelle's attachment to the Port Dauphin site blinded him to some of the merits of Louisbourg as an inter-colonial port and to some of the demerits of Port Dauphin. Although he was a marine officer, he had no experience in naval campaigns³² and has been described by one historian as "an honest man who was not a sailor at all." It has been argued that he was not able to understand the strategic aspects involved in the creation of a new colony and port.³³ There was some justification to Costebelle's views because *Commissaire Ordonnateur* Pierre-Auguste de Soubras, Governor-General Vaudreuil of Canada, Intendant Bégon, engineer l'Hermitte, and Hertel de Rouville, la Ronde and other colonial officers and merchants joined the anti-Louisbourg campaign. They all recommended the transfer of the capital and the projected port from Louisbourg to Port Dauphin.³⁴ There was little doubt as to which site was favoured by prominent people of the colony.

³¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 263-269v, au ministre, 30 novembre, 1713.

³² G.C. Salagnac, "Pastour de Costebelle, Philippe," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 532-35.

³³ Quoted in Charles de la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française. 5: Le crépuscule du Grand Règne. L'Apogée de la guerre en course* (Paris: 1932), p. 268.

³⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 7, de Rouville au ministre, 18 octobre, 1713; *ibid.*, pp. 77-79v, Mémoire par l'Hermitte au ministre, 2 novembre, 1714; MG 1, C11A, vol. 34, p. 239, Vaudreuil et Bégon au ministre, 20 septembre, 1714; *RAPQ*, vol. XXVIII, p. 267, Vaudreuil au ministre, 16 septembre, 1714; *ibid.*, p. 233, Vaudreuil au ministre, 14 novembre, 1713; MG 2, B1, vol. 8, pp. 173-175, Isle Royale, 1716.

In 1715 Governor Costebelle was given orders to transfer his staff and garrison to Port Dauphin.³⁵ Two companies of the garrison were to stay at Louisbourg under the command of Saint-Ovide.³⁶ Another company of troops under Jacques de Penses, Aide-Major, was sent to Port Toulouse (Saint-Pierre). L'Hermite was asked to prepare plans for the construction of the buildings and fortifications at Port Dauphin. Since he was not able to undertake any important work as a result of his age and ailments, l'Hermite was removed from the post and transferred to Canada.³⁷ In March 1715 Pontchartrain appointed Jean-Maurice-Josué de Boisberthelot de Beaucours, who was the chief engineer of New France, to supervise construction work at Port Dauphin.

The death of Louis XIV on 1 September, 1715, and the subsequent political developments that took place at Versailles changed the administrative system of France. Using his influence over the *Parlement* of Paris, the Duc d'Orleans established a Regency to take over the charge of administration during the minority of Louis XV.³⁸ The government of France under the Regency of the Duc d'Orleans replaced the secretaries of state with a system of *Polysynodie* or the six

³⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 37, p. 27, à Desmaretz, 10 février, 1715; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 28-28v, à Costebelle et Soubras, 17 mars, 1715.

³⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 198-99v, St. Ovide, 10 septembre, 1715.

³⁷ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 45-47, Mémoire du Conseil de marine sur le service que le Sr. l'Hermite..., 20 mars, 1716. L'Hermite died in a ship-wreck on his way home on 27 August, 1725. See F.J. Thorpe, "l'Hermite, Jacques" *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 433-435.

³⁸ Cardinal Dubois wrote in his memoirs: "The Duc d'Orleans soon [after the death of Louis XIV] had some of the most determined partisans of the Duc du Maine on his side, for it was stated openly that the *Parlement* would not admit the king's will, and M. de Guiches had received a hundred thousand francs in order to win over the troops to the Duc d'Orleans." Dubois, *Memoires of Cardinal Dubois*, trans., Ernest Dowson, 2 vols. (London: 1899), vol.II, p. 17.

councils.³⁹ On 3 November, 1715, the Council of Marine was formed, Pontchartrain was removed from his office as Minister of Marine and Comte de Toulouse, Admiral of France, was appointed to head the new council. In an attempt to reduce the work of his administrative responsibilities the presidency of the council was given to Victor Marie d'Estrées, Vice-Admiral and Marechal de France.

The Council of Marine decided to appoint a new engineer Jean-François de Verville from France in order to examine the construction completed at Isle Royale and to make plans for further work. Verville reached Port Dauphin in the fall of 1716, met with Costebelle and Beaucours and examined the port site. Later they proceeded to Port Toulouse and from there Verville and Beaucours went on to Louisbourg. Costebelle chose not to accompany them since he did not wish to meet Saint-Ovide as they were not on good terms following their dispute over the Louisbourg site.⁴⁰ After this visit, Verville submitted a report in favour of the establishment of the principal port and the capital of the colony at Louisbourg. It is not unreasonable to assume that Saint-Ovide might have persuaded Verville by exaggerating the relative merits and importance of Louisbourg, to prepare a favourable report. Saint-Ovide wrote with great satisfaction and self-justification: "Messieurs de Verville et de Beacours avoient fait un mémoire avant partir dicy touchant les travaux qu'il falloit y faire."⁴¹ The Council of Marine considered Verville's report and the recommendation from the colonial investigation to move the principal port back to Louisbourg. On 26 June, 1717,

³⁹ Michel Antoine, *Le conseil du Roi sous le règne de Louis XV* (Geneva: 1970), pp. 77-79.

⁴⁰ Crowley, "France, Canada and the Beginnings of Louisbourg," p. 61.

⁴¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 460v., à Conseil de la Marine, 18 novembre, 1716. St. Ovide was very satisfied with the opinion of Verville on Louisbourg "parce qu'elle est conformé à l'idée qu'il en a ci-devant donnée." MG 1, C11C, vol. 16, n.p., St. Ovide, 18 novembre, 1716.

the council formally announced its final choice of Louisbourg as the capital of the colony of Isle Royale.⁴²

PART III

The historical evolution of the establishment of the base at Louisbourg clearly illustrates that France's primary concerns were its economic interests. They remained so without any change until the final fall of Louisbourg in 1758.⁴³ After the cession of Placentia and Acadia, France was left without a solid foundation for its Grand Banks fishing industry and commerce. The cod fishery was the basis of the French North Atlantic economy during the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries and by the beginning of the eighteenth century cod had gained a widespread market in Europe. According to H.A. Innis, in the first half of the sixteenth century fishing fleets from France dominated the North Atlantic fisheries.⁴⁴ Nicolas Denys described cod as an "inexhaustible manna," well known in France, particularly in Paris.⁴⁵ The Lenten and Advent fasts made dried cod a primary alternative high protein food in Catholic nations. Elucidating the advantages of the cod fishery, Minister of Marine Comte de Maurepas said that it provided "une denrée dont il consume une partie en Lui-mesme, et porte le surplus chez L'étranger, et surtout en Espagne où il en fait la

⁴² MG 1, B, vol. 39, pp. 271-27, Mémoire du Roy à Costebelle et Soubras, 26 juin, 1717.

⁴³ MG 1, C11C, vol. 16, n.p., Importance de la colonie de L'Isle Royale pour la France, 30 décembre, 1758.

⁴⁴ H.A. Innis, *The Cod Fisheries. The History of An International Economy* (Toronto: 1954), p. 49.

⁴⁵ Nicolas Denys, *Denys' Description and Natural History of North America (Acadia)* trans., ed., W.F. Ganong (Reprint. Toronto: 1908), vol. II, p. 257.

vente en argent."⁴⁶ Cod was a principal item in terms of French domestic consumption as well as foreign trade.⁴⁷

The fishery played a pivotal role in the making of Louisbourg as one of the major Atlantic ports, and was the medium of Louisbourg's integration into the international economy. The transfer of the people of Placentia to Isle Royale facilitated the spiralling growth of this industry. Within five years after the establishment of the colony, Isle Royale had produced and exported about 156,500 quintals of cod. Eventually, the value of fish products exported from Louisbourg exceeded that of Canada's fur trade.⁴⁸

The creation of a resident fishery was the main objective of France, because it would provide the products regularly in every season. In addition, the resident fishing community would offer a market for French manufactures in the colony. Therefore, at Isle Royale the metropolitan government adopted their "Placentian policy" i.e. the resident fishery received official support and encouragement over the seasonal ones of migrant metropolitan fishermen. At Placentia these migrant workers had enjoyed a certain importance because of the "green" fishery, but following the

⁴⁶ "Situation du commerce Extérieur du Roiaume exposé à Sa Majesté par M. Le Comte de Maurepas Secrétaire d'État aiant le départm.t. de la marine dans le conseil. roial de commerce tenu à Versailles le 3 octobre, 1730" in M. Filion, *Maurepas, ministre de Louis XV* (Montreal: 1967), p 113.

⁴⁷ See Laurier Turgeon, "Colbert et la pêche française à Terre-Neuve" in R. Mousnier, ed., *Un nouveau Colbert* (Paris: 1985), and "Pour une histoire de la pêche: le marché de la morue à Marseille au XVIIIe siècle," *HS/SH*, vol. XIV, no. 28 (1981), pp. 295-322; C. Grant Head, *et. al.*, "The Fishery in Atlantic Commerce" in Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, plate 28.

⁴⁸ B.A. Balcom, *The Cod Fishery of Isle Royale, 1713-1758* (Ottawa: 1984), table 5, p.18. For a study of Louisbourg's merchants and trade see also Christopher Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1977).

establishment of the new colony on Isle Royale the migrant fisheries suffered a relative decline under restrictive rules and regulations.⁴⁹

As an entrepot Louisbourg developed a network of trade relations with France, Canada, and the West Indies.⁵⁰ Besides this officially recognised triangular trade, Louisbourg had legal and illegal trade relations with New England colonies and Nova Scotia. France remained the major partner of Louisbourg's trade.⁵¹ Most of the commodities of daily consumption in the colony such as grain, flour, salt, wine, brandy, clothes, medicine, housewares, hardware and other items were imported from France. It also sent German steel and pottery, Mediterranean oil and cloth, Chinese porcelain and Irish salt meat to Louisbourg.⁵² For the development of Louisbourg's industries France admitted its products without import duties. This duty exemption was granted for the first time in September 1713 for fish products, the only major export to France, for a ten-year period.⁵³

⁴⁹ Balcom, *ibid.*, table 10, p. 50 for annual production of the resident and French migrant fisheries at Isle Royale between 1715 and 1755.

⁵⁰ Jacques Mathieu, *Le commerce entre le Nouvelle-France et les Antilles au XVIIIe siècle* (Montreal: 1981), pp. 224-25; The Ministry had given high priority to the preservation of this triangular trade. MG 1, B, vol. 53 (5), p. 6v, Maurepas à de Lalande-Magon, 12 janvier, 1729; B, vol. 50, pp. 245-46v, à de Feuquièrre et Blondel, 22 juillet, 1727; see also MG 1, C11C, vol. 16, n.p, Importance de la colonie de L'Isle Royale pour la France, 30 décembre, 1758.

⁵¹ Jacques Mathieu indicates that most of Louisbourg's trade was with France and the West Indies. Mathieu, *Le commerce*, pp. 224-25.

⁵² Moore, "Merchant Trade," p. 16. Porcelain wares from Japan, Batavia (Dutch trading centre in Java), and Turkey were also imported to Louisbourg. There is a collection of these porcelain wares at the Fortress of Louisbourg Museum, CN 83-R4-4, CN 83-R24-10, CN 83-R25-10, CN 83-R26-8.

⁵³ MG 1, C11G, vol.8, pp. 46-47v, Arrest du conseil d'estat du Roy qui décharge le Morues et les Huiles que proviendront de la pesche de sujets de Sa Ma[jes]té à l'Isle Royale...de tous droits..., 9 septembre, 1713; MG 2, B1, vol. 29, pp. 316-317, à Feuquièrre et Mesurier, 26 janvier, 1718; MG 1, B, vol. 35 (2), pp. 484-86, à de Gramont, 19 septembre, 1713; ACM, liasse 6109, Arrest du
(continued...)

In 1715 other products of Isle Royale were also declared free from duties in France for a ten-year term.⁵⁴ These duty exemptions were renewed at the time of expiry.

While France remained a chief source of food supplies, French authorities wanted Louisbourg to import provisions from Canada as well.⁵⁵ Canada had been the main supplier to Placentia during the War of Spanish Succession. As France had been facing problems of scarcity after the war and as there were chances of delay occurring in the shipping across the Atlantic, Pontchartrain advised Canadian authorities to despatch food materials to Louisbourg:

Elle [Sa Majesté] a appris avec plaisir que les négociants de Québec ont envoyé l'année dernier beaucoup de vivres à Plaisance. Ils doivent observer à l'avenir de laisser une liberté entière de Naviguer de Québec à l'Isle Royale.⁵⁶

The minister advised the Canadian government to persuade some of the Canadians to emigrate to Isle Royale for permanent settlement and for the promotion of intercolonial trade.⁵⁷

In spite of the absence of Canadian immigration to Isle Royale, the merchants of Canada were quick to take advantage of the newly opened marketing opportunities. The Louisbourg-Canada trade at the beginning was limited to the mutual exchange of fish and flour. By the 1720s,

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conseil d'etat du Roy, 20 mai, 1718.

⁵⁴ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 27-27v, Arrest du Roy, 29 janvier, 1715 and p. 43, Arrest du Roy, 1 janvier, 1716; MG 1, C11G, vol. 8, p. 79, Arrest du Roy, 29 janvier, 1715; *ibid.*, pp. 99-101v, Arrest du Roy, 1 février, 1716; MG 1, B, vol. 37, pp. 149-50, Pontchartrain à Desmaretz, 29 janvier, 1715; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 54, Arrest du conseil d'etat du Roy, 19 décembre, 1716.

⁵⁵ According to J.F. Boshier Canada's trade was much encouraged by the founding of Louisbourg. J.F. Boshier *The Canada Merchants* (New York: 1987), p. 182.

⁵⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 279v, Mémoire du Roy à Vaudreuil et à Bégon, 25 juin, 1713.

⁵⁷ *RAPQ*, vol. XXVIII, pp. 245-46, Mémoire du Roi à Vaudreuil et Bégon, 19 mars, 1714; MG 1, B, vol. 35 (3), pp. 158-69, à Vaudreuil, 29 mars, 1713.

a period of success in French commerce abroad, this trade expanded to include a variety of commodities as Louisbourg became an attractive entrepot standing on a well-known route of inter-colonial and intercontinental maritime trade.⁵⁸ James Pritchard pointed out that between 1727 and 1735 the volume of Canada's export to Louisbourg surpassed France's trade with Canada.⁵⁹ Nonetheless, by the end of the 1730s the Louisbourg-Canada trade began to decline due to crop failures in Canada.

The French colonies in the Caribbean provided an expanding market to Louisbourg. The increasing slave population in the West Indies and other colonies was the basis of this potential market. Most of the poor quality fish products were exported to feed the slaves and by the 1740s Louisbourg exported up to 40,000 quintals of cod products to the West Indies per year. In turn sugar, molasses, rum, indigo, tobacco etc. were imported to Louisbourg, from where a large quantity of these was re-exported. At the same time Louisbourg developed a small market for slaves imported from the West Indies.⁶⁰ Michel Daccarette, a wealthy merchant at Louisbourg, participated in the slave trade and as early as 1713 sold a black slave named Georges to the

⁵⁸ For a discussion of Louisbourg's trade with Canada see A.G. Reid, "Intercolonial Trade During the French Regime" *CHR*, vol. XXXII, no. 3 (1951), pp. 326-51; French success in trade in the 1720s is mentioned in J. F. Boshcr, *Business and Religion in the Age of New France, 1600-1760* (Toronto: 1994), pp. 308-309.

⁵⁹ James S. Pritchard, "Ships, Men, and Commerce: A Study of Maritime Activity in New France" (Ph.D thesis, University of Toronto, 1971), p. 364.

⁶⁰ For a detailed study of Louisbourg's slave trade see Kenneth Donovan, "Emblems of Conspicuous Consumption: Slaves in Ile Royale 1713-1760" (unpublished paper, the Fortress of Louisbourg Library: 1994). Donovan has identified 207 Blacks and at least 12 Amerindians enslaved in Louisbourg.

Governor of the colony, Costebelle, for 300 livres.⁶¹ Jean Pierre Roma was another prominent slave owner in Isle Royale. Louisbourg's slave trade never became a major commercial enterprise, even if the government of France had great interest in developing it. Minister Maurepas suggested to Governor Saint-Ovide that "slaves might be profitably employed in the Isle Royale fishery" and he asked the governor to make a list of "how many Isle Royale citizens would take slaves and how much they be willing to pay."⁶² The minister further proposed that the Company of the Indies could export slaves from Senegal. These ambitions remained unfulfilled due to the lack of interest in the colony. The colonists found that, on a commercial basis, the slave trade was not profitable, although they did import some slaves for domestic services.⁶³ Local experience won out over a metropolitan misunderstanding of local conditions in Isle Royale.

Louisbourg additionally established flourishing trade relations with the New England colonies. Among the four New England colonies - Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Connecticut - the first two dominated the trade with Louisbourg.⁶⁴ Louisbourg continued to

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 6, 8, 12-13

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9. The metropolitan government's interest in the slave trade with the North American French colonies was not new. In the 1710s the Council of Marine advised Canadian authorities to engage in the slave trade. Governor-General Vaudreuil replied that it was not convenient in Canada because of the severe winter climate that would cost the inhabitants a huge sum for maintaining the slaves without any use. MG 1, C11A, vol. 37, pp. 2-3, Conseil de marine, 16 janvier, 1717.

⁶³ The minister's view of the slave trade is a clear indication of the lack of knowledge of the colonial conditions. The metropolitan authorities believed that, as in Louisiana or other Southern colonies of plantations, the slave trade might be useful in the Northern part of New France as well.

⁶⁴ For Louisbourg-New England trade see Donald F. Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England, 1713-1763" (Ph.D thesis, University of Ottawa, 1976); Christopher Moore, "The Other Louisbourg: Trade and Merchant Enterprise in Ile Royale, 1713-58," *HS/SH*, vol. XII, no. 23 (continued...)

receive most of its supplies from France and Canada, but in times of scarcity New England became the only alternative source. Even Canada, which was expected to provide supplies to Louisbourg according to metropolitan plans, tried to get essential commodities from New England via Louisbourg in times of severe shortage or crop failure.⁶⁵ Despite France's restrictions on foreign trade, the New England merchants faced no curbs on their exchanges at the Louisbourg market where they sold food items, building materials, ships, tobacco, salt, cloth, pitch, tar, etc. As the New England merchants could sell their commodities at lower prices than did the French, the Louisbourg habitants and merchants were ready to break any mercantile restrictions and sacrifice the interests of metropolitan France.⁶⁶ The Louisbourg administrators had tolerated this illegal trade and some of them participated directly in it taking advantage of the loopholes in the mercantilist rules and regulations.

The New England colonies were not legally permitted to trade with Louisbourg. Despite their political allegiance, the colonial merchants did not follow mercantilist regulations under the British Navigation Acts. They purchased West Indies products such as molasses, rum, sugar and indigo, as well as French manufactures, at Louisbourg. Thus the Louisbourg-New England trade relations reflected the weakness and incompatibility of both the French and British efforts to enforce mercantilist restrictions.

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(1979), pp. 79-96.

⁶⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 25, p. 3, au ministre, 12 avril, 1743; *Collection des Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 513, Duquesne et Bigot à Raymond et Prévost, 2 janvier, 1753.

⁶⁶ Judith Tulloch, examining the Canso Trade, noted that the clandestine trade with Louisbourg played a significant part in the Canso economy. J. Tulloch, *Canso Trade, 1720-1744* (Halifax: 1987), pp. 6-7, 10.

With the loss of French territories on the North Atlantic seaboard by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the political security of Canada came under threat from the English colonies. The serious concerns about the future of the political existence of Canada had been demonstrated quite well before the fall of these French seaboard colonies. In an anonymous memoir of 1706 sent to the Minister of Marine, it was suggested that the increasing population in the English colonies posed a threat to the existence of Canada; this numerical superiority might encourage them eventually to conquer Canada.⁶⁷ The memoir proposed that the occupation and settlement of Isle Royale was necessary for the political security and economic prosperity of Canada as well as of France. Describing the strategic significance of Isle Royale the memoir stated:

Cette Isle est la clef du Canada et de toutes les côtes de la Nouvelle France, en la fortifiant les Anglois ne pourront plus rien entreprendre de ce côté là. Ils ne s'aviseront jamais d'entrer dans la profondeur du Golfe de Saint Laurents pour monter jusqu'à Québec, pendant qu'ils auront derrière eux un poste de cette importance.⁶⁸

The political situation following the year 1713 introduced new dimensions to imperial defence in the North Atlantic region. Isle Royale became the leading possession of France in the region and Louisbourg became the primary strategic locus. The protection of Canada and the Gulf of St. Lawrence was strategically and politically necessary just as the protection of the fisheries had been important for economic considerations. Throughout the period that Isle Royale remained under the control of France the defensive role of Louisbourg was accorded utmost significance. After the restoration of Louisbourg in 1748, Maréchal de Noailles wrote that "elles [Isle Royale and Isle St.

⁶⁷ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, pp. 10-39, Mémoire pour l'établissement d'une colonie à l'Île Cap-Breton, 30 novembre, 1706.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

Jean] sont de grande importance tant pour la conservation du Canada que pour protéger la pesche."⁶⁹

As a stronghold of defence the first and foremost function of Louisbourg was to protect the colony of Isle Royale, its fishery and commerce. This defensive role was to a great extent dependant upon the construction of a permanent fortress and the maintenance of troops. At the initial phase of the establishment of Louisbourg, the idea of the erection of a grand fortress was not the official policy. Rather, a plan for a small fort similar to that of Placentia was under consideration for the safeguarding of the settlement.⁷⁰ Although the new political situation that emerged after 1713 placed a high emphasis on the strategic position of Louisbourg in the French North Atlantic imperial system, the government of France remained lethargic in the construction of an expensive fortification because of financial constraints. Yet such a project was mentioned in official correspondence. In 1715 Pontchartrain wrote: "ils [les Anglois] ne reussiront point lorsqu'il sera bien fortifié, si la france perdoit cette isle cela seroit irréparable et il faudroit par une suite nécessaire abandonner le reste de l'amérique septentrionale."⁷¹ Governor-General Vaudreuil suggested that the military defence of Louisbourg was necessary not only to safeguard the French fisheries but to forestall attempts of the English to become the "masters of the sea".⁷²

⁶⁹ MG 4, A1, vol. 2997, p. 215, Correspondance du Maréchal de Noailles avec le Roi, Mémoire par rapport aux différentes colonies, 1 août, 1749.

⁷⁰ MG 1, B, vol. 35 (3), pp. 145-52, Instructions pour l'Hermite, mars, 1713.

⁷¹ MG 1, B, vol. 37., p. 28, à Desmaretz, 10 février, 1715; pp. 807-27, à Soubras, 4 juin, 1715.

⁷² MG 1, C11A, vol. 36, pp. 135-135v, au Conseil, 11 février, 1716.

In 1717 Saint-Ovide and Soubras had been informed that the Council of Marine decided to fortify Louisbourg based on the Verville report.⁷³ Verville was appointed the director of the fortifications. The contract for the work was given to Michel-Philippe Isabeau on the recommendation made by Verville. Orders were sent to Governor Saint-Ovide and *Commissaire Ordonnateur* Soubras to recruit workers. Since the colony did not have a sufficient labour force the minister suggested that soldiers should be employed in the construction.⁷⁴ Verville was expected to reach Louisbourg and to begin the work in 1718, but a delay in preparing for the voyage required that the work be postponed to 1719.⁷⁵ Still further delay meant that the project was started only in 1720.

The fortress of Louisbourg was completely metropolitan in theory and practice. The Ministry of Marine gave top priority to the construction of this military stronghold and public buildings. About four million *livres* were spent by the government of France for the fortifications alone. The allotment of funds for each year varied from 80,000 to 150,000 *livres*.⁷⁶ This large capital investment demonstrated how significant Louisbourg was deemed to be to the protection of the French empire and its fisheries, but is difficult to know how the metropolitan government allocated this large amount of capital.

⁷³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, p. 131, à conseil, St. Ovide et Soubras, 13 novembre, 1717.

⁷⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 40, pp. 514v-515, à St. Ovide et Soubras, 21 avril, 1718.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 568v, à St. Ovide et Mézy, 10 aoust, 1718.

⁷⁶ For an exhaustive study of the Louisbourg fortifications: F.J. Thorpe, *Remparts lointains. La politique française de travaux publics à Terre-Neuve et à L'Île Royale. 1695-1758* (Ottawa: 1980), appendix no. IV for fortification expenses, p. 173.

Frederick Thorpe explained that the financial arrangements reveal a network of complex relationships between public works and private interests. The Louisbourg fortifications became an area for private capital investment through public borrowing.⁷⁷ The government took out cash loans from international banking corporations and merchant groups and acquired building materials from artisan-entrepreneurs and other supply agencies. These private groups were interested in large-scale public works for their own motives and existence. This collusion between public works and private enterprise became well-cemented as the government officials, such as the engineers and the administrators, acted as intermediaries in their own interests between the government and private investors.

The conceptual parameters of the Louisbourg fortifications were provided by eighteenth-century European military thinking. The frontiers of most of the European nations were guarded by mighty fortresses. In France, Sebastien Le Prestre de Vauban, the renowned engineer and director-general of fortifications, had erected thirty-three new fortresses besides restoring and renovating many others. Verville, the new director at Louisbourg, having no experience in the colonies, adopted Vauban's "first system" as the basis for the construction.⁷⁸ The Vauban methods and style proved extremely expensive as they required the importation of suitable materials from Europe and New England. In spite of all the capital investment and works done, the fortress ultimately proved to be defective in the defence of the colony. It has been shown that the basic

⁷⁷ Thorpe, *ibid.*, p. 167.

⁷⁸ Vauban Maréchal of France was the greatest military engineer of the *Ancien Régime*. He had developed three systems of fortifications of which the first one was the one most commonly used. See Henry Guerlac, "Vauban: l'impact de la science sur la guerre" in E.M. Earle, ed., *Les Maîtres de la Stratégie* (Paris: 1980), pp. 39-64.

defects of the Château Saint-Louis and of the Royal battery were chiefly the products of Verville's designs, not of the Vauban plan.⁷⁹ The use of local bricks and mortar added considerably to the deterioration of the edifice. In the 1750s Thomas Pichon said that "it would be absolutely necessary to change the entire fortification,"⁸⁰ because:

toutes ces fortifications sont défectueuses parce que le sable de la mer dont on est obligé de se servir, ne convient nullement à la maçonnerie. Les revêtements de différentes courtines sont entièrement écroulées et délabrées.⁸¹

The European-type fortress was not able to resist the severe winter climate of North America.

The grand size of the Louisbourg fortress was most probably a product of the business motives than that of the metropolitan imperial ambitions. All the profit-motivated private investment in the enterprise had been justified as the growing commerce of Louisbourg required strong protection. Between 1730 and 1745 construction plans had enlarged beyond the original plan, and the subsequent alterations, repairs and the maintenance of the fortress became a government sponsored industry which existed until the fall of Louisbourg in 1758. The policies with regard to the construction coincided with France's general economic interests. France made an enormous capital investment, but a major part of this returned to the private sector of the metropolitan economy through the purchase of building materials and supplies as well as in the form of payments for service.⁸²

⁷⁹ F.J. Thorpe, "Verville, Jean-François De," *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 648-50.

⁸⁰ Webster ed., *Thomas Pichon*, pp. 47-48.

⁸¹ Thomas Pichon, *Lettres et mémoires*, p. 8; MG 18, F12, vol. 3, pp. 8-9.

⁸² F.J. Thorpe, "The Politics of Constructing Fortifications and Public Buildings at Louisbourg, 1713-1753" in *Papers and Abstracts for A Symposium on Ile Royale During the French* (continued...)

Another aspect of construction was that the government of France had no real control over the work. It was not able to formulate a consistent policy with regard to fortifications. In spite of the promulgation of rules for controlling expenditure,⁸³ the Council of Marine could not implement them, rather it was compelled to allow engineers and contractors in the colony to do what they pleased. The history of Louisbourg fortifications mirrored the administrative weaknesses and inconsistent policies of France as well as the vested interests of the private sector.

In protecting the fisheries, Louisbourg was intended to maintain France's largest naval training programme. The North Atlantic fisheries had long been considered a "nursery of seamen". This industry produced not only the highly valuable cod, but also the excellent sailors who were essential to the existence of the French navy and the merchant marine. The government of France was quite aware of this additional advantage of the cod fishery and, it appears, it was one of the reasons for the establishment of Louisbourg.⁸⁴ It was believed the rough waters and weather of the North Atlantic moulded better sailors than those trained in the Mediterranean and the Caribbean seas. This naval training programme did not entail any expense to the French treasury. The cod fishery provided employment to the seamen and paid their expenses as they went through their apprenticeship training. In the period between 1699 and 1713 the French fisheries surpassed those

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Régime (Ottawa: 1972), pp. 111-16.

⁸³ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 72-73, Mémoire du Roy au sujet des fortifications de L'Isle Royale, 18 juin, 1718.

⁸⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 116-132, Instructions pour Saint-Ovide, 20 mars, 1713; MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 3-5, Minutes de conseil, s.d., 1712; MG 1, C11C, vol. 16, n.p., Importance de la colonie de L'Isle Royale pour la France, 30 décembre, 1758.

of the English employing from 16,000 to 30,000 seamen annually.⁸⁵ Before 1713 France had controlled three-quarters of the Newfoundland coastline. After the cession of Newfoundland to the English, the French fishing industry was centered on Isle Royale. Protection of this "nursery of seamen" came to constitute one of the chief purposes of Louisbourg.

The function of Louisbourg as a naval base was relative to the importance given to the navy by the metropolitan government. It is noteworthy that Louisbourg never became a strong naval base but it served, instead, to protect French commercial shipping. Subsequent to the defeat at La Hogue in 1692 the French navy began to decline through neglect. The battle of La Hogue was a critical turning point in the history of the French fleet. Historian G. LaCour-Gayet stated that "la bataille de la Hougue, dont nous avons tant de droits d'être fiers, ne fut pas la ruine de notre marine, certes non. Mais elle fut la ruine de notre politique maritime, ce qui fut pis."⁸⁶ King Louis XIV followed the advice coming from the Ministry of War which began lobbying for more financial and political support for the army which was considered indispensable to the defence of the continental frontiers of France.

⁸⁵ Ralph G. Lounsbury, *The British Fishery of Newfoundland, 1634-1763* (Hamden: 1969), p. 231.

⁸⁶ G. LaCour-Gayet *La marine militaire de la France sous le règne de Louis XV* (Paris: 1910), p. 11. In 1688 the Minister of War, François Michel Le Tellier de Louvois, was able to convince Louis XIV to stop the fortification of French ports as planned by Vauban for the protection of the navy. At La Hogue, on 2 June 1692, fifteen French ships were destroyed. This loss to English fireships could be blamed on the lack of military intervention on the part of Marshal de Bellefonds and the lack of proper coastal defences. This reverse in the War of the League of Augsburg had grave effects upon French opinion and national morale. Lacour-Gayet is correct in asserting that the French navy had not been swept from the seas. A year later, the combined squadrons of Tourville and D'Estrées destroyed 92 English ships off Lagos in a running fight. This victory was not sufficient to convince Louis XIV to change his mind about favouring the continental army over the navy.

The reduction of the naval budget in 1695 was a vivid demonstration of the unfavourable changes made in the marine policies. The high cost of maintenance of a large and expensive fleet was considered an extravagance. Vauban suggested that, instead of retaining a large fleet, the operation of a *guerre de course*, using small squadrons and privateers, could defeat the enemies.⁸⁷ His idea was to destroy the maritime commerce of France's enemies through privateering wars carried on by private merchants. Vauban's plan became so attractive that it was adopted as an official policy. The *guerre de course* disturbed English commerce and crippled their shipping considerably during the War of Spanish Succession, but in the long-term fight against a stronger British navy it could not guarantee sufficient French naval power.⁸⁸

A large French naval fleet had virtually disappeared from the seas by the end of the War of Spanish Succession. In 1712 the naval force was composed of ninety-six warships, which carried forty-four to one hundred and ten canons and twenty-nine smaller vessels.⁸⁹ Despite this decline, the Council of Marine which was set up after the removal of Pontchartrain, made further steep cuts in the number of ships. It is estimated that the number of operating ships was reduced from eighty in 1715 to forty-nine in 1719, and smaller vessels from one hundred and thirteen in 1715 to seventy-five in 1719.⁹⁰ The funds for the operation of the navy and its administration were also subject to a deep cut under the regency. By the year 1716, the marine was allotted the sum of a mere eight

⁸⁷ De la Roncière, *Histoire de la marine française*, vol.VI, pp. 164-68.

⁸⁸ For French privateering and British trade see Patrick Crowhurst, *The Defense of British Trade, 1689-1815* (Kent, England: 1977).

⁸⁹ LaCour-Gayet, *La marine militaire... Louis XV*, p. 22.

⁹⁰ Patrick Villiers, *Marine royale, corsaires et trafic dans l'Atlantique de Louis XIV à Louis XVI*, 2 vols. (Dunkerque:1991), vol. I, p. 204.

million *livres*, an amount which was not even sufficient to meet routine expenditures. Consequently, every year the marine accumulated a huge deficit which further incapacitated it by restricting its operations and maintenance.

The Comte de Toulouse, head of the Council of Marine, was a naval officer, yet he believed that the object of naval rivalry was to destroy the commerce, not the fleet, of the enemy.⁹¹ Such views influenced by Vauban's idea of *guerre de course*, and encouraged by practical economic considerations, debilitated the fundamental structure of the naval programme. Ultimately, the Council of Marine abandoned the project of naval restoration planned by the former Minister of Marine, Pontchartrain. The argument for a strong navy was also considerably weakened by the fact that under Cardinal Dubois French foreign policy had been reversed and an alliance had been forged with England and Holland.

After a period of neglect under the Council of Marine, it was Comte de Maurepas, Minister of Marine (1723-1748), who took initiatives to rebuild the navy based on the policies and precedents established by Colbert and Pontchartrain. He rejected the view that the navy would not protect the continental dominance of France. He argued that not only the continental role but also the commercial success of France depended upon naval power. In a memoir on the subject Maurepas wrote: "les forces navales sont absolument nécessaires pour le soutien du commerce maritime et pour la défense d'un état bordé par la mer."⁹² When Maurepas took over the charge

⁹¹ LaCour-Gayet, *La marine militaire...Louis XV*, pp. 61-62; Arthur M. Wilson, *French Foreign Policy During the Administration of Cardinal Fleury, 1726-1743* (Cambridge: 1936), p. 80.

⁹² MG 4, A1, vol. 3127, p. 253 (3), Mémoire dont l'original est de la main de M. de Comte de Maurepas sur la marine et le commerce remis au feu Roi à la fin de l'année 1745. Maurepas's naval programme was not incompatible with the interest of the army. He explained that "je ne proposerai
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of the marine in 1723, France had only thirty ships of the line. By the beginning of the 1740s the French navy consisted of forty-five ships of the line and by the outbreak of the Seven Years' War France had sixty-three ships of the line.⁹³ Although Maurepas would be dismissed in 1748, the naval programme retained ardent supporters such as Marechal de Noailles, who reflected: "il ne suffit pas d'avoir des vaisseaux, à quoi on peut parvenir avec beaucoup d'argent, mais il faut des officiers mariniens, il faut des matelots, il faut rétablir l'ancien ordre qui étoit dans les classes du temps de M. de Colbert."⁹⁴

Maurepas clearly understood Louisbourg's strategic importance in the French imperial system. He believed that it could protect the North American French empire if there were a strong naval base.⁹⁵ He referred to Isle Royale as the "maintien du Canada, et même de la Louisiane quoiqu'elle en soit fort éloignée, et sera en état d'empêcher le projet que des nations pourroient former de se rendre maître de L'Amérique septentrionale."⁹⁶ An anonymous memoir to the minister

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point de diminuer les forces de terre pour augmenter celles de la mer... Mais le bien de l'état et le bon gouvernement exigent qu'il soit du moins établi entre les forces de mer et celles de terre un équilibre qui fasse que les unes puissent également le défendre par mer et les autres par terre." Maurepas's naval policy was supported by officials like Sicur de Valincour who was secretary of Comte de Toulouse and an open critic of French foreign and naval policies. In 1726 he demanded an end to the Anglo-French alliance and the rebuilding of the French navy. LaCour-Gayet, *op.cit.*, pp. 65-70.

⁹³ John R. McNeill, *Atlantic Empires of France and Spain. Louisbourg and Havana, 1700-1763* (Chapel Hill: 1985), pp. 62-63.

⁹⁴ MG 4, A1, vol. 2997, p. 215, Marechal de Noailles, Mémoire, 1 août, 1749.

⁹⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 47, pp. 92-117, Mémoire du Roy à Vaudreuil et Robert, 30 mai, 1724; *ibid.*, vol. 52, pp. 499-502, à Beauharnois, 14 mai, 1728.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Filion, *Maurepas ministre*, p. 115.

pointed out that for Louisbourg to provide adequate protection to the St. Lawrence entrance to the continent required a local naval force:

A l'égard de Louisbourg, une armée navale peut entrer dans le fleuve St. Laurent pour venir à Québec par l'entrée ordinaire, car Louisbourg pour les empêcher d'entrer dans le fleuve il faudrait tenir une escadre à croiser dans les passages entre l'Isle Terre-neuve et l'Isle Royale.⁹⁷

The minister tried to convince the Canadian authorities of this defensive role of Louisbourg in protecting Canada, but they remained sceptical. Governor-General François de Beauharnois said "toute l'armée d'Angleterre pourroit venir à Québec où on n'en sçauroit rien à Isle Royale et quand mesme on le sçauroit en ce pays que pourroient-ils faire."⁹⁸ Engineer Gaspard-Joseph Chaussegros de Léry agreed with Beauharnois's opinion and maintained that there were three safe passages for any ship to enter the St. Lawrence River and go to Canada without the notice of Louisbourg. He believed however that if Louisbourg had a naval squadron to patrol the strait, it could protect New France.⁹⁹

Regardless of all the attempts made by Maurepas for the development of a strong navy, Louisbourg remained a centre for privateers, a port of refuge and rest for merchant ships, and a base

⁹⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, pp. 300-324, Mémoire sur le port de Louisbourg et les moyens pour empêcher les Anglais d'y faire aucune entreprise, s.d. 1738.

⁹⁸ MG 1, C11E, vol. 10, p. 100, Beauharnois au ministre, 13 octobre, 1727.

⁹⁹ Chaussegros said: "A l'égard du boulevard de Louisbourg, une armée navale peut entrer dans le fleuve St. Laurent pour venir à Québec par l'Entrée ordinaire ou les vaisseaux qui venant dans ce port passant qui est entre L'Isle de Terre-neuve et Isle Royale, ou bien par le passage de l'Isle entre L'Isle de terre-neuve et la côte de Labrador dits des Exquimaux ils peuvent aussi passer par le passage de canceaux entre L'acadie et Isle Royale, le premier passage est éloigné de Louisbourg plus de 30 lieues, le deuxième de plus de 80 lieues et le troisième de 30 lieues pour les empêcher d'entrer dans le fleuve, il faudroit tenir une Escadre à croiser dans ces trois passages au dans le golfe de St. Laurent." MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, p. 300, Mémoire sur le port de Louisbourg et moyens pour empêcher les anglais..., 20 octobre, 1738.

for warships in times of emergency. It was not until 1757 that Louisbourg acquired a permanent naval squadron. In a memoir Governor-General La Galissonnière asserted that "beaucoup de personnes avoient fait dans la dernière guerre que la conservation du Canada dépend de celle de Louisbourg. [Mais] on a bien vu que le Canada pouvoit se soutenir sans cette place."¹⁰⁰ He added that Isle Royale was more important to France than to Canada for economic and political reasons.¹⁰¹ During the 1745 Anglo-American occupation of Louisbourg Charles Knowles observed: "the Island of Cape Breton would be as much our own without this expensive weak fortress of Louisbourg as much it is with it."¹⁰²

The immigration of the Acadians to Isle Royale was seen as a major resettlement project by the government of France after the cession of Acadia to Britain in 1713. Established at the beginning of the seventeenth century on the marshlands of the Bay of Fundy Acadia was soon relegated to the position of a marginal colony.¹⁰³ Except for missionary work among the Mi'kmaq little attention was paid by Versailles to the people of Acadia. Until 1713, as we have seen, this colony remained isolated, a unique cultural entity within a distinct geographical area.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ MG 1, C11E, vol. 10, p. 93v, Mémoire sur la nécessité de fortifier et d'augmenter le Canada par de la Galissonnière, s.d.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, *idem*.

¹⁰² MG 11, CO 217, vol. 30, p. 14, Charles Knowles to the Duke of Newcastle, 20 January, 1746/47; Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London: 1973), pp. 382-83.

¹⁰³ For a chart of the settlement see Jean Daigle, "Acadian Marshland Settlement" in Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, plate 29.

¹⁰⁴ This is the thesis of Naomi Griffiths, *The Contexts of Acadian History, 1686-1784* (Montreal: 1992).

The new political developments following the Treaty of Utrecht changed the marginal status of the Acadians. They were soon considered highly valuable to the survival of the French empire for economic and political reasons. It was believed that the Acadians being predominantly farmers would clear the land and introduce agriculture on Isle Royale and other neighbouring islands. Thus they would provide a firm agrarian base to the French resident fisheries established by the people from the former French colony of Placentia. Subsequently agriculture and the fishery would make the colony of Isle Royale self-sustaining and prosperous, challenging the existence of New England.

By the treaty of Utrecht the Acadians legally became subjects of the British empire. As they were originally French and Catholic, special provisions were made to ensure that the Acadians could pursue the practice of their religion and customs and continue their own traditional way of life. They were also given freedom to emigrate to the French colony within a year of the signing of peace, taking with them only their movable properties. A special order from Queen Anne declared that "the Acadians were permitted to retain and enjoy their...lands and tenements without any molestation as fully and freely as other our subjects do...or to sell the same if they shall choose to remove elsewhere."¹⁰⁵

For France the removal of the Acadians from the British territory was crucial to the progress of the new colony. Isle Royale was considered a place for the consolidation of the people from the former French colonies of Acadia and Placentia, a place of the confluence of two occupations, two sources of income, and two ways of life. On 12 April, 1713, Pontchartrain informed Costebelle

¹⁰⁵ T.B. Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia Documents Relating to the Acadian French and First English Colonisation of the Province, 1714-1758* (Halifax: 1869), p. 15, to Francis Nicholson, 13 June, 1713.

about the necessity of bringing the Acadians to Isle Royale.¹⁰⁶ In February 1714 l'Hermite was instructed by the minister:

Vous devez faire tout vostre possible pour les [the Acadians] attirer à Isle Royale vous pouvez placer ceux qui viendront dans les havre Ste. Anne...et comme les terres y sont excellents il s'adonneront à leurs cultures...¹⁰⁷

In effort to attract the Acadians, the metropolitan government promised to provide food supplies and other provisions for their survival until they harvested their first crop in the new colony. The *lettres patentes* of April 1714 ensured the Acadians that they would receive property rights to their land on Isle Royale if they abandoned Nova Scotia.¹⁰⁸

The French missionaries were entrusted with the charge of encouraging the Acadians to vacate Nova Scotia. The missionaries were considered more capable than the government officials in implementing the immigration project since they were in closer contact with the people. In March 1713, Father Félix Pain of Beaubassin was informed by Pontchartrain that as soon as Saint-Ovide and l'Hermite arrived at Louisbourg he should proceed there and assist them in taking the necessary measures to attract the Acadians. Additional financial privileges were promised:

vous pouviez leur [the Acadians] dire que Sa Maj[es]té leur donnera toutes les facilités possibles pour leur établissement et qu'ils profiteront de la grâce qu'elle pourra se

¹⁰⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 39, à Costebelle, 12 avril, 1713; *ibid.*, pp. 238-40, à St. Ovide, 20 mars, 1713.

¹⁰⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 36, p. 425v, à l'Hermite, 28 février, 1714.

¹⁰⁸ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 15-16, Lettres patentes pour donner de grèves et terres à l'Île Royale aux habitants de l'Acadie et de Terre-Neuve, 9 avril, 1714. The intention was not to subject them to seigneurial tenure and its obligations as in Canada.

déterminer de faire à ceux qui habiteront à cette Isle par la remise de la moitié de droits sur la morue et sur les huilles qui sortiront de cet établissement.¹⁰⁹

Instructions were also sent to Abbé Antoine Gaulin in order to persuade the Acadians to relocate on Isle Royale. Neither Gaulin nor Pain had any disagreement with the relocation of the Acadians, but they were doubtful about the success of the project. The French authorities tried to appeal to the religious sentiments and cultural affinities of the Acadians in order to get them to leave Nova Scotia. When the English had assured the Acadians of freedom to practice their religious and cultural life under British rule, French appeals were unattractive to the Acadians who had grave reservations about agricultural prospects on Isle Royale. The missionaries had a more realistic understanding of this matter, as Gaulin indicated: “il paroît très déficile de pouvoir les engager à quitter leurs terres,” because “les anglois leurs promisons les mesmes avantages qu’on leur fait assurer au Cap-Breton.”¹¹⁰

In 1714 la Ronde and Jacques Espiet de Pensens were despatched to Annapolis Royal (formerly Port Royal) to meet Francis Nicholson, Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, to negotiate the conditions for the transfer of the Acadians to Isle Royale based on the June 1714 order of the British Crown. According to this order, the Acadians were given the right to sell their land and to move to the French colony, but no specific conditions were set regarding the time of removal and related matters. When the French emissaries met with Nicholson he granted them permission for

¹⁰⁹ MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 261v-262., au R.P. Félix [Pain], 29 mars, 1713; *RAPQ*, vol. XXI, p. 440, à Antoine Gaulin, 23 mars, 1714 et au R.P. Justinien [Durand], 23 mars, 1714; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 12-13, to the Secretary of State, 5 November, 1717.

¹¹⁰ MG 1, C11A, vol. 7, p. 224v, Extrait de la lettre que j’ay [Costebelle] reçue de Mr.Gaulin...en datte de 20e aoust, de Baubassin, 26 aoust, 1713.

their transfer within a period of one year.¹¹¹ After obtaining the permission, Pensens and la Ronde spoke to the representatives of the inhabitants of Port Royal, Minas, Cobequid, and Beaubassin.¹¹² Of a total population in these settlements estimated to be 2,500, only a few families agreed to relocate on Isle Royale.¹¹³

Not many Acadians had migrated by the termination of the allotted time of one year in 1715. Consequently, Nicholson issued a warning that those who wished to move to Isle Royale should do so immediately. At this critical juncture it appeared that, in spite of expressed metropolitan interest, the Acadian immigration project still lacked the promised support from France. An indecisive Versailles took no active steps to transport the Acadians by sending government ships for the purpose. On the contrary, the local government was instructed to provide the necessary vessels, but Governor Costebelle and *Commissaire Ordonnateur* Soubras, having no suitable transportation facilities available, sent a joint request in October 1714 to the Ministry of Marine for the ships.¹¹⁴ The Ministry only sent some equipment for colonial boats.¹¹⁵ As the immediate removal of those few

¹¹¹ MG 2, B1, vol. 8, p. 266.. Décision du Conseil, 9 septembre, 1714; Bona Arsenault, *History of the Acadians* (Quebec: 1966), p. 78.

¹¹² MG 11, CO 217, vol. 5, p. 28, Francis Nicholson, 13 August, 1714; *ibid.*, p. 56, Francis Nicholson, 25 August, 1714; Mary Maude, "Espiet de Pensens, Jacques D." *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 226-28; D.J. Horton and B. Pothier, "Denys de la Ronde, Louis," *DBC*, vol. III, p. 190.

¹¹³ Akins, *ed.*, *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 5, Colonel Vetch to the Lords of Trade, 24 November, 1714; Bernard A. Pothier, "Acadian Settlement on Ile Royale, 1713-1734" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa: 1967), p. 9.

¹¹⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 36, p. 425v, à l'Hermitte, 28 février, 1714.

¹¹⁵ La Ronde said that the Acadians at Port Toulouse were discouraged by the metropolitan inability to send ships for evacuating their relatives. MG 1, C11B, vol, 1, pp. 230-31v, la Ronde, 10 novembre, 1715.

Acadians who wanted to go to Isle Royale was demanded by Nicholson, the solution was left to the local government which lacked sufficient means to meet the challenge.

In the meantime, Father Dominique de la Marche, Grand Vicar of the Bishop of Quebec, visited Acadian delegates from Minas at Port Toulouse. La Marche was informed that although the Minas habitants had agreed to relocate on Isle Royale during their meeting with Pensens and la Ronde in 1714, they had since lost interest in relocating. La Marche urged the government of Louisbourg to despatch the required ships without any further delay. Pensens and la Perelle were sent on board the *Mutine* to bring over the Acadians with the advice that they should return quietly if the Acadians refused to come.

Meanwhile, in opposition to France's interests, the Acadians informed the government of Nova Scotia of their decision to remain in that province. Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Caulfield wrote:

I rec[cive]d a letter from ye people of Minas of their resolution to continue in this govt. and are making all preparations for emprovement, as formerly, and they seem impatient to hear what is determined on their behalf.¹¹⁶

This decision reflected the attitude of the majority of the Acadians who had no interest in abandoning their homeland. In October 1716, Costebelle was obliged to inform the Council of Marine that "les habitans françois de l'Acadie parroissent si peu déterminer à quitter leur ancienne terre."¹¹⁷

Initially the British had no overt objection to the migration of the Acadians, but gradually there developed among the colonial officers opposition to any emigration. Colonel Samuel Vetch

¹¹⁶ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 10, to the Board of Trade, 16 November, 1716.

¹¹⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 123-24, au ministre, 9 septembre, 1715.

advised the Lords of Trade that the Acadian resettlement project would make Isle Royale so powerful and wealthy that it would "create (the) greatest danger and damage to all the British colony's as well as the universal trade of Great Britain."¹¹⁸ In November 1715 the Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia explained:

My Lord, I am now to lay before Your Lopps. my opinion in relation to ye french Inhabitants of this collony, wch. if they continue in this country, will be of great consequence for ye better improvement thereof; for as you observe their numbers are considerable and in case they quits us will strengthen our enemies when occasion serves by so much; and tho' we may not expect much benefit from them, yet their children in process of time may be brought to our constitution.¹¹⁹

This encouraged the Acadians to stay in Nova Scotia despite the urgings of the French, who disliked the indulgence of the British authorities and the reluctance of the Acadians. Louisbourg could not exert any forceful influence on them for fear of an open conflict at a time when France and Britain were formally at peace.

By the beginning of the 1720s the local attitude against the removal of the Acadians became official British policy. As early as March 1715, based on the report of Colonel Samuel Vetch, the Lords of Trade requested the Queen to approve a policy restricting Acadian emigration. The appointment of Richard Philipps as governor of Nova Scotia in 1717 was a turning point in this

¹¹⁸ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 5-6., to the Lords of Trade, 24 November, 1714; see also MG 11, CO 217, vol. 6, pp. 101-103, to the King, 17 March, 1715; A.M. MacMechan, ed., *Nova Scotia Archives II: A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission-Book in the Possession of the Government of Nova Scotia, 1713-1741* (Halifax: 1900), pp. 24-25, Caulfeild to the Board of Trade, 1 November, 1715; Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and the West Indies* (Vaduz: 1964), vol. 28, pp. 42-43, Col. Vetch to the Council of Trade, 24 November, 1714. Vetch was in England at the time having been accused of mismanagement of colonial affairs.

¹¹⁹ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 8-9, to the Board of Trade and Plantations, 1 November, 1715.

matter. Philipps was determined to make the Acadians loyal to the British Crown and ordered them to take an unconditional oath of allegiance. The Acadians agreed only to an oath of neutrality affirming they would “take up arms neither against his Britannic Majesty, nor against France, nor against any of their subjects or allies.”¹²⁰ Philipps was determined to implement his decision taking whatever measures necessary so he gave them four months’ time to decide whether to stay in Nova Scotia and take the oath of allegiance to the British Crown or to leave.¹²¹ He wrote Saint-Ovide asking him to use his influence to persuade the Acadians to take the oath.¹²² The one year period allotted by former governor Nicholson for the removal of the Acadians having expired, Philipps informed Saint-Ovide on August 10, 1720 that “you must admit that there is a great difference of time between one and seven years ... You ought not to be surpris’d, if his Majesty at this time thinks proper for the security of his dominion, to summon them [the Acadians]... demanding of them their allegiance.”¹²³ Faced with Louisbourg’s inaction and the Acadian resistance, Philipps gave his verbal agreement to an oath of semi-allegiance in 1729-30.¹²⁴ Those who opposed taking this oath would be forced to leave the province. In 1731 the Ministry of Marine acknowledged that “les Anglois éstant possesseurs de l’Acadie, ceux qui l’habitent sont censés sujets de cette couronne.”¹²⁵

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 16.

¹²¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 101v-102, conseil, 10 juin, 1720; Charlevoix, *History*, vol.V, p. 298; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 25-26, to Saint-Ovide, 6 May, 1720.

¹²² Akins, *ibid.*, p. 27, to Saint-Ovide, 14 May, 1720.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 38-39, to Saint-Ovide, 10 August, 1720.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 86, to the Duke of Newcastle, September 2, 1730; see also the list of oaths obtained by Philipps in the winter, p. 84.

¹²⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 55, p. 498, à Beauharnois, 24 avril, 1731.

The main reason for the failure of the emigration project was economic. Unlike the transfer of the fisheries from Placentia to Isle Royale, the transfer of an agrarian settlement from Acadia required a huge amount of capital investment and human resources. The Acadians believed that Isle Royale was not as good a place for cultivation as their fertile marshlands around the Bay of Fundy. They had clearly conveyed their decision as early as 1713 when the resettlement proposal was introduced by France. The Acadians said to Father Pain:

Ce seroit nous exposer manifestement, ont ils [the Acadians] dit, à mourir de faim charges comme nous sommes de grosses familles de quitter des habitations qui sont en valeur, et des quelles nous tirons toute notre subsistance ordinaire sans aucune autre ressource, pour prendre de terres Brutes et nouvelles, dont ils faut arracher le Bois qui est debout sans aucune avance ny secours, il y a parmi nous le quart du monde qui sont des personnes âgées hors d'estat de deffricher de nouvelles terres, et qui a grande peine peuvent cultiver celles qui fournissent à leurs subsistance et à celle de leurs familles.¹²⁶

There were only sixty-six Acadian families comprising three hundred people, out of the total of about 2500 in Nova Scotia who moved to Isle Royale in six stages between 1713 and 1734.¹²⁷ At the initial phase of the evacuation some poor Acadians decided to move to the new colony because the promise of one year's food supply and a plot of land was vital for their survival. On coming to Isle Royale they did not continue to farm but entered commerce, worked as tavern keepers, or started other business-oriented jobs. When Governor Philipps began to use forceful tactics to make the Acadians take the oath of allegiance, a few political "refugees" left for Isle Royale.¹²⁸

The majority of the Acadian families settled in Port Toulouse. Out of the sixty-six families that came to Isle Royale, thirty-eight settled around this port between 1720 and 1724. By 1734

¹²⁶ MG 1, C11C, vol. 7, p. 226v, à Costebelle, 23 septembre, 1713.

¹²⁷ Pothier, "Acadian Settlement on Ile Royale," pp. 45-47.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, *idem*.

there were only nineteen families left in Port Toulouse. The decline of the Acadian population was a general phenomenon on Isle Royale. There were twenty-eight families at Petit Saint-Pierre until the beginning of 1717, but by the spring of the same year they had abandoned it most returning to Nova Scotia, while a few settled at Port Toulouse.¹²⁹ Some Acadians went to Isle St. Jean, an area recommended for resettlement, but many of them reverted to a life in Nova Scotia after a few years' absence.¹³⁰

The Acadian relocation programme was not a success. Despite the lack of tangible support from Versailles, it was predominantly Acadian reluctance to go to Isle Royale that resulted in its failure. The root cause for the reluctance to accept the project grew out of the geopolitics of the region. Living in a particular geographical and political entity for more than a century, largely neglected by the mother country, the Acadians had developed a unique economic and social system grounded in agriculture and kinship ties. They knew that they would not succeed if they shifted their unique agrarian family communities from Nova Scotia. Thus the influence of geography and metropolitan "salutary neglect" were prominent factors in their decision to remain in the isolated local communities, a decision which was linked to their identification with the land, the soil, the climate, and the vegetation.¹³¹

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 35, 128.

¹³⁰ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 10, to the Board of Trade and Plantations, 16 May, 1716. Isle St. Jean was considered a valuable agrarian base of Louisbourg. It was described "un point important pour la subsistence de Isle Royale, pour conserver les habitans de l'Acadie dans nos interests." MG 4, A1, vol. 2997, p. 216v, Marechal de Noailles, mémoire, 1 août, 1749.

¹³¹ For Acadian geopolitics see Andrew Hill Clark, *Acadia. The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison: 1968); Naomi Griffiths, *The Acadians: Creation of a People* (Toronto: 1975); and Jean Daigle, ed., *The Acadians of the Maritimes* (Moncton: 1982).

One of the most important objectives behind the establishment of Louisbourg was to influence the Mi'kmaq against the English. As the French did not have enough troops, they hoped to use native warriors to resist British expansion. In addition, the Natives worked as messengers, spies and trading partners of the French. The Amerindian population on the North Atlantic seaboard consisted chiefly of Mi'kmaq who lived in the regions of Acadia, Isle Royale, Isle St. Jean, and the Gaspé peninsula. There were small groups of Abenakis and Malisect living near the English settlements. The Mi'kmaq were the first people with whom the French had established their early contacts. In 1604 Sieur de Monts laid the foundation of the first French colony in Acadia and the new settlers interacted with the Native peoples in many sectors of everyday life. Acadians and Mi'kmaq were linked in friendship and military alliance until the fall of Acadia; both had perceived the English as threats to their traditional way of life.

Subsequent to the loss of Acadia, the establishment of a new colony became imperative to the maintenance of France's political relations with the coastal aboriginal groups. The French government clearly realised that the new colony should be the nucleus of French-Amerindian imperial relations and trade and missionary interaction. Pontchartrain communicated with the colonial government at Placentia and the missionaries in Acadia regarding the permanent settlement of the Mi'kmaq on Isle Royale. Saint-Ovide had been instructed about the removal of the Mi'kmaq to Isle Royale before he started his exploratory expedition to examine and to take possession of the island. Pontchartrain said to him: "je crois qu'il est absolument nécessaire d'attirer les sauvages qui habitent la péninsule de l'Acadie à l'Isle du Cap Breton ou de leur faire habiter le long du gulf St.

Laurent les terres qui resteront à la France."¹³² The permanent settlement of the Mi'kmaq on Isle Royale was considered as important as the Acadian relocation project. In April 1713 Pontchartrain wrote Bernard-Anselme d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin, who was at Pentagouet on the Penobscot River with the Abenakis that:

il faut que les François et les Sauvages de l'Acadie voyent le Soleil et les Etoiles de dessus la mesme terre que la hache des uns et des autres se repose et soit levée Ensemble et que leurs os soient dans le mesme lieu.¹³³

The Minister of Marine contacted the missionaries in Acadia, who were in close contact with the Mi'kmaq, expressing that he believed they could easily persuade them to move over to Isle Royale.¹³⁴ In accordance with the instructions given by Pontchartrain, Abbé Antoine Gaulin came to Louisbourg with three native chiefs of Acadia to meet with l'Hermite and to discuss the transfer of the Natives to Isle Royale. The meeting did not yield the anticipated results although the chiefs were treated with gifts of gun powder and lead. Without giving any assurance of moving to Isle Royale, the chiefs left after receiving the presents.¹³⁵ The Mi'kmaq were nomadic hunters, food gatherers, horticulturalists and fishers, who wanted to enjoy the freedom to pursue their traditional subsistence cycle. The missionaries were apprised of their unwillingness to sacrifice this traditional life-style in order to assume sedentary lives on Isle Royale.¹³⁶

¹³² MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 239, à St. Ovide, 20 mars, 1713.

¹³³ MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 262v-263, à St. Castin, 8 avril, 1713.

¹³⁴ See MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 259v-260, à Gaulin, 29 mars, 1713; *ibid.*, pp. 261v-262, à Felix, 29 mars, 1713.

¹³⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol.1. pp. 58-58v, au ministre, 25 aoust, 1714.

¹³⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol.1, p. 277, Felix à Costebelle, 23 septembre, 1713.

The Mi'kmaq remained friends and allies of the French in spite of these differences and several groups remained hostile to the English. After the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the governor at Boston met the Abenakis and told them: "by the treaty of peace, the king of France, cedes to our Queen Plaisance and Portrail [Port Royal] . Therefore, if thou wilt, we shall live in peace." The Abenakis agreed to live in peace, but they added that their land had been given to them by the Great Spirit, therefore, "as long as there shall be a child of my tribe, he will fight to retain it."¹³⁷ The Mi'kmaq asserted "they would proclaim no foreign king in their land."¹³⁸ French attempts to have them leave Nova Scotia failed, although their efforts to influence them against the English had some remarkable effects. The cession of Acadia did not assure the British of the cooperation of various Amerindian inhabitants. Ostensibly it was not the imposition of metropolitan French decisions but diplomatic manoeuvring at the local level, as we shall see in the following chapters, that made French-Amerindian relations successful.

The establishment of a new colony on Isle Royale was indispensable for the exercise of France's political power and the maintenance of its fishery in the North Atlantic region. The obstacle to this achievement was that none of the original metropolitan plans made for the protection of the fishery and commerce and the agricultural development of the colony proved successful. Right from the beginning, when the colonisation of Isle Royale was deemed necessary, the Ministry of Marine revealed its lack of knowledge of colonial matters through indecisive and inconsistent policies and decisions. The Ministry became dependent upon local officials, who played a pivotal role in the

¹³⁷ R.G. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* (New York: 1959), vol. LXVII, pp. 207-209.

¹³⁸ Quoted in Cornelius J. Jaenen, *The French Relationship with the Native Peoples of New France and Acadia* (Ottawa: 1984), p. 33.

process of colonisation, for information, suggestions and “decisions”. The establishment of Louisbourg reflected signs of the weakening of the French imperial system and metropolitan political power in favour of facilitating the dominance of local initiatives and interests in the implementation of appropriate colonial programmes.

CHAPTER 3

THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUISBOURG AN EXAMINATION OF THE FORMULATION OF POLICIES AND DECISIONS

A study of the administrative relationship between Versailles and Louisbourg is imperative in order to arrive at any judgement about the role the colony and its officials played in the structure and formulation of French imperial policy. The historical evidence examined in a re-interpretative framework illustrates that colonial or local experience, knowledge and initiatives formed a foundation for French imperialism on the North Atlantic littoral.

The French Imperial school of historians, as John Rule identified them, depicted the *Ancien Régime* colonial establishments as under the absolute control of the metropolitan government. They further claimed that at least well into the reign of Louis XV the colonial administration was largely based on the policies and decisions shaped by the king and his ministers at Versailles.¹ A 1994 work by Jeremy Black and Roy Porter offered the latest support to this view: "Louis XIV remained directly responsible for the fundamental policies of the reign."² Did the part of government at Louisbourg fit into this interpretation? Or, as shall be proposed here, did the government at

¹ In John Rule's analysis there were four stages in the history of France's first colonial empire: the period of exploration launched by Cartier, of colonisation under Richelieu, of colonial maturity under Colbert and of imperial decline begun under the Pontchartrains. John C. Rule, "The Old Regime in America, A Review of Recent Interpretations of France in America," *WMQ*, vol. IV, no. 4 (1962), pp. 575-600.

² Jeremy Black & Roy Porter, eds., *A Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century World History* (Oxford: 1994), p. 425.

Louisbourg play a role in the enunciation of important colonial policies and decisions? This is a question that hitherto has not been examined thoroughly.

Terence A. Crowley explored the functioning of the colonial administration at Louisbourg but he did not discuss the formulation of imperial policies either at the metropolitan or colonial levels.³ It has been demonstrated that under Jérôme Pontchartrain, the Ministry of Marine became increasingly indecisive and uncertain about colonial affairs.⁴ During this period French society, polity and bureaucracy were shaken by a *crise de conscience* and a *crise d'autorité*, crises which were the result of eighteenth-century European rationalism and empiricism.⁵ The minister was influenced by these new intellectual developments of the period and consequently he began to adopt a liberal political approach towards colonial matters.⁶ This change of attitude and the decline of

³ A detailed examination of colonial administration is beyond the objective of this study. For such a work see T.A. Crowley, "Government and Interests: French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1758" (Ph.D thesis, Duke University: 1975). Crowley's conclusions are: (1) the government was paternalistic and acted benevolently towards the community; (2) the government was not despotic but authoritarian; (3) civil administration was more influential than the military; (4) merchants were able to influence the administration; and (5) patron-client relationships intensified factionalism within the government.

⁴ For the eighteenth-century criticism of French monarchy and its despotic authority see Phyllis K. Leffeler, "French Historians and the Challenge to Louis XIV's Absolutism," *FHS*, vol. XIV, no. 1 (1985), pp. 1-22.

⁵ Paul Hazard, *European Thought in the Eighteenth Century* (Cleveland: 1967) focuses on what he termed the *crise de conscience*.

⁶ Despite his attempts to enforce stronger commercial regulations, during the time of Comte de Maurepas, liberalism was reflected in ministerial decisions. Officials in France, for example, believed that development of iron mining and smelting in Canada would not be against the interest of the *métropole*, on the contrary, they said, encouraging competition "... il seroit même à souhaiter que l'on tira du Canada une assez grande quantité de fer pour que les maîtres des forges en France puissent en convevoir quelque inquiétude..." Quoted in Cameron Nish, *François-Étienne Cugnet, 1719-1751: Entrepreneur et Entreprises en Nouvelle-France* (Montreal: 1975), p. 59.

despotic authority during the period of the Regency fostered a crisis in the French political system.⁷ In this circumstance, administrative policies and decisions evolved from the structure of everyday political, social and economic life in the colony. The Regency (1715-1723) witnessed unprecedented local initiatives in policy-making. There were indications that colonial officials and leading inhabitants in several colonies would not only reject centralised control from Versailles but would succeed in imposing their own policies. In 1717 the colonists in Martinique refused to accept the Regent's attempt to impose taxes and forcibly sent the Governor and Intendant back to France. In 1721 the leading inhabitants of St. Domingue refused to accept trade restrictions and evicted the royal officials. In both cases, Versailles blamed the royal officials and acquiesced in colonial demands.⁸ The functioning of the government of Louisbourg set an example of this change from "below". As the internal dynamics of local polity and economy did not fit the *Ancien Régime's* political and mercantile systems, the metropolitan government found it difficult, even failed, to impose a mechanism of control on the colonial administration unless it used its ultimate powers to dismiss or transfer colonial officials. Such administrative weakness was not an unprecedented development as the relative independence of provincial and municipal governments in seventeenth-century France reflected. Even during the reign of Louis XIV, according to Eugene L. Asher, Andrew Lossky and Roger Mettam, royal authority was not as absolute and powerful in practice as depicted by other historians although the king succeeded in the creation of a strong centralised

⁷ Marcel Giraud, one of the outstanding historians of the Imperial School, pointed out that the beginning of the eighteenth century witnessed the transformation of decline of rigid "Colbertian control." See Marcel Giraud, *Histoire de la Louisiane 1: Le Règne de Louis XIV, 1698-1715* (Paris: 1953) and *Histoire de la Louisiane française, 2: Années de transition, 1715-1717* (Paris: 1758).

⁸ Philip P. Boucher, *Les Nouvelles Frances: France in America, 1500-1815, An Imperial Perspective* (Providence: 1989), pp. 71-74.

administrative system during the latter half of the seventeenth century.⁹ By the end of his regime there no longer existed a strong government at Versailles to direct France and its overseas possessions.¹⁰

The metropolitan policy with regard to the colonies clearly reflected this political change. Although the king remained as the only supreme authority, for practicalities, as Claude Sturgill suggested, the administration of the colonies became more self-regulating in the eighteenth century. He explained:

was it possible that the colonies were being cast adrift and more or less left on their own, until another world war [the War of Austrian Succession] would bring them again into prominence? If this was so, then the local factors, in each colony, were more important for the future of the French overseas empire than were the policies of the far away government in Paris.¹¹

The discussion in this chapter will delineate that the functioning of colonial administration at Louisbourg would sustain such a hypothesis.

After the cession of Placentia and Acadia to the English, Louisbourg became the seat of

⁹ Studying the maritime classes Asher said that despite Minister J.B. Colbert's strict control "the provincial officials [in France] were unwilling, or unable to carry out the tasks proposed by the authorities at Versailles" and in general "the Sun King failed to reduce France to order." Eugene L. Asher, *The Resistance to the Maritime Classes; The Survival of Feudalism in the France of Colbert* (Berkeley: 1960), pp. 75, 94; Andrew Lossky, *Louis XIV and the French Monarchy* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: 1994), pp. 17-37; Roger Mettam, ed., *Government and Society in Louis XIV's France* (Toronto: 1977), pp. 60-61, 129-131, 200-202, *passim*; see also Roger Mettam, *Power and Faction in Louis XIV's France* (New York: 1988).

¹⁰ Mettam, ed., *Government and Society*, p. 266.

¹¹ Claude Sturgill, "Philip of Orlean's *No Colonies* Policy, 1715-1722" in Philip P. Boucher, ed., *Proceedings of the Tenth Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society, April 12-14, 1984* (New York: 1985), p. 133. French administration in the Mississippi Valley also illustrates local initiatives. See Glenn R. Conrad, "Administration of the Illinois Country: The French Debate," *Louisiana History*, vol. XXXVI, no.1 (1995), pp. 31-53.

French colonial administration on the North Atlantic seaboard. As a centre of regional colonial government it was officially placed under the control of Quebec, the capital of the French empire in North America in 1714, when Versailles appointed Pierre-Auguste de Soubras "en qualité de commissaire ordonnateur dans Isle Royale et Isles adjacents...en l'absence de l'Intendant de la Nouvelle-France."¹² This was merely an official formality as the authorities at Quebec had no real power to control the Louisbourg administration. In practice, the Quebec government was forbidden from interfering in the affairs of regional governments, especially Isle Royale and Louisiana, because it was presumed that Quebec officials might not have sufficient knowledge of the needs and priorities of the regional governments which were located far away. For this reason in 1684 the Governor of Quebec Joseph Antoine Lefebvre de La Barre had been instructed by the king not to meddle in the administration of Acadia. Succeeding governors and intendants of Quebec received similar instructions from the Ministry of Marine.¹³

The government of Louisbourg conducted its business in direct correspondence with the metropolitan government. The Quebec government was informed of the administrative matters at Louisbourg only if they were related to Quebec's interest or the colonies' interests in general.¹⁴ In

¹² MG 1, G2, Carton 178, pp. 24-26, Commission de subdélégué à l'Isle Royale pour le Sieur de Soubras, commissaire ordonnateur, 12 avril, 1714; see MG 2, C7, vol. 311, n.p. for dossiers personnels de Soubras. This was the first commission that indicated the subordinate position of Isle Royale under Quebec.

¹³ Gustave Lanctot, *L'Administration de la Nouvelle France* (Paris: 1929), p. 24; Jean-Claude Dubé, *Claude-Thomas Dupuy, Intendant de la Nouvelle-France, 1678-1738* (Montreal: 1969), p. 88; Lawrence G. Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution 5, Zones of International Friction* (New York: 1942), p. 19; Conrad, "Administration of the Illinois Country," pp. 33-34.

¹⁴ T.A. Crowley, "French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1744" (Fortress of
(continued...))

1726 Governor Saint-Ovide had even made a request for the complete separation of his government from Quebec and the elevation of his office to that of governor-general, but the minister declined his request.¹⁵ It was specifically stated in the Commission to Saint-Ovide that he was appointed the governor of Isle Royale “sous l’autorité du gouverneur et notre lieutenant général audits pays de la Nouvelle France.”¹⁶ but not all important documents referred to this kind of clause of subordination.¹⁷ In brief, both Louisbourg and Quebec had equal rights and privileges in their own respective realms of administration and both governments remained in a co-operative way of functioning rather than of submission of the former to the latter. Pasteur de Costebelle was given charge of colonisation and administration of Isle Royale even before he arrived in the colony, while Philippe de Rigaud Marquis de Vaudreuil, Governor-General of New France, was asked to assist him by sending soldiers and supplies to Isle Royale.¹⁸ In 1755 when the English were preparing for an expedition to the Ohio region, Louisbourg officials wrote to governor Marquis Duquesne de Menneville in Canada: “Si vos opérations exigent des secours de vivres de nostre part, il est

(...continued)

Louisbourg Library, 1970), p. 4.

¹⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 50, pp. 585-85v, Maurepas à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727; MG 1, C11B, vol. 9, p. 24, Conseil de marine, 25 mars, 1727; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 172, à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727.

¹⁶ MG 1, G2, carton 192, registre 1, pp. 3-4, Commission de la Gouverneur de l’Isle Royale en la Nouvelle France pour le sieur Brouillan de Saint-Ovide, 12 novembre, 1717. The same document is available in carton 190, registre 2, pp. 6-6v, 12 novembre, 1717.

¹⁷ See Mémoires du Roy given to governors and *commissaire ordonnateurs*. The functions and responsibilities of these officials were described in the memoirs which were more important than the commissions. For examples, MG 1, B, vol. 68, pp. 369-388, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instructions au S. de Forant Cap. ne. de vaisseau et gouverneur de l’Isle Royale, 22 juin, 1739 and pp. 389-400, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d’instructions au S. Bigot commi[ssai]re de la Marine ordonnateur à l’Isle Royale, 22 juin, 1739.

¹⁸ MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 230v, à Vaudreuil, 24 février, 1713.

essentiel, Monsieur, de nous prévenir de très bonne heure.”¹⁹ The Louisbourg government was also entrusted with the administration of Isle St. Jean (Prince Edward Island) from 1713 onwards although it did not come under Louisbourg’s formal jurisdiction until it became a royal domain in 1730.²⁰ From 1739 onwards it appears that the governors of Isle Royale were often honoured as “Gouverneur de notre dit Isle Royale, et des Isles St. Jean, de Canceau [Canso] et autres en dépendantes.”²¹

The governor was the head of the government of Louisbourg and highest dignitary in the colony. His position was the first in importance as he represented the person of His Most Christian Majesty. He was the lieutenant-general of the king and the head of the colonial military forces, receiving special ecclesiastical privileges and honours and occupying the first place at all public functions.²² The governor was appointed “directly” by the king. His term of office was not specified, rather it depended upon his good service and success in the administration as well as the good will and pleasure of the king and the minister.

The foremost duty of the governor at Louisbourg was to maintain the colony under the

¹⁹ *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 533, Druccour et Prévost à Duquesne, 27 janvier, 1755.

²⁰ When Pensens received a promotion as the king’s lieutenant and his appointment in Isle St. Jean his commission said “Lieutenant pour nous à Isle St. Jean dépendante de Isle Royale.” MG 1, D2C, vol. 60, p. 21, Commission de Lieutenant de Roi de l’Isle St. Jean pour le sieur de Pensens, 1 septembre, 1733. See also MG 1, G2, carton 192, register 2, pp. 21-21v, Commission...pour Pensens, 1 septembre, 1733.

²¹ MG 1, G2, 192, 55, Provision de Gouverneur pour le sieur Forant, 1 avril, 1739.

²² MG 1, G2, carton 192, registre 1, pp. 27-28, Ordonnance du Roy qui règle le rang des officiers entretenu à L’Isle Royale pour les cérémonies publiques, 5 mai, 1735.

authority and the obedience of the king and thus to uphold his sovereignty unchallenged and in perpetuity.²³ He was required to protect the colony from all external threats and aggressions and to preserve peace and order within the colony. In order to perform this duty he had the supreme command of the troops. The military affairs and defence of the colony were one of the areas in which the governor had independent and undisputed powers.

According to official regulations and commission, the governor had no power to make any promotions, yet his recommendations were given utmost consideration in making them. He was authorised to appoint commanders at military posts in the colony, but if the minister did not find the appointed officer qualified, he could be removed from the post. He was granted the right to discharge soldiers, but such action should be taken in compliance with the Ministry's rules and policies. While the governor had the absolute right to defend the colony, he had no power to declare any offensive war or to establish any treaty relations with foreign officials without prior permission from the Ministry of Marine.

The administration of the native affairs was another area in which the governor had an independent authority. His primary responsibility was to maintain the Native peoples as friends of the French and foes of the English. For this purpose he was given the power to distribute "des présens de Fusils, de Poudre, et de Plombs et d'outils."²⁴ In addition, he awarded honourary medals

²³ The governor's duties and responsibilities described in the following part are taken from MG 1, B, vol. 68, pp. 369-388, *Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instructions du S. de Forant Cap. de Vaisseau et gouverneur de l'Isle Royale*, 22 juin, 1739; MG 4, A4, *Mémoires sur l'administration de la marine et des colonies*, article 241, chapitre 3, pp.136-146, s.d. This memoir was written sometime after 1783. See also André Vachon, "L'administration de la Nouvelle-France," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. xv-xxiv.

²⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 68, p. 383.

to influential chiefs and established military and commercial relations with them. He was also permitted to use the commanders of the military outposts, the merchants and the missionaries to maintain the French influence among the Native peoples.

The external relations of the colony was the other realm of administration in which the governor had exclusive rights. As representative of the king and the head of the military forces in the colony, it was the governor who received the power to deal with foreign colonies. He was the only official authorised to receive foreign dignitaries. His passport was required for any inhabitant to leave the colony. Even fishing vessels and merchants had to obtain his passport to enter foreign waters and territories. He was responsible for supervising the movements of foreign vessels in the port of Louisbourg. Despite all these powers, the governor had no right to develop his own foreign policy, rather his diplomacy had to correspond with the policies of Versailles.

The *commissaire* occupied the second most important position in the government of Louisbourg. He was the pre-erninent civil administrator in the colony. His principal responsibilities were the administration of finance, justice and "police" or public order.²⁵ All financial affairs in the colony were under his strict control and no money could be spent without his consent. There was no budget in the modern sense, but he had to keep an account of the income and expenditures made in the colony in each year and forward it to the Ministry for examination and approval. In addition, every year in the autumn he had to send an estimate of funds required for the maintenance of the

²⁵ The duties of the *commissaire* described in the following part are found in MG 1, B, vol. 68, pp. 389-413v, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instructions au S[ieur] Bigot commissaire de la marine et ordonnateur à l'Isle Royale, 22 juin, 1739 and MG 2, C7, vol. 31, n.p., Instruction que le Roy veut estre remise au Seubras, commissaire ordonnateur à L'Isle Royale, 10 avril, 1714, or MG 1, B, vol. 36 (7), pp. 89-109, Instruction pour Soubras, 10 avril, 1714; see also MG 4, A4, Mémoires sur l'administration de la marine et des colonies, article 241, chapitre 3, pp. 136-46, s.d.

colony and its administrative apparatus during the upcoming year.²⁶ There were certain financial matters on which the *commissaire* and the governor worked together. At the time of preparing the financial statement the governor decided the amount required for military expenditure and for the Native peoples. The governor could also place requests for extraordinary expenditure with justifications therefor. Nevertheless, neither the *commissaire* nor the governor was permitted to increase the expenses unless instructed by the Ministry and neither official had any right to levy taxes unless ordered by the king. The governor was given the right to see that there was no financial mismanagement or corruption but that all funds were properly allocated. This was an administrative punctilio since he had no effective power to control the *commissaire* in financial matters. The *commissaire* also had charge of all the munitions, merchandise, and other materials in the king's stores. Without his permission nothing could be taken from the stores. While the governor had the right to decide on presents for the Mi'kmaq and arms and ammunition for expeditions, it was the *commissaire* who had to issue the order for their delivery.

The administration of justice was under the jurisdiction of the *commissaire* which granted him the right to judge all civil and criminal cases. The governor was advised to co-operate with him in order to ensure that the rule of law and justice prevailed in the colony. Ultimately more power was placed in the hands of the *commissaire*. In the Superior Council, the highest court in the colony, the governor was instructed to ascertain that freedom of speech and voting were properly observed properly as well as administering the oath of fidelity to the members of the Council,

²⁶ After examining this estimate the Ministry would prepare a statement of finance for colonial expenses. This financial statement was called *État du Roy* because colonial expenses were drawn on the funds accorded to the Ministry of Marine and Colonies by the king. For details see Crowley, "Government and Interest," pp. 250-52.

whereas it was the *commissaire* who presided the Council meetings and directed its proceedings.

The administration of "police" (i.e., public order and security) was an area in which both officials were empowered to make their own decisions and regulations by issuing ordinances in accordance with metropolitan policies. The governor was authorised to issue ordinances on military affairs, with the *commissaire* attending to those relating to civil matters, while they issued joint-ordinances pertained to general business concerning the colony. Whatever the nature of these local orders, all of them required the eventual approval of the king. In the case of conflicting proposals between the governor and *commissaire*, they were instructed to give an account of the matter and of their own views to the Ministry for final decision.

The supervision of religious affairs was a joint responsibility of the governor and *commissaire*. They were to work on religious matters in harmony with the religious communities and the missionaries.²⁷ Their objective was to ensure that the religious needs of the people were well served and Christianity remained influential among the Native peoples. The governor had a special duty to encourage the missionaries to work among the Mi'kmaq as he was in charge of the native affairs. For this purpose he was permitted to provide necessary assistance to the missionaries.

The administration of the general order of the colony such as commerce, land use, and population, were under the joint responsibility of the governor and *commissaire*. They were to protect and encourage commercial activities in every possible way and to sustain the colony within the formal structure of mercantilism by preventing all trade with foreign colonies. They were further advised to take all possible measures to increase the population of the colony through the

²⁷ The role of the Church is clarified in A.J.B. Johnston, *Religion in Life at Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (Kingston/Montreal: 1984).

promotion and encouragement of new settlements, immigration, and marriages. This included providing land-grants and inducing the people to engage in agricultural activities.

These were the principal duties of the governor and the *commissaire*. In obedience to their commissions they were fully under the direct control of the Ministry of Marine. In theory, they had no adequate power to form their own policies, but were required to follow instructions from the metropolitan government. In practice, the everyday colonial administration was in the hands of these two officials. The governor as head of the "men of sword" and the *commissaire* as head of the "men of pen" were the actual directors of the military and civil activities in the colony.

The Superior Council of Louisbourg was the legislative and judicial body of the colony, which was established in 1717.²⁸ Its main duty was to function as court of law and a court of registrations and records. The powers of the Superior Council were not unlimited as the governor and the *commissaire* being members of the council had a dominant voice in its deliberations and decision-making. In terms of the colony's relation with the *métropole* the council, like a *Parlement* in France, expressed the colony's political and economic interests and distinct identity. In addition to governor and *commissaire*, initially the council was composed of two councillors, an attorney-general, a clerk and an usher; later this composition had been expanded.

The Superior Council followed the *Coutume de Paris* and it held its meetings as often as matters required; that was at least once in a month. The council tried both civil and criminal cases

²⁸ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 65-66v, Édít portant Établissement des trois baillages et d'un Conseil Supérieur à l'Isle Royale à Louisbourg, juin, 1717; MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 99-100, Conseil de Marine, 22 mai, 1717; MG 1, G2, vol. 178, pp. 27-33, Édít portant Établissement de trois Baillages et d'un Conseil Supérieur à Isle Royale, 22 juin, 1717. There was another court of justice called the Court of Admiralty which dealt with shipping regulations and marine police. MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 107-8, Règlement pour le siège de l'Amirauté à l'Isle Royale, 9 décembre, 1720.

in the colony based on the investigation report of the case submitted by the attorney-general. The Custom of Paris was the only civil law allowed in the colony, but the council also tried cases based on local custom, particularly those concerning the fishing industry. Ordinances, patents, edicts and other orders, whether metropolitan or local, became effective laws only after their registration by the Superior Council. It also registered various commercial agreements, contracts, land concessions, judicial verdicts and other legal procedures, prepared inventory of estates, and decided the rate of fee for the service of royal officials such as surveyor, judicial officers and others. It is therefore in the context of the role of the Superior Council as the high court and the role of governor and *commissaire* as the chief administrators that we examine the administrative interaction between the colony and the mother country.

The first observation that must be made is that between the king and the Minister of Marine in France and the colonial officials and colonists overseas there intervened a growing bureaucracy intent on establishing its own supremacy. The Ministry of Marine had evolved from a secretariat of state responsible for the management of the *Maison du Roi*. Initially the Ministry had no permanent administrative office although colonial affairs made up a large portion of its work. Its officers had to follow the minister to Versailles, Paris, Marly, Fontainebleau, St. Germain-En-Laye, or wherever he was going and staying.²⁹

Despite these inconveniences, there had been a process of centralisation of the administration of the marine and the colonies. This began from the time of Cardinal Richelieu and reached its culmination under Jean-Baptiste Colbert. In 1669 Louis XIV had created a post of secretary of

²⁹ Francis H. Hammang, *The Marquis de Vaudreuil. New France at the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century* (Louvain: 1938), p. 15.

state for the marine and Colbert was appointed to the office; this was the origin of the Ministry of Marine. Colbert then seized the powers of the Admiral of France through a very diplomatic move. After the death of Duc de Beaufort, the Admiral of France, in 1669, Colbert employed his influence to get an eighteen-month old child, the Duc de Vermandois, selected as the new Admiral.³⁰ Through this political manoeuvring Colbert was able to establish his exclusive control over the whole of marine affairs. In addition, in 1680, the Ministry of Marine was allowed to organise a new body of troops called *troupes de la marine* for the overseas service. In 1699, commercial affairs, which had been taken away from the jurisdiction of the Minister of Marine after the death of Colbert in 1683 and given to the Controller-General, were placed back under the control of Minister of Marine, Pontchartrain. Hence, by the end of the seventeenth century the administration of colonial commerce, the defence of colonial territories, and instructions to colonial officials came under the direct and total control of the Ministry of Marine.³¹

Within the Ministry of Marine colonial administration was conducted in two different *bureaux*, the *Bureau de Levant* and the *Bureau de Ponant*. The affairs of the North Atlantic colonies were under the purview of the latter. In 1710 the *Bureau de Ponant* was reorganised as *Bureau de Consuls*. Moreover, a special *Bureau des Colonies* was instituted to direct all colonial affairs. This new office played a prominent role in the formulation of general policies with regard to the colonies. With the creation of the *Bureau des Colonies* the position and power of the chief clerk who was in charge of this office became highly important. Although he was under the control

³⁰ Albert Decenc, *La politique coloniale de France. Le Ministère des Colonies depuis Richelieu* (Paris: 1928), p. 24.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

of the minister, in a period when there were no directors or under-secretaries of state "the chief clerk held in his hands all the threads of colonial policies."³² It was Moise Augustin Fontaineu who first assumed this position in the *Bureau des Colonies* on 23 November, 1710. He remained in the office until 1725. Following him De Forcade became the chief clerk and continued in power until 1738. He was succeeded by Arnaud de La Porte who stayed in the office until 1758. They were the three chief clerks who handled the business of Louisbourg in the Ministry of Marine. Despite the political upheavals and the rise and fall of the ministers, they remained in their seats, stable and powerful. During the period that Arnaud de La Porte held the office there were six ministers one after another at the head of the Ministry. As the chief clerks were in service for longer periods than most of the ministers, they had greater knowledge and experience in administrative procedures. Historian James Pritchard, in his study of the administrative organisation of the navy, remarked: "the succession in 1723 of comte de Maurepas to his father's old charge of secretary of state for the navy brought no new development. Maurepas relied on experienced *premiers commis* or bureau chiefs to guide his actions."³³

During the time of Colbert these functionaries had only limited authority as it was the minister who examined all details of administration. On the contrary, under his son and successor,

³² *Ibid.*, p. 37; Hammang, *The Marquis De Vaudreuil*, p. 18; R. La Roque De Roquebrune, "La Direction de la Nouvelle France par le ministre de la marine," *RHAF*, vol. VI, no. 4 (1953), pp. 470-488, and *Les Canadiens d'autrefois* (Montreal & Paris: 1960), p. 125. Administrative developments in other departments of the government similarly indicate the increasing power of the chief clerks. See Camille-Vincent Piccionis, *Les Premiers commis des affaires étrangères au XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles* (Paris: 1928); J.F. Bosher, "The *Premiers Commis des Finances* in the Reign of Louis XVI," *FHS*, vol. III, no. 4 (1964), pp. 475-94; F.J. McLynn, *France and the Jacobite Risings of 1745* (Edinburgh: 1981), pp. 39-40.

³³ James S. Pritchard, *Louis XV's Navy 1748-1762, A Study of Organisation and Administration* (Kingston/Montreal: 1987), p. 21.

Jean-Baptiste Marquis de Seignelay, the chief clerks gradually became influential functionaries in the direction of colonial affairs since the minister could not go through all the details.³⁴ By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Ministry of Marine expanded with a heavy load of administrative works regarding the navy, the colonies and the commerce. Consequently, Minister Pontchartrain was not able to concentrate on all matters and, therefore, the chief clerks became indispensable officials in the conduct of the administration. In the year 1715 there were four chief clerks at the same time under Pontchartrain. By 1740 this number increased to eight in accordance with the increase in the number of *bureaux* in the Ministry.³⁵ Furthermore, the Ministry employed a large number of second and third rank clerks. In 1753 there was a total of sixty-five clerks altogether.³⁶

The chief clerks, particularly those of the colonies, became the dominant functionaries under the Minister of Marine. This is quite evident in the transactions Louisbourg officials and missionaries had with Versailles. A 1732 memoir concerning the organisation and meeting of the Superior Council and judicial matters in the colony was sent to chief clerk Forcade for ministerial considerations.³⁷ In 1738 a report on illicit trade at Canso and Petit Dégras was to be directed to

³⁴ Referring to the economic policy of France after 1683 C.W. Cole said it was "carried on in good part by the weight of routine and administered often by minor officials with only sporadic attention from above." C.W. Cole, *French Mercantilism, 1683-1700* (New York: 1965), p. 5.

³⁵ De Roquebrune, "La Direction de la Nouvelle-France," pp. 470-488 and *Les Canadiens'...*, p. 125.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 125. For a list of "Premiers Commis of the Navy's Central Bureaux, 1748-1762" see Pritchard, *Louis XV's Navy*, Table 1, p. 31.

³⁷ MG 1, G2, Carton 181, pp. 570-73, Mémoire du procureur général du Conseil Supérieur de Louisbourg envoyé à M. de Forcade, 24 octobre, 1732.

M. La Porte, not to the minister.³⁸ In 1747 missionary Jean-Louis Le Loutre, referring to his brother Deprez Le Loutre's promotion, wrote the superior of the Séminaire des Missions Étrangères: "vous pouvez écrire à M. de la Porte, il m'a promis sa protection pour mon frère."³⁹ In 1752 the governor of Isle Royale petitioned the chief clerk for his reassignment to another posting and the sending out of a royal vessel to the colony.⁴⁰ Two years later Lieutenant Dublaisel de la Cloye sent his application to the chief clerk for obtaining a leave of absence.⁴¹ Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu felt assured that La Porte would deal personally with a problem without troubling the minister.⁴² Even after the fall of Louisbourg, the former engineer Jean-Baptiste de Couagne believed the most effective channel to argue for a change of site for the naval base, should the colony be returned to

³⁸ An anonymous letter of 1738 mentioned the illicit trade at Canso and Petit Dégras and that this matter should be "Communiquer à M. de La Porte." MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, pp. 311-12v, sans signature, 27 décembre, 1738.

³⁹ *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, p. 28, Le Loutre à Du Fau, Supérieur du Séminaire des Missions Étrangères, 8 mars, 1747. In 1748 Le Loutre again wrote Abbé Du Fau: "si vous voyez M. de la Porte, je vous prie de luy demander si [il] a fait écrire à Msgr. de Maurepas à la Compagnie en faveur de mon frère..." With regard to other matters Le Loutre also asked the superior of his mission to consult the chief clerk, not the minister. During his confinement at Winchester he requested Du Fau "parler pour moy à M. de la Porte et au ministre." Yet, it is noteworthy, he said again in the same letter in a post-script: "N'oubliez pas, Je vous prie, de voir M. la Porte." *Ibid.*, pp. 32-38, Le Loutre à Du Fau, 12 juillet, 1747, 8 mars, 1748.

⁴⁰ Comte de Raymond wrote La Porte "je vous demande en grâce par toutes sortes des raisons et au nom de l'amitié dont vous m'honorez de me faire remplacer de bonne heure l'année prochaine, et de m'envoyer un vaisseau du Roy." MG. 4, A1, vol. 3393, n.p, copie de la lettre à M. de la Porte, 11 juillet, 1752.

⁴¹ MG 2, C7, carton 89, n.p., Dublaisel de la Cloye (Louis-Gabriel) à M. de La Porte, 8 octobre, 1754.

⁴² In December 1755 l'abbé de L'Isle-Dieu referring to a letter sent to de La Porte informed the Minister "... qu'il en a Envoyé coppie à M. de La Porte qui sans doute vous l'aura déjà communiqué ainsy J'ay cru inutile de vous en Envoyer une nouvelle coppie." MG 1, C11A, vol. 100, p. 237, l'Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu au ministre, 18 décembre, 1755.

France in the peace negotiations, was the chief clerk Jean-Augustin Accaron. Madam Courserac de Drucour also believed in the power of Accaron when she demanded justice to improve the financial situation of her husband Governor Drucour of Isle Royale.⁴³ By the middle of the eighteenth century the chief clerk had become a substantially influential director of the colonies as a result of the frequent changes of ministers following the dismissal of Maurepas. As Roquebrunç said:

De 1725 à 1758 deux hommes ont occupé le poste de premier commis à la Marine: Forcade et Arnaud de La Porte. On peut dire que le Canada [et autres colonies] a [ont] été sous la coupe de ces deux fonctionnaires pendant tout le règne de Louis XV. La Porte surtout a joué dans l'histoire du Canada un rôle immense, totalement ignoré des historiens et d'ailleurs bien difficile à pénétrer. Sur toutes les lettres venues de la Nouvelle-France, on trouve, de la main d'un commis, à l'encre ou crayon, la mention: "M. de La Porte" ou simplement: "M. de La P." Ce qui signifie que La Porte lira la lettre et y fera faire réponse. Et on peut penser que le ministre n'a pas toujours pris la peine de lire les lettres pour la colonie que l'on portait à sa signature. Il en était de même dans tous les ministères. Le duc de Choiseul disait que "les commis barbouillaient les notes et que le ministre n'y mettait que

⁴³ In 1760 De Couagne had sent a memoir to chief clerk Accaron requesting him that "si L'Isle Royale revenoit à la France, il ne faloit pas que l'on fit le lieu principal de cette colonie à Louisbourg, mais bien à la baie de l'espagnol..." For this and other letters see MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, pp. 82-91v, à Monsieur Accaron, Directeur de Bureau des colonies à Versailles par son serviteur de Couagne ingénieur ci-devant employés à l'Isle Royale, 4 novembre, 1760; For Madam Drucour's letter see McLennan, *Louisbourg*, pp. 318-19, appendix I, Courserac de Drucour à Accaron, 22 December, 1758. Another example, in the words of the Chevalier de Johnstone: "Le despatches de la cour étant arrivées, il n'y avoit pas question de mon Avancement... En 1751 je me trouvais à Louisbourg l'unique des Ecossois vilement retrogradé en Enseigne par l'ignorance de M. Rouillé dans les affaires militaires, qui avoit envoyé à L'Isle Royale des officiers ineptes...pendant qu'il me refusoit la justice de ratifier ma commission de capitaine du Prince Edouard..." Johnstone went to Paris to seek the support of his influential friends and protectors to lobby for his promotion. They succeeded in their efforts. Johnstone said, "M. Rouillé leur donnoit toutes les assurances possibles d'accorder leur demande en ma faveur et M. de La Porte m'assuroit en même tems que je trouverois à Louisbourg ma commission en y arrivant." It appears that the chief clerk was more firm and definitive in making this decision than the minister. MG. 18, J. 10, *Memoirs of the Chevalier de Johnstone*, pp. 291-92, 296.

les virgules.⁴⁴

The correspondence between the Ministry and the colonies always flowed through the *Bureau des Colonies*. Normally despatches and documents from the colonies reached Versailles in the months of November and December. There were letters, reports, memoirs and other documents jointly and separately written by governors and intendants or *commissaire ordonnateurs*, as well as by other officials, merchants, missionaries, and the people of the colony. These documents were filled with a multiplicity of details of colonial administration, commerce, French-Amerindian relations, Anglo-French relations and other matters. When they arrived in the office of the colonies the clerks sorted them out and drafted summaries (*extraits*) of their contents. These summaries were mostly prepared by the chief clerk. They were written in such a way that the one half, or a wide margin, of the paper was left blank for the minister's use. Only these summaries were submitted to the minister and the *Conseil de Marine* for deliberations and decisions.⁴⁵

The minister made his comments and decisions based on these summaries and marked them on the margins usually in the form of notations rather than full sentences. Pontchartrain gave his approval by a little word "bon", his disapproval by "mal", his final and complete rejection by "non absolument", and expressed his disappointment by "mal et très mal". He marked his "attendre" on certain matters when he had no clear idea about them, or if something did not agree with his viewpoint. When contradictions were discovered he wrote "vérifier". Each minister had his own

⁴⁴ Roquebrune, "La direction de la Nouvelle-France," p. 486.

⁴⁵ See MG 1, C11B series. In each volume of this series of documents the first part contains the summaries prepared by the chief clerk often with his own signature.

separate style. Maurepas followed the same method, although he had used more clear notations to indicate his decisions and opinions. He expressed his approval by “approuvé” and disapproval by “désapprouvé”. He used “bon” to convey simple approval and acknowledgment and signalled his displeasure by “très fâcheux”.⁴⁶ Some of his other notes are “rien à répondre, on lui procurera, on a procuré;⁴⁷ qu’il continue;⁴⁸ il pourra bien permettre; il ne sera pas possible.”⁴⁹ Occasionally Maurepas wrote long notes along the margins to clarify his perspectives.

These little scribbles and notes were the strings of metropolitan control over the colonial government. When the summaries were returned to the office of the colonies the chief clerk was responsible for preparing elaborate letters and instructions to the governor, *commissaire* and others in the colony based on the minister’s notations and notes. In this procedure the chief clerk was able to influence the decision-making process at least in two ways. At first it was through the summaries that he could influence the minister’s decisions. He was able to alter the nature of original correspondence through his own explanations and evaluations, or he could even conceal certain matters from the knowledge of the minister. Secondly, it was through elaborating and interpreting the minister’s little scribbles in the correspondence to the colonial officials that the chief clerk could influence the decisions. The chief clerk’s role in manipulating the Ministry’s policies and

⁴⁶ Needless to note the exact source of all these notations as they are spread throughout different series of documents, such as C11B, CIIC, AM and F3, in the National Archives of Canada. The notations used by Jérôme Pontchartrain are quoted in Hammang, *The Marquis De Vaudreuil*, p. 22-23.

⁴⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 240-41, Duchambon à Maurepas, 15 septembre, 1740.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 246, Sabatier au ministre, 25 novembre, 1740.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52, Duquesnel au ministre, 19 octobre, 1741.

programmes depended upon the nature of his relationship with the colonial officials.

The second observation about this system is that the bureaucrats at Versailles were dependent on the flow of information from the colonies. They were forced to depend on what they considered to be “reliable sources”, or on officials whom they knew, whom they trusted, or with whom they shared certain interests. Arnaud de La Porte’s friendship with François Bigot, Intendant of Canada and with Jacques Prévost de La Croix, *Commissaire* at Louisbourg, and their business connections with the Sephardic Jewish Gradis and Mendès-France families of Bordeaux that monopolised contracts for Canadian supplies, reveal how the chief clerk camouflaged colonial administrative malpractice and financial corruption from the notice of the minister and protected his friends from punishment.⁵⁰

Another incident which reflected the intimate friendship between the chief clerk and the colonial official was what De Couagne said to Accaron:

je vous prie monsieur de ne pas m’oublier et de me permettre de vous écrire de tems en tems. Je vous dirais même que être heureux, il ne me manque trois choses: le plaisir de vous voir, assés d’argent pour imprimer un petit livre, et mon retour à l’Isle Royale.⁵¹

Furthermore, when the minister was away from Versailles in 1744 the chief clerk confided to Governor Duquesnel:

en l’absence de M. le C[om]te de Maurepas j’ay reçu la lettre que vous lui avéz écrit le 11

⁵⁰ Guy Frégault, *François Bigot, Administrateur français* (Montreal: 1948), pp. 283-338, 352-354; Richard Menkis, “The Gradis Family of Eighteenth Century Bordeaux: A Social and Economic Study” (Ph.D thesis, Brandeis University, 1988, Michigan: 1990); and especially Richard Menkis, “Patriarchs and Patricians: The Gradis Family of Eighteenth-Century Bordeaux” in Francis Malino and David Sorkin, eds., *From East and West, Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750-1870* (Oxford: 1990), pp. 11-45; J.F. Boshier & J.C. Dubé, “Bigot, François,” *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 59-71; T.A. Crowley, “Prévost de la Croix, Jacques,” *Ibid.*, pp. 643-46.

⁵¹ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, p. 91v, De Couagne à monsieur Accaron, 4 novembre, 1760.

may, vous verré par ma despêche comme à vous et à Bigot l'arrangement que j'ay pris pour f[air]e l'envoy de secours de vivres que vous avéz demandés. Le v[aissea]u du Roy *l'Ardent* et la flute *la gironde* sont partis le 18 de ce mois pour l'Isle Roy[al]e, par le retour de *l'Ardent*, vous pouvez f[air]e les représentations que vous juges nécessaire. M. le C[om]te de Maurepas qui prendra les ordres du S[a] M[ajesté] et vous les fera sçavoir l'année prochaine.⁵²

The third observation is that the minister and bureaucrats in colonial affairs consulted outside the official colonial cadres for information and for clarification of matters before forming their own opinions. Claude Sturgill argued that during the period of the Regency colonies were a neglected subject, or the last one on the general list of metropolitan priorities. Referring to the prevailing attitude of Versailles in the eighteenth century, Jeremy Black said that the French ministers' main concerns were firmly European and for most ministers colonies, trade and navy were subordinated to European strategy.⁵³ This being so, there is little doubt about the decisive role of advisors in the framing of colonial policies. Ordinarily, the minister called upon whoever came to Paris from the colonies at the time. At one point, Denis Riverin, who had been in Paris since 1702 as agent of the *Compagnie de la Colonie*, became a ready source of information for the minister.⁵⁴

Not only had he been the secretary of the Intendant Jacques Duchesneau at Quebec but he was active in the management of *Compagnie du Nord* (1682-1700) and the king's domain at Tadoussac.

⁵² MG 1, B, vol. 78, p. 419, à Duquesnel, 25 juin, 1744, see also *ibid.*, p. 417 à Duquesnel, 2 juin, 1744, et p. 419 à Bigot, 25 juin, 1744.

⁵³ Sturgill, "Philip of Orleans' *No Colonies* Policy, 1715-1722," *op.cit.*, pp. 129-35; Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies. Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens, Georgia: 1987), p. 42.

⁵⁴ The marginal note on a 1709 memoir of Isle Royale shows that Riverin was consulted to discuss the contents of the memoir. MG 1, C11A, vol. 24, pp. 145-49, Mémoire sur ce qui regard l'Isle du Cape Breton par sieur le Riverin, s.d., and C11C, vol. 8, pp. 53-57v, Mémoire sur l'Isle du Cape Breton, 1709.

Former Intendant of Canada Antoine-Denis Raudot also served as an advisor, especially during the period of the Regency. Governor Costebelle had met him at Paris in 1717, the year when the Council of Marine decided to fortify Louisbourg. After meeting with Costebelle, Raudot may have helped the Council to arrive at this decision. A perusal of marine documents offers sufficient evidence to prove that Raudot was consulted by the *Conseil de Marine* for advice on financial, commercial and other matters.⁵⁵ It was Raudot who had drafted a memoir for the Court in 1706 advising the authorities that the only way to stimulate the economic development of New France, as well as to promote French Atlantic commerce, was to establish a port on Cape Breton island.

We have already seen how the metropolitan government depended largely upon the initiatives and recommendations of colonial authorities for the selection of the site of the principal port of Isle Royale and that the idea of its colonisation had originated with Intendant Raudot and the merchant Riverin.⁵⁶ In 1713 when France was faced with the loss of its North Atlantic colonies and, consequently, in need of an alternative outpost of empire in the region, Pontchartrain took up the proposal of Raudot and Riverin and made it official policy. It was the minister who could not decide on the location of the principal port and capital of the colony in spite of the inflow of a large

⁵⁵ In the margins of the documents orders such as “M. Raudot parlera...,” “Il faudra que M. Raudot en parle à la signature”, and “Il faut prendre sur cela l’avis de M. de Costebelle et que M. Raudot explique ce que c’est que ces raisons” denote his eminence as an advisor. MG 2, B1, vol. 19, pp. 148, 180, 195, 205, 236-37, 344, 381, *passim*. Decisions, 1717. See also Dechene, *La politique coloniale...*, p. 56; D.J. Horton, “Raudot, Antoine-Denis,” *DCB.*, vol. II, p. 553. The influence of Raudot went even beyond colonial matters, such as Michel Sarrazin’s attempts to obtain a chair in the Académie Royale des Sciences. Kathryn A. Young, “Crown Agent - Canadian Correspondent: Michel Sarrazin and the Académie Royale des Sciences, 1697-1734,” *FHS.*, vol. XVIII, no.2 (1993), pp. 416-433. François de Beauharnois also often advised the Minister. In 1713 he was consulted for his opinion on a memoir on Isle Royale sent by Vaudreuil and Bégon. MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 93-95, Pontchartain à Beauharnois, 10 février, 1713.

⁵⁶ See chapter 2, pp. 33-35.

amount of diverse information from Isle Royale and Canada. When the colonial officials had expressed different viewpoints, as we have seen, the metropolitan authorities grew increasingly indecisive and inconsistent about the location of the principal port. Louisbourg had originally been chosen as a result of the report submitted by Saint-Ovide, however Costebelle and his friends were able to influence the minister to change his mind in favour of a port and capital at Port Dauphin.⁵⁷ Louisbourg was finally chosen once again, this time, based on Verville's report which was influenced by Saint-Ovide's convictions. An overview of the correspondence between the colony and Versailles shows that it was from the colonial level of advice that the decision had been formulated.

The fourth observation is that in addition to routine administrative decisions, as provided for in their commissions, the governor and *commissaire* exercised administrative power through policy initiatives taken without prior approval from the Ministry. An important instrument of power and control which enabled them to do this was the ordinance. They issued a large number of ordinances to regulate the various activities in the colony, most of which focussed on commercial and social activities. *Marchands forains* (itinerant merchants) were one of the principal targets of local ordinances. The local officials found that these merchants did not contribute to the economic prosperity of the colony as they were not permanent residents but returned to France in the autumn after their sale. Therefore, the administration was determined to restrict their activities in the colony. In 1714 *Commissaire* Soubras issued an ordinance prohibiting them from retailing commodities, particularly wine and alcoholic liquors, to soldiers and *engages*.⁵⁸ He made similar

⁵⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 43, Costebelle au ministre, 29 octobre, 1714.

⁵⁸ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 19, Ordonnance rendues depuis mon arrivée à Louisbourg sur la vente de vins et eaux de vie, 16 septembre, 1714; *ibid.*, p. 34, Extrait de la lettre du ministre à
(continued...)

plans to control the taverns in the town. The maximum number of taverns was fixed at six and the sale of alcoholic liquors to soldiers and fishermen was forbidden. He further imposed an annual tax of twenty quintals of cod on each tavern for the support of the hospital. Following up on the colonial initiative, the Ministry later raised this tax to twenty-five quintals.⁵⁹ There was strong opposition from the colonists against Soubras' strict regulations. The tavern keepers and *marchands forains* argued that this exacting policy would adversely affect the economic interests of the colony.⁶⁰

The co-operation of Governor Costebelle was essential for the enforcement of these ordinances; but, unlike Soubras, Costebelle's attitude was not in favour of enforcing them. Rather he was sympathetic towards the demands of the colonists and advocated the revocation of rigid regulations.⁶¹ The Ministry supported the position of Soubras, but ultimately the reluctance on the part of Costebelle led to the relaxation of the rules. The local merchants were permitted to sell alcoholic items to almost anyone, except during the time of mass and other divine service.⁶² This

(...continued)

Soubras, 4 juin, 1715.

⁵⁹ H.A. Innis, ed., *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History, 1497-1783* (Toronto: 1929), pp. 97-98.

⁶⁰ MG 1, C11C, vol. 15, pp. 43-43v, Conseil, 27 mars, 1716; MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 9-13, Conseil de marine, 13 avril, 1717. When Soubras arrived in the colony in 1714 he tried to levy one quintal of cod per chaloupe from the fishermen for the expenses of the hospital. Later because of local protests, the Council of Marine advised Soubras to repeal this tax. It was restored in 1722, but for one year only. MG 1, C11C, vol. 15, p. 35, Soubras, 22 septembre, 1714; MG 1, B, vol. 37, p. 226, à Soubras, 22 avril, 1716; MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, p. 27, Ordonnance pour l'établissement du droit d'un quintal de morue, 12 mai, 1722.

⁶¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 141-48, Costebelle, 5 novembre, 1715.

⁶² MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 84-89, Affaires des cabarets, 27 mars, 1716.

is an example of metropolitan inability to impose rules against the interest of the colonists. The *marchands forains* continued their retail business without any effective intervention from the local government. Despite numerous attempts to enforce his ordinance Soubras could not achieve it for the lack of support from Costebelle and colonists.

It was only when Saint-Ovide became the governor of the colony that some positive steps were taken to enforce the controversial ordinance. On 11 April, 1717 an ordinance was issued by the governor and *commissaire* forbidding the *marchands forains* from retailing in the colony. In 1718 the administration issued yet another ordinance to prohibit the sale of alcoholic liquors to the fishermen, the workers and the soldiers, imposing a fine of one hundred *livres* for the first violation and the confiscation of property and deportation for a second violation. It was ruled that all taverns in the town should be closed after nine o'clock in the evening and during the hours of divine service.⁶³ More measures were taken in the 1720s in effort to further strengthen the restrictions on the *marchands forains* who were engaged in the purchase and retail of commodities brought to the colony. These dealers would buy cargoes as soon as the ships anchored in the port and resell the goods to local people at a higher price. To outlaw this practice the local government issued two ordinances in 1721 and in 1727.⁶⁴ These ordinances may have been within the power of the said officials as provided in their commissions, nevertheless they were measures which did not reflect

⁶³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 21, Ordonnance contre les marchands de France vendant à terre en détail, 11 avril, 1717; *ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 146-46v, Ordonnance au sujet des cabaretiers, 30 juillet, 1718.

⁶⁴ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 137-37v, Ordonnance qui confirme celle rendue par les Sr. de St. Ovide et de Mézy le 4 juin, 1721, portant défense à tous capitains et marchands forains d'acheter aucuns vivres dans la colonie, 12 mai 1722; See also MG 1, B, vol. 45, pp. 932v-33, Ordonnance qui confirme celle rendue par les Sr. St. Ovide et de Mézy le 4 juin, 1721, et 12 mai, 1722; MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, pp. 14-14v, Conseil de marine, avril, 1722; MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 311-12v, 17 avril, 1727.

metropolitan policy at the time.

The setting of a fixed price for fish was another step taken by the Louisbourg government to thwart the exploitation of local fishermen by the merchants from France. In conformity with the Placcntian custom, based on the *au tiers franc* practice of the ports of Normandy, fishing crews were usually paid one third of the value of the catch, with the other two-thirds of the profits going to the *armateurs*, the charter parties or merchant investors. The *marchands forains* were able to offer a higher price for cod purchased at Louisbourg as the price was almost double in France what it was in Isle Royale. This practice was outlawed by the local authorities who set a fixed price for the cod at twelve *livres* per quintal. They also permitted the resident employers to continue their Placcntian option.⁶⁵ In order to abolish fraud in weighing and measuring commodities another ordinance was issued in 1728 which ruled that only the Parisian weights and measurements were legal in the colony.⁶⁶

The development of Louisbourg as a principal centre of the fishing industry and inter-colonial commerce required the introduction of new regulations. Soubras had lobbied for the establishment of trade relations with Canada and the Antilles although the Ministry's policy was in favour of reciprocal relations with the *métropole* as opposed to inter-colonial trade. A 1720 ordinance instructed captains of the ships arriving at the Louisbourg port to report first to the

⁶⁵ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 180, Ordonnance, 21 septembre, 1721; MG 1, C11B, vol. 7, pp. 11-11v, Ordonnance de police, 8 septembre, 1724; Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, p. 88.

⁶⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 21, p. 305, Extraits des règlements de police, 1739; Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, p. 99.

governor and *commissaire* prior to declaring their cargoes at the clerk of the Admiralty.⁶⁷ In an attempt to avoid congestion on the wharves, merchants were obliged to remove their goods before the beginning of the trading season at the end of March.⁶⁸ In 1732 when Louisbourg was particularly busy with commercial activities and shipping, the governor and *commissaire* issued a comprehensive ordinance concerning the anchoring, loading, unloading, and wintering of the ships.⁶⁹ In 1737 another order was issued to forbid the ships from anchoring and unloading their merchandise at Careening Point on the north-east side of the harbour which was used for cleaning and repairing the ships. Captains were required to obtain official permission before anchoring there for repairs.⁷⁰

The ordinances issued during the 1740s and the 1750s were effectively a reaffirmation of previous ones and were mainly aimed at the social problems, business malpractice and port regulations. The following are some of those ordinances: *commissaire* François Bigot issued two ordinances to regulate the taverns which may indicate previous attempts at control had been ineffective. In 1741 he prohibited the tavern keepers from buying supplies from the incoming ships for twenty-four hours after they anchored at the port. This measure was to give the residents of the colony the first opportunity to purchase their necessities.⁷¹ In the same year, Bigot reiterated a

⁶⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, 158-8v, Ordonnance de police sur divers cas, 27 avril, 1720.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp., 157-58, Ordonnance, 27 avril, 1720.

⁶⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 12, 288-89v, Ordonnance, 27 avril, 1732. See also MG , A1, vol. 71, p. 29, Ordonnance du Roy, 2 juin, 1733, which confirmed the local ordinance issued by the Louisbourg government.

⁷⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 24, p. 318v, Règlement, 7 juin, 1737.

⁷¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 24, p. 320, Ordonnance, 19 aoust, 1741.

former ordinance to forbid tavern keepers from selling liquors to the soldiers, workers and the fishermen.⁷² In 1742, shooting of fire arms and gambling were forbidden in the town.⁷³ Merchants and ship captains were forbidden to leave their merchandise on the wharves of the quay so as to avoid any weakening of the wharves by the heavy weight of the cargoes.⁷⁴

During the course of this research I have discovered one hundred and two local ordinances and regulations issued by the Louisbourg government.⁷⁵ The proclamation of these orders in town was carried out by the bailiff or drum-major of the Superior Council. These regulations were treated in the same manner as royal orders emanating from the *métropole* and registered by the Superior Council. All these ordinances issued by the Louisbourg administration were to be forwarded to Versailles for confirmation. Local ordinances which reached the Ministry were confirmed and approved by the king without fundamental change,⁷⁶ with one exception in 1720. When Saint-Ovide and Mézy ordered that those soldiers and sailors convicted of stealing livestock were to be punished as *voleurs domestiques*, the Ministry overruled this decision, demanding instead

⁷² MG 1, C11B, vol. 23, pp. 3-5, Ordonnance, 4 juillet, 1741.

⁷³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 24, pp. 320v-21, Ordonnance, 19 avril, 1742.

⁷⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 25, p. 204, Ordonnance, 17 avril, 1743.

⁷⁵ T.A. Crowley in his research had only been able to locate a total of seventy-seven. Crowley, "Government and Interest." p. 65.

⁷⁶ The following is an example of royal approval of local ordinance in brief: "S[a] M[ajesté] étant informé qu'il a été rendu par led. Sr. de St. Ovide gouverneur et de Mézy ordonnateur à l'Isle Royale le 4 juin 1721 une ordonnance que fait défense à tous capitans et marchands forains d'acheter aucuns vivres dans la colonie... de l'avis de M. le Duc d'Orleans Régence Elle a approuvé et confirmé lad. ordonnance." MG 1, B, vol. 45, pp. 932v-933, Ordonnance, 12 mai, 1722; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 137-37v, Ordonnance, 12 mai, 1722.

that the soldiers be punished according to military law.⁷⁷ This action appears to have been unique and probably was intended to maintain the pre-eminence of the military establishment.

The local government periodically advised the Ministry to take appropriate measures for the effective administration of the colony. In 1722, a royal ordinance was issued based on “les plaintes qui ont esté portées au Conseil par M. de St. Ovide que plusieur habitans de l’Isle Royale passoient à l’Isle St. Jean pour se mettre à couvert de créanciers et qu’ils restoient en ladt. Isle avec les matelots pêcheurs...” This ordinance also reinforced the prohibition to travel outside Isle Royale without written permission of the governor.⁷⁸

In 1739, after his transfer from the colony to St. Dominigue, Sébastien-François-Ange Le Normant prepared a memoir at Versailles describing the abuses which existed in the fisheries of Isle Royale and suggested the necessary measures to establish the rule of law in the fishing industry and in commerce.⁷⁹ He described how local merchants indebted their fishermen and domestic servants through extending credit, while themselves avoiding their metropolitan creditors. Later, Le Normant presented his suggestions to the Ministry in the form of a draft regulation consisting of thirty-one articles.⁸⁰ The minister instructed the incumbent Louisbourg officials, Governor Isaac-Louis de Forant and *Commissaire* François Bigot, to comment upon the proposals submitted by

⁷⁷ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 105. Du Conseil à St. Ovide et de Mézy, 20 novembre, 1720; MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, Conseil de Marine, 27 avril, 1720, et pp. 78-80v, à St. Ovide, 20 aoust, 1720. The 1720 disallowance was the only one found in the course of this research.

⁷⁸ MG 1, C11B, col. 6, pp. 20-20v, Conseil de marine, 12 mai, 1722.

⁷⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 21, pp. 297-304v, Mémoire sur les habitants de l’Isle Royale [par Le Normant], 7 mars, 1739. Partially reproduced in Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, pp. 90-96.

⁸⁰ MG 2, A1, vol. 77, p. 34. Projet de règlement au sujet de la pesche et du commerce de l’Isle Royale [par Le Normant], s.d., 1740.

Le Normant.⁸¹ As Forant and Bigot were new to the colony, they were advised to consult experienced people and other local officials. To this end, Antoine Sabatier, Attorney-General of the Superior Council, was specifically mentioned to them since he was working on a memoir on the same subject.⁸²

The practice of consulting “leading inhabitants” as to which regulations would be to the advantage of the colony had been suggested in Canada and was adopted as official policy by Louis XIV in 1675. Intendant Jacques Duchesneau had been instructed to “consult the principal inhabitants and the Sovereign Council” on a regular basis. In 1707 the colonial officials - Governor-General Vaudreuil and Intendant Raudot - were asked to draw up a code of procedure for such consultative assemblies “in simple, legal form” so that they might serve as regulations “for meetings to be held every year.”⁸³

After Forant’s and Bigot’s investigation into the problems in the fishery they not only supported Le Normant’s proposal for remedy, but added a few recommendations of their own intended to alleviate the labour shortage at Louisbourg. They proposed, firstly, to set a low passage fare that would induce more men to participate in the fishery as part of their fare, and secondly, to require ship captains to transport more indentured labourers (*engages*) to the colony and hence to reduce local wages.⁸⁴ Incorporating these recommendations into Le Normant’s draft regulations,

⁸¹ MG 1, B, vol. 68, p. 379, à De Forant et Bigot, 28 juin, 1739.

⁸² *Ibid.* p. 379.

⁸³ MG1, B, vol. 6, p. 94, Instructions pour le Sieur Duchesneau, 7 juin, 1675; *RAPQ*, 1939-1940, vol. XX, p. 361, Roi à Vaudreuil et Raudot, 30 juin, 1707.

⁸⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, p. 5-6, Forant et Bigot au ministre, 16 janvier, 1740.

the Ministry in 1743 promulgated a comprehensive royal decree of thirty-two articles for the Isle Royale fishery and commerce.⁸⁵ This further demonstrates the creation of an important imperial policy and subsequent regulations originating from drafts and opinions at the colonial cadres of administration. For the present study, the historical significance of this ordinance is not its impact on the people but the way in which it came into existence. It is clear that the information and initiatives from the local government were the crucial and vital factors which provided the foundation for the metropolitan policy and regulation.

It should also be noted that the local administration often consulted the people in the colony, especially the merchants, on the subject of ordinances and regulations before these decrees were issued.⁸⁶ In 1716, when he was lieutenant at Louisbourg Saint-Ovide called a consultative assembly of the merchants and captains to discuss the division of the fish. Later, in 1724, as the governor of the colony, when he received some complaints about the operation of fishing industry he consulted

⁸⁵ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 254-259v, Règlement concernant l'exploitation de la pêche de la morue à l'Isle Royale, 20 juin, 1743; MG 2, A1, vol. 79, p. 26, 20 juin, 1743.

⁸⁶ The extensive legislative powers given to the governor and intendant or *commissaire* led "the Anglo-American Imperial School" of historians to believe that the colonial administration was an absolute despotism. Lawrence Gipson argued that French colonies in America were "a world of suppression of thought in which governmental policy affecting the most vital interests of the people were carried out without their consent expressed directly or indirectly." This view is profoundly indebted to the orthodox Parkman theory of "Canadian absolutism": "The spirit of absolutism was everywhere apparent [in the colony]... Public meetings were jealously restricted... Seigneur, censitaire, and citizen were prostrate alike in flat subjection to the royal will... Their [the govt's] fault was not that they exercised authority, but that they exercised too much of it, and, instead of weaning the child to go alone, kept him in perpetual leading-strings, making him, if possible, more and more dependant and less and less fit for freedom." Yves Zoltvany, *The Government of New France: Royal, Clerical or Class Rule* (Toronto: 1971). Gipson, *The British Empire, Zones of International Friction*, p. 343. Francis Parkman, *The Old Regime in Canada* (Toronto: 1900), vol.II, pp. 78-80, 199.

the fishermen before issuing another ordinance.⁸⁷ In 1733 *Commissaire* Le Normant held a consultation to discuss matters concerning the fishing industry before issuing an ordinance. In 1740 Forant and Bigot convened similar public meeting in order to discuss the problems in the fishery and commerce before sending forward their comments on Le Normant's proposed regulations.⁸⁸ Consultation with the colonists became a well-known practice in the colony, although there is no document indicating it as an established formal part of regular administration on Isle Royale. The Ministry had no objection to the practice of consulting the people as noted earlier. The metropolitan government hesitated in taking any decision contrary to the interests of the colonists. In 1753 when a Louisbourg port captain requested permission from the Ministry to impose a fee for his services in helping the ships to manoeuvre in the harbour, the minister urged the governor and *commissaire* to discuss the matter with the merchants and ship captains at Louisbourg.⁸⁹ This is a clear indication of the importance of the views of the colonists, particularly merchants, and colonial authorities in the formulation of France's directives.

In addition to ordinances and regulations, certain local customs had the force of law at Louisbourg. St. Michael's Day, the 29th of September, was traditionally considered the closing date of summer season fishing and the deadline for paying debts and rents. This tradition of settling

⁸⁷ MG 1, C11C, vol. 15, p. 85, St. Ovide au Conseil, 27 octobre, 1716; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 180, Ordonnance, 21 septembre, 1724.

⁸⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 14, p. 62, Représentations des habitants qui font la pêche, septembre, 1733; *ibid.*, p. 90, Ordonnance concernant le pêche, 20, septembre, 1733; *ibid.*, vol. 15, pp. 61, Ordonnance concernant la pêche, 22 mai, 1734; MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, p. 5, Forant et Bigot, 16 janvier, 1740; see also Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, p. 88.

⁸⁹ MG 1, B, vol. 97, p. 307, à Raymond et Prévost, 13 juillet, 1753.

financial accounts had more relevance and influence in the colony than the deadline regulations prescribed by the *Code Marchand* of the metropolitan government. If this local practice was ignored, its defenders could get a certificate from the prominent and long-established citizens of the colony to show that traditional practices were standard rules in the colony. Sylvian Beaubassin, despite his sound knowledge of written rules, rejected a demand for the supply of fish in August, claiming that:

les payements et pesée de morue d'été ne se faisant dans la colonie qu'à la Saint Michel ainsi que cela est pratiqué et passé en usage dans la dite colonie depuis son établissement.⁹⁰

On another occasion a resident argued against the enforcement of an ordinance's minor clause, since legal advice was not available in the colony: "n'y ayant aucun avocat ny procureur en cette colonie pour instruire les habitants."⁹¹ The implicit point behind this argument, as one historian stated, was that "the full rigour of French law should not apply in the colonies."⁹²

In conclusion to this re-examination of colonial administration it can be said that the officials at Louisbourg had a significant role in the enunciation of policies. Many important ordinances and regulations originated in the embryo stage with the colony's government. Colonial administrators formulated the construct and framework of many decisions and policies. It can even be argued that the colonial officials, on the one hand, and the chief clerk of the colonies, on the other hand,

⁹⁰ They had submitted affidavits to the court. MG1, G2, vol. 193, registre 1, p. 86, Beaubassin vs. Lachoue de Vildé, 17 aoust, 1752.

⁹¹ Cited in Christopher Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa: 1977), p. 95.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 95.

actually directed much of the administration of the overseas empire of France. As Professor Claude Sturgill remarked the local factors in the colony were more influential than the policies of Versailles for the development of France's North Atlantic seaboard empire.⁹³

⁹³ Sturgill, "Philip of Orlean's *No Colonies* Policy," p. 133.

CHAPTER 4

THE GOVERNMENT OF LOUISBOURG CONFLICTING INTERESTS AND LOCAL PREDOMINANCE

In the context of colonialism, the imperial nation and the colony sometimes pursued contradictory objectives. In theory, the success of French colonialism depended first and foremost upon effective metropolitan control of the political and economic activities of a colony. To what extent did France succeed in this matter? This was an important issue in the context of Isle Royale, which can be explained by examining the principal aspects of colonial administration such as commercial policy, military matters, relations with the British colonies, native affairs, and the nature of the relations between colonial officials at Louisbourg.

The establishment of Louisbourg, as we have seen, was mainly aimed at the maintenance of France's North Atlantic fishery and trade. This commercial empire was politically and ideologically grounded in the principles of mercantilism or a system of economic protection. One of the major responsibilities of the Louisbourg administration was to implement the mercantilist policies and regulations enunciated by the metropolitan government. Hence, by protecting and promoting the colony's fishing industry and commerce, Louisbourg was intended to support France's economic interests. In practice, as the figures and estimates of Isle Royale's trade suggested, it appears that

the balance of trade was in favour of the colony's interest, not those of France, during the period between 1713-1758.¹

Supporting the thesis of mercantilism Christopher Moore stated that "the essence of Isle Royale's foreign trade fell within the regulations, and it was supervised by local officials who supplied regular statistical reports about it to the Ministry in France." In making this statement Moore claimed that "smuggling was never a vital aspect of the colony's commerce,"² but he did not provide any records to substantiate his position.³ Nonetheless, considering the prominence of Louisbourg in the Atlantic trade it is reasonable to assume that the colony must have engaged in a considerable amount of illegal commercial activities. Moore made a plausible explanation that the broad spectrum of mercantile regulations "often included specific permission or implicit tolerance for particular exchanges." The present discussion suggests that this special permission, or tolerance, was not a part of mercantilistic policy but exceptions to the rule, which became a usual practice at Louisbourg. According to this policy and its principles the *métropole* should have become the centre of exchanges and it should have exercised unchallenged control over trading activities. What we see at Louisbourg, as Moore himself conceded in another paper, is that "the

¹ Christopher Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale" (MA thesis, University of Ottawa: 1977), p. 34, *passim*.

² Christopher Moore, "Cape Breton and the North Atlantic World in the Eighteenth Century" in Kenneth Donovan, ed., *The Island: New Perspectives on Cape Breton History, 1713-1990* (Fredericton: 1990), pp. 41-42.

³ Donald F. Chard said: "despite the occasional seizure of a French or New England ship for violating French trade regulations, the traffic continued, by the admission of Louisbourg officials ... Drucourt and Prévost claimed that illegal trade between English and West Indian merchants [at Louisbourg] cost Cape Breton merchants 40,000 to 50,000 *livres* a year." Donald F. Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England, 1713-1763" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1976), pp., 237-242.

1740s saw a decline in the importance of France among Ile Royale's trading partners . . . Trade with the British colonies had to increase once food shortages forced Ile Royale to rely on New England grain."⁴ Could this also have offered vital opportunity to ignore official regulations?

An examination of colonial administration reveals the inapplicability of mercantilism, or "mercantilist imperialism" as Professor Dale Miquelon put it, to the study of colonial economic history, at least as far as Louisbourg is concerned.⁵ Instead, it shows that local interests were decisive factors in shaping the nature and pattern of colonial exchanges. As early as 1706, Antoine-Denis Raudot denoted that trade restrictions on the colonies would not favour the economic interests of France. Proposing the establishment of a colony on Isle Royale and the necessity of reciprocity he wrote: "Si l'on vouloit établir cette isle pour y faire fleurir le commerce, il faudroit

⁴ Christopher Moore, "The Other Louisbourg: Trade and Merchant Enterprise in Ile Royale 1713-1758," *HS/SH*, vol. XII, no. 3 (1979), p. 91. For a critical study of eighteenth century mercantilism see Pierre H. Boulle, "French Mercantilism, Commercial Companies and Colonial Profitability" in L. Blussé and F. Gaastra, eds., *Companies and Trade, Essays on Overseas Trading Companies During the Ancien Régime* (Leiden: 1981), pp. 97-117; see also, Richard L. Merritt, "Systems and the Disintegration of Empires" in Ludwig von Bertalanffy and A. Rapoport, eds., *General Systems, Yearbook of the Society for General Systems Research*, vol. VIII (1963), pp. 91-103.

⁵ Based on his study of the westward expansion of New France in the eighteenth century Dale Miquelon presented a thesis that "the new-style imperialism from political and strategic motives that appeared in 1701 and was prominent especially after 1715 did not eclipse the older mercantilist imperialism with its economic preoccupations." Dale Miquelon, *New France, 1701-1744, "A Supplement to Europe"* (Toronto: 1987), p. 260. Miquelon's thesis can be disputed in the context of the North Atlantic seaboard regions of New France. In the context of Canada, Eccles pointed out that by the beginning of the eighteenth century trade became "mainly a political instrument" of imperialism, which was not mercantile in any way. W.J. Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: 1987), pp. 79-95; Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," pp. 243-244, 306-307, *passim*.

luy permettre celuy de tous les ports de France, de l'Espagne, du Levant, des Isles Françaises de l'Amérique et de la Nouvelle Angleterre."⁶

The metropolitan government had never agreed to allow such free trade, but neither could it enforce trade regulations. After the establishment of Louisbourg, the local officials were instructed to prohibit all exchanges with the English colonies.⁷ These officials realised that the colony, as a staples economy, was heavily dependent upon foreign supplies for subsistence and therefore would not fit into the mercantilist framework. Lack of provisions often occurred in the colony due to insufficient supplies from France or Canada, or because of delays in shipping. Colonial officials at Louisbourg were frequently forced to ignore France's trade restrictions in tune with the interests of the inhabitants of the colony. In other words, colonial realities did not fall in line with metropolitan interests.

In 1721 the Louisbourg officials unilaterally and unanimously decided to permit merchants and inhabitants of Isle Royale to purchase essential commodities from the neighbouring English colonies.⁸ They subsequently permitted Michel-Philippe Isabeau, contractor of the fortifications at Louisbourg, to purchase necessary construction materials from the English.⁹ This was an overt

⁶ MG 1, C11C, vol. 8, p. 52, Mémoire sur les affaires présentes du Canada et l'établissement du Cap Breton, 7 août, 1706.

⁷ MG 2, C7, carton 31, pp. 5-16, Instructions que le Roy veut estre remise à Soubras, 10 avril, 1714; *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires et autres documents relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 25, Mémoire du Roy à de Costebelle et de Soubras, 26 juin, 1717; *ibid.*, pp. 45-46 Mémoire du Roy à St. Ovide et de Mézy, 2 juillet, 1720.

⁸ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 124, à Isle Royale, signé par St. Ovide, De Mézy, Le Vrasseur et La Forest, 4 septembre, 1721.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

rejection of earlier metropolitan directives, yet the Ministry of Marine had no choice but to comply with the local decision. The Louisbourg administration had been informed that “Elle [Sa Majesté] a approuvé qu’ils aient permis le commerce [anglois],” but in future, local officials were warned, “Elle ne l’approuverait pas sans une nécessité préssante et indispensable, et Elle leur recommande d’avoir attention de mettre la colonie en état de n’avoir besoin du secours des étrangers.”¹⁰ It was a typical mandate sent to Louisbourg throughout the years between 1713 and 1758. The Ministry did not offer any assurance of a regular and sufficient supply of provisions from France to alleviate scarcity and poverty in the colony. Rather, it was attempting to make the local government wholly responsible for obtaining provisions. In response to the situation the local government acted efficiently to solve the supply problems, but in contravention of the restrictive regulations.

After Maurepas took over charge of the Ministry of Marine in 1723, he tried to implement the existing regulations more firmly than had any of his predecessors. Nevertheless, Louisbourg merchants continued to trade with the English under the protection of the local government. In 1724 a number of inhabitants complained to the minister that a substantial number of New England vessels were coming to Isle Royale with prohibited items such as tar, pitch, salt, tobacco, lard and even cloth under the pretext of bringing permitted goods.¹¹ The minister could not do anything to stop this trade but informed Governor Saint-Ovide de Brouillan and *Commissaire Ordonnateur* Jacque-Ange Le Normant de Mézy:

¹⁰ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 77. Mémoire du Roy à St. Ovide et Mézy, 12 mai, 1722.

¹¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 7, pp. 183-85, Mémoire au ministre, octobre, 1724. Morel, one of the complainants, later conducted business with Peter Fancuil of Boston in 1737; the 1724 complaint may have been motivated by jealousy on the part of those who had no share in the clandestine trade.

On a porté des plaintes au Roy du commerce Étranger que les Anglois font à l'Isle Royale au préjudice de celuy des françois. Sa Majesté n'en a pas esté satisfait et m'ordonne de vous Écrire qu'elle veut bien en attendant que la colonie soit mieux établie, vous continuer de permettre aux batteaux des colonies d'introduire de Bestiaux, des rafraichissements, et du Bois a bastire, mais Elle vous deffend de leur permettre d'introduire aucune merchandise n'y mesme de farine à moins qu'il n'y en ait dissette dans la colonie.¹²

This did not deter the colony from continuing its trade with the Anglo-Americans. In 1727 the Ministry issued another order, a royal edict, so as to forbid Isle Royale and other French colonies in the Americas from engaging in commercial relations with foreign countries and colonies.¹³ At Louisbourg the edict was practically rejected by the local administration. All royal orders issued by the king and the minister were normally registered at the Superior Council of the local government as an official formality before they became law in the colony. In contradiction to this practice the 1727 royal edict remained a dead letter for three years at Louisbourg. Eventually, it was registered in 1730 due to complaints from the Louisbourg Admiralty and repeated orders from the Ministry of Marine.¹⁴ The eventual registration does not appear to have resulted in any consistent enforcement of the law.

While the Ministry was trying to eliminate foreign trade through the implementation of the 1727 edict, *Commissaire Mézy* at Louisbourg wrote the minister that "sans secours des Anglois la colonie auroit presque manque de tout" and "les payments des marchandises portées par les anglois

¹² MG 1, B, vol. 49, p. 695, à St. Ovide et Mézy, 8 janvier, 1726.

¹³ "Lettres patentes du Roi, en forme d'Édit, concernant le commerce étranger aux Isles et colonies de l'Amérique, octobre 1727" in *Édits, ordonnances, royaux déclarations et arrêts du Conseil d'État du Roi concernant le Canada* (Québec: 1803), vol. I, pp. 464-76.

¹⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 53, pp. 585-85v, à St. Ovide et Mézy, 12 mai, 1729; MG 1, C11B, vol. 10, p. 250-50v, Les officiers de l'amirauté de Louisbourg au ministre, 16 décembre, 1729; MG 1, B, vol. 54, p. 498-98v, aux officiers de l'amirauté, 30 juin, 1730.

fussent faits en denrées du pays."¹⁵ The "denrées du pays" were mostly merchandise imported from France. In the same year the merchants of St. Malo complained to the Ministry that:

Mr. St. Ovide souffre les anglois traiter à l'Isle Royale qu'il les favorise même jusqu'à faire acheter par gens à sa devotion leurs denrées comme pain, sel, farine, viandes salées, beurre, fromages et toutes marchandises sèches. Que les anglois épuisent la colonie d'espèces d'or et d'argent, qu'ils enlèvent même le poisson quand ils ne trouvent plus d'espèces.¹⁶

To which Saint-Ovide and Mézy responded, probably with some exaggeration, in 1728:

Nous avons eu l'honneur d'informer Monseigneur l'année dernière des raisons qui nous forcèrent de permettre l'entrée du sel et quelque viande salée dont la colonie manquoit entièrement. Nous avons l'honneur de réitérer à Monseigneur, que nous serons toujours très soumis sur les articles à ses ordres, mais nous ne pouvons nous dispenser de luy représenter que cette colonie ne produit ny pain, ny viande, subsistance indispensable pour un nombre de peuple qui multiplie tous les jours, que tous les vaisseaux qui viennent de France à l'exception de ceux de St. Malo et Nantes ne portent pas a beacoup près les vivres qui leurs est nécessaire pour la subsistance de leurs équipages.¹⁷

After the 1727 edict had been registered in 1730, it was only enforced for two months. By the autumn of 1731, Governor Saint-Ovide again began to authorise trade with the New Englanders. He justified his action by informing the minister that the commodities which he permitted to be imported from the English colonies were not available from elsewhere and they were indispensable to supplement the dried and salted food regularly consumed in the colony. These

¹⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 10, p. 22v, Conseil de marine, 7 mai, 1727; H. A. Innis, ed., *Select Documents in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: 1929), p. 106.

¹⁶ Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, pp. 106-107

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 107; MG 1, C11B, vol. 10, pp. 46-48v, St. Ovide et Mézy au ministre, 3 novembre, 1728.

imports were cattle, sheep, poultry, apples, onions, pears, cheese, lard, Indian corn, flour, as well as bricks and planks for construction.¹⁸

A year after the renewal of trade with New England, thirty-nine Anglo-American ships visited Louisbourg; each of them received permission to sell its cargo. At the same time, thirteen New England vessels were sold at Louisbourg.¹⁹ Yet in spite of this, Governor Saint-Ovide made a show of seizing two New England vessels, the *Suzanne* and the *Phoenix*, in 1733 to demonstrate his compliance with metropolitan regulations, but when the former vessel was sent away from Louisbourg, it was taken to Port Toulouse and unloaded its prohibited items. The *Phoenix* also was ordered away, but it went to Scatary and traded there for many days.²⁰ Finally in 1733 the Ministry, backing away from its own restrictive instructions, gave specific approval to Isle Royale's exchanges with foreign colonies.²¹ The new order did not create a new policy; it merely recognised and acquiesced in colonial practice.

Despite political differences, New England merchants received full protection for their commercial activities at Isle Royale. In 1737 Saint-Ovide promised that any English who came with provisions would have his support.²² Upon receiving this news Peter Warren and Peter Fancuil sent Thomas Kilby to Louisbourg with biscuits for purchasing rum and molasses. Fancuil, the son of a

¹⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 12, p. 42, St. Ovide au ministre, 25 novembre, 1731; *ibid.*, p. 181, L'Amirauté au ministre, 10 novembre, 1731.

¹⁹ MG 1, C11B, p. 243, Liste générale des bâtimens, p. 244, État des bâtimens...achetez, 22 décembre, 1732. Donald F. Chard estimated that between 1713 and 1744 Louisbourg purchased about 141 New England vessels. Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," p. 43b.

²⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 14, p. 235 (statement of commerce), 2 décembre, 1733.

²¹ MG 1, B, vol. 59, p. 523v, Maurepas à St. Ovide et Le Normant, 19 mai, 1733.

²² Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," p. 59.

Huguenot refugee, was particularly interested in Cape François rum which was sold at Louisbourg by privateer and port captain Pierre Morpain.²³ Kilby's visit was not only on behalf of Fancuil but also of other English merchants like Philip Dumaresq and Thomas Bell. The protection offered by the officials at Louisbourg facilitated English colonists to trade indirectly with France. Fancuil's correspondence with two Bordeaux merchants, Etienne Sigal and P. Griffon, incontestably indicated that Louisbourg was actually a linchpin of anti-mercantile trade.²⁴

In addition to New England colonies, Isle Royale had established trade relations with Nova Scotia as early as 1715. The garrison, public works and the fishery at Louisbourg provided a ready market for Acadian agricultural produce and livestock. French military outposts, French-Amerindian military campaigns, and mission centres also required Acadian supplies. In turn the French supplied the Acadians with cloth, sugar, molasses, wine, brandy, iron, etc. Notwithstanding the Nova Scotia government's prohibition, this trade had been flourishing during the years between 1720 and 1744 keeping pace with Louisbourg's development.²⁵ The New Englanders were compelled to compete with the Acadians in marketing agricultural items particularly in livestock, at Louisbourg. While the Isle Royale-Nova Scotia exchange revealed the ineffectiveness of British commercial restrictions, in contrast to Isle Royale-New England trade it fell in line with French mercantile policy for two main reasons: first, this trade was chiefly in essential items approved by

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 60. Peter Warren's shipment to Louisbourg was ostensibly first noted in Julian Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral, The Personal Fortune of Admiral Sir Peter Warren* (Kingston/Montreal: 1974), p. 237 fn.1. Bernard Pothier, "Pierre Morpain," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 474-76.

²⁴ Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," p. 60.

²⁵ Andrew H. Clark, *Acadia: The Geography of Early Nova Scotia to 1760* (Madison: 1968), pp. 254-261.

France and, secondly, the Acadians were considered the subjects of France even though the province was under British rule.

Along with the shortage of provisions, delays in European shipping also promoted commercial relations with the English colonies. The difficulties encountered in carrying large volumes of heavy and bulky commodities across the Atlantic and the reluctance of sea captains to take on such cargo, which was normally less profitable, tended to increase importation from New England. In 1737 François-Angé Le Normant de Mézy, son and successor of former *Commissaire* Mézy, observed:

Il faut présentement pour la subsistance des habitans, des pescheurs et autres particuliers de la colonie chaque année vingt mille quintaux de vivres en farines, biscuits et légumes, il n'est pas possible que les bâtimens de France puissent nous en apporter ordinairement cette quantité, par la raison que ces vivres sont d'un trop grand volume et que le sel et les autres effets que ces bâtimens doivent apporter dans la colonie n'y laissent point assez de places y charger encore une quantité suffisante de vivres D'ailleurs comme les habitans ne peuvent donner qu'un prix des vivres à moins s'oberer, les navires trouveron toujours plus de profit à apporter d'autres effets.²⁶

These problems further forced local officials to argue for and approve trade with neighbouring English colonies.

Even Canada which, in keeping with metropolitan plans, was supposed to supply Isle Royale with provisions, took part in Louisbourg's exchange with foreign colonies, especially New England. The Canadian officials approached the government of Louisbourg whenever they had insufficient supplies for their colony. In 1743 Canada made such arrangements with Louisbourg for the purchase of "4,000 quarts de farine" and in 1753 it again sought help from the Louisbourg

²⁶ Innis, ed., *Select Documents*, p. 109.

administration in order to purchase flour from New England.²⁷ Metropolitan attempts to monopolise the trade did not produce the anticipated results due to local refusal to enforce restrictive regulations. Yet the Ministry continued to reissue the same regulations to prohibit foreign exchanges at Louisbourg. The act of continual reissuing of these prohibitions clearly illustrates that France's mercantilist policy had no impact on the colony.

At one time, as was the case in Newfoundland, the first fishing captain to arrive in a bay of the colony during the spring fishing season was declared the admiral of that bay for the year. As the admiral he had the right to exercise a considerable number of powers ranging from allocating shore space to the settling of disputes among members of the fishing fleet. Even after the establishment of governmental authorities on Isle Royale to conduct the administration of such matters, it seems that the vestiges of this tradition remained in the colony.²⁸ Thus local customs also played a significant role in regulating the routine activities of the colony. The influence of traditional practices, surpassing the power of metropolitan rules, highlights an important aspect in the colony's relationship with France inasmuch as the metropolitan mechanism of control was sometimes incompatible with colonial conditions.

The military affairs of the colony expose a different facet of the enunciation and implementation of decisions. At Louisbourg, besides the *troupes de la marine*, there were the mercenary Karrer troops which created countless problems for the military authorities in the colony.

²⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 25, p. 3, Duquesnel et Bigot au ministre, 12 avril, 1743; *ibid.*, vol. 24, p. 102, Bigot au ministre, 20 septembre, 1742; MG 1, C11A, vol. 80, p. 76, Beaujours au ministre, 12 juin, 1743; *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 513, Duquesne et Bigot à Raymond et Prévost, 2 janvier, 1753.

²⁸ Moore, "Merchant Trade in Louisbourg, Ile Royale," p. 64.

In 1721 a detachment of the Karrer regiment was sent to Isle Royale by the government of France without considering the local situation and the views of local officials. The Karrer regiment was not a part of the French regular troops; it had a separate contract called *Capitulation* and its own rules and privileges. The governor of Louisbourg found that it was difficult for him to control the soldiers of such an autonomous regiment.²⁹ His efforts to keep the Karrer soldiers under his command often resulted in quarrels with the commander of the detachment. In 1727, there was a controversial case regarding the constitutional right of the Karrer commander. An inhabitant of Louisbourg named Philippe Dupré filed a complaint with the Superior Council about Sergeant Leopold Reintender who had beaten and severely wounded him. When the Council began criminal proceedings against the sergeant, Louis-François de Mervilleux, the Commander of the Karrer detachment, intervened and on the basis of the *Capitulation* claimed that the right to try the accused belonged to him. Subsequently, the Council suspended the proceedings and requested guidance from the Ministry.³⁰ The minister upheld the claims of Mervilleux.³¹

²⁹ The Karrer regiment was founded in France in the year 1719 by a Swiss officer named Franz Adam Karrer. It was also called the Swiss regiment after the founder's nationality. According to the *Capitulation* (written contract) between the Ministry of Marine and Karrer, he had full control over the internal administration of the regiment and was responsible for appointing officers, recruiting men, and providing them with uniforms, food and salary. The soldiers would be drilled, disciplined and judged only by the Karrer officers. In brief, the Karrer regiment had its own constitution and code of conduct which were separate from those of the French. MG 1, vol. 16, n.p., *Traite du S. Karrer avec le Conseil*, 8 juin, 1721; For details see Allan Greer, *The Soldiers of Isle Royale, 1720-45* (Ottawa: 1979), pp. 13-23; Christopher Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits* (Toronto: 1982), pp. 203-278, gives a description the life of a Karrer soldier at Louisbourg.

³⁰ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 173-74v, *Extrait de registre du Conseil Superieur de Louisbourg, Isle Royale*, 10 septembre, 1727; *ibid.*, pp. 175-75v, *Réponse de M. Mervilleux*, 8 octobre, 1727; *ibid.*, pp. 179-82, *Extrait de minutes du Conseil Superieur*, 16 octobre, 1727.

³¹ MG 1, B, vol. 52, pp. 572v-73, à St. Ovide et Mézy, 12 juin, 1728; Greer, *The Soldiers* (continued...)

This metropolitan decision reaffirmed the right of the Karrer detachment to remain as a separate unit with its own code of rules, which it continued to retain until the 1740s. The local officials never retreated from their protest against this privileged position of the Karrer unit and what they saw as the miscarriage of justice, such as the acquittal of soldiers accused of crimes, deliberately occasioned by its officers. In 1742 *Commissaire* Bigot argued that the special legal status of the Karrer was “un grand abus” because the officers acquitted their soldiers despite the presence of overwhelming evidence against their wrong doings.³²

The conflicts between the governor and the Karrer commander reached their climax in the 1740s. The most serious disputes occurred between Commander François-Joseph Cailly and the Governor Duquesnel who was firmly determined to reduce Karrer autonomy. When the minister learned about the deteriorating state of relations between Duquesnel and Cailly and the disobedience of military rules by the Karrer soldiers and officers, he finally decided to support the position of the local administration. The minister instructed local officials to undermine the Karrer judicial privileges by allowing the officers to try only petty cases while submitting the major ones to the Superior Council. This was a tremendous success for the Louisbourg administration in its attempts to bring the specially privileged Karrer company under local control. In spite of his disinclination to transgress the *Capitulation*, the minister was constrained to violate the special contract of the Karrer regiment in order to create a new policy in favour of the local government.³³

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of Isle Royale, p. 17.

³² MG I, C11B, vol. 24, p. 163-64v, Bigot au ministre, 14 novembre, 1742.

³³ MG I, B, vol. 76, p. 491v, Maurepas à Bigot, 27 june, 1743.

Armed with new powers, in 1741, the Superior Council tried and executed three deserters, including one from the Karrer detachment. The two French soldiers and the Karrer were tried separately, but the governor ordered the entire garrison to assemble and witness the executions, which was a customary military rule. Cailly forbade his soldiers to obey the governor's order. The Minister, Maurepas took it as a serious offence against the order of military discipline and dismissed Cailly as commander. Following this, the garrison major was given the authority to ensure that the Karrer soldiers obeyed garrison rules. The Karrer detachment was no longer treated as an independent unit possessing exclusive legal status but was placed under the general command of the governor.³⁴ From these developments the minister understood that, despite the special privileges accorded to the Karrer troops in France, it should be under a single command in a distant colony such as Isle Royale. The Louisbourg administration had suggested this from the early 1720s.

The admission of cadets into the military organisation at Louisbourg gave rise to occasional conflicts with the metropolitan authorities, but the latter finally accepted proposals of subaltern officials. In the early years of the colony, cadets were considered an informal group having no official recognition. The rank of cadet was the first step towards obtaining a full-time military career and virtually any boy or young man could be admitted to receive training. At Louisbourg most of these cadets were sons of military officers who used their influence and relationship with the governor to have their sons enrolled even as young as five years of age. This system offered an additional economic benefit of collecting extra salary and rations on behalf of their sons.

In 1717 the Council of Marine endeavoured to prohibit the admission of cadets below fourteen years old, but the early enrollments continued. In 1726 Governor Saint-Ovide resolved

³⁴ Greer, *The Soldiers of Isle Royale*, p. 19.

to establish some order by admitting only two cadets into each company of Marine troops. Although Maurepas strongly opposed this and decided to drop all cadets from the military pay roll, it appeared that he was totally unable to control the governor. He wrote Controller Antoine Sabatier at Louisbourg, that Saint-Ovide and Mézy were informed of the dissatisfaction of the king with regard to the admission of minor cadets but "Mézy ne m'a fait aucune réponse et St. Ovide m'a simplement écrit qu'il estoit vray qu'il y avoit dans les compagnies quelques enfans d'officiers."³⁵

The minister continued:

le silence de M. de Mézy sur cet article et ce que M. de St. Ovide m'en a écrit me persuade que l'abus dont on m'a informé est véritable et je suis mal satisfait qu'en qualité de Controlleur vous ne l'ayez pas fait cesser ou que ne m'en ayez pas rendu compte.³⁶

By 1732 Maurepas, having realised that Saint-Ovide was right, reversed his earlier decisions by obtaining a new royal ordinance formally accepting cadets on a regular basis, who were fourteen years or above. He also approved Saint-Ovide's decision to select two cadets for each company in the colony.³⁷

The value of Saint-Ovide's knowledge and perspectives were further acknowledged by his superiors as his name was suggested for the position of advisor on regional defence to the minister. At the outbreak of the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735), Governor-General Charles Marquis de Beauharnois was asked about the defence requirements at Louisbourg in case of an

³⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 49, p. 721, Ministre à Sabatier, 25 juin, 1726.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 721.

³⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 57, p. 764, à St. Ovide et Le Normant, 24 juin, 1732; MG 1, G2, carton 192, registre 1, pp. 50-51, Extrait de la lettre de Monseigneur le Comte de Maurepas à St. Ovide et Le Normant, 24 juin, 1732.

English attack. He said he knew very little about the matter, but suggested that the authorities consult Saint-Ovide who was, in his words:

plus aportée que moy d'être instruit des l'État de Anglois, et de celuy on se trouvent Leurs forts et...les françois de l'acadie. Et c'est à Luy de juger si les secours de deux vaisseaux de guerre est suffisant pour l'execution, avec le secours des troupes de l'Isle Royale, de pêcheurs, et des Acadiens.³⁸

The project for the permanent settlement of soldiers was an example of the Ministry's lack of knowledge of conditions in the colony which could lead to the enunciation of an inappropriate colonial policy. In spite of the governor's power to discharge soldiers, the Ministry often tried to control their numbers because of the difficulties in finding new recruits in France and in transporting them across the Atlantic. As the Ministry was interested in populating the colony, the governor was advised to discharge married soldiers who wished to settle down in the colony and to take up farming.³⁹ In 1725 the Ministry further undertook to encourage the permanent settlement of soldiers by offering a sponsorship for three years. The governor was asked to release one soldier every year from each of the French companies and two Catholics from the Karrer detachment on condition that they would become permanent residents of Isle Royale. They were to receive free grants of land, and soldiers' pay and rations for three years.⁴⁰ Yet this royal ordinance was not implemented in the colony as the governor and other officials were not interested in the proposed project. In 1738 the minister learned that those who were given discharges based on the soldiers' settlement policy never became settlers and farmers. Rather, they collected the salary and rations

³⁸ MG 1, C11A, vol. 61, p. 303, Beauharnois au ministre, 10 octobre, 1734.

³⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 3, pp. 139-40, Mémoire du Roy, 18 july, 1718.

⁴⁰ MG 4, A1, vol. 63, p. 16, Ordonnance, 26 juin, 1725; MG 1, C11G, vol. 12, p. 77; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 61.

and happily spent three years hunting and fishing in the colony. It was alleged that once the Ministry's sponsorship had been terminated they returned to France.⁴¹

Contrary to Allen Greer's argument, the failure of soldier-settlement was not the fault of the Louisbourg administration.⁴² The metropolitan officials developed this programme based on the Canadian model of soldier settlements, but did not understand the geographic difference between Isle Royale and Canada. Or as Guy Frégault said "le ministre [Maurepas] entretenait l'illusion que tout pays pouvait et devait avoir, comme la France, un caractère agricole... Il se trompait."⁴³ Even if the local administrators had put forth their best efforts to encourage soldier settlements we can not assume that the discharged men would have stayed permanently and cultivated the land because they had no sound knowledge of agriculture and no experience in North American cultivation. Furthermore, there is no reasonable ground to believe that they would have tilled the inferior quality soil on the island, in which even the Acadians, who were well-experienced farmers, had no desire to try their luck.⁴⁴ The Acadians had originally selected an environment along the Bay of Fundy

⁴¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, pp. 317-7v, Troupes, s.d. 1738. Soldier-settlement was in general a failure, although there were exceptional cases. Jodocus Koller stayed in the colony after leaving the army and became a staunch defender of the colony during the 1745 siege. Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits*, pp. 203-278.

⁴² Allen Greer argued that the failure was "partly the fault of colonial administrators who were less than lukewarm in their encouragement of military settlement." Greer, *The Soldiers of Isle Royale*, p. 33.

⁴³ Frégault, *François Bigot*, p. 150.

⁴⁴ A 1990 article by historian Kenneth Donovan indicated that there were several blocks of arable lands cultivated on Isle Royale in the eighteenth-century although the Acadians found them inferior to their marshlands in the Annapolis valley. Kenneth Donovan, "The Myth of French Agricultural Inactivity: Gardens and Gardening in Isle Royale" (unpublished manuscript, the Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1990).

which bore some resemblance to the Poitevin marshlands from which most of them came. The Louisbourg administrators had promoted agrarian settlement in the colony as their efforts to attract the Acadians demonstrated. Soldier-settlement had been designed in Canada mainly to protect the colony from Iroquois incursions. On Isle Royale the neighbouring Mi'kmaq were perceived as friends and allies, not as potential enemies. In addition, the lure of commerce and fishery made agriculture seem comparatively unattractive.

General disorder and indiscipline in the garrison were problems that the Ministry of Marine failed to confront at Louisbourg. In 1716 *Commissaire* Soubras reported that disorder in the garrison reached such an extent that the troops had been drilled only once since his arrival in the colony.⁴⁵ Governor Costebelle did not deny this allegation, but replied that there was little time for this as the soldiers were too occupied with construction works at the fortress site. The minister was not pleased with this explanation and instructed him to drill the soldiers every Sunday without fail.⁴⁶ When Jean-François de Verville, director of fortifications, complained that the Sunday military exercise was interfering with the progress of work the minister resolved to cancel the previous ministerial order.⁴⁷ This incident displays the Ministry's willingness to sacrifice the maintenance of

⁴⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 416, Soubras au ministre, 1 novembre, 1716.

⁴⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 39, pp. 290-91v, Mémoire du Roy à Costebelle et Soubras, juin, 1717.

⁴⁷ T.A. Crowley, "French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1745" (unpublished report, the Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1970), p. 42, fn. 2.

order and discipline in the garrison to the wishes of its favourites in the colony.⁴⁸ The soldiers were indispensable construction workers, but that job was not what they were supposed to do.

Many of the military officers were more attracted to fishing and commerce than their military duties. Even the governor and *commissaire* participated in these remunerative enterprises. According to Soubras' census in 1715, Jacques l'Hermite employed eight fishermen and a clerk, Captain Allard de Ste. Marie also had eight fishermen and a clerk, Jacques-Espiet de Pensens employed ten fishermen, Soubras himself employed the same number, and Costebelle and Saint-Ovide employed seventeen and thirteen fishermen respectively.⁴⁹ In France these activities by noble classes were traditionally considered socially and politically unacceptable and reprehensible. Originally the Ministry of Marine did not permit its officials to engage in business activities, but in Isle Royale, as in Canada, the metropolitan government had to sacrifice its conventional principles and values on account of colonial economic difficulties. The officers' need for more money and the modest or insufficient amount of salary paid to them by the mother country obliged the Ministry to allow the officers to take part in private business. In 1718, based on a complaint made by Verville about indiscipline and disorder in the garrison the Council of Marine prohibited the officials at

⁴⁸ Verville was held in high esteem at the Council of Marine which was exceptionally responsive to his opinions. As director and chief engineer of the fortifications he was able to exert considerable influence in making decisions on the construction works, on the selections of contractors etc. For details see F.J. Thorpe, *Remparts Lointains. La politique française des travaux publics à Terre-Neuve et à l'Île Royale, 1695-1758* (Ottawa: 1980), pp. 64-67, *passim*.

⁴⁹ MG 1, G1, carton 466, p. 51, Recensement des habitans établis dans le havre de Louisbourg, 14 janvier, 1715; B. Pothier, "Monbeton de Brouillan, dit St. Ovide, Joseph de," *DBC*, vol. III, pp. 491-93.

Louisbourg from conducting commercial activities.⁵⁰ This ministerial decision was a contradiction to its own long-standing policy of allowing colonial nobles to participate in commerce.⁵¹

Despite metropolitan prohibition the Louisbourg officers continued their private business pursuits. In the records of the colony regarding the fisheries and commerce the names of officers such as François Du Pont Duvivier, Louis Du Pont Duchambon, Robert Tarride Duhaget, Gabriel Rousseau de Villejouin, Louis Le Neuf de La Valliere, Jean-Joseph de Ste Marie, Gabriel Dangeac, Saint-Étienne de La Tour, Jacques-Espiet de Pensens, Louis Loppinot among others, frequently appear.⁵² In 1750 engineer Louis Franquet accused every officer except those who had recently arrived in the colony of being “plus occupés de son commerce que de l’interest du Roy.”⁵³ The continued participation of the officers and officials in profit-making enterprises further reveals the

⁵⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 119-119v, Avis de Verville, 27 avril, 1718; MG 1, B, vol. 40, pp. 556-556v, Mémoire du Roy à St. Ovide et Mézy, 18 juillet, 1718.

⁵¹ The royal edict of 1685 permitted the nobles of Canada to participate in commercial activities without sacrificing their social status. Cameron Nish, ed., *The French Régime* (Scarborough: 1965), p. 80. Nish believed that “c’était un privilège colonial seulement, puisque ce n’est qu’en 1701 qu’on accorda le même droit à la noblesse de France.” Cameron Nish, *Les Bourgeois-Gentilshommes de la Nouvelle-France, 1729-1748* (Montreal: 1968), p. 16. The nobles of France along with those of the West Indies had already received permission to trade without losing their social status by the 1669 royal edict. Roger Mettam, ed., *Government and Society in Louis XIV’s France* (Toronto: 1977), pp. 171-72, Edict permitting the nobility to participate in commerce at sea without loss of rank, St. Germain-En-Laye, August, 1669; W.J. Eccles, *France in America* (Vancouver, Toronto: 1972), p. 113; Before 1669 the custom of Brittany and the city of Lyon permitted nobles to participate in commerce. This local practice paved the way for the 1669 edict issued by Louis XIV. This is an example of the evolution of a French policy from “below” within France.

⁵² T. A. Crowley, “Government and Interests: French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1758” (Ph.D. thesis, Duke University, 1975), pp. 123-24.

⁵³ Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 123.

metropolitan inability to impose an unpopular policy as well as the determination of the local elite to pursue their own interests.

In compliance with royal instructions and commissions, the governor as head of the military forces had exclusive power to direct the matters of defence. As mentioned earlier he was accorded no authority to declare war without receiving the royal order. Disregarding this rule, when France declared war on Britain in March 1744 and this news arrived in Louisbourg, acting-governor Jean-Baptiste-Louis Le Prévost Duquesnel began to make plans for an offensive campaign against Canso and Acadia. The Ministry's instructions were for a defensive campaign, yet he seems to have taken advantage of a comment made by the minister that the only way to halt Anglo-American pretensions was to capture Canso.⁵⁴ Duquesnel immediately ordered the capture of Canso. What is significant here is that, according to his correspondence during March and April 1744, the minister did not order the Canso expedition at this critical point, a point missed by McLennan and repeated Crowley.⁵⁵ Duquesnel succeeded in his mission, and encouraged by the victory at Canso he

⁵⁴ MG 1, vol. 78, p. 393, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 17 avril, 1744.

⁵⁵ J.S. McLennan said that Maurepas ordered the capture of Canso at the time of sending two warships, *l'Ardent* and *le Caribou*, to Louisbourg in 1744. T.A. Crowley argued that "it was official French policy that Louisbourg should take the offensive at the opening of hostilities." McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 109; Crowley, "French Colonial Administration," pp. 135-36. Neither author produced any documents to support his argument. Contrary to their beliefs this study explains that the minister instructed Sieur de Saint-Clair, Captain of *l'Ardent*: "Sa Majesté s'est déterminée à déclarer la guerre à l'Angleterre. Et comme il est d'une extrême consequence de mettre les navires françois qui font la pesche de la morue à l'abri des corsaires anglois de la Nouvelle Angleterre, d'interrompre la pesche et commerce de cette nation, et de procurer en mesme tems des secours à la colonie de l'Isle Royale, c'est pour remplir ces trois objects que Sa Majesté a fait armer ses vaisseaux *l'Ardent* et *le Caribou*." *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 198-201, Instruction au Sieur de St. Clair, Capitaine de Vaisseau, 29 mars, 1744. The second instruction to disrupt English fishery and commerce did not mean an offensive expedition to their settlements at Canso or in Acadia. Such an offensive action suggested by Duquesnel was declined by the Ministry. Rather, the
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decided to attempt the reconquest of Acadia. As an initial step towards this Duquesnel planned the capture of Annapolis Royal. He apprised the Governor-General the Marquis de Beauharnois about his intentions and requested his help. Beauharnois was willing to offer military assistance, but understandably he wanted to receive the Ministry's approval first. Duquesnel concurred with Beauharnois' idea of having metropolitan approval, but he did not want to wait until its arrival. Ignoring metropolitan recommendations he went ahead with his plan for an expedition.⁵⁶ A local informant said that "M. du Quesnel took it upon himself to proceed with the enterprise, while M. de Beauharnois waited quietly for the orders of the Court."⁵⁷ It is again evident that the governor took this decision by himself as he was forced to arm a merchant ship from La Rochelle, the *Atlas*, and a brigantine, the *Tempest*, for the expedition when the captains of king's ships, the *Ardent* and

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metropolitan government emphasized a defensive strategy, i.e., the protection of French fishery, commerce and the colony. See MG 1, B, vol. 78, pp. 388-88v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 18 mars, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 389-89v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 29 mars, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 391-91v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 17 avril, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 409-409v, à Duquesnel, 30 avril, 1744. Duquesnel was also informed in 1744 that the Ministry had no intention of increasing the number of troops. MG 1, vol. 78, pp. 397-97v, Maurepas à Duquesnel, 21 avril, 1744. In 1745 the minister wrote Duchambon that "l'objet de l'armement de ce vaissau [le Vigilant]...est de protéger les pescheurs françois et des bâtimens de france et du canada qui iront faire leur commerce a Isle Royale et d'interrompre autant qu'il sera possible le commerce et la pesche des Ennemies." MG 1, B, vol. 81, p. 338, ministre à Duchambon, 29 mars, 1745.

⁵⁶ The metropolitan government did not plan to launch the military expedition to Annapolis Royal in 1744, because as the minister wrote to Duquesnel, "la saison s'est trouvée trop avancée, lorsque la guerre a este declarée, p[ou]r pouvoir f[air]e cette année un armement part[iculi]er pour ex[ecut]er cette entreprise." Therefore, instead of declaring a sudden offensive campaign, the governor was asked to prepare a plan for a future reconquest of Acadia and send it to the minister. MG 1, B, vol 78, pp. 409-409v, à Duquesnel, 30 avril, 1744.

⁵⁷ *Louisbourg in 1745: The Anonymous "Lettre d'un Habitant de Louisbourg"*, trans., ed., G.M. Wrong (Toronto: 1897), p. 42.

the *Caribou*, declined to co-operate with Duquesnel prior to obtaining orders from Versailles.⁵⁸ This informant accused these captains of non-co-operation with the governor:

in seizing Acadia we should have freed ourselves from the menace of the enemies...The naval commanders argued that they had not the orders of the Court, as if it was necessary for all subjects of the king to have special orders before keeping his enemies from doing him injury...M. du Quesnel could not induce them to support the enterprise; in vain did he assert his official authority. It was necessary for him to think of carrying through the matter alone.⁵⁹

Thus the exclusive power of the king to make decisions on offensive military expeditions was overstepped by the colonial governor. Yet the Ministry did not oppose Duquesnel's actions on the eve of an Anglo-French war. In June 1745 the minister informed *Commissaire* Bigot that an additional fund had been sanctioned for covering the expenses made for the English prisoners taken at Canso and brought to Louisbourg in the previous year.⁶⁰ In a 1755 letter, Governor-General the Marquis Duquesne de Menneville wrote Governor Augustin de Boschenry de Drucour of Isle Royale:

Suppose cependant que les entreprises des anglois fussent portées au point de devoir être regardées comme une véritable rupture de leur part. Sa Majesté vous donne dans ce cas la

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 12, 17, *passim*; see also Bernard Pothier, *Course à L'Acadie: Journal de campagne de François Du Pont Duvivier en 1744* (Moncton: 1982), p. 49.

⁵⁹ *The Anonymous "Lettre d'un Habitant"*, p. 14. On other matters of administration "The Habitant" was critical of Duquesnel and personally disliked the governor. He described Duquesnel as a "poor man, we owe him little; he was whimsical, changeable, given to drink and when in his cups knowing no restraint of decency" and "he had affronted nearly all the officers of Louisbourg and destroyed their authority with the soldiers...The ambition of M. Du. Quesnel was to distinguish himself against the English." *Ibid.*, pp. 15-17.

⁶⁰ MG I. B. vol. 81, pp. 343v-44, à Salvert et Bigot, 19 juin, 1745.

liberté de faire les arrangements qui vous paraîtront les plus convenables pour le bien de son service et la gloire de ses armes.⁶¹

This gave the local authorities leave to take whatever initiative they deemed appropriate.

In general, the administration of military affairs at Louisbourg reflects three specific aspects: the lack of metropolitan control over military organisation; official and unofficial admission of the self-interests and actions of colonial officers; and the failure of several metropolitan policies for lack of understanding of the colonial situation. In other words, the military operation at Louisbourg was run, to some extent, according to the exigencies and preferences of the local authorities.

The administration of native affairs was another principal function of the local government. This was an exclusive portfolio of the governor who received instructions directly from the minister. In spite of the alliance between the Mi'kmaq and the French having been based on their historical relationships, the latter could not take this for granted forever.⁶² The governor and his assistants in the colony played a prominent part in the maintenance of the French alliance with the Natives by renewing their friendship and diplomatic relations every year. As the defence of the colony depended primarily upon the assistance of the Native peoples, particularly the Mi'kmaq, and as the French-Amerindian relations were so complex that they often required immediate action in accordance with local needs and circumstances, the governor's power and responsibility went beyond metropolitan control. It was one of the realms of colonial administration in which the governor

⁶¹ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 534, Résumé d'une lettre écrite par monsieur le Marquis Duquesne au Chevalier de Druourt, 8 mars, 1755.

⁶² William C. Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: Mi'kmaq Society, 1500-1760" (Ph. D. thesis, McGill University, 1994), p. 438. Wicken argued that the seventeenth-century historical relationships between the Mi'kmaq and the French determined their relations in the eighteenth century, but he overlooked the role of colonial officials in the creation of policy with regard to the Natives and, hence, maintaining the relations.

made virtually all decisions and planned strategies. It was the governor who decided the number of firearms, and the amount of ammunition and provisions for the Natives as *présents*. His reports and recommendations were essential for sanctioning, or increasing, funds for the administration of native affairs .

The colonial correspondence exemplifies that the minister and chief clerk had no different opinion from the local officials with respect to the administration of native affairs. Every year, following the governor's visit to Port Toulouse on Isle Royale and Port la Joie on Isle St. Jean for the distribution of *présents* and for the renewal of friendship and military alliance, the minister was informed of these activities.⁶³ At this time demands for more gifts and funds, as well as the complaints, and other news of the Natives were passed on to him. Rarely did the minister reject the governor's suggestions, advice and demands. Usually he replied that "His Majesty approved what you have done" and encouraged him to continue on his course of action so as to retain the Native peoples in the French interest.⁶⁴ In 1739 when Governor Isaac-Louis Forant suggested the awarding of medals to those Mi'kmaq who served the French with courage and loyalty, the Ministry immediately approved. About thirty medals as requested by the governor were despatched to Louisbourg for the initial award.⁶⁵

⁶³ MG 1, B, vol. 50, pp. 581-82, Ministre à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727; *ibid.*, vol. 59, p. 517, à St. Ovide, 19 mai, 1733; *ibid.*, vol. 68, p. 353, à Bourville, 11 juin, 1739.

⁶⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 59, p. 516v-517, à St. Ovide, 19 mai, 1733; *ibid.*, p. 524v à Normant, 26 mai, 1733; *ibid.*, vol. 64, p. 479v, à St. Ovide, 8 mai, 1736; *ibid.*, vol. 66, p. 300, à Bourville, 13 mai, 1738; *ibid.*, vol. 68, p. 353, à Bourville, 11 juin, 1739, *ibid.*, vol. 72, p. 434, à Du Quesnel et Bigot, 17 mai, 1741; *ibid.*, vol. 107, p. 360v, à Drucour, 11 février, 1758; *ibid.*, p. 365 à Drucour, 18 février, 1758.

⁶⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 70, p. 384v, à Forant, 6 mars, 1740.

There were two principal reasons for this predominant role of the governor in the administration of native affairs. First, the Native peoples were politically, strategically, and economically indispensable for the existence of the French empire in North America. They insisted that they were “allies”, not subjects of the king, and recognised the governor as the commander of the French forces with which they were allied. Second, the governor in the colony had a better understanding of local conditions and needs than metropolitan officials in most cases. Thus, as the Native peoples became so crucial to the sustainment of the French hegemony in North America, the Ministry had to “bow” to the decisions and policy of the local government. In 1727 Maurepas wrote Saint-Ovide concerning the necessity of preventing the Malisect of the St. John River region from making peace with the English: “je ne doute pas que vous ne faissiez tout ce qui pourra dépendre de vous pour détruire leurs desseins, et je ne saurais trop vous le recommander.”⁶⁶ On another occasion, the minister reminded the governor and *commissaire* that when they had demanded the increase of gifts, they did not mention the reason for this. Nevertheless, he ordered the despatch of the gifts as soon as possible.⁶⁷ Such incidents demonstrate how important the alliances of the Malisect and the Mi’kmaq were to the French and, thus, how valuable was the opinion of the colonial government in the administration of native affairs.

As His Most Christian Majesty’s representative for diplomatic and external affairs in the colony, the governor was given the power to direct international matters. For Louisbourg such matters were predominantly concerned with the English colonies. Although the governor was accountable to the metropolitan government for his actions, he had wide-ranging powers in this

⁶⁶ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 133-34, Ministre à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727.

⁶⁷ MG I, B, vol. 59, p. 516v, à St. Ovide et Normant, 19 may, 1733.

field. Controversial issues, such as the possession of Canso and the Acadian boundary question were removed from his portfolio and handled directly by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Of particular interest is that the metropolitan authorities were unable to successfully negotiate these issues with Britain. Inter-colonial conflicts frequently broke out between the French and the English on the North Atlantic seaboard, conflicts in which the Abenakis, the Malisect and the Mi'kmaq were also involved.

France and Britain were officially allies from 1717 to 1731 and formally at peace until the 1740s. The Louisbourg administration was thereby obliged to maintain harmonious relations with the English. Louisbourg had, in fact, a double mission to perform: on the one hand, it was obliged to support the formal peace between France and Britain, while on the other hand, it had to wage an informal war to check the expansion of the English colonies and thus to uphold the hegemonic position of the French empire on the North Atlantic seaboard. It was in this political setting that the governor of Louisbourg was forced to develop the colony's external policies, a task which required excellent diplomacy and adroit tactics. It is in this context that this study discusses the relevance and predominance of the colony's external policies.

The Canso and Acadian boundary issues were frequently raised in negotiations between Isle Royale and the Anglo-American colonies. Contention over the possession of the fisheries and commercial interests were usual causes for a disruption of peaceful external relations. The diplomacy of the governor of Isle Royale was to treat these matters in such a way that they would not jeopardise the colony's economic and political motives in the region. In 1718 Governor Samuel Shute of Massachusetts expressed his resentment over French fishing operations and settlements at Canso. Shute wrote Saint-Ovide:

J'ai été informé par des lettres de plusieurs marchands résidant présentement à Canseau, qu'il y a déjà un nombre de François établis, lesquels ont bâtis chaffaux et maisons, et outre c'est un navire de la même nation mouillé dans le dit havre, et qu'on en espère d'autres.

Je n'ai que faire, monsieur de vous dire que ce procez n'est pas juste puisque par le traité de paix d'Utrecht, cet endroit n'appartient pas à votre gouvernement et que cela fait une brèche aux articles 12 et 13 du même traité.

Dans le 12^e article il est dit que les sujets de la Grande Bretagne seront possesseurs de la Nouvelle Ecosse suivant l'ancienne limite, laquelle prend 30 lieues à l'Est de l'Isle de sable tirant vers le Sud-Ouest ce qui comprend toute la Nouvelle Ecosse.⁶⁸

With this letter Captain Thomas Smart and Cyprien Southack were sent to Louisbourg where they were to demand that Saint-Ovide order the immediate withdrawal of the French from Canso.⁶⁹

After meeting with these delegates Saint-Ovide informed Shute on 23 September 1718:

Vous remarquez par le 12^e article du vôtre que les airs de vent ne sont pas égaux, et que d'ailleurs il n'y est point fait mention des trente lieues près des côtes de la Nouvelle Ecosse comme il est porté dans le mien, ce qui fait en cette occasion une très grande erreur, ainsi il n'est pas possible de convenir présentement où doivent être les anciennes limites. Car selon votre rhumb de vent, vous emportez beaucoup sur l'isle Royale, et selon le nôtre nous aboutissons aux environs de la Rivière Ste Marie.⁷⁰

Despite Saint-Ovide's rejection of the claims made by Shute, he agreed to remove the French fishermen from Canso by the end of the fishing season. Setting the terms, he said it would be done "pourvu qu'il voulut pareillement évacuer les habitants Anglois, jusque à ce que nous

⁶⁸ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 29. Shute à Saint-Ovide, 24 août, 1718; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 8, pp. 161-163, Shute to St. Ovide, 2 June, 1719 [misdated].

⁶⁹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 8, pp. 165-67, Instructions to Capt. Thomas Smart, 2 June, 1719 [misdated].

⁷⁰ *Collections de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 30, St. Ovide à Shute, 23 septembre, 1718; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 8, pp. 169-171, St. Ovide to Shute, 23 September, 1717 [1718].

cussions de nos cours une décision parfaite.”⁷¹ These developments indicate the strategic and diplomatic precautions taken by the governor in corresponding with the English officials. His willingness to recall the French from Canso shows that he formally agreed with Governor Shute, but his demand for reciprocal removal of the English habitants was made for two purposes: to provide a neutral and reasonably amicable ground for both parties to solve the disputed matter; and if such a basis were not created due to English reluctance to withdraw from Canso then the French seemed justified in continuing their activities there. Much to Saint-Ovide’s satisfaction, he did not have to order a withdrawal of the French. Nor did the English have any intention of removing their fishermen. Governor Richard Philipps of Nova Scotia remarked that “Canso is the first [settlement] which...ought to be possessed and defended in regard to the Great advantage which accrues from the fishery.”⁷²

The British government and the Admiralty had only a marginal interest in the Canso affair.

Historian Julian Gwyn said:

unlike Newfoundland, whose fishery was carried on principally by West-Country men, and thus was in every respect an extension of England itself, Canso was dominated by New Englanders, for whom the British, and hence the Royal Navy, felt only a remote responsibility.⁷³

⁷¹ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 30.

⁷² T.B. Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia. Documents Relating to the Acadian French and the First British Colonisation of the Province, 1714-1758* (Halifax: 1869), pp. 56-57.

⁷³ Julian Gwyn, “The Royal Navy in North America, 1712-1776” in Jeremy Black & Philip Woodfine, eds., *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: 1989), p. 133.

As a result of this London attitude, the local British officials, like their French counterparts, made their own decisions in attending to colonial matters.⁷⁴ The nature of the relations between French and British colonies on the North Atlantic seaboard was therefore almost exclusively determined by the decisions and actions taken by local officials. In the words of Max Savelle:

In most instances it was these direct negotiations which defined the issues in the local areas, and the recommendations of the governors, derived from the local conflicts, which provided the bases for the diplomatic demands of the mother countries against each other in Europe.⁷⁵

He concluded that since local issues emerged out of local situations the governor through his correspondence exerted a profound influence upon the foreign policies and specific demands of the *métropole*.⁷⁶

Subsequent to the refusal of Governor Saint-Ovide to comply with the order of Governor Samuel Shute, Captain Smart carried out an attack on the French at Canso and captured a number of their fishing vessels. Even though the Board of Trade in London denied the legitimacy of French claims, it ordered that the confiscated vessels and goods, or their value, should be returned. There is no evidence to ascertain that the restitution was actually carried out by the local officials.⁷⁷ Despite Captain Smart's attack, the posting of a body of troops and the occasional British naval

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 129-147; Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London: 1973), p. vii; W.A.B. Douglas, "The Royal Navy and Louisbourg, 1744-1760," *Papers and Abstracts for a Symposium on Ile Royale during the French Régime* (Ottawa: 1972), pp. 77-78, and "Nova Scotia and the Royal Navy, 1713-1766" (Ph.D. thesis, Queen's University: 1973); Chard, "The Impact of Ile Royale on New England," p. x.

⁷⁵ Max Savelle, *The Origins of American Diplomacy: The International History of Anglo-America, 1492-1763* (New York: 1967), p. 232.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 233.

⁷⁷ C.P. Browne, "Smart, Thomas," *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 609-10.

visits to Canso, the French dominated the fishery and commerce.⁷⁸ Ultimately the English had failed to force the Louisbourg government to withdraw the French fishermen and merchants from Canso.

When Versailles learned of the Anglo-French negotiations which took place at Louisbourg Saint-Ovide was upheld.

Le Conseil a examiné monsieur ce que vous avés marques...au sujet de la prétention des anglois sur Canceau et du commerce qui se fait dans cet endroit, surquoy ne pouvant quant à présent vous rien mander de positif Son intention est que les choses restent à cet égard en l'état ou elles sont jusqu'à nouvel ordre.⁷⁹

This "jusqu'à nouvel ordre" remained France's attitude towards Louisbourg's external affairs until the fall of the colony. Such an aloof position of Versailles put the complicated task of managing Anglo-French relations in the North Atlantic region squarely on the shoulders of colonial administrators, a position not dissimilar from what Zoltvany identified as policy in the upper country of Canada.⁸⁰ The only creative role performed by the Ministry was the marking of the "bon du Roy" when letters and memoirs describing the capture of English vessels or Native peoples' hostilities against English fishermen and farmers reached the *Bureau des Colonies*. It is perhaps not

⁷⁸ Gwyn, "The Royal Navy in North America, 1712-1776," p. 133; W.A.B. Douglas, "Prelude to Louisbourg: Canso and the Royal Navy, 1713-1744," (paper read to the 1978 Conference of the North American Society for Oceanic History).

⁷⁹ MG 1, B, vol. 40, p. 573v. à St. Ovide, 20 aoust, 1718.

⁸⁰ Studying the frontier policy of Vaudreuil, Zoltvany said: "the policy that enabled the French to cope with the English pressure in those regions [the New England borders, the Great Lakes country, and the Mississippi valley] was formulated by a small group of senior colonial administrators headed by the governor general..." Yves F. Zoltvany, "The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725," *CHR*, vol. XLVIII, no. 3 (1967), pp. 227-50.

unreasonable to surmise that France had no coherent and consistent policy to direct the external relations of its overseas colonies either in the Atlantic region, or in the Indian Ocean region.⁸¹

Following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 France was in search of a foreign policy which ended up being moulded under the influence of British interests. Both France and Britain were weakened by the War of Spanish Succession and disturbed by their own domestic problems. In 1716 these powers entered into a military alliance for mutual defence and support so as to avoid any conflict between them in the near future. Jeremy Black described it as a mere “diplomatic expedient” to protect each nation's interest and that it would be “discarded if there was a change

⁸¹ France supported the aggressions on the British colonies and their native allies in North America by constructing a chain of forts from Louisbourg to Mobile to resist English expansion, yet it strongly opposed such actions against the empires and kingdoms and the English and Dutch settlements in South Asia. This policy *prima facie* was contradictory and detrimental to the interests of the French empire. Refusing to comply with this metropolitan policy, the colonial government at Pondicherry decided to implement its own foreign policy in its relations with the local states and the English in India. French interference in local politics and the subsequent territorial expansion on the Coromandal coast were exclusively a product of the hegemonic policies exercised by the local government. Rejecting the Ministry of Marine's view that French East India Company “should concern itself solely with the purchase and sale of merchandise and never make war,” Governor Dupleix of Pondicherry said, “this argument, which is really specious, has a great influence on people who think only in terms of the present... If the Dutch had shared that limited and narrow viewpoint, their Company would long ago have ceased to exist. ... It was war which won them their revenues... We, also, can acquire ours only by war...It can make ours more powerful than any European company.” Dupleix's conflict with the Ministry and his involvement in the domestic affairs of local kingdoms finally resulted in his recall in 1754 and the formation of a peace treaty in favour of the English. V.M. Thompson, *Dupleix and His Letters, 1742-1754* (New York: 1933), pp. 818-19, 793, Dupleix's Memoir, 16 October, 1753 and Dupleix to Savalette, 15 February, 1753. See also Henry Dodwell, *Dupleix and Clive: The Beginning of Empire* (London: 1968); Walter L. Dorn, *Competition for Empire, 1740-1763* (New York: 1940), p. 260.

of circumstance."⁸² Indeed, the alliance collapsed by the beginning of the 1730s.⁸³ Subsequently, according to A.M. Wilson, the control of European diplomacy shifted from London to Paris under the direction of French first minister, Cardinal André Hercule de Fleury.⁸⁴ With the accession of the Marquis d'Argenson to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1744, after the death of Cardinal Fleury, a coherent foreign policy fell apart. Marechal de Noailles wrote Louis XV: "je ne puis me dispenser de dire à votre Majesté que ses affaires étrangères sont très-mal conduites."⁸⁵ The lack of cooperation between the Ministries of War, Navy, Finance and Foreign Affairs led to the incompetent management of external relations and the formulation of contradictory policies.⁸⁶ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs did not have full and independent authority over external matters. During the *Ancien Régime* French consuls were under the control of the Ministry of Marine. This administrative diversification complicated the decision-making process on matters of foreign policy.

At the level of diplomatic relations between Louisbourg and the English colonies, Saint-Ovide had always been keen to preserve the standard formalities of international etiquette and tried not to intimidate the English officials in any way, even though indirectly and informally he employed the Mi'kmaq, the missionaries and the merchants to annoy the English. In response to a complaint

⁸² Jeremy Black, *Natural and Necessary Enemies, Anglo-French Relations in the Eighteenth Century* (Athens: 1987), p. 19; for the terms of the alliance see p. 11.

⁸³ Jeremy Black, *The Collapse of the Anglo-French Alliance, 1727-1731* (New York: 1987).

⁸⁴ A.M. Wilson, *French Foreign Policy During the Administration of Cardinal Fleury, 1726-1743: A Study in Diplomacy and Commercial Development* (Harvard: 1936); Jeremy Black, "French Foreign Policy in the Age of Fleury Reassessed," *English Historical Review*, vol. CIII, no. 407 (1988), pp. 359-384.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Sir Richard Lodge, *Studies in Eighteenth Century Diplomacy, 1740-1748* (London: 1930), p. 80. See also pp. 81-122 for French foreign relations under D'Argenson.

⁸⁶ F.J. McLynn, *France and the Jacobite Rising of 1745* (Edinburgh: 1981), p. 40.

about a Mi'kmaq assault at Canso. Governor Philipps received a standard diplomatic answer from Louisbourg:

Nous ne pouvons en donner de meilleures preuves que les assurances que nous donnons pour lors que nous allons dépescher des officers avec un détachment pour se rendre sur les Lieux afin de dissiper et de chasser autant qu'ils pourroient ces Sauvages, même leur faire rendre ce qu'ils avoient pillé, et que s'il y avoit de français meslés, de les saisir de les punir. Nous n'aurions pu faire rien de plus si ces sauvages avoient commis ces actions sur les sujets du Roy notre maître.⁸⁷

It is clear from this reply that Saint-Ovide chose not to take any punitive action against the Mi'kmaq. He declared that the Natives as military allies were beyond his control, however he would make efforts to distract them from hostilities against the English. In addition, refuting the allegation that he had persuaded the Mi'kmaq to launch the attack, Saint-Ovide said it was the English who irritated and instigated the Mi'kmaq by exerting political pressure on the Acadians, the close allies of the natives, to take the oath of fidelity to the British Crown.⁸⁸ Saint-Ovide, by reversing the charges, attributed the responsibilities for native campaigns to the English. He explained to Major Alexander Cosby at Annapolis Royal, that "il estoit surpris que M. Le Général [governor of Nova Scotia] peut adresser à moy pour réprimer une nation [the Mi'kmaq] dont la plus grande partie habitoit les terres du Roy d'angleterre."⁸⁹ Saint-Ovide was striving to establish a perception that the Anglo-Amerindian conflicts were not his domain but an English domestic matter and, therefore, interference in the internal affairs of foreign colonies was not his business.

⁸⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 197-98, Réponse de Mrs. de Saint-Ovide et de Mézy à la lettre de Mr. Philipps du mois de 7. bre [septembre] sur le pillage de Canceau, 27 septembre, 1720; Extraits can be found on pp. 137v-318.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 197-198.

⁸⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, p. 47v, St. Ovide au ministre, 4 septembre, 1722.

In 1725 when Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence Armstrong of Nova Scotia complained about the supply of arms and ammunition to the Mi'kmaq through the merchants who had come to buy cattle in that province, Saint-Ovide again offered his diplomatic response that he would "punish them severely" if such merchants were brought to his notice.⁹⁰ These are a few examples that depict the style of Saint-Ovide's direction of affairs between Louisbourg and the English colonies.

The administration of external affairs in the North Atlantic region during the 1720s and the 1730s was conducted largely by the Louisbourg government and the period of Saint-Ovide can be described as the heyday of hegemonic foreign policy. In spite of the lack of active assistance from France, he succeeded in thwarting English attempts to monopolise the Canso fishery, expand their territories, and to dismantle the French-American alliance. At the same time, he was able to preserve formal peace between the English and the French. This Janus-faced approach towards the English colonies came to an end in the 1740s, especially with the outbreak of the War of Austrian Succession.

With the conclusion of the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle and the restoration of Louisbourg to France following its occupation (1745-1748), the imperialistic exigencies on the North Atlantic seaboard demanded the resumption of the pre-war policy of external relations.⁹¹ Formal peace and informal warfare under the direction of the colonial governor continued until the declaration of the Seven Years' War between France and Britain. As Max Savelle remarked, French policy for dealing

⁹⁰ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 63.

⁹¹ W.A.B. Douglas, "Nova Scotia and the Royal Navy, 1713-1766," p. 167.

with the threat of English expansion was outlined by the governor, who was familiar with the practical exigencies of the local situation and who could foresee English motives.⁹²

The internal contention between "the men of sword" (military officers) and the "men of pen" (civil officials) in the government of Louisbourg reflected the ineffective metropolitan control over the colonial administration. These conflicts occurred chiefly between the governor and the *commissaire*. We have already discovered that when *Commissaire* Soubras was predisposed to enforcing metropolitan regulations, Governor Costebelle did not show any interest in it. Costebelle was sometimes irritated by Soubras' desire to acquire full independence in the exercise of his powers, and by his encroachment upon the governor's jurisdiction.⁹³ Soubras also came into conflict with Major Lingondes when the latter accused him of being a drunkard and illegal liquor trader.⁹⁴ Distressed and disappointed by these quarrels, Soubras requested his transfer from the colony, but the Ministry wanted him to continue in the post on account of his good service to the Crown and his local popularity.⁹⁵ The appointment of a new governor, Saint-Ovide, in 1717 did not change the relationship between these two officials. Soubras could not accept his role as a subordinate officer,⁹⁶ rather he was finally happy to receive his transfer in April 1718.⁹⁷

⁹² Savelle, *The Origins of American Diplomacy*, pp. 234-35.

⁹³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 190-91, Costebelle, s.d., 1717, provides a brief account of the dissension between the governor and *commissaire*.

⁹⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 265-69, Lingondes, 16 novembre, 1717; MG 1, C11C, vol. 15, p. 152, St. Ovide au ministre, 18 septembre, 1717. Lingondes was a good friend of Costebelle.

⁹⁵ "Soubras, Pierre-Auguste De," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 638.

⁹⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 4, pp. 39-45, Conseil, lettre de Soubras, 30 novembre, 1718.

⁹⁷ It seems from the request submitted to the Ministry by the governor, the general staff, and
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From 1718 to 1739 the civil administration of the colony was dominated by Jacques-Angé Le Normant de Mézy (hereafter Mézy) and his son Sébastien-François-Angé Le Normant de Mézy (hereafter Le Normant). The latter came to the colony along with his father and acted as his leading emissary, particularly after 1725 when he became a member of the Superior Council.⁹⁸ Only a few months after the Mézy's arrival in the colony *Commissaire* Mézy began to cross swords with the governor. He believed that as *commissaire* his powers were separate from and equal to those of the governor and had no intention of acting as a "clerk of the governor."⁹⁹ Mézy took every opportunity to increase and strengthen his powers. His ambition to control the entire administration led to conflict not only with the governor but also with the Superior Council. Antoine Sabatier, Attorney-General of the Council, wrote Mathieu-Benoit Collet, Attorney-General of Quebec, that "il voudroit tout faire, cela le jette aussi quelques fois dans ses erreurs, et c'est le Diable pour s'en relever."¹⁰⁰ Governor Saint-Ovide said that "il est venu ici avec un Esprit Estonnant comme s'il

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prominent citizens of Louisbourg for retaining Soubras in his post that he was an active *commissaire* admired by all people in the colony. No other *commissaire* received this appreciation of his service in Louisbourg's history. MG 1, C11B, vol. 3, pp. 152-52v, Requête, 15 novembre, 1718; "Soubras, Pierre-Auguste De," *op.cit.*, p. 638.

⁹⁸ T.A. Crowley, "Le Normant de Mézy, Jacques-Angé," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 386-389; James S. Pritchard, "Le Normant de Mézy, Sébastien-François-Angé," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 465-468. Le Normant Junior was appointed a clerk at Louisbourg in 1722, promoted to the post of principal clerk in 1728, and was selected member of the Superior Council in 1726. MG 2, C7, vol. 180, p. 16, Mémoire de mes services, 28 mai, 1759.

⁹⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 4, p. 214, Mézy au Conseil de Marine, 10 novembre, 1719.

¹⁰⁰ MG 1, G2, carton 178, pp. 340-41, Sabatier à Collet, 12 juin, 1724; T.A. Crowley, "Sabatier, Antoine," *DBC*, vol. III, p. 622.

devoit lui commander absolument” and he wanted to “vivre dans un esprit d’indépendance, régler le Militaire, la Police, et la Justice.”¹⁰¹

Saint-Ovide had no desire to tolerate the vested ambitions of his colleague. In spite of their differing attitudes and opinions, the first and immediate bone of contention after Mézy’s arrival was the royal instruction regarding the presidency of the Superior Council: “le Gouverneur a sans contredit la première place au Conseil, mais c’est l’Ordonnateur qui doit présider.”¹⁰² Saint-Ovide felt rejected and convinced that this instruction belittled the position of the governor. He continued to attend the Council meetings but refrained from voting as a protest against the *commissaire*’s domineering position in the Council. In terms of the exercise of power the governor was made a “rubber-stamp” to seal the Council’s decisions. Since the governor refused to vote, the military officers followed the example of their commander. When the minister learned about these developments, he ordered Saint-Ovide to either vote and participate in all the Council transactions or to stay out of the Council meetings completely. He was also instructed not to object to the views of other officials unless there was a serious misconduct of procedures in the Council. In such cases he should seek out the co-operation of the *commissaire*.¹⁰³ The altercation between the governor and *commissaire* was generated by the overlapping jurisdictions assigned by the Ministry. This kind

¹⁰¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 4, pp. 211-13v, St. Ovide au Conseil, 28 novembre 1719; *ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 166-70, St. Ovide au Conseil, 22 juin, 1720; *ibid.*, vol. 5, pp. 261-62, Bourville au Conseil, 18 juin, 1720.

¹⁰² MG 1, B, vol. 42, pp. 419-423, Conseil à St. Ovide et de Mézy, 20 septembre, 1720; MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 78-99v, Conseil de Marine, lettre de St. Ovide [16 juin 1720], 20 août, 1720; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 101-106.

¹⁰³ MG 1, B, vol. 52, pp. 571-72v, à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1728; MG 1, C11B, vol. 9, pp. 260-60v, Mémoire au Sujet de Conseil Supérieur de Louisbourg, 1728.

of problem could have been avoided had unambiguous and specific instructions about the definite and distinct positions and powers of colonial officials been forthcoming, but the Ministry did not do anything to bring about such a constitutional reform. On the contrary, as in Canada, it repeatedly issued the same instructions to all governors and intendants or *commissaires*. Hence, the conflicts between local officials became a feature of colonial government.

As presiding officer, Mézy made a few attempts to usurp the powers of the Superior Council. After the assassination of Jean-Antoine Comte d'Agrain at a lumbering site on the Labadeck [Baddeck] river on Isle Royale in 1722, he asked the controller to prepare an inventory of his assets, a procedure formally and normally done by the attorney-general. When Sabatier expressed his resentment, Mézy reminded him that, according to the Marine regulations the *commissaire* had the right to do so. Sabatier explained that only in the absence of an attorney-general could the *commissaire* perform the attorney's duties, although Mézy proceeded with his action which he justified on the basis of the late d'Agrain's contract with the government. He also took legal actions to recover payments for debts. At times he acted as both secretary and judge in the selection of tutors for the children of the town's prominent citizens. These were the regular functions of the Superior Council, but Mézy desired to exercise all of them.¹⁰⁴

Sabatier wrote Attorney-General Mathieu-Benoit Collet at Quebec about Mézy's encroachment upon the jurisdiction of other officials and they discussed the legitimate powers of an *commissaire*.¹⁰⁵ On the basis of the information received from Collet,¹⁰⁶ it was confirmed that

¹⁰⁴ See Crowley, "Government and Interests," p. 322.

¹⁰⁵ MG 1, G2, carton 178, pp. 340-41, Sabatier à Collet, 12 juin, 1724. Along with this letter an anonymous "mémoire au sujet du Conseil Supérieur de Isle Royale" was sent to Collet on the
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the *commissaire*'s administrative involvements had overstepped the prerogatives of the Council which decided to control Mézy. In 1726, when he interfered with the succession of two merchants named Pierre Alain de la Motte and Jean Morin, the Council published two "arrests" which opposed "tous juges de connoitre de l'affaire concernant les successions des feus La Motte et Morin jusqu'à ce qu'il en soit ordonné par le Conseil."¹⁰⁷ The significance of this incident was that it was the local body of administration which tried to stop the *commissaire* from violating the terms of his royal commission and instructions. The Ministry supported Council's decision, but by the time the royal order came from Versailles Mézy's pretensions had already been circumscribed.¹⁰⁸ Disputes over the presidency of the Superior Council continued. Mézy further attempted to involve himself in the matters of military justice, but Saint-Ovide's strong opposition checked him from interfering with the functions of the War Council.¹⁰⁹

(...continued)

same day. It appears that Sabatier must have been the author of this memoir.

¹⁰⁶ Collet said that the jurisdictions of the intendant and *commissaire* were limited to "les fermes du Domaine D'occident, La Compagnie du Castor, le Trésor, Les Magazins du Roy, L'exécution des privilèges accordé par Sa Majesté, Les armements, Equipments des vaisseaux, ou les traittes faites en son nom, et les autres affaires de cette nature, qu'il peut juger en dernier ressort, sauf l'appel au Conseil du Roy." See MG 1, G2, carton 178, registre 1, pp. 312-19, Réponse au mémoire au sujet du Conseil Superieur de l'Isle Royale [par Collet], 1724, see also pp. 297-322.

¹⁰⁷ MG 1, G2, carton 190, p. 55, Arrest, 27 aoust, 1725; For various documents concerning la Motte's and Morin's succession see MG 1, E, vol. 395, n.p; MG 1, B, vol. 52, pp. 72-72v, à St. Ovide et Mézy, 10 juin, 1728.

¹⁰⁸ MG 1, B, vol. 49, pp. 278v-79, à Sabatier, 9 juillet, 1726.

¹⁰⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 78-99v and pp. 166-70, St. Ovide au Conseil, 16 and 22 juin, 1720.

In 1729, when Mézy left for France, his son Le Normant took over the charge of civil administration.¹¹⁰ Saint-Ovide and Le Normant managed to maintain a friendly relationship, but there were some occasions of conflicts as well. Saint-Ovide claimed Le Normant wanted “tout faire par lui-même...Il rend la justice, il fait la police, et l’administration des fonds, de magasins et des troupes.”¹¹¹ At times Le Normant seems to have paid no heed to the governor’s requests. In 1737 the Minister of Marine had to reprimand him for not reimbursing the soldiers assigned by Saint-Ovide to apprehend a deserter in the previous year.¹¹² In spite of such differences, the governor and the *commissaire* acted in unison to permit and to participate in the trade with the English colonies in defiance of metropolitan rules. In 1738 a petition from the fishing community of Isle Royale resulted in the recall of Saint-Ovide and Le Normant from Louisbourg.¹¹³

In 1739 Isaac-Louis de Forant and François Bigot were appointed governor and *commissaire* respectively of Isle Royale. Unfortunately Forant died eight months after his arrival in the colony. Having worked together for only a short period of time, Forant and Bigot displayed the best example of harmonious relationship between two higher officials in the colony. Mourning the death of Forant, *commissaire* Bigot wrote the minister “il a été généralement regretté surtout de

¹¹⁰ MG 1, D2C, vol. 60, p. 7, Ordre du Roi, 1 mai, 1729. Le Normant received the official confirmation of his appointment as *commissaire* only in 1735. MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 211-211v, Provision de p[remi]er co[nseil]ler au c[onseil] superieur de Louisbourg pour Le Normant, 23 mars, 1735 and at pp. 212-212v, commission de subdélégué à Ile Royale pour le Sr. Le Normant, 23 mars, 1735.

¹¹¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 14, pp. 126-129, St. Ovide, 29 novembre, 1733; Pritchard, “Le Normant de Mézy, Sébastien-François-Ange,” p. 465-66.

¹¹² MG 1, B, vol. 65, pp. 465-57, à Le Normant, 16 avril, 1737.

¹¹³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, pp. 304-307, Les habitans pescheurs de L’Isle Royale au ministre, 26 novembre, 1738.

moy, monseigneur, qui connoissoit mieux que personne toutes ses bonnes qualités, la colonie a infiniment perdu...”¹¹⁴ Forant was succeeded by two commandants, as acting-governors, namely Le Prévost Du Quesnel and Louis Du Pont Duchambon before the siege of Louisbourg in 1745. Each of these officers maintained a cordial relationship with Bigot.

François Bigot, in the work of T.A. Crowley, was a good civil administrator, very punctual, kept accurate accounts of financial matters and there were no allegations of corruption filed against him during his period of office at Louisbourg.¹¹⁵ This perception of Bigot, who became the most controversial intendant of New France, may be questioned for many reasons. In 1748 the Portuguese Jewish family of David Gradis in Bordeaux formed a trading company with Bigot at Quebec. His son, Abraham Gradis wrote his cousin Moise Gradis in Paris that Bigot had become rich by the time he was posted to Quebec as intendant.¹¹⁶ One may ask “why was the Crown charged over 33,000 *livres* for outfitting the coast guard *Le Success* in 1744 when according to Bigot’s financial statement that autumn J. B. Lannelongue had rented the schooner ... for only 6,300 *livres*?”¹¹⁷ Later in 1763 Bigot wrote that he “was loath to accept this position [of *commissaire*]

¹¹⁴ MG I, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 149-150v, Bigot au ministre, 29 mai 1740. The minister also expressed grief over Forant’s death: “J’ay été très touché M[onsieur] de la mort de M. de Forant.” MG I, B, vol. 70, pp. 418-18v, à Bigot, 21 septembre, 1740; En Collaboration, “Forant, Isaac-Louis De,” *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 232-34.

¹¹⁵ Crowley, “Government and Interests,” p. 223.

¹¹⁶ *RAPQ*, 1944-45, vol. XXV, p. 287, Abraham Gradis à Moise Gradis, 9 mars, 1759; R. Menkis, *The Gradis Family of Eighteenth Century Bordeaux: A Social and Economic Study* (Facsimile of a 1988 Ph.D thesis, Michigan: 1990), pp. 193-245.

¹¹⁷ This incident is cited in Crowley, “Government and Interests,” pp. 223-24, but he failed to see any possibility of corruption; see also J.F. Boshier and J.C. Dubé, “Bigot, François,” *DCB*, vol. IV, p. 60.

although he knew it would offer him exceptional opportunities for enriching himself, but that he took it at the personal solicitation of the minister, and because it was necessary to have served a term in one of the colonies in order to qualify for the intendency post of a naval port in France."¹¹⁸

This professed reluctance, as Adam Shortt described, was a diplomatic afterthought. It is not unreasonable to doubt his innocence when one considers his relationship with Arnaud de La Porte who became the chief clerk of the colonies in 1738, a year before Bigot was appointed *commissaire*. It was La Porte who protected the Bigot-Gradis business enterprise.¹¹⁹ The Gradis members similarly had close relations with officials at Versailles. Whenever he visited Paris, it was customary for Abrahams Gradis to spend many hours talking and dining with Jean-Augustin Accaron, chief

¹¹⁸ Adam Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to Canadian Currency, Exchange and Finance During the French Period* (Ottawa: 1925), vol. II, p. 765. Using public office for private gain was not illegal at the time. John F. Boshier is of the opinion that Shortt had the clearest and soundest view on the subject. J.F. Boshier, "The French Government's Motives in the *Affaire du Canada*, 1761-1763," *English Historical Review*, vol. XCVI, no. 378 (1981), pp. 59-78, at p. 60, fn. 4. In Canada Intendant François de Beauharnois (1702-1705) was recalled because of his "commercial involvements," and Gilles Hocquart (1731-1748) had investments in Etienne Cugnet's iron works at Saint-Maurice.

¹¹⁹ In 1761 Bigot was arrested and imprisoned at Bastille on the basis of serious accusations of financial corruption, abuse of power, and other administrative malpractices during his office as Intendant in Canada and royal orders were issued for his trial. There were fifty-four other people who were associates of Bigot accused of corruption and brought to prison. A Commission of twenty-seven judges was created with Antoine de Sartine as its president for their trial, which took fifteen months for legal procedures to reach a conclusion. For Bigot, the verdict of the Commission was lifelong banishment, a fine of 1,000 *livres*, a restitution of 1,500,000 *livres*, and confiscation of his property. (Historian Adam Shortt noted that at the time of the sale of his property there was fierce competition between rich families of France to obtain his exceptionally artistic silver plates which had graced his famous dinners at Quebec.) For the trial of Bigot and his associates see Pierre Georges Roy, *Bigot et Sa Bande et l'Affaire du Canada* (Levis: 1950); Guy Frégault, *François Bigot*, pp. 341-388; Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to... the French Period*, vol. II, pp. 765-71; J.F. Boshier & J.C. Dubé, "Bigot, François," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 59-71; see also some of the important documents: MG 7, II, vol. 12111, p. 247, Note sur F. Bigot, sa culpabilité et les sanctions, s.d., vol. 12146, part 2, p. 307, Liste des prisonniers du Canada, 29 juin, 1763. In this series vols. from 12110 to 12582 describe "the Affaires du Canada" and "the Affaires de l'Isle Royale".

clerk of the Bureau of Colonies, and Joseph Pellerin, *fils*, chief clerk of the Bureau of Police, and other officials. He also acted as a safe-keeper of Bigot's finances, which was discovered in 1761 when he had been holding 279,400 *livres* hidden in his account. J.F. Boshier and J.C. Dubé pointed out that if the minister wished to bring Bigot to trial for corruption "there would have been plenty of testimony against him at any time during his career in Louisbourg and Canada," but nothing happened until his arrest on 17 November, 1761.¹²⁰ These events bring into question the role and efficiency of the metropolitan government in the administration of the colony. In the first place, it appears that the chief clerks and colonial officials could decide the course of daily administration overseas without the knowledge of the king and the minister. Secondly, any colonial official could reasonably be suspected of engaging in some commercial activity on the side in order to compensate for inadequate salaries. Bigot later defended himself by saying that officers commanding colonies had always enjoyed that possibility, nevertheless he kept his activities secret because of his *état*, or status.¹²¹

In the 1750s, conflicts within the colonial administrative apparatus reached a peak between Governor Jean Louis Comte de Raymond and *Commissaire* Jacques Prévost de La Croix. Apart from their personal differences, Prévost's extensive commercial alliances and corrupt administration provoked not only the governor but even the *commissaire's* own staff. Chevalier de Johnstone accused Prévost of colluding with Louisbourg's merchant families such as the Rodrigues and the

¹²⁰ Boshier and Dubé, "Bigot, François," pp. 68-69.

¹²¹ MG 7, IA2, vol. 11342, p. 233, Bigot à Berryer, 25 octobre, 1759. In Britain the situation was little different. Sir Peter Warren made money on the side by trading, speculating in land, investing and selling captured prizes. See Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral*.

Carrerots, as well as with the chief clerk of the Bureau des Colonies, Arnaud de La Porte. Johnstone explained:

Nous n'étions long tems à Louisbourg avant d'apprendre la puissante protection de l'Iphigenie: Rodrigue [sic] étoit en Société avec M. de Prévost Commissaire Ordonnateur à Isle Royale et celui cy avec M. de la Porte premier commis du bureau de la Marine, ainsi, il n'est pas étonnant que les Inspecteurs à Rochfort fermerent les yeux sur l'état de Bâtimens qu'on frettoit pour le Roi.¹²²

The association with Antoine Rodrigue and his brother Michel Rodrigue put him in touch with Pierre-François Goossens, a member of a Dutch family settled in Bilbao, who moved to Paris and became naturalised in 1743. Goossens and Michel Rodrigue formed a fishing company in 1750 with a number of anonymous shareholders for the exploitation of Louisbourg trade with the Antilles. At the same time they worked in association with Dutch merchant bankers, especially Jean-Baptiste Vandenguer in Paris. There was, in fact, a network of financiers and entrepreneurs in collaboration with royal officials, which controlled and profited from the supply trade and other commercial ventures with the colonies.¹²³

Prévost was working in collaboration with the *Société du Canada* of Bigot and the Gradis.¹²⁴ In 1751 the Store Keeper at Louisbourg, Pierre-Jérôme Lartigue, informed the minister

¹²² MG 18, J10. Memoirs of the Chevalier de Johnstone, p. 290.

¹²³ These extensive financial networks, which crossed national and religious boundaries are examined in J.F. Boshier, "Financing the French Navy in the Seven Years' War," *Business History*, vol. XXVIII (1986), pp. 115-133, and "A Fishing Company of Louisbourg, Les Sables d'Olonne and Paris," *FHS*, vol. IX, no. 2 (1975), pp. 263-277.

¹²⁴ Kenneth Donovan, "The Gradis Collection and the Interpretation of Jewish History at Louisbourg" (unpublished manuscript, Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1988). Governor Raymond also had private business relations with the Gradis. The Gradis documents are available at NAC, in series MG 18, H63 (F. 1601, F. 1621, and F. 1623). I did not obtain permission from Henri Gradis in France in order to consult them.

that Intendant Bigot had despatched a Bordeaux ship named *La Renommée* loaded with flour to Louisbourg, which was usually used by the Gradis family to transport provisions to Quebec. When the cargo was weighed by Lartigue in the presence of Controller Séguin, they discovered that it was short 46 quintals. This was reported to Prévost, but he replied that it might have been caused by incorrect weighing and therefore the *commissaire* would take care of it. What actually happened was that Prévost had already met with the captain of the ship and settled the matter without their knowledge.¹²⁵ In 1752 Prévost claimed 20,000 *livres* for the transportation of the Acadians to Isle Royale, but Governor Raymond and Major Michel Le Courtois de Surlaville alleged that Prévost used this amount for purchasing beef from New England on Bigot's account.¹²⁶

Between Raymond and Prévost the main issue of contention was the latter's corrupt financial management and suspect relations with Bigot and his company of traders. As a result of a substantial number of grievances sent by the governor and other officials from the colony, the Minister of Marine Antoine-Louis Rouillé Comte de Jouy ordered Prévost in 1754 to submit all accounts of his commercial and financial administration and explanations for the spiralling

¹²⁵ MG 1, E, vol. 258, n.p., Lartigue au ministre, 15 septembre, 1751.

¹²⁶ T.A. Crowley, "Prévost de La Croix, Jacques," *DCB*, vol. IV, p. 645. For discrepancies noted by Surlaville in the financial administration see MG 18, F 30, *Troupes de Isle Royale [papiers Surlaville]* n.p., copie de total des fonds de l'année 1752; note sur l'état des fonds de l'année 1752 et de celle de 1753; MG 1, C11B, vol. 34, pp. 240-44, Raymond à Rouillé, 6 juillet, 1754.

Prévost had a long and intimate friendship with Bigot which began when the latter was *commissaire* at Louisbourg. Following the death of Sabatier, who was settling the accounts of the colony after the capture of Louisbourg, Prévost was selected to continue this work in 1747 on the recommendation made by Bigot. Later, Prévost was appointed his subdelegate based on a further recommendation. Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to...French Period*, vol. II, p. 812.

expenditure.¹²⁷ Meanwhile, Rouillé, who granted several lucrative contracts to the Goossens company for naval supplies, was deposed from office and subsequently no action was taken to obtain Prévost's report. When the new minister, Jean-Baptiste de Machault, took over the office, he too ordered an investigation into the affairs of Prévost and Bigot, but it is not surprising that the charge of Prévost's malfeasance was lost in the process of examination. It can be suspected that the chief clerk La Porte, who had been a protector of Prévost, might have concealed the documents from the minister. The subject was not referred to again until after the fall of Louisbourg.

During the course of these events the quarrels between the governor and the *commissaire* worsened considerably. Prévost used all his power to isolate the governor and his staff. He even treated his own staff reprehensively for opposing him. He sent repeated complaints about the "misconduct" of Store Keeper Lartigue, whereby he was eventually removed from his post in 1753. In his place, the *commissaire* appointed his own friend Jean-Baptiste Morin, a Protestant who married the daughter of Marine Treasurer, Jean de Laborde, in 1749.¹²⁸ Morin and Laborde were associated with Michel Daccarrette and Elie Allenet, thus forming an influential Huguenot clique in the colony. In an attempt to discredit Lartigue and his friend Séguin, the Controller, Prévost turned to Bigot for support as he too was in close relationship with the Huguenot and Jewish investors.¹²⁹ Séguin opposed the nomination of Morin to the post of store keeper because of his collusion with *commissaire* Prévost. He reported to the minister the details of Morin's connivance

¹²⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 99, p. 264, Rouillé à Prévost, 1 juillet, 1754.

¹²⁸ MG 1, B, vol. 97, pp. 316 and vol. 99, p. 262, à Prévost, 17 juillet, 1753, and 1 juillet, 1754.

¹²⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, p. 425, Bigot à Prévost, 25 octobre, 1753; MG 1, C11A, vol. 93, p. 352, Bigot à Rouillé, 30 octobre, 1754.

to sell his friends' merchandises to government. The minister ordered his dismissal, but Prévost with the support of Intendant Bigot defended Morin successfully.¹³⁰ Prévost further disturbed Raymond's friend, Lawrence-Dominique de Meyracq, presiding judge of the Admiralty Court, who was married to Jeanne Lartigue, daughter of Joseph Lartigue. Since he was dubious of Meyracq's activities, Prévost appointed his own subdelegate in the outports to spy on him and examine the enforcement of the maritime regulations.¹³¹ As the Ministry did not take any action against Prévost, Governor Raymond applied for his transfer from Louisbourg.

After the fall of Louisbourg in 1758 Prévost departed for France. Before going to Paris he spent some time at La Rochelle to work on the accounts and papers of his department of Louisbourg. In this work he was assisted by Jean de Laborde, former treasurer of the colony. Discovering the discrepancies in the accounts Laborde accused Prévost of stealing funds from the treasury.¹³² For this fraud Laborde had been considered responsible and had been questioned while he was in Louisbourg. When the facts were finally disclosed, the minister asked Antoine de Sartine, who was then investigating the affairs of Bigot, to arrest Prévost. He was arrested and sent to the Bastille along with his papers. Laborde was also imprisoned despite his attempts to justify his position.¹³³

¹³⁰ T.J.A. Le Goff, "Morin de Fonfay, Jean-Baptiste," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 558-59.

¹³¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, p. 444, Prévost au ministre, 25 décembre, 1753.

¹³² Shortt, ed., *Documents Relating to...the French Period*, vol. II, p. 815; MG 7, II, vol. 12200, part 2, pp. 438-47, Mémoire du S. Jean de La Borde...pour justifier sa gestion à Messieurs les trésoriers généraux des colonies, 18 novembre, 1760.

¹³³ *Ibid.* p. 815; MG 7, II, vol. 12480, pp. 21-22, Notes indiquant les dates d'incarcération de Laborde et Prévost, s.d [1763]; *ibid.*, vol. 12200, pp. 24-29, Interrogatoire de Laborde par le
(continued...)

These internal dissensions reflected the ineffectiveness of the Ministry of Marine and Colonies in supervising the colonial administration. The Ministry failed to make the necessary amendments to royal directives that would eliminate the overlapping of jurisdictions and specify each official's distinct portfolios and positions. It was considered in general that for a proper and effective government, the colonial administration was to be entrenched in a system of checks and balances.¹³⁴ In practice this system had little impact on the efficacy of the administration as it simply meant that the Ministry should be informed of the alleged wrongdoings of a few officials in the colony. The Ministry had been lethargic about taking any preventive or punitive measures against offenders.¹³⁵ Serious complaints and allegations were investigated but decisions were normally taken only after prolonged deliberations and could be delayed indefinitely.

The distance between the colony and the mother country stood as an additional hindrance to the effective metropolitan supervision of the local government. Isle Royale was not cut off from the *métropole* during the winter months as was Canada, nevertheless communications were often

(...continued)

commissaire Rochebrune - accusations portée contre Prévost etc., 26 mars, 1763.

¹³⁴ MG 4, A4 [serie provisoire], article 241, chapitre 3, p. 136-38, Mémoire sur l'administration de la marine et des colonies, s.d.

¹³⁵ Despite a large number of complaints against Saint-Ovide and Le Normant, no action was taken by the Ministry until a mass petition was sent in 1738. See MG 1, C11B, vol. 10, 22-37v, Conseil sur le commerce étranger de Isle Royale, 7 mai, 1728; MG 1, B, vol. 51, pp. 62-63v, au Comte de Toulouse, 3 août, 1728; MG 1, C11B, vol. 20, pp. 304-307, Les habitans pêcheurs de l'Isle Royale au ministre, 26 novembre, 1738; *ibid.*, pp. 330-37 Le vasseur au ministre, 31 décembre, 1738.

erratic.¹³⁶ Consequently local officials were left to take their own decisions on urgent matters and only later was the Ministry informed of them. This kind of procedure frequently resulted in an alleged abuse of power. In 1724 Mézy informed the minister accusing Governor Saint-Ovide:

Dans l'État et surtout dans les colonies Éloignées de la Cour ou ceux qui ont le commandement outre passent presque tout le pouvoir qui leur est confié, parce qu'ils ont une année devant eux pour se déffendre de leurs vexations qu'ils se tient sur l'éloignement qui diminue la force de plaintes des peuples et de ceux qui'ils font tort et ne se servent souvent de leur pouvoir que pour mettre leurs creatures en place et amasser du bien.¹³⁷

This charge was attributable not only to Saint-Ovide but also to Mézy and to other governors and *commissaires*. In brief, the government of Louisbourg often operated without the effective supervision of the Ministry of Marine in France. In criticising the colonial administrative system, Surlaville wrote in 1761 of the necessity to "changer en entier l'administration générale de nos colonies, dont les défauts sont une des principales causes de leur perte et de leur mauvais État."¹³⁸

It is obvious from the preceding discussions that the hypothesis that colonial administration in terms of commercial, military, political and diplomatic activities functioned considerably from the subaltern level, or from below, is well founded. Whether this was altogether disastrous, as Surlaville claimed, is debatable. The tension between the *métropole* and the colony about matters

¹³⁶ Ken Banks pointed out that Louisbourg occupied a logical and strategic position in the Atlantic network of communications and transportation in the eighteenth century but the system remained inefficient. Ken Banks, "Lente et assez fâcheuse Traversée: Communications and Empire in Three French American Ports, 1713-1763" (paper read at the French Colonial Historical Society Meeting, Cleveland, 1994).

¹³⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 7, p. 56, Mézy au ministre, 22 novembre, 1724.

¹³⁸ MG 4, A4 [serie provisoire], article 1105, pp.1-10, Résumé de réflexions de Surlaville sur les colonies et la marine, 4 novembre, 1761.

concerning policies and decisions, metropolitan inability to control the colonial government, and the frequent lack of political will on the part of the Minister of Marine and Colonies to impose rules on the colony substantiate the view that local administration succeeded in establishing its predominance on several issues.

CHAPTER 5

FRANCE'S AMERINDIAN POLICY AND IMPERIALISM IN THE CONTEXT OF COLONIAL FACTORS

The French, like other Western European colonisers, approached Native peoples with the cultural biases and preconceptions common to their old world. Before the founding of Louisbourg French metropolitan perceptions of Amerindians in New France had undergone a significant change as a result of the feedback from the "New World". France's Amerindian policy clearly demonstrates this transformation. The nature and structure of this policy depended upon the nature of aboriginal peoples, their religious and political systems, cultural assimilability, attitude towards evangelisation, rights of possession, and approaches to colonisation. We will examine how this policy was shaped, or reshaped, and implemented in the colonial context. For this purpose the following discussion examines the exercise of *la mission civilisatrice* and cultural hegemony in terms of the French relationship with the Mi'kmaq, and to some extent with the Malisect and the Abenakis in the North Atlantic seaboard regions in contact with Louisbourg and also in Nova Scotia as the Natives there were under the influence of Louisbourg although the region belonged to Britain.¹

¹ The following discussion in this chapter does not correspond exactly with the period of Louisbourg between 1713 and 1758 as the evolution of the Amerindian policy needs to be explained in a *longue durée* perspective to provide a proper intellectual foundation for understanding.

The historiography generally asserts that the French were able to live in friendship and cooperation with the Native peoples of New France. The exception to the rule in Canada was the tense and sometimes hostile relationship with the Five Nations Iroquois until 1701. The perception that the French relationship in northeastern North America was different from the Anglo-American experience became well established in French, British and even Amerindian thinking. In France this belief was developed into a *genie colonial* thesis which glorified the special capabilities of the French to interact with the Amerindians as unique and magnanimous.² A contemporary French historian and missionary Pierre-François-Xavier de Charlevoix (1682-1761) wrote: "our nation was the only one which has possessed the secret of gaining the affection of the American (Natives)."³ English writings at the same time appear to have agreed with the *genie colonial* thesis as Henry McCulloch stated in 1755 that "the French always had a great advantage over the English in treating with them."⁴ An anonymous writer elucidated: "The French...are careful to gain the affection of these Indians. And according to their superior dexterity in address and civility in usage they are more successful than we in procuring and retaining their friendship."⁵ Thomas Pownall offered a clinical analysis of French-Amerindian relationship in comparison to the Anglo-American approach:

² See Cornelius J. Jaenen, "Characteristics of French-Amerindian Contact in New France" in S.H. Palmer and D. Reinhartz, eds., *Essays on the History of North American Discovery and Exploration* (Texas: 1988), pp. 79-80.

³ P.F.X. Charlevoix, *History and General Description of New France*, vol. I, trans. J.G. Shea (Chicago: 1870), p. 12. For Charlevoix's biography see David M. Hayne, "Charlevoix, Pierre-François-Xavier De," *DBC*, vol. III, pp. 111-117.

⁴ Henry McCulloch, *The Wisdom and Policy of the French in the Construction of Their Great Offices*, (London: 1755), p. 124.

⁵ Anonymous, *The Expediency of Securing Our American Colonies by Settling the Country Adjoining the River Mississippi* (sic)... (Edinburgh: 1763), p. 157.

While the French kept themselves thus allied with the Indians as hunters, and communicated with them in, and strictly maintained all the laws and rights of sporting, the Indians did easily and readily admit them to a local landed possession; a grant which rightly acquired and applied, they are always ready to make, as none of the rights or interests of their nation are hurt by it: While on the contrary, they experience and receive great use, benefit, and profit, from the commerce which the Europeans therein establish with them.

Whereas on the contrary, the English with an insatiable thirst after landed possessions, have gotten deeds and other fraudulent pretences grounded on the abuse of treaties, and by these deeds claim possession even to the exclusion of the Indians, not only from many parts of their hunting grounds, (which with them is a right of great consequence) but even from their house and home, as by particular instances from one end of the continent to the other might be made appear....

On the contrary, the French possessions interfere not with the Indian rights, but aid and assist their interest, and become a means of their support.⁶

The most succinct and eloquent description of the *genie colonial* thesis was presented by historian Francis Parkman: "Spanish civilisation crushed the Indian; English civilisation scorned and neglected him; French civilisation embraced and cherished him."⁷ Thus it was almost unanimously accepted that the French-Amerindian relationship was a unique experience in the history of European colonialism in the Americas.⁸ France's Amerindian policy was instrumental in bringing about this cultural experience. It was not entirely a metropolitan product, but was fundamentally developed

⁶ Thomas Pownall, *The Administration of the Colonies* (London: 1768, New York: 1971 reprint), pp.12-13 and "Considerations upon the Scite, Interests, and Service of North America" in Stanley Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America, 1748-1756* (New York: 1969), pp. 161-62. For other contemporary English commentaries on France's unique approach see Thomas Mante, *The History of the Late War in North-America and the Islands of the West-Indies* (London: 1772, New York: 1970); John Almon, *An Impartial History of the Late War Deduced from the Coming of Hostilities in 1749 to the Signing of the Definitive Treaty of Peace in 1763* (London: 1763).

⁷ Francis Parkman, *The Jesuits in North America in the Seventeenth Century* (Toronto: 1899), vol. I, p. 131.

⁸ For detailed discussion see Jaenen, "Characteristics of French-Amerindian Contact in New France," pp. 79-101; Cornelius J. Jaenen, *The French Relationship with the Native Peoples of New France and Acadia* (Ottawa: 1984), pp. 1-16.

in response to colonial necessities. This policy had both theoretical and practical facets. In terms of the theoretical formulation, metropolitan political, religious, and legal traditions and belief systems played a prominent role in order to justify the overseas programme of cultural imperialism.⁹

In terms of the practicalities of implementation the policy was moulded within the framework of native social and cultural systems as well as with respect to the political, strategic and commercial importance of the colony.

French policy was intended to christianise and civilise the Natives. It was aimed at the cultural assimilation of the Native peoples through *la mission civilisatrice*, which was considered an initial and essential step, a prelude, to the establishment of political hegemony. Cultural ties were a principal factor in Native peoples' decision to support the French in times of war.¹⁰ The primary objective of all European powers was the creation of empire. The English and the Spaniards attained this by subjecting the Native peoples through conventional methods of conquest such as the use of military force, confiscations of lands, and eviction through treaties or brutal mass killings.¹¹ On the other hand, the French in Acadia gained this empire through policies of cultural interaction, ideological indoctrination, and diplomacy. It was a different process of dominance in

⁹ Cornelius J. Jaenen, "France's America and Amerindians: Image and Reality," *History of European Ideas*, vol. VI, no. 4 (1985), pp. 405-20; See also Lewis Hanke, *Aristotle and the American Indians, A Study in Race Prejudice in the Modern World* (Bloomington & London: 1959).

¹⁰ Stephen E. Patterson, "Indian-White Relations in Nova Scotia, 1749-61: A Study in Political Interaction," *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (1993), p. 25.

¹¹ Spain alone decreed in 1542 that all indigenous peoples in its conquered territories unconditionally became "subjects and vassals of the Crown," and as such were required to accept the Catholic religion and adult males were ordered to pay an exorbitant tax or tribute. *Colecion de documentos inéditos relativos al descubrimiento, conquista, y organizacion de las antiguas posesiones espanolas* (Madrid: 1864-84), vol. XXXI, pp. 15-16. I gratefully acknowledge the kindness of Professor Cornelius Jaenen who offered me this reference and interpretation.

which the exercise of conventional practices, particularly the use of formal military power against indigenous populations, played little role.

Urs Bitterli has defined three types of interactions between European and non-European cultures: contacts, collisions and relationships.¹² Pursuant to this typology, Giovanni da Verrazzano's encounters along the Atlantic coast on the orders of King Francis I in 1524 constituted a contact as it was an initial short-term cultural experience. Samuel de Champlain's decision to accompany Montagnais, Algonkian and Huron warriors on an expedition against Mohawks in 1609 may be categorised as contributing to a situation that could develop into long-term collision.¹³ In the St. Lawrence valley and the *pays d'en haut* above the Great Lakes the French were able to interact with the Native peoples in trade and military alliances that fits Bitterli's category of a relationship. Bitterli concluded:

The French seem to have been past masters in the art of maintaining contacts solemnly at certain times, informally at others; this enabled them, both in West Africa and in North America, to strengthen their position even when they were numerically inferior to their European rivals.¹⁴

The Mi'kmaq-French experience, in Bitterli's categorisation, was a relationship. It constituted a leading aspect of French planning at Louisbourg which could rarely be ignored in the formulation of policy.

¹² Urs Bitterli, *Cultures in Conflict, Encounters Between European and Non-European Cultures, 1492-1800* (Stanford: 1989), p. 20.

¹³ Matthew Dennis, *Cultivating a Landscape of Peace, Iroquois-European Encounters in Seventeenth-Century America* (Ithaca: 1993), pp. 220-23.

¹⁴ Bitterli, *Cultures in Conflict*, p. 42.

The French in Canada, like the Portuguese in Brazil, sought only trade relations with the indigenous inhabitants at the initial phase of colonisation. By the 1530s, the Portuguese colonisers began to enslave Amerindians who lived at a distance from their settlements, while maintaining good relations with nearby groups on whom they depended for food and military assistance. In 1548 King Joao III ordered Governor-General Tomé da Sousa to protect their "liberty" [i.e., non-slavery] by relocating them in communities under Jesuit tutelage.¹⁵ This type of segregated resettlement under Jesuit direction in Paraguay, known as a *reduccione*, was advocated in Canada by Father Paul Le Jeune¹⁶ and implemented at Sillery in 1637. The French *réduction* did not require the displacement of Amerindians, but rather attracted them onto designated religious seigneuries in proximity to major towns such as Montreal, Trois Rivières and Quebec. There were no *réductions* in Acadia or Isle Royale.

French policy with regard to Native peoples was determined by many factors in the eighteenth century, including European political rivals, geography, resources, availability of troops and material support. Amerindian policy on Isle Royale did not conform precisely to those pursued in Canada, much less in Louisiana and the Antilles where the situation was radically different. The same was true of the Spaniards, who in their encounters with large densely populated Amerindian civilizations, such as those of the Aztec, Maya and Inca pursued a ruthless policy of military conquest. Nonetheless, elsewhere, as on the Chilean frontier and in the American South-East

¹⁵ Patricia Seed, "Aboriginal Communities and Nation-States: An Historical Approach" (unpublished paper, Rice University, 1994), pp. 1-28 at p. 16.

¹⁶ Paul Le Jeune, "Relation de ce qui s'est passé en la Nouvelle-France, 1634" in Lucien Campeau, S.J., ed., *Montumenta Novae Franciae II: Etablissement à Québec (1616-1634)* (Quebec: 1979), pp. 559-562; R.G. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France* (New York: 1959), vol. VI, pp. 145-155.

(present day Florida, Georgia, Alabama), after driving out the French in 1565, the Franciscan missionaries extended Spanish sovereignty without the support of armed forces.¹⁷ The French experience in Acadia had been somewhat parallel: local officials and missionaries were those who championed the cause of imperialism. Although they were the “deputies” of the dominant political and religious groups, who exercised the subaltern functions of social and cultural hegemony and political government,¹⁸ they were forced to seek the co-operation of the aboriginal peoples. France’s Amerindian policy was an attempt to accommodate the interests of the Native peoples in tune with its imperial strategy and local conditions .

In the context of the North Atlantic seaboard colonies cultural imperialism was not an exercise of political domination, or other forms of power, to impose and spread the values and habits of a foreign culture at the expense of native culture.¹⁹ France had neither the will nor the power to enforce its laws, military enterprises, or social customs on the Mi’kmaq in the eighteenth century. This study postulates that French cultural imperialism was not an imposition but had as its objective the friendship and co-operation of the Mi’kmaq, Maliseet and the Abenakis. From a long-term perspective it appears that French policy with regard to the Natives was often subject to changes which reflected the colonial situation. As early as the beginning of the seventeenth century France replaced its aggressive agenda of conquest with one of pacification and domination.

¹⁷ John J. TePaske, “Spanish Indian Policy and the Struggle for Empire in the Southeast, 1513-1776” in John B. Elliot, ed., *Contest for Empire, 1500-1775* (Indianapolis: 1975), pp. 25-40.

¹⁸ For this idea I am indebted to Antonio Gramsci. Quintin Hoare and G.N. Smith, eds., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (London: 1971), p. 12.

¹⁹ For a historiographical discussion of cultural imperialism see John Tomlinson, *Cultural Imperialism, A Critical Introduction* (London: 1991); see also A.P. Thornton, *Doctrines of Imperialism* (New York: 1965), p. 187.

Contrary to the royal commission to Jean-François de La Rocque de Roberval, dated 15 January 1541, which instructed him to use “force of arms...and all other hostile means” to establish French control, laws, religion and missions, Pierre du Gua de Mont’s commission of 8 November 1603 authorised him “to establish, extend, and make to be known our [royal] name, might, and authority,” but did not instruct him to use force on the Natives.²⁰

This shift of approach in policy was adopted due to the necessity to establish the fur trade and missionary work, both of which required assistance of the Natives of the colony. The frequently cited article XVII of Charter of the Hundred Associates, granted by Cardinal Richelieu in April 1627, recognised the descendants of French colonists and the Natives who professed the Catholic faith as “naturel françois” who could take up residence in France and enjoy all proprietary rights without being required to obtain a letter of naturalisation.²¹ In practice this contributed no change to the legal status of the converted Amerindians. The local officials discovered that in spite of early desires to impose French laws on them, such as those stipulated in the 1676 Regulation of the Sovereign Council of Quebec,²² it was impossible to do so. The Governor-General the Marquis de Vaudreuil and Intendant Michel Bégon informed the minister in 1713 that French laws had not been imposed. The response from Versailles was that “la matière est fort délicate et doit être traitée

²⁰ H.P. Biggar, ed., *A Collection of Documents Relating to Jacques Cartier and the Sieur de Roberval* (Ottawa: 1930), p. 178; Marc Lescarbot, *Nova Francia. A Description of Acadia, 1606*, trans. P. Erondelle (New York: 1928), “Patent to M. De Monts,” pp. 1-6; James P. Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine*, (Portland: 1901), p. 3, Extracts from the Patent of Acadia to De Monts by Henry IV of France, 8/18 November, 1603.

²¹ *Édits ordonnances royaux, déclarations et arrêts...concernant le Canada*, vol. I, p. 10.

²² *Ibid.*, vol. II, p. 70.

doucement” so that the local situation would remain unaffected.²³ These were the relevant precedents which illustrate the transformation of France’s political attitude to the Natives.

By the time the colony of Isle Royale was established in 1713, France’s policy with regard to the Mi’kmaq, Maliseet and Abenakis had functioned for over a century and had attained maturity and clarity in its approach. Despite this dynamic development, there remained a conviction in the *métropole* that the French possessed a superior “civility” in social, political, economic and religious organisations and activities and the Natives were “sauvages, sans foy, sans loy, sans religion, sans civilité aucune, mais vivans comme bestes irraisonnables...”²⁴ This perception of savagery was refuted by some of the French - missionaries and other intellectuals - in the colonies.²⁵ They

²³ MG 1, C11A, vol. 34, pp. 23-26, Vaudreuil et Bégon au ministre, 5 novembre, 1713; MG 1, B, vol. 36 (6), pp. 28-29, Mémoire du Roy au Sr. le Marquis de Vaudreuil et Bégon, 19 mars, 1714.

²⁴ André Thevet, *Les Singularitez de la France antarctique nommée Amérique et de plusieurs terres et isles découvertes de nostre temps* (Paris: 1558, 1878), pp. 134-35.

²⁵ Lahontan, rejecting the description of the Natives as wild and hairy savages, wrote: “ceux qui ont dépeint les sauvages velus comme des ours, n’en avoient jamais vû.” Quoted in O.P. Dickason, “The Myth of the Savage and the Beginning of French Colonialism in the Americas” (Ph.D thesis, University of Ottawa, 1976), p. 131. Marc Lescarbot said: “they [the Mi’kmaq] are well-limbed, well-boned and well-bodied and robust in proportion.” Marc Lescarbot, *The History of New France by Marc Lescarbot*, trans., ed., W.L Grant (Toronto: 1907), vol. III, p. 146. He also pointed out that, contrary to the common belief, “they are not void of those virtues that are found in men of civility... They have courage, fidelity, generosity, and humanity and their hospitality is so innate and praiseworthy ... So that if we commonly call them savages, the word is abusive and unmerited.” *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp. 32-33; Marc Lescarbot, *Nova Francia: A Description of Acadia, 1606*, trans. P. Erondelle (New York: 1928), p. 260. Missionary Biard wrote: “I say, as far as we know, for we have never seen anything except always great respect and love among them [Mi’kmaq]; which was a great grief to us when we turned our eyes upon our own shortcomings.” Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, vol. III, p. 93. Joseph François Lafitau stated that “the discovery of America was so startling to the scholars...the first thing they wanted to know was if the Indians belonged to the race of Adam.” Joseph François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times*, trans., ed., W.N. Fenton and Elizabeth L. Moore, 2 vols. (Toronto: 1974), vol. I, p. 42. Missionary Antoine
(continued...)

projected an image of a “noble savage” which exerted considerable influence on metropolitan political, religious, philosophical and literary works. Robert Berkhofer Jr. suggested “that the Indians north of Mexico came to loom large in the French image of the noble savage must be ascribed mainly to the voluminous *Relations* of the Jesuits.”²⁶ Both the metropolitan and colonial authorities believed that the Native peoples required christianising and civilising processes for their cultural and spiritual development. As Hans Kohn observed “inequality in the level of civilisation and civilising energy are the very essence of imperialism.”²⁷ The idea of “noble savage” was a symbolic representation of the strategic shift made by the missionaries to locate the Native peoples in the structure of a Christian system of beliefs and practices and, hence, to impose hegemony over them. This idea, an attempt to discover a rational being in the Amerindian, an indicator of the possibility of Amerindian progress, and a theoretical outline for the enunciation of France’s policy of *la mission civilisatrice*, evolved in the colony from its embryonic stage.

The first missionary in the region was a secular priest Jéssé Fléché, who came to Port Royal with Jean de Biencourt de Poutrincourt in 1610. Within a year after his arrival in the colony Fléché had baptised about one hundred and thirty Mi’kmaq, among them the famous Mi’kmaq chief Membertou and his family.²⁸ Following Fléché, two Jesuits, Pierre Biard and Enemond Massé,

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Gaulin remarked that the Mi’kmaq naturally practice many of the Christian moral principles. MG 1, K, carton 1232, no. 4, p. 12, Gaulin, 1720.

²⁶ Robert F. Berkhofer jr., *The White Man’s Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: 1978), p. 74.

²⁷ Hans Kohn, *Nationalism and Imperialism in the Hither East* (London: 1932), p. 62.

²⁸ Mass baptisms were commonplace in Catholic missions at the time of contact. In southern
(continued...)

began missionary work on a firm footing at Port Royal although in 1616 both missionaries left their establishment. Subsequently, in the 1630s, six Capuchins were despatched to Acadia, but by 1655 all of them were obliged to leave the colony on account of armed conflicts between Charles de Menou d'Aulnay and Charles de La Tour and due to several English assaults.²⁹ One of the longest missions was established by Father Martin de Lyonne at Chedabucto in 1657 which remained for more than thirty years. Father Chrestien Le Clercq also began a mission in Gaspesia in 1676, where he stayed for nearly a decade.³⁰ There was, however, little continuous missionary contact during the seventeenth century.³¹ Versailles did not accord it much support or encouragement as Acadia was considered a marginal area.

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Brazil and Paraguay the Jesuits had as their objective acquiring the favour of a few native leaders and then the baptism of several thousands at a time. Within two years they baptised two thousand Natives at the *reducciones* of Lorcto and San Ignacio. Barbara Ganson, "The Footprints of Saint Thomas: Jesuits and Guarani Interactions during the Seventeenth Century" (unpublished manuscript, 1995), p. 89. At Port Royal in Acadia Father Jéssé Fléché baptised twenty-one Mi'kmaq on June 24, St. John the Baptist's Day, in 1610. Lescarbot, *The History of New France*, vol. III, pp. 37-39; Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. I, pp. 199-113; vol. IV, p. 87. W.J. Eccles says that "Fléché was not the first priest to reside in Acadia. A Roman priest and a Huguenot pastor had been at Port Royal with Champlain, but they had served only the members of the trading venture and spent much of their time disputing with each other until they both succumbed to scurvy. They were buried in a common grave by the irreverent crew, who desired to see if they could abide each other in death, not having done so while alive." W.J. Eccles, *France in America* (Vancouver/ Toronto: 1973), p. 16.

²⁹ Jaenen, *The French Relationship*, pp. 57-58. The conflicts between Charles de La Tour and Charles de Menou d'Aulnay, both of whom had received seigneurial rights from the Crown over jurisdiction came to an end in 1653 with the marriage of La Tour to d'Aulnay's widow. John G. Reid, *Acadia, Maine and New Scotland* (Toronto: 1981), pp. 47-56, 92-111.

³⁰ Chrestien Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, trans., ed., W.F. Ganong (Toronto: 1910), pp. 5-6.

³¹ For a detailed study of early missionary activity see William C. Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: Mi'kmaq Society, 1500-1760" (Ph.D. thesis, McGill University, 1994), pp. 309-330.

Following the cession of Acadia to the English in 1713 missionary activities became regular and assiduous among the Mi'kmaq and other Amerindians. As the new political situation made the Natives far more valuable than ever they had been under direct French rule, Versailles began to exhibit unprecedented interest in native affairs of the region. This occurred as a result of information received from New France that the missionaries in the Maritime region would continue to hold a key political position, unlike the situation in the upper country of Canada. A typical despatch read:

Comme ils [Mi'kmaq] sont tous Catholiques et attachez à leur religion comme il paroît par la dernière response qu'ils ont faits aux propositions des anglois, les missionaires se serviront toujours utilement de ce motif pour les empêcher de se déclarer contre les françois.³²

In the eighteenth century, officials at Quebec came to rely increasingly on military officers, rather than on missionaries, as diplomatic agents among the Amerindians.³³ In the Acadian region, the situation was quite different as French officials relied on missionaries and inter-cultural contacts. Governor-General Vaudreuil depended almost entirely on the military officers in the *pays d'en haut* to carry out his orders, establish cordial relations with the original inhabitants and for intelligence services, whereas on the eastern frontier he sought the assistance of missionaries such as Father Sébastien Rasle and *métis* leaders such as Bernard-Anselme d'Abbadie de Saint-Castin.

The governor of Isle Royale was assigned indisputable power to deal with the Natives. Under his direction the missionaries were in charge of developing a well-founded plan of action and

³² MG I, C11A, vol. 35, p. 212, Bégon au ministre, 25 septembre, 1715.

³³ This is the situation clarified in Peter Lawrence Cook, "Les Voyes de Douceur et d'Insinuation, French-Amerindian Diplomacy on New France's Western Frontier, 1703-1725" (M.A. thesis, University of Ottawa), pp. 108-116.

policy at the local level of the imperial system. The first and foremost duty of a missionary, in the words of Abbé Maillard, was that he:

must incessantly excite them to the practice of acts of religion, and labour to render them tractable, social and loyal to the King [of France]. But especially I apply myself to make them to live in good understanding with the French.³⁴

The religion they presented to the Mi'kmaq consisted of the basic principles of Catholicism, yet it would appear that to the Mi'kmaq Christianity meant little beyond sharing rituals and prayers. Father Pierre Biard, who had laboured in Acadia from 1611 to 1613, quickly concluded that they had accepted baptism "solely as a sign of friendship with the Normans, for this they call us."³⁵ Catechism was taught them in the native language. Abbé Antoine Gaulin and his assistant Michel Courtin translated the catechism and other elementary instructional books into the Mi'kmaq language.³⁶ Abbé Maillard, after his arrival in the colony in 1735, employed hieroglyphics for teaching the Mi'kmaq.³⁷ This enabled the somewhat literate Mi'kmaq to learn the prayers, chants

³⁴ Antoine Simon Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmakis and the Maricheets. Savage Nations. Now Dependent on the Government of Cape Breton* (London: 1758), p. 2; "Lettre du M. l'Abbé Maillard" in H. Casgrain ed., *Les Soirées Canadiennes* (Québec: 1863), vol. III, p. 294.

³⁵ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. III, p. 147; vol. LXVII, p. 175.

³⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 249v, *Mémoire sur les Mikmaques*, s.d.

³⁷ "Lettre du M. l'Abbé Maillard," *op.cit.*, pp. 355-56. Maillard had an exceptional talent in learning the native language. He said: "in truth I may venture to say, without presumption, that I talk the Micmaki language as fluently and as elegantly as the best of their women, who most excel in the point." Le Loutre commented about his Mi'kmaq language teacher Maillard: "I spent the winter with a good teacher...to whom... the Lord has given the gift of languages." Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners...*, p. 3; Norman Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," *CHR*, vol. XI, no.2 (1930), p. 109. See also MG 7, A1, vol. 18, n.p., *Rudiment de la langue mikemak XVIIIe siècle*, s.d. Another missionary in Canada Father Allouez was able to understand six Indian languages. Marie de l'Incarnation, *Word From New France: The Selected Letters of Marie de l'Incarnation*, trans., ed., (continued...)

and lessons by reading in their own tongue.³⁸ It also enabled the missionaries to retain a kind of censorship so long as the Mi'kmaq were incapable of reading French. Abbé Maillard explained:

s'ils étaient une fois en état de se servir, comme nous, de notre alphabet, soit pour lire, soit pour écrire, ils abuseraient infailliblement de cette science, par cet esprit de curiosité que nous leur connaissons, qui les domine pour chercher avec empressement à savoir plutôt les choses mauvaises que les bonnes.³⁹

In addition to learning the native language, the missionaries appear to have become much like the "savages," following their life style in some way or another in order "to win them to Jesus Christ." Abbé Gaulin after twenty years of service described himself as "un pauvre mikmack."⁴⁰ The missionaries had formulated a policy of cultural relativism by trying to make adjustments to native customs and traditions as a means to attract the Natives. In Canada this policy had been in practice from 1642 but it was not until the eighteenth century that it became imperative to the seaboard colonies. The ecclesiastical and state authorities in France had reservations about such an approach,

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Joyce Marshall (Toronto: 1967). p. 361. Before Maillard, Father Le Clercq had developed Mi'kmaq hieroglyphics. See Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, pp. 21-31, 126, 132.

³⁸ MG 7, A1, vol. 23, pp. 1-8, Prières en langue micmac, s.d. *ibid.*, vol. 34, n.p [2 pages], Fragment d'un livre de prières catholiques traces avec les hieroglyphs de Indiens Micmac de terre neuve, s.d; MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 249-54, Mémoire sur les missions des sauvages Mikmak et de L'Acadie s.d. [1739?]. As early as the late 1670s Father Le Clercq noted that "some of these Indians...have in short time become philosophers and pretty good theologians." He also mentioned two Gaspesian girls who learned reading and writing from the Ursulines of Quebec. Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, p. 125. Information about the Mi'kmaq literacy rate is unavailable.

³⁹ "Lettre du M.l'Abbé Maillard," *op.cit.*, p. 358. For a discussion see, Micheline D. Johnson, *Apôtres ou Agitateurs: la France missionnaire en acadie* (Trois Rivières: 1970), pp. 80-85.

⁴⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 4, pp. 132-37, Gaulin à St. Ovide, 17 novembre, 1719; One memoir described Gaulin's life: "il mange souvent du poisson et de la viande sans pain, couche sur la neige, souffre l'extreme foit porte actuellement des souliers à la sauvage faite des peaux de loups marins." "Documents inédits: Description du Port Dauphin," *RHAF*, vol. XIII, no. 3 (1959), pp. 431-32.

but colonial officials did not interfere with the missionaries' convictions. In 1723, during his visit to an Abenaki village, Father Sébastien Rasle commented: "we must indeed conform to their manners and customs, so as to deserve their confidence and win them to Jesus Christ."⁴¹ Ethno-historian Kenneth M. Morrison pointed out that in the context of Anglo-French rivalry the Jesuits, in particular Father Rasle, lobbied for a reorientation of French policy that would bring imperial strategy in line with what they deemed to be the native interests.⁴² Indicating the validity of pragmatic policies of Christianisation, Abbé Maillard said: "I adapt myself to their taste...I borrow the most lively images from those objects of nature, with which they are so well acquainted."⁴³ The Amerindian policy in terms of evangelisation was thus reshaped by the missionaries. The local agenda of cultural relativism reflected not only the influence of the Natives on missionary policy and practice but also the respective independence of the missionaries in the region. Most did not belong to religious orders and, therefore, were not closely supervised by superiors or provincial directors. They were at the same time far removed from the control the Bishop of Québec. Instead of being held in obedience to any particular congregational directives they acted as innovators in the field and sought to have their views adopted by the civil authorities.

At the outset, the missionaries were highly confident about the success of the conversion of the Native peoples. This optimism was ensconced in a common belief that the Natives' minds were *tabulae rasae* having no knowledge of religious or spiritual life, nor of any form of organised

⁴¹ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, p. 141 and for the thesis of cultural relativism in the Canadian context propounded by Father Vimont in 1642 see vol. XXIII, p. 207-209.

⁴² Kenneth M. Morrison, *The Embattled North-east: The Elusive Ideal of Alliance in Abenaki-Euroamerican Relations* (Berkeley: 1984), p. 164.

⁴³ Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 3.

and institutionalised belief systems or ceremonies. They were thought to be in a primitive stage of social evolution possessing only a rudimentary conception of spiritual truth. At the same time they were considered open-minded, responsive and receptive, with elementary qualities of goodness, and therefore predisposed to accept the Gospel.⁴⁴ As early as 1534 Jacques Cartier had proposed that “these people would be easy to convert to our holy faith.” During his second voyage he read selected passages from the Bible and distributed religious materials to the Natives and prayed for the healing of the sick at the island of Montreal.⁴⁵ André Thevet wrote that the Native peoples:

demeuras tousjours nuds tant hommes que femmes, jusques à tant, peut estre, qu’ils seront hantez des Chrestiens, dont ils pourront peu à peu despouiller ceste brutalité, pour vestir d’une façon plus civile et plus humaine.⁴⁶

Such early positive assessments encouraged evangelisation.

To a great extent the relationship with the Mi’kmaq proved French optimism concerning the conversion of the Natives to be empirically grounded. From the first establishment of permanent French settlements in the Maritime regions the missionaries began to meet with the Mi’kmaq and convert them to Christianity. Unlike evangelisation efforts in Canada, Acadia was not a scene of large scale missionary campaigns. As we have noted earlier, it would appear that the mass conversion of the Mi’kmaq was more an acknowledgement on their part of the alliance with the French than a renunciation of their traditional beliefs in favour of Catholicism. The British had to

⁴⁴ Jaenen, *The French Relationship*, p. 59.

⁴⁵ H.P. Biggar, ed., *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (Ottawa: 1924), pp. 56, 150-51, 164-66, *passim*. Christopher Columbus similarly concluded from his first meeting with the Indians that “they would easily be made Christians, for it appeared to me that they had not creed.” Quoted in Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man’s Indian*, p. 118.

⁴⁶ Thevet, *Les Singularitez de la France*, p.135.

concede that this association with the French could not be easily broken, even in peninsular Nova Scotia which was under British control after 1710. Governor Richard Phillips informed the Lords of Trade:

I never dismissed them [the Mi'kmaq] without presents (which they always expect) for which I am out pocket one hundred & fifty pounds. But I am convinced that a hundred thousand will not buy them from the french interest while the Priests are among them, who have got in with them by the way of religion & brought them to regular confessions twice a year, they assemble punctually at those times & receive their absolution conditionally that they be always Enemyes to the English.⁴⁷

Even if the Board of Trade had been less parsimonious in offering presents, it is doubtful the Mi'kmaq or Abenakis would have renounced their special relationship with the French. The Mi'kmaq were increasingly incensed by the incursions of Massachusetts fishermen into their traditional fishing grounds off Nova Scotia. The fact that the real focus of power in the British-controlled littoral region was Massachusetts, not Britain, did not help the English to influence the Natives. The governors of Nova Scotia looked to Massachusetts for protection and assistance and followed the latter's policies in dealing with the Amerindians.

French policy with regard to the Natives in the region displayed marked contrast to that of Massachusetts. It was the missionaries, not traders and planters, who set the pattern of relations. After 1713, they operated in three different sectors: Isle Royale, the official headquarters of the missionary service; Isle St. Jean, which was also under French control; and Nova Scotia and the mainland region (now northern Maine) under British rule. Those who worked in the regions designated as British territory will be of particular interest here. By 1720, Abbé Gaulin had succeeded in persuading a number of the peninsular Mi'kmaq to settle near his mission at

⁴⁷ W.E. Daugherty, *Maritime Indian Treaties in Historical Perspective* (Ottawa: 1983), p. 22, Phillips to secretary Craggs, 26 September, 1720.

Antigonish, in closer proximity to Louisbourg. In addition, he established missions at Cape Sable, La Hève, Chebnakadie (Subenacadie) and Mirligucche.

Efforts were made by the British authorities to wean the Mi'kmaq and Abenakis from their French connections, but with little success. The French became aware that Barthélemy Petitpas had spent three years in Boston to be educated for the Protestant ministry among the Mi'kmaq.⁴⁸ French missionaries who pursued work in British territory were required to obtain permission from the Nova Scotia officials and to report any disloyal actions or threats against the colony. In 1724, it was normal for a certain Father Isidore at Piguit to appear before the Colonial Council to report on his information about a possible attack on Annapolis Royal.⁴⁹ The minutes recorded him saying, "I think myself obliged in Conscience to give Notice of any ill Designe Against it [government], My Conscience being Dearer to me than any Worldly Interest."⁵⁰ He had been sent from Louisbourg but additional protection had been obtained from the British authorities at Annapolis Royal "for the Encouragement of all such Regular proceedings amongst said Romish Priests for the future."⁵¹

⁴⁸ MG1, F2C, carton 3, pp. 173-74, Délibération sur la lettre de M. de Beauharnois, 14 décembre, 1722; E.B.O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany: 1853-87), vol. IX, p. 912, Vaudreuil and Bégon to the Council of Marine, 17 October, 1722. In 1731 Petitpas turned up at Louisbourg as a Mi'kmaq interpreter, having proved to be an unsuitable candidate for the priesthood at the Seminary of Quebec in 1722. Bernard Pothier, "Petitpas, Barthelémy," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 512-13.

⁴⁹ A party of fifty-six Mi'kmaq had attacked the garrison at Annapolis Royal, killing two soldiers and wounding several others. Lieutenant-Governor John Doucett had the Récollet priest Cuvier exiled to Louisbourg as a result.

⁵⁰ Archibald M. MacMechan, ed., *Original Minutes of His Majesty's Council at Annapolis Royal, 1720-1739* (Halifax: 1908), p. 73, Minutes of Council of 29 August, 1724.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 52, Council meeting of 5 February, 1714.

The following year, an “unidentified” Father Ignace⁵² was dispatched to Nova Scotia by the superior at Louisbourg, Juconde Drué, the creator of the church architectural style known as Récollet. The Council at Annapolis Royal inquired “how he Durst presume, and by whose authority & permission he had Come into this Province & why he did not Immediately depart.” He answered that he was Flemish from the Récollet province of Flanders with orders from his superior at Louisbourg to gather the Mi’kmaq at Chignecto. This was accepted as sufficient justification to grant him the required permission, especially since he pledged to apprise the Council of any measures designed to undermine British authority.⁵³ Abbé Gaulin applied for the permission to continue his evangelical service in Nova Scotia in 1726 but the Council decided, in light of his role in inciting Mi’kmaq harassment of the garrison in 1710, to accede to his wishes on the condition that he would “begg pardon for his faults, take the Oaths of fidelity to his Majesty King George & the Crown of Great Britain. Never to Intermeddle in the affairs of ye Government Either amongst the Indians or Other Inhabitants...”⁵⁴ Gaulin eventually promised to try to convince the Mi’kmaq to ratify the Treaty of Boston and the Acadians to take the oath of allegiance. After the drowning of Abbé Michel Courtin at sea and the retirement of Gaulin in 1732, the Seminary of Quebec had no further direct role in these Mi’kmaq missions. The suggestion that an Irish priest who had come from Isle St. Jean be sent to Nova Scotia did not acquire approval.⁵⁵ The new missionaries, such

⁵² There is no *Dictionary of Canadian Biography* entry for this religious, for Father Cuvier, Father Isidore and Abbé Michel Courtin.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, pp. 88-90, Minutes of Council, 4 and 5 January, 1725.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 131, Minutes of Council, 11 October, 1726.

⁵⁵ MG. 17, A3, Séminaire des Missions Étrangères, vol. 345, p. 580.

as Pierre Maillard, Jean-Louis Le Loutre and Jean Manach, recruited by the Seminaries of the Missions Etrangères and of the St. Esprit in Paris, were in the diocese of Quebec but not under the jurisdiction of its superiors. They followed whatever orders reached the Récollet superior at Louisbourg, which were not numerous, from the procurator of missions in Paris, Abbé de L'Isle-Dieu. By the year 1738 there were three principal missions on the North Atlantic seaboard region: Miragouche [Chapel Island] on Isle Royale with a subordinate centre at Antigonish under the control of Abbé Maillard; Malpeque (Malpeq) on Isle St. Jean, which had no resident missionary but was visited by Maillard; and Chebnaquadiac in Nova Scotia under the supervision of missionary Le Loutre.⁵⁶

Much to the satisfaction of the French, the Abenakis were equally amenable to accept the new religion. At the beginning of the eighteenth century they were involved in trade with the English, but they also welcomed four Jesuit missionaries on the Kennebec River and two others at the head of the Saco River. As Father Sébastien Rasle opined, "the only bond which has united them to us so closely is their attachment to the Catholic Faith."⁵⁷ Governor Earl of Bellomont of Massachusetts feared a mass uprising of all the Amerindians on his frontier in 1699-1700, believing as did many colonists at the time that the governor at Quebec and the Jesuit missionaries were pressing them to go to war. Chief Justice Samuel Sewall of Massachusetts provided a more accurate assessment of the situation:

⁵⁶ MG I, B, vol. 68, pp. 379-80, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au S. de Forant Cap[ita]ine de Vaisseau et Gouverneur de l'Isle Royale, 22 juin, 1739; MG I, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 249-54, Mémoire sur les missions Mikmak, s.d. [1739]. Le Loutre at Chebnaquadiac had charge of other native villages such as Beaubassin, Chedaik, Chibouctou, Port Royal, La Hève, Cape Sable, Miramichy, Ristigouche and Tatamegouche in Nova Scotia.

⁵⁷ Thwaites, ed., *Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, p. 197.

I should think it requisite that convenient Tracts of Land should be set out for them; and that by plain and natural Boundaries, as much as may be; as Lakes, Rivers, Mountains, Rocks, Upon which for any English man to encroach, should be accounted a Crime... the French Friars will persuade them, that the English, as they encrease will never leave till they have crouded them quite off their Lands.⁵⁸

The General Court decided to banish the Jesuits from all the territories claimed by Massachusetts. Itinerant traders were recalled and a single trading post, or truckhouse, was designated at Casco. These measures were expected to undermine French influence in the region.

About forty Abenaki families living near the towns of Woodstock and New Oxford, where a few families were served by a French Protestant pastor, J. Labouric, left for Pennacook.⁵⁹ At a conference preceding the signing of the Treaty of Casco Bay (1701) the English invited the Abenakis to join with them “in the true Christian Religion, separated from those foolish superstitions and plain Idolatries with which the Roman Catholicks and especially the Jesuits and Missionarys have corrupted it.” Their response to such a proposal was that “being instructed by the French we have promised to be true to God in our religion, and it is this we profess to stand by.” In addition, they indicated that they “care not to be deprived of liberty of going wither we please.”⁶⁰

With the outbreak of the War of Spanish Succession, the new governor of Massachusetts, Joseph Dudley, promised the Abanakis more truckhouses and cheaper prices for trade goods.

⁵⁸ *MHS Collections*, 6th series, vol. I, pp. 232-33, S. Sewall to Sir William Ashurst, 3 May, 1700.

⁵⁹ Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of Maine*, vol. X, pp. 689-691, Earl of Bellomont to Lords of Trade, 9 July, 1700. See also Mary Celeste Leger, *The Catholic Indian Missions in Maine, 1611-1820* (Washington: 1929), pp. 86-87.

⁶⁰ Baxter, *op.cit.*, vol. X, p. 94, Memorial of propositions made with the Eastern Indians, 3 June, 1701; Colin G. Calloway, ed., *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England* (Hanover/London: 1991), p. 75.

Irrespective of this plan, when a few Abenakis joined a French and Mi'kmaq raid on Casco and Wells in August 1703, Dudley reciprocated with a declaration of war. Immediately many Abenakis moved to the *rédutions* created for them in Canada. Towards the end of the war, Dudley concluded that he could never be assured of their fidelity "until some English Settlements be Established in those Eastern parts to Govern them and their Priests be Kept from them which will hardly be obtained unless the French Governours be Command'd Intirely to withdraw them."⁶¹ This approach was in stark opposition to French policy. European settlements encroaching on aboriginal territory and attempts to impose foreign laws and customs were the principal reasons for the genesis of Abenaki resistance, and Amerindian hostility to the British in general.

Subsequent to the conclusion of the Treaty of Utrecht the governor at Boston invited the Abenakis to establish peace with the English colony. During the meeting the governor offered presents and vowed to provide necessary assistance to them in the construction of churches. The Abenakis perceived the English as "too selfish and materialistic" with no real interest in teaching them "prayers". The chief responded to the governor:

Therefore, I tell thee that I hold to the prayer of the Frenchmen; I accept it, I shall keep it until the world shall burn and come to an end. Accordingly keep thy workmen, thy money, and thy Minister; I shall speak of them no more, but I shall ask the French governor, my father, to send me some.⁶²

⁶¹ Baxter, *op.cit.*, vol. IX, pp. 336-337, Dudley to Board of Trade, 12 December, 1712; see also, Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies* (London: 1964 reprint), vol. 28, pp. 214-215, Council of Trade and Plantations to Secretary Stanhope, 30 June, 1715.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 213; Letter from De la Varenne to his friend at Rochelle, May 1756 in Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 88, which pointed out that the Natives were less grateful to the English for their interests in offering presents and assistance.

Were these Amerindians, who once said to Enemond Massé that “you can have your way and we will have ours; everyone values his own wares,”⁶³ sincerely interested in Catholicism, to the extent of rejecting the English? With experience and the passage of time the missionaries did not appear to have believed so because it was doubtful whether genuine spiritual objectives inspired the Mi’kmaq and Abenakis to become faithful Catholics. Father Pierre Biard observed:

Indeed some of our countrymen tell us that when they [the Mi’kmaq] were by themselves, they insolently made sport of our ceremonies, and that really, when they were well sounded, it was learned that they had accepted Baptism solely as a sign of friendship with the Normans, for thus they call us.⁶⁴

In view of this Biard believed that among all the Natives the Mi’kmaq chief Membertou was an exception “for he was a Christian at heart.” It should not be overlooked that “at heart” even Membertou was not fully a Christian in the missionary sense for he once said to Sieur de Biencourt after his confession and receiving the extreme unction a few days prior to his death that “he wished to be buried with his fathers and ancestors.” Biard was shocked and much opposed to the proposition of such an “impious act”. Membertou then suggested that he would have his burial place blessed by the priest, but insisted he be buried as he wished. An angry and frustrated Biard left the chief’s cabin unable to change the final desire of a star convert on his death bed. After an hour Biard came back to the cabin still with his obstinate intention for Christian burial and stayed beside the chief’s bed. Biard wrote: “by the next morning the savage, of his own free will, he changed his mind” [for his burial in the Christian way] “to prove his faith to all.”⁶⁵ There is no

⁶³ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. III, p. 123.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 147, 203-205.

evidence to ascertain that Membertou changed his mind voluntarily due to his belief in Jesus Christ. Rather, it is reasonable to suppose that he sacrificed even his last wish on his death bed merely to retain his friendship with the French priest.

This incident demonstrates that the Native peoples did not always find a contradiction in retaining aspects of Catholic beliefs and rituals alongside their own traditions and customs. One Canadian missionary had his own interpretation:

Dissimulation, which is natural to those Savages,...makes them assent to all that is told them; and prevents them from ever showing any opposition to the sentiments of others, even though they may know that what is said to them is not true.⁶⁶

Conversion to Catholicism was more a tolerant assent to new ideas and practices than a complete renunciation of traditionalism. Historian Calvin Martin observed:

such generosity even extended to the abstract realm of ideas, theories, stories, news and teachings; the native host prided himself on his ability to entertain and give assent to a variety of views, even if they were contrary to his better understanding... Conversion was often more a superficial courtesy rather than eternal commitment, something the Jesuits could not fathom.⁶⁷

Whether conversion was a product of divinely inspired genuine attraction as some missionaries believed, or of friendship and dissimulation, or mere courtesy, one thing is sure, the missionaries enunciated and executed a policy of implanting a religious ideology in the minds of the Native peoples and, hence, were able to influence them in favour of France's imperialistic motives. It may well be accurate to assert that religion was a political instrument rather than primarily a medium for spiritual salvation as "les idées générales des missionnaires des sauvages sont d'établir

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. LII, p. 203.

⁶⁷ Calvin Martin, *Keepers of the Game. Indian-Animal Relationships and the Fur Trade* (Los Angeles: 1978), p. 153.

de plus et plus la religion parmy ces peuples ...et de leur inspirer un profond Rêspec, un attachment et une fidelité inconuable pour le Roy.” Missionary Abbé Maillard added that his main duty was to induce the Mi’kmaq to follow Catholic observances and to become loyal and obedient to the king of France.⁶⁸ Thus promotion of France’s imperial aspirations through the conversion of the Natives was the principal objective of the missionaries in terms of their relations with the empire in the material world. They had full endorsement from the local authorities at Louisbourg, since the latter presumed that the missionaries could direct the “savages” in their duty to God and the king. In 1715 Intendant Michel Bégon stated that religion was the greatest strength to keep the Natives in the glory of the king and the well-being of the colony.⁶⁹ Besides political ambitions, commercial motives induced the local officials to support the religious mission. In 1715 *Commissaire Pierre-Auguste de Soubras* advised the missionaries to use “motifs de la religion” to persuade the Natives because “la politique des sauvages semble estre de s’entretenir neutres et de se conserver la liberté d’aller chez les françois et les anglois prendre les marchandises où ils le trouvent à plus bas prix.”⁷⁰

It would appear that missionary Le Loutre acted more as an agent of the Louisbourg government than a preacher of the Gospel among the Mi’kmaq in Acadia. The civil authorities at Louisbourg always kept him employed promoting and encouraging his activities to incite the Mi’kmaq against the English settlements in the province. Successive military commanders at

⁶⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 252, Mémoire sur les missions de Sauvages Mikmak et de l’acadie, c. 1739; Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 2; “Lettre de M. l’Abbé Maillard,” p. 294.

⁶⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 12, p. 37v, St. Ovide au ministre, 25 novembre, 1731; MG 1, C11A, vol. 35, p. 119, Bégon au ministre, 25 septembre, 1715.

⁷⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 343-43v, Lettre de Soubras, 14 décembre 1715, en délibérations du conseil, 28 mars, 1716.

Chignecto were instructed to co-operate with him and to treat him with deference in all matters relating to the Natives and the Acadians.⁷¹ Le Loutre's chief mission was to use the Mi'kmaq to check the expansion of the English colonies: He declared in July 1749:

je pense qu'on ne peut mieux faire que d'exciter les Sauvages à continuer de faire la guerre aux anglois, mon dessein est d'engager les Sauvages de faire dire aux anglois qu'ils ne souffriront pas que l'on fasse de nouveaux établissemens dans l'Acadie....si les anglois persistent dans leur dessein les Sauvages ne seront jamais en paix avec eux et leur déclareront une guerre éternelle.⁷²

It was therefore Le Loutre who advocated an aggressive Amerindian policy to use the Mi'kmaq against the British colonies. Le Loutre's proposals for creating a buffer zone of Mi'kmaq territory between the French and British colonies is the best example for the enunciation of policies and strategies "from below".⁷³ His proposals were highly appreciated by the local authorities. Governor-General Duquesne described his policy as "an excellent one," and that it was eventually appreciated by metropolitan officials as well.⁷⁴ The missionaries also organised and at times participated in native war parties, which enhanced their prestige.⁷⁵ In Nova Scotia Le Loutre

⁷¹ J.C. Webster, *Thomas Pichon. "The Spy of Beauséjour"* (Sackville: 1937), pp. 151-52; Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," *CHR*, vol. XI, no. 2 (1930), pp. 105-128.

⁷² *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 438.

⁷³ T.B. Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia. Documents Relating to Acadian French and First English Colonisation of the Province, 1714-1758* (Cottonport: 1972), p. 217, Letter from Le Loutre, 27 August, 1754.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 238; Webster, *Thomas Pichon*, p. 55-56. For metropolitan appreciation of Le Loutre's and Abbé Maillard's service see MG 1, B, vol. 90, p. 209, à de Mirepoix, 5 novembre, 1749.

⁷⁵ In Paraguay it was the missionaries who organised and led Guarani warriors against slave raids from Brazil, and the Spanish conquest of Paraguay was carried forward not by soldiers but by the missionaries. Ganson, "The Footprints of St Thomas," pp. 109, 114.

maintained a sphere of influence, where repeated military expeditions were unsuccessful in attempts to overthrow the British.

Christianity and the principle of cultural assimilation were applied to ensure the maintenance of France's interests. The Natives were made to believe that Christian principles and practices were a valuable addition to their lives. In the absence of written native historical documents an examination of Amerindian actions, as William Wicken suggested, would help us to understand how the Natives perceived and incorporated a foreign religion into their own culture and values.⁷⁶ At the initial stage of evangelisation, Catholic ceremonies such as the use of holy water, reading from the gospels, reciting of the rosary, praying for healing of the sick, kissing of the cross or the crucifix and other pious formalities played an important role in attracting them to Christianity. It should be noted that the Natives valued ceremonial functions so important in their traditional culture that they did not experience any compunction in accepting and incorporating new rituals into their life. One missionary said when a Mi'kmaq captain was affected by "most violent convulsions ... the savages bethought themselves to apply to his body some Images, Rosaries and Crosses; for they make great account of these using them against the molestations of the Demons." After his recovery, the missionary added, "he still continues in infidelity, he nevertheless values the Faith."⁷⁷ They even believed that missionaries possessed magical powers which were in some respects thought to be superior to those of native Shamans.

⁷⁶ Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales," p. 350.

⁷⁷ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. XLV, pp. 63-65; About the Natives of Penobscot James Sullivan said: "they are in some measure attached to the Roman Catholick religion, on account of its being more ceremonious. Some of them are regular in the forms of devotion, repeating their prayers, and crossing themselves at morning and evening." *MHS Collections*, I series, vol. IX, p. 228, "History of the Penobscot Indians."

Religious change in the context of colonisation was determined by three variables, those being the extent and mode of contact; different levels of scientific and economic development of the two societies; and the nature of their respective moral and religious values and practices.⁷⁸ In meeting with the Mi'kmaq, the French did not represent an overpowering demographic pressure and although they were economically more developed, the Mi'kmaq were well adapted to their natural environment. In this situation, the missionaries were able to gain the Mi'kmaq's confidence, particularly in the face of British territorial expansion, and thus acted as both political and religious leaders.

Initial contact experience eventually led the Mi'kmaq to accept the Catholic faith. The baptism registers of the eighteenth century, unlike those of the late seventeenth century, show us that Mi'kmaq children were baptised soon after birth adhering to the Catholic custom and there are no records of the baptisms of adults and of children above three or four years of age. During the baptismal ceremonies Mi'kmaq adults acted as godfathers and godmothers.⁷⁹ In addition, the Mi'kmaq adopted the practice of planting crosses on the graves in order to respect their attachment to the new faith.

This attachment to Christianity can be further proven by the fact that even after the departure of the missionaries subsequent to the fall of the French empire, the Mi'kmaq and Abenakis retained Catholic beliefs and ceremonies. They requested the British officials at Halifax to send

⁷⁸ David Lorenzen, *Religious Change and Cultural Domination* (Mexico City: 1981), pp. 10-12.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 352-354.

Catholic missionaries to their villages.⁸⁰ Notwithstanding British rule, the Mi'kmaq even tried to establish contacts with the French at St. Pierre and Miquelon, and held annual assemblies at Island Madam, or at Chapel island, for religious observances and for discussing their community matters following the procedure that had been established by the missionaries.⁸¹

Christianity failed to make any structural change in the Mi'kmaq society and traditional belief system at the time of contact, although clearly they were receptive to new ideas and practices.⁸² What we see in the evangelisation during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries among the Mi'kmaq was the emergence of a new form of Catholicism compatible to native beliefs and customs.⁸³ In the process of the appropriation of Catholicism, the Mi'kmaq were indoctrinated by the inculcation of a hegemonic ideology; their attachment to the new faith was used by the missionaries to sustain France's imperial interests. In 1745 when the fortress of Louisbourg was under the siege of British and New England forces, Abbé Maillard advised the Mi'kmaq of Isle

⁸⁰ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 72, p. 131 Wilmot to the Board of Trade, 10 December, 1763; *ibid.*, vol. 78, pp. 84-85, Michael Francklin to the Lords of Trade, 3 September, 1766.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 72, p. 133; *ibid.*, vol. 78, pp. 85-88. Mi'kmaq annual assemblies at Chapel Island continue to exist in the twentieth century. The 1845 Report of Indian Commissioners said: "Being at the Chapel Island in the beginning of August last, he [E.M. Dodd] found about 80 [Mi'kmaq] families congregated here from all parts of Cape Breton and from Nova Scotia, as far west as Cape Sable. They meet annually on St. Anne's day for religious observances..." Report of Indian Commissioners for Cape Breton, Sydney, 16 June, 1845, prepared by E.M. Dodd and H.W. Crawley; source: Fortress of Louisbourg Library.

⁸² Recently William Wicken's study also pointed out that despite European contacts the cultural integrity of the Mi'kmaq society was maintained throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales," pp. 9-10, 89, 159, 374.

⁸³ We can see parallel processes of evangelisation in sixteenth-century central Mexico. Charles E. Dibble, "The Nahuatilization of Christianity" in Munro S. Edmonson, ed., *Sixteenth-Century Mexico: The Work of Sahagun* (Albuquerque: 1974), pp. 225-33.

Royale on the goodness of being Catholic and loyal to the king of France. He explained to them that the objectives of the king, their "father," was that:

après avoir suffisamment pourvu au bien de vos âmes, fut d'ordonner que l'on vous conservat votre pais, que l'on vous y laissait libres, maîtres de vos volontez, tranquilles; que vos rivières à castor et à saumon, que vos montagnes où se tiennent d'ordinaires les originaux et les karibous pendant l'hyver, qu'en un mot tous vos endroits de chasse et de pêche ne fussent fréquentez que de vous seuls.⁸⁴

In addition, he warned the Mi'kmaq: "si Louisbourg est pris, toute l'Isle Royale, vous n'en doutez pas, est dévolue aux Anglois." Based on this strategy of admonition he endeavoured to convince the Mi'kmaq of the importance of defending the fortress and town of Louisbourg, where they were otherwise not welcome to visit. Abbé Maillard ordered the Mi'kmaq warriors:

Marchez ensuite, sans que rien soit capable de vous arrêter, à la déffense d'une ville que notre prince Louis XV votre Père a fait exprès bâtir sur cette Isle pour mettre par cette précaution tous ces pays-ci à l'abry des insultes, des incursions et des ravages que viendroient souvent sans cela faire des nations non Priants. Voyci, mes enfans, voicy le moment venu de vous signaler en zèle, en valeur, et en obéissance; en zèle pour votre Prière, dont ceux qui maintenant nous assiègent sont les ennemis jurez; belle occasion aujourd'hui pour vous de faire voir que vous sçavez effectuer ce que vous avez solennellement promis par la bouche de vos parrains et marraines lors de votre baptême.⁸⁵

From his speech we can infer that Maillard was making efforts to take advantage of the Mi'kmaq's attachment to Catholicism to further French imperial gains. Contrary to the teachings of Jesus, he even taught his converts to hate their enemies. They were told that the English were, "mauvais animaux dont il est absolument nécessaire que nous purgions la terre sur laquelle nous nous

⁸⁴ Maillard, "Lettre de M. L'Abbé Maillard," p. 346

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 322, 338

trouvons actuellement établi."⁸⁶ This indoctrination, which required no faith in Christianity, led them to despise the English for religious reasons. Father Noel de Joinville illustrated:

I have remarked in this country so great an aversion in the convert-savages to the English, caused by difference of religion.... These savages are so zealous for the Roman Catholick church, that they always look with horror upon, and consider as enemies those who are not within the pale of it.⁸⁷

Such sentiments were not unusual in the confrontation between Catholics and Protestants in Europe at the time. De la Varenne wrote a friend:

I have before said that religion has no great hold of these savages, but it could not be but of some weight in the scale, where their minds were already so exulcerated against those of a different one, whom they now considered as their capital enemies. You may be sure likewise, our priests did not neglect making the most of this advantage...⁸⁸

A 1741 publication of John Oldmixon gave a Protestant assessment of Catholicism:

The religion of the French was the worst thing they [the Natives] learned from them; for being popish, those of the Barbarians, who embraced it, hated the English as much as for being protestants as being intruders... The Barbarians were certainly much honester than the French... till the French corrupted both their religion and morals. For if the Indians had any religion at all, it must be better than the Friars taught them.⁸⁹

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 341-42.

⁸⁷ Quoted in Letter from De la Varenne to his Friend at Rochelle, Louisbourg, 8 May, 1756 in Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, pp. 84-85. This letter is separately published with an introduction by Ken Donovan under the title "A Letter from Louisbourg, 1756," *Acadiensis*, vol. X, no.1 (1980), pp. 113-30.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 111. Refuting the accusations of the missionaries' role in instigating the Natives, Maillard argued: "as to what concerns the missionaries to the savages they can not be suspected of using any connivance in all this, if justice is done to the conduct they always observed amongst them and especially in the time of the last war. How many acts of inhumanity would have been committed by this nation [the Mi'kmaq], naturally vindictive, if missionaries had not taken pain, in good earnest, to put such ideas out of their heads." Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 69.

⁸⁹ John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America*, 2 vols. (London: 1741), vol. I, p. 159.

In 1755 an English official noted:

Ces prêtres ne sont pas plutôt admis parmi eux que prenant un grand ascendant sur leur esprit, ils employent jusqu'à la religion pour leur inspirer autant de haine pour les anglais que d'attachement pour les français.⁹⁰

These are some of the evidences which explain an established local policy of ideological indoctrination. As evangelisation processes involved a degree of cultural relativism, the missionaries had no difficulty in influencing the Natives with anti-Anglo-American sentiments and ideology.⁹¹

The contact between the French colonial authorities and the Mi'kmaq, with the missionaries as intermediaries, has been viewed in the historiography, and by the colonial officials at the time, as a European attempt to dominate or manipulate the Native peoples. The present approach of "imperialism from below" has served to indicate that in many cases the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis turned to the missionaries to obtain support and assistance from the French authorities to protect their interests. Thus the Natives were receptive to missionary advice because of the benefits they could expect. In 1745 five deputies of the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia went to Quebec with their missionary Le Loutre to convene with the governor and "to request him to prescribe to them the course they should subsequently have to adopt." The governor offered them gun powder, lead, some provisions and clothes and exhorted them to continue their fight against the English under the

⁹⁰ MG 18, F. 12, vol. 1, p. 372, Guillaume Clarke, *Observations sur la conduite actuelle des Français à l'égard des colonies anglaises...*, 1755; see also MG 18, F. 10, Charles Morris papers, pp. 78-79 which notes the influence of the missionaries.

⁹¹ The number of complaints made by the English officials, merchants, farmers and fishermen throughout the first half of the eighteenth century especially in the 1740s and 1750s about Mi'kmaq aggressions consistently indicated the role of the missionaries in influencing them against the English. Among the large number of supportive documents see MG 11, CO 217, or CO 5, at the NAC., Ottawa.

guidance of their missionary.⁹² When there was a shortage of supplies the missionaries purchased provisions from Acadian farmers on behalf of the government to distribute to the Mi'kmaq. In brief, their role as intermediaries greatly enabled the missionaries to exert their influence on the Mi'kmaq in favour of French interests.

Missionary activities in general upheld principles of altruism founded on social and spiritual welfare. This study has no disagreement with the benefits to be gained by the Natives as a result of Christianisation. Nonetheless, it was not ultimately beneficial to the cultural and spiritual well-being of the Natives since it was aimed at uprooting aboriginal culture and belief systems. Missionary work was intended to transform native traditions through the application of Catholic values. Although the Mi'kmaq accepted Christianity, they were not considered full-fledged Christians by their missionaries. Biard commented: "in our processions we had the little [native] children march before the Cross and perform some services, such as carrying the light, or other things; and both they and their fathers take pleasure in this as if they were really Christians."⁹³ As historian L.F.S. Upton remarked, the missionaries never dignified the converted Natives with the adjectives "Christian" or "Catholic" but called them *priants* or *homme priants*, meaning those who prayed.⁹⁴

⁹² O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. X, pp. 11-14, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 12 September, 1745.

⁹³ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. IV, p. 87.

⁹⁴ L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists, Indian-White Relationship in the Maritimes, 1713-1867* (Vancouver: 1979), p. 33; "Lettre du M. L'Abbé Maillard," pp. 325-326, 338, *passim*. It should be also noted that the missionaries used these terms because for the Mi'kmaq Catholicism was tantamount to prayers. The king was sometimes dignified with *le Roy très-Priant* for the easy comprehension of the Mi'kmaq. Maillard, *ibid.*, pp. 344-46. This interpretation does not imply that *priants* or *homme priants* did not express bias as there are no direct or indirect references to the use of Catholic honouring the converted Natives.

This did not create any problems in routine French-Amerindian relationships and might appear to be an insignificant matter, but it reflected deep-seated French attitudes towards the Natives. The ultimate result of this pseudo-altruistic missionary approach was to exert cultural dominance over the Natives. It can be described as an aspect of cultural imperialism through its association with the empire building process.

In addition to a proselytising mission, the policy of cultural assimilation, or cultural imperialism, was to be implemented by three other means: education, sedentary settlements and *métissage*.⁹⁵ A complete cultural intercourse between the French and the Natives was envisaged as essential for causing the latter to become French.

Education was regarded as an appropriate medium for the acculturation and intellectual development of the Native peoples and was considered to be the responsibility of the missionaries in the colony. This was primarily aimed at teaching boys, and as early as 1632 the Capuchins started the first school at La Hève in Acadia for the Mi'kmaq. In keeping with colonial custom the boarding school was called a "seminary". In Canada, Father Paul Le Jeune suggested the construction of a "seminary" since he found that the missionaries "could not retain the little Natives, if they be not removed from their native country."⁹⁶ On behalf of the government of France, Cardinal Richelieu encouraged education in the colony because he believed that assimilation of the

⁹⁵ The term *métis* as employed in the colonies was introduced by Cornelius de Pauw, *Recherches philisophiques sur les Américains, ou Mémoires intéressants pour servir à l'Histoire de l'Espece Humaine*. 3 vols. (Berlin: 1770), vol. I, pp. 199-200 .

⁹⁶ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. VI, pp. 86-88, 154-55; Y.F. Zoltvany, ed., *The French Tradition in America* (New York: 1969), pp. 51-52. This concept would eventually give rise to the Indian residential schools. Convents and seminaries were forms of residential schools which were established in New France in the seventeenth century.

Mi'kmaq into French culture would be easier by educating their children who, after finishing their studies, could attract their own people to mingle with the French. With missionaries as teachers in charge of the curriculum, Mi'kmaq education differed little from religious teaching. Both religious and secular instruction were guided by imperialistic motives. The documentation supports Helen Ralston's assertion that "the ideology that informed and justified the decisions of public administrators and the work of the missionaries in relation to Mi'kmaq education reflected European thinking of the time."⁹⁷ The foremost objective of Mi'kmaq schooling was to make them think and act like French Catholics and consequently buttress France's political and economic ambitions. The British conquest of Acadia in 1710 terminated this experiment.

On Isle Royale acting-governor François Le Coultre de Bourville attempted to inculcate new social values through a special legal code in July 1739.⁹⁸ It was for the punishment of the Mi'kmaq for committing crimes within their own community. This law proclaimed:

Anyone who strikes his father or mother or quarrels [literally pulls the hair] with them will be put to death. Anyone who consents to kill his brother and then kills him, will also be put to death. Anyone who has relations with a woman against her will, even if both have consented, will spend nine days on his knees at the door of the church and everyone who enters during this number of days will give him a lash with a rod. The same thing will be done to a female who is guilty in fact and in law of a similar crime. Anyone who carries English letters or serves them in other ways will no longer share [presents]... Anyone who commits incest will be taken and brought to the commander of place [for punishment]...⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Helen Ralston, "Religion, Public Policy, and the Education of Micmac Indians of Nova Scotia, 1605-1872," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol. XVIII, no. 4 (1981), pp. 474, 491.

⁹⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 118-124, Bourville au ministre, 26 octobre, 1740.

⁹⁹ D.L. Schmidt and B.A. Balcom, eds., "The Règlements of 1739: A Note on Micmac Law and Literacy," *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no. 1 (1993), pp. 117-18.

These punitive measures undeniably evince that the French wished to eliminate native concepts and values and impose their own principles and procedures on the Mi'kmaq. In 1740 Bourville wrote Maurepas that a Mi'kmaq woman convicted of killing several children was publicly beaten for her crime.¹⁰⁰ According to law, the penalty for murder was death, but as in Canada the French authorities had to be satisfied with public corporal punishment because the Mi'kmaq believed that their traditional method of compensation was the best means to render justice and restore peace in the community.¹⁰¹ In other words, the *Règlement* of 1739 was not strictly enforced. This incident explains three important aspects of the relationship between the French and the Mi'kmaq: it was the local French officials who took initiatives to change the nature of Amerindian policy concerning crime; there was considerable native resistance to this form of cultural imperialism; and subsequently the local authorities were forced to adopt various aspects of Mi'kmaq practice in implementing their regulations. There was no question of imposing metropolitan French criminal laws and judicial proceedings on the Mi'kmaq population.

The sedentarisation of the Natives was another objective of the civilising mission. After the establishment of Louisbourg, a major task of the local government was to attract the Mi'kmaq and Eastern Abenakis from Acadia to Isle Royale in order to form a permanent residence. For this reason Versailles sought the assistance of the missionaries, in particular Abbé Gaulin and Félix Pain, as they had more influence in native communities than the civil authorities at Louisbourg.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

¹⁰² MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 259v-61, à Gaulin, 29 mars, 1713, *ibid.*, pp. 261v-62, à Felix, 29 mars, 1713. Already in 1634 Father Le Jeune had pointed out the necessity of the sedentarisation
(continued...)

Permanent settlement of the Natives was more a political and economic matter rather than a religious one, and the authorities managed to persuade only a small number to move Merliguèche in 1723, a few of which took up farming. In spite of the initial official enthusiasm, the French had to abandon their efforts to completely sedentarise the Mi'kmaq, just as they had to concede defeat among the nomadic Montagnais and Algonkian groups in Canada. Instead, the missionaries followed native groups in their migratory life-style as best they could in order to retain them in the French imperial scheme.

Métissage, or inter-racial marriage between Frenchmen and native women was a social reality dating from the beginning of French-Amerindian contacts. Taking advantage of the sexual liberality that existed in native societies, the early fishermen and sailors who visited the littoral regions had casual liaisons with Mi'kmaq women. Later inter-racial relations increased with the advent of settlers, traders and soldiers for colonisation and commercial purposes. It was initially considered a suitable means of cultural assimilation. Samuel de Champlain had strongly advocated such a policy from the very beginning of colonisation. He said to the Native people at Québec that "our young men will marry your daughters, and we shall be one people."¹⁰³ Furthermore, following France's sixteenth-century policy of *truchments* in Brazil, Champlain introduced the practice of sending young men out to live among the Natives in order to learn their language and customs and

(...continued)

of the Natives for Christianisation and assimilation. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. VI, p. 145-46.

¹⁰³ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. V, p. 211; Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 22.

establish friendly relationships with them to serve as interpreters.¹⁰⁴ The Jesuit missionaries always deplored this consuetude as it encouraged promiscuity. Some of the early settlers in Acadia married native women, or engaged in occasional liaisons with them. De la Varenne wrote in 1756, probably with some exaggeration, that "they [the Acadians] were a mixed breed, that is to say, most of them proceeded from marriages or concubinage of the savage women with the first settlers."¹⁰⁵ The settlement at La Hève consisted predominantly of *métis* families. The Malisect were considered *métis*, for they were popularly known as the descendants of the casual unions between Mi'kmaq women and the St. Malo fishermen.¹⁰⁶

The official metropolitan approval of *métissage* was simply an acknowledgement of a local practice. *Métissage* was initially encouraged for two reasons: to preserve close relationship with the Native peoples who were paramount to the security of the colony, and to increase the

¹⁰⁴ The first recorded instance of *truchments* in North America occurred in 1541 when Jacques Cartier sent two French boys to live with the Natives at Hochelaga (Montreal) and learn their language. H.P. Biggar, ed., *The Voyages of Jacques Cartier* (Ottawa: 1924), p. 257. We see that later in 1601 St. Malo merchants, who were engaged in the fur trade off the Atlantic coast as a sideline of their fishery, despatched a youth to the Mi'kmaq for the same purpose. Alfred Ramé, *Documents inédits sur le Canada* (Paris: 1865), p. 52. For a discussion of the origin of *truchments* see Olive P. Dickason, "The Brazilian Connection: A Look at the Origin of French Techniques for Trading with the Amerindians" in Thomas C. Buckley, ed., *Rendezvous: Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981* (St. Paul, Minnesota: 1981), pp. 27-40 at p. 29.

¹⁰⁵ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. I, p. 67, vol. III, pp. 103-105; Donovan, ed., "A Letter from Louisbourg, 1756," p. 122.

¹⁰⁶ Jaenen, *Friend and Foe*, pp. 161-62; Bailey explained that the term Malouidit, meaning those of St. Malo, was at a later date the name given to the *métis* among the Malecite, "because a greater part of their fathers came from St. Malo." Moreover, the grain which was introduced to them was known as "Maloumenal". A.G. Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures, 1504-1700* (Toronto: 1969), p. 18.

population of the colony in the face of limited immigration.¹⁰⁷ It was deemed that, in contrast to the incidental unions made by fishermen or traders, the marriage relations between French settlers and native women would lead to the assimilation of the offsprings into the mainstream of French culture as they were to be brought up almost exclusively under paternal guidance. This type of demographic development was in the minds of Minister of Marine Colbert and other officials in endorsing *métissage*. The programme can be better understood within the framework of mercantilist interests as it was aimed at maximum appropriation of native human resources for the economic prosperity of the French empire.

Missionaries followed a relative approach to *métissage*. In general, they did not offer an unconditional support to inter-racial relationships, because they found that it was merely an alternative solution to deal with the lack of French women in the colony and, therefore, it did not function as an effective medium for cultural absorption of the aboriginal peoples.¹⁰⁸ In opposition to what was planned by Versailles, *métissage* strengthened the aboriginal society and even attracted Frenchmen to the native life-style rather than otherwise. Marie de l'Incarnation had noted that "it was easier to make Frenchmen into Savages than to make Savages into Frenchmen."¹⁰⁹ De la Varenne stated that in Acadia "it was not only men that had taken passion for a savage life; there

¹⁰⁷ Article XVII of the Charter of the Company of New France (1627) shows the earliest metropolitan support for the promotion of *métissage*. *Édit du Roy pour l'Établissement de la Compagnie de la Nouvelle France* (Paris: 1657), p. 13.

¹⁰⁸ Cornelius J. Jaenen, *Friend and Foe, Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contacts in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Toronto: 1976), pp. 164-65.

¹⁰⁹ Marie de l'Incarnation, *Word from New France*, p. 28.

had been, though much rarer, examples of our women going into it."¹¹⁰ The missionaries approved *métissage* in the early seventeenth century, if marriage between Frenchmen and aboriginal women were likely to establish a stable Catholic family life based on sedentary activities like agriculture.

In the eighteenth century French official policy with regard to *métissage*, quite contrary to the Colbertian plans, was discouraged. In 1683 Governor-General Joseph-Antoine Le Febvre de La Barre announced that this policy had already been abandoned in Canada before the metropolitan government knew about it.¹¹¹ The government of Louisbourg never approved inter-racial marriages; the officials disliked French-Amerindian contact when it came to the point of personal relations. Some had even expressed their disapproval of the Mi'kmaq visiting the capital of the colony.¹¹² In 1754 a controversy erupted over an inter-racial marriage when Second Enseign Bogard de La Noue married Marguerite Guedry whose mother was an Amerindian. The Superior Council at Louisbourg stated that this marriage was "clandestin, scandaleux et abusif," because "les enfans procrées ou à procrées dudit mariage seront Bâtards et Inhabiles à succeder et hériter" and therefore declared it invalid.¹¹³ The right of succession and inheritance became a prickly problem

¹¹⁰ "Lettre de M. de La Varenne," pp. 94-95.

¹¹¹ Jaenen, *Friend and Foe*, p. 165; La Barre wrote the minister: "You placed 3000 *livres* at my disposal in the list of gratuities for 1682 for the dowries of Indian maidens. This has been a mistake for none of them married." Therefore, he suggested "to correct the designation in the estimates...and apply it instead to the support of two *Hospitalières*." O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. IX, p. 207, La Barre to Seignelay, 4 November, 1683.

¹¹² MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 43v, Soubras, 4 décembre, 1715 en délibération du conseil 19 avril 1717; C11B, vol. 6, pp. 431-32, Soubras au ministre, 4 décembre, 1716; see also Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 10, 129.

¹¹³ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 504-24v, Extrait des Registres du greffe de Conseil Supérieur, Isle Royale, 17 février, 1755. We have no record of the church's position in this case.

in the case of *métis* families in the absence of official sanction. The baron de Saint-Castin, a famous Acadian leader, had to tackle a host of troubles in order to have his succession rights acknowledged by the authorities because his mother was an Abenaki woman.¹¹⁴

At the beginning of the eighteenth century inter-cultural marriages were permissible in New France but were not recommended. There were those who deplored the “mixing of good and bad blood” and those who saw practical advantages in miscegenation. By 1709 Louis XIV was ambivalent in his opinion on the matter.¹¹⁵ Minister Maurepas, on the strength of negative reports from Louisiana, and in particular from the Illinois country, objected to such relations and rebuked a few missionaries for allowing these unions without having secured permission from the civil authorities. In 1735 he warned them that they “doivent pas se porter si légèrement à marier des françois avec femmes Sauvages.”¹¹⁶ The Superior Council of Louisiana virtually prohibited inter-racial marriages by the edict of 8 October 1735, but no such rule was promulgated at Louisbourg. Colonial or local procedures and decisions determined the nature and structure of France’s policy with regard to *métissage*.

The change of policy was brought about by the realisation that intermarriage had not been an effective means for the cultural assimilation of Natives. It can also be argued that as the French population in the colonies increased through natural growth as well as by immigration from France

¹¹⁴ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, p. 336; Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p.118.

¹¹⁵ MG I, B, vol. 30 (2), pp. 344-45, 359, Roi à Vaudreuil et Raudot, 6 juillet, 1709.

¹¹⁶ MG I, B, vol. 62, p. 88v, Maurepas à Brisacier, 4 octobre, 1735. Despite the minister’s objection inter-racial marriages received support in the colony as an anonymous letter indicates. MG1, C11C, vol. 16, p. 28, 9 juillet, 1746.

the need for absorbing the Native peoples declined. De la Varenne's letter made it obvious that *métissage* was a feature of French-Amerindian relations only at the beginning of colonisation and that it decreased in the course of time. From the beginning of French-Amerindian contacts a cultural gap had always existed, which, by the eighteenth century, became wider and deeper as the colony matured and in some respects began to resemble the mother country.¹¹⁷ In sum, the policy of *métissage* was shaped in conformity with local demographic and economic conditions.

The cultural gap, or cultural incompatibility, between the French and the Natives may have appeared less striking in Acadia and Isle Royale than in Canada. Among the Native peoples of North America the Mi'kmaq were considered more sociable since they had a long-term relationship with the French. They were the only Native people, with the possible exception of several Abenaki groups, who most fully accepted the Catholic faith. An eighteenth-century memoir highlighted "les sauvages [Mi'kmaq] de tous ces villages ont [été] instruits dans la religion catholique, apostolique et Romaine."¹¹⁸ De La Varenne asserted: "all most all of the Micmakis, and a great numbers of the Maricheets, or Abenakis were converted to our faith."¹¹⁹ This large-scale conversion to Catholicism so much insensed the New Englanders, who occupied Louisbourg from 1745 to 1748, that they desecrated the Mi'kmaq burial ground at Port Toulouse. Abbé Maillard reported: "the

¹¹⁷ Jaenen, *Friend and Foe*, p. 197.

¹¹⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, p. 249v, *Mémoire sur les missions de sauvages Mikmaks et de l'acadie*, c. 1739.

¹¹⁹ Donovan, ed., "A Letter from Louisbourg, 1756," p. 124.

burying place of the savages was demolished and all crosses planted on the graves broke(n) into a thousand pieces."¹²⁰

Native adherence to Catholicism, which we now interpret essentially as an identification with the French alliance, did not proceed from concentrated missionary activity. The Seminary of Foreign Missions in Quebec and Paris furnished some of the secular priests, as did the Spiritans of Paris, but these were always few in number. In 1723 the Captain of *Le Cheval de Marin* was reprimanded for having taken on board a secular priest bound for France, who had been assigned by the Bishop of Quebec Jean-Baptiste de Saint-Vallier to the Mi'kmaq mission.¹²¹ A few foreigners also took up the challenge posed by a shortage of clergy. In 1725, a Flemish priest came to Minas, as mentioned earlier, without any official authorisation from either the Bishop or the British governor, and was allowed to stay in the colony.¹²² A few years later, an Irish priest who had originally come to Isle St. Jean as a chaplain turned up at Louisbourg to assist the Récollets. Governor Saint-Ovide gave him permission to remain.¹²³ By 1739, the Seminary of Quebec advised the authorities at Louisbourg that they had sufficient missionaries to serve the Mi'kmaq and the

¹²⁰ Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 66.

¹²¹ MG 1, C11A, vol. 45, pp. 70-71, Vaudreuil au ministre, 31 octobre, 1723.

¹²² A.M. MacMechan, ed., *Original Minutes of His Majesty's Council at Annapolis Royal, 1720-1734* (Halifax: 1908), Minutes of Council of 4 January, 1724/5; *ibid.*, pp. 84-88, 5 January, 1724/5.

¹²³ MG 17, A3, Séminaire des Missions Étrangères, vol. 345, pp. 5795, fol. 580; MG 1, C11B, vol. 14, pp. 54-61v, St. Ovide et Le Normant au ministre, 15 octobre, 1733; *ibid.*, vol. 15, pp. 139-48, St. Ovide au ministre, 1 novembre, 1734.

Malisct and that it would no longer assume responsibility for providing religious services to the French inhabitants of Isle Royale.¹²⁴

The French had made another remarkable concession to the Mi'kmaq. Abbé Gaulin, and possibly his fellow priests, said Mass primarily in the native tongue in lieu of the customary Latin. He acknowledged:

La plus grande différence qu'il y ait c'est que nous faisons toutes ces cérémonies et que tous nos chants et prières sont dans la langue du pays, car il m'auroit été impossible de leur enseigner à ces qu'ils sont une langue étrangère, et à leur de l'apprendre. J'ay suivy en cela les traces de mes prédécesseurs...¹²⁵

Abbé Gaulin also conceded that the usual rules of fasting and abstinence were not compatible with their semi-nomadic way of life, therefore he ignored them. The result was that they were faithful in attending mass, public prayers, confession and communion.

The civilising mission to the Mi'kmaq, Malisct and Abenakis operated in a peaceful manner, but this is not to say that it was devoid of any cultural and ideological antagonism.¹²⁶ The entire programme of *la mission civilisatrice* was dominated and controlled by missionaries, therefore Christianity had a profound impact on native societies. It has been demonstrated that it challenged native religious and spiritual traditions and beliefs, and disrupted native practices such as shamanism. Yet it never shook the foundation of native morality, hospitality, sharing and other

¹²⁴ MG 17, A 3, Séminaire des Missions Étrangères, vol 21, pp. 1613-1614, fols. 128-128v, 10 mai, 1739.

¹²⁵ MG 3, K, carton 1232, no. 4, Relation de Gaulin [1720], p. 117

¹²⁶ The present study does not discuss in detail French-Amerindian cultural, political and ideological discord and subsequent social problems. For this see Jaenen, *Friend and Foe*, pp. 84-120, 153-89.

social values. On the other hand, religious instruction introduced ideas and doctrines, beliefs and customs of a French Catholic society which were not always comprehensible to the Mi'kmaq.

Historians have sometimes been harsh in their assessments. A.G. Bailey argued that European-Amerindian contacts led to "inevitable conflict of their cultures which resulted in most cases in the obliteration of those Indians." G.B. Nash stated: "Indians were always regarded as aliens and were rarely allowed to live within white society except on its periphery." C.J. Jaenen pointed out that "the policy of assimilation, which when translated into action became in reality an effort to effect an integration of French and Indian societies while maintaining French dominance..."¹²⁷ In the words of A.P. Thornton,

The rights of man are properly viewed only through a prism made in France. Accordingly, the result of the much-vaunted French dream of assimilation, itself the produce of the doctrine of *la mission civilisatrice*, was the destruction of the native personality; and, not content with this ruinous result, *les civilisés* promptly betrayed him whose spirit they had pervaded, since they never in fact admitted him as one of themselves.¹²⁸

We can see that French policy failed to assimilate the Natives; theories of cultural integration remained utopian. Nonetheless, France succeeded in the process of cultural imperialism because of the cultural relativism of the missionaries and the emergence of a syncretic Mi'kmaq Catholicism.

A critical examination of the French-Amerindian relationship in terms of colonisation and the recognition of native territorial rights elucidates how the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis were brought under local French influence. The government of Louisbourg was totally responsible for managing native territorial rights in the colony. The colonisation processes on Isle Royale never

¹²⁷ Bailey, *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures*, p. ix; Gary B. Nash, *Red, White and Black. The Peoples of Early America* (Englewood Cliffs: 1974), p. 285; Jaenen, *Friend and Foe*, p. 153.

¹²⁸ A.P. Thornton, *Doctrines of Imperialism* (New York: 1965), 194.

disturbed the Mi'kmaq. Contacts with aboriginal peoples in the neighbouring areas of the settlements were limited to activities in the realms of commercial exchange, missionary service and military alliance. In sharp contrast to the English practice, the French authorities in the colony did not need to displace the Natives in the course of territorial occupation. Thus, in certain colonial circumstances, contact experience provided an atmosphere of cordial relations between the French and the Amerindians.

G.B. Nash remarked that "Europeans of all nationalities took what they could get in North America and adopted their methods to the circumstances that pertained to any particular area."¹²⁹ This thesis of "circumstances" and regional setting can be further elucidated by the fact that wherever the French tried to open agricultural settlements similar to the English pattern, they faced native resistance and were even forced to engage in warfare.¹³⁰ Where peaceful diplomacy failed to win the Native peoples, the French were not reluctant to turn to the application of hostile means.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Nash, *Red, White and Black*, pp. 120, 66-67; Mason Wade also pointed out that "circumstances forced the French into alliance with the Algonkian tribes of Northeastern North America." Mason Wade, "French Indian Policies" in Wilcomb E. Washburn, ed., *History of Indian-White Relations* (Washington: 1988), p. 21.

¹³⁰ The French-Natchez relation is the best case to exemplify that the French were not much different from the English or the Spaniards in dealing with the Natives. Unlike in Canada or Acadia, in the lower Mississippi valley the French found that the Natives were not useful and, therefore, they could be displaced. In 1729 the French demanded the land where a large Natchez village was located. In 1730 more than one thousand Natchez were butchered, and about four hundred were sold as slaves in Saint-Domingue. Nash, *Red, White and Black*, pp. 108-109; W.J. Eccles, *The Canadian Frontier* (New York: 1969), p. 6; Andrew C. Albrecht, "Indian-French Relations at Natchez," *American Anthropologist*, vol. XLVIII (1946), pp. 321-54; Philip Pittman, *The Present State of the European Settlements on the Mississippi* (London: 1770), pp. 78-81.

¹³¹ The Miami massacre at Pickawillany and the overwhelming onslaughts of the Chickasaws
(continued...)

While recognising native nationhood and territorial rights at the local level, France succeeded to a certain degree in establishing its sovereignty over the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis.¹³² It was the local government which played the most significant part as indicated by official correspondence between the English colonies and Louisbourg on various issues concerning the Natives. The English officials recognised the governor at Louisbourg as the French authority in charge of dealing with the Mi'kmaq and frequently requested his mediation to solve Anglo-Mi'kmaq conflicts in Nova Scotia. He maintained a policy that in the context of Anglo-Mi'kmaq relations the Louisbourg government would not officially interfere with native rights. Yet Louisbourg supported the Mi'kmaq territorial claims, thus native nationhood coincided with French sovereignty as a unique feature of the colonial policy under the direction of local authorities. This dualism was described by Antonio d'Ulloa following a visit to Louisbourg:

These natives, whom the French term savages, were not absolutely subjects of the King of France, nor entirely independent of him. They acknowledged him lord of the country, but without any alteration in their way of living; or submitting themselves to his laws; and so far were they from paying any tribute, that they received annually from the King of France a quantity of apparel, gunpowder and muskets, brandy and several kind of tools in order to keep them quiet and attached to the French interest; and this has also been the political practice of the crown with regard to the savages of Canada.¹³³

(...continued)

are examples of this approach. Wilbur R. Jacobs, *Wilderness Politics and Indian Gifts, The Northern Colonial Frontier, 1748-1763* (Lincoln: 1966), p. 43.

¹³² For a detailed discussion on French sovereignty and native nationhood see Cornelius J. Jaenen, "French Sovereignty and Native Nationhood during the French Regime" in J. R. Miller, ed., *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: 1991), pp. 19-42.

¹³³ Jorge Juan y Antonio d'Ulloa, *A Voyage to South America* (London: 1806), vol. II, pp. 376-77; also cited in Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 27.

This is a fascinating description of French-Amerindian relations, but it does not reflect the entire political and economic situation of the Natives. The functioning of this strange dualism was more ostensible than real in some cases.

Until recently the historiography of French-Amerindian relations eulogised this apparent French uniqueness, but conditions were different for the Mi'kmaq in Acadia after 1713.¹³⁴ In 1721 the Mi'kmaq complained to Governor Saint-Ovide at Louisbourg "qu'il leur étoit impossible de pouvoir faire vivre leur famille avec 3 livres de poudre et autant de plomb qu'ils avoient reçus, qu'ils avoient pense mourir de faim pendant l'hiver."¹³⁵ In 1749 when Abbé Le Loutre arrived in Acadia, he said, "je les [the Mi'kmaq] ay trouvés dans une extrême pauvreté."¹³⁶ Lieutenant-Governor Doucette of Nova Scotia observed that "the Indians are entirely ruled by the French, and are used by them in no other manners but like slaves."¹³⁷

The recognition of native nationhood and territorial rights as a part of local French diplomacy was largely an acceptance of the usufructuary rights of the Natives; that is, their right to hunting, fishing, fowling, trapping, food gathering, and horticultural activities on traditional territories. For the Native peoples ownership meant usufructuary rights.¹³⁸ The Natives did not pay

¹³⁴ Jacnen, *The French Relationship*, p. 33.

¹³⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, p. 341v, Conseil, 15 novembre, 1721; *ibid.*, p. 360, St. Ovide au ministre, 15 septembre, 1721; C11B, vol. 8, p. 51v, St. Ovide au ministre, 18 novembre, 1726.

¹³⁶ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 461, Lettre de l'abbé Le Loutre, 4 octobre, 1749.

¹³⁷ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 13, Doucette to Secretary of State, 5 November, 1717; A.M. MacMechan, ed., *Nova Scotia Archives II: A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission-Book in the Possession of the Government of Nova Scotia, 1713-1741* (Halifax: 1900), p. 51.

¹³⁸ Olive P. Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest*
(continued...)

much attention to the possession of lands in a European legal sense although they understood the inextricable relationship between land and livelihood.¹³⁹ They feared that European settlements, particularly English occupation of Nova Scotia and New England, would evict them from their lands and destroy their traditional way of life. It is in this context that this study examines the rights and claims of the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis to their land, and their concept of territoriality.

The Louisbourg government recognised native territorial rights, and "nationhood" without any objection, as these had never been an obstruction to French ambitions. There was no contradiction between native usufructuary rights and French occupancy privileges, and there was no immediate incompatibility between the idea of native nationhood and French sovereignty. This unusual pragmatic and conceptual accord fostered an image that the French possessed a peculiar quality for accommodating Native peoples, a *génie colonial*. It is important to ask: did the Native peoples genuinely understand the European concept of sovereignty and its legal and practical implications? Perhaps they had no idea of what sovereignty meant, and how it made them the subjects of France, or Britain.

It was only after the cession of Acadia to Britain in 1713 that the Mi'kmaq and Abenakis had come to realise the nature of French claims to their ancestral lands. As one English official said, the French derived their title from the Natives, and it was ceded to the English by the Treaty of

(...continued)

Times (Toronto: 1992), p. 120.

¹³⁹ An officer at Louisbourg had observed the absence of an idea of exclusive ownership among the Natives: "They are also very uncurious of paying the debt they contract, not from natural dishonesty, but from their having no notion of property, or of meum or tuum. They will sooner part with all they have, in the shape of a gift, than with anything in that of payment. Honors and goods being all in common amongst them, all the numerous vices, which are founded upon those two motives, are not to be found in them." Donovan, ed., "A Letter from Louisbourg, 1756," p. 116.

Utrecht.¹⁴⁰ The Mi'kmaq were appalled to hear from the English that their lands were transferred to the English. They protested to the French:

Mais apprends de nous que nous sommes sur cette terre que tu foule aux pieds et sur laquelle tu marche, avant même que ces arbres que tu vois eussent commence a en sorti, elle est à nous et rien ne pourra jamais nous l'oter n'y nous la faire abandonnée.¹⁴¹

To this accusatory declaration Saint-Ovide replied:

Je sçay fort bien que les terres sur lesquelles je marche vous les possédez de tous tems, mais vous devez estre persuadez que le Roy de france votre Père n'a jamais eu d'intention de vous l'oter, quoy qu'il eut cédé le droit qu'il pouvoit y avoir au Roy d'Angleterre.¹⁴²

This reply portrays a distinction between French sovereignty and native rights, but it did not attest native territoriality in any way distinct from the land ownership rights of the colonists. The French in Acadia, who similarly came under British rule by the Treaty of Utrecht, had possessory rights to their own lands. Both the colonists and the Natives were permitted to use the land only for extracting their livelihood in their usual manner. When the Mi'kmaq complained about the English "qui occupent à présentment une partie de nos terres," Saint-Ovide responded that as "les terres qu'ils occupent ne vous étant d'aucune utilité" they had no grounds for grievances.¹⁴³ There was no mention at all about the rights of the Mi'kmaq in the Treaty of Utrecht other than the unilateral cession of the colony by the French to the English and there was no international recognition of native territorial rights, or of independant nationhood.

¹⁴⁰ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 19, p. 22, Belcher to Lords of Trade, 2 July, 1762.

¹⁴¹ MG 18, E. 29, n.p., Discours fait aux Sauvages du Canada par St. Ovide...aux sujet des mouvements du gouverneur anglois de l'Acadie avec les Réponses que les Sauvages ont faites, s.d.

¹⁴² *Ibid., idem.*

¹⁴³ *Ibid., idem.*

The Abenakis also strongly protested the cession of Acadia to the English as its boundaries were not yet fixed and might include some of their ancestral lands. They learned about the Treaty of Utrecht from the English who informed them that the French, after using them as cannon fodder, had concluded a separate peace with the English and had ceded their lands to the Queen of Britain without consulting them. When the Abenakis found it difficult to believe this the English presented them written documents.

Alors les Abenakis s'emportèrent et demandèrent de quel droit le Roi de France disposait de leur pays. Leur emportement eut été plus loin si les missionnaires ne les eussent appoises en leur disant qu'on les trompait par une équivoque et que leur pays n'entraît point dans ce qui avoit été cédé aux Anglois.¹⁴⁴

The Abenakis were fobbed off with obfuscating tactics on the part of the missionaries. The Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis were deceived by the local authorities in the matter of acknowledging native territorial rights. The answers given to them by both the Louisbourg officials and the missionaries did not specifically state the nature of their recognition of Native peoples' rights; they reflected excellent diplomatic obscurity designed to cajole and console the plaintiffs. Nor did they overtly tell the Natives that they would not support native claims, because "si l'on ne convient ou si l'on ne fait semblant de convenir de leur droit sur le pays qu'ils veulent, jamais on ne les engagera dans aucune guerre..."¹⁴⁵ It was this kind of diplomacy exercised by the local authorities that made the French tolerable friends of the Natives and set them apart from the English.

¹⁴⁴ MG 18, H. 27, p. 236, Félix Martin Collection, *Mémoire sur l'Acadie par rapport aux Sauvages Abenakis*, s.d.; O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. IX, p. 879-80, *Memoir Respecting the Abenakis of Acadia*, 1718; Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, pp. 101-103.

¹⁴⁵ MG 18, H. 27, p. 235, Félix Martin Collection, *Mémoire sur l'Acadie par rapport aux sauvages*, s.d.

The Abenakis did not find it unreasonable to accept the local French rationalisation of the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht with regards to the rights of the Native peoples. They told the governor of Massachusetts that they shared “a cabin” with the French, but each had “his own fire” - a vivid image of their independence under an umbrella of French sovereignty - and they would defend their French brother if attacked at his fire.¹⁴⁶ This was a reaffirmation of their 1715 statement that they were not French subjects but rather allies of the French king because he provided them with religious instruction.¹⁴⁷ The success of the French policy lay in the diplomatic recognition of native territoriality and in the passive exercise of French sovereignty under the direction of Louisbourg.

French colonisation and settlements, whether in *terra nullius* or not, constituted as Berkhofer Jr. stated “*de facto* and therefore *de jure* evidence of conquest, no matter how peacefully done.”¹⁴⁸ France’s policy pertaining to the Natives was predominantly directed towards the establishment of French imperialism. The ultimate proof can be found in the successful arousal of the Mi’kmaq against the British in Nova Scotia in 1749. The authorities at Louisbourg kept up a semblance of diplomatically correct relations with the neighbouring English colony, but all the while they supported Abbé Le Loutre’s efforts to organise a large body of Mi’kmaq, Malisect and Abenakis to enforce their claims to their ancestral lands, their hunting grounds and fishing areas. On 24 September, 1749, they drew up a formal declaration, drafted by Abbé Maillard in Mi’kmaq

¹⁴⁶ Cornelius J. Jaenen, “One Cabin, Two Fires - French Sovereignty and Native Nationhood” in Patricia Galloway, ed., *Proceedings of the XVIIIth Annual Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society* (Washington: 1992), p. 10.

¹⁴⁷ MG 1, C11A, vol. 35, p. 205, Bégon au ministre, 25 septembre, 1715.

¹⁴⁸ Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian*, p. 122.

demanding the return of the site of Halifax. Subsequently war was declared on the British garrisons as they had dared to usurp native land to build a fortress, unlike the French who had built Louisbourg with their "permission".¹⁴⁹

This overview of French-Amerindian contacts illustrates that the local authorities were fully responsible for formulating and co-ordinating policies and strategies so as to exercise hegemony over the Natives. The whole programme of cultural relativism and plans of action devised by the missionaries, on the one hand, and the official support offered by the local authorities at Louisbourg and their diplomatic interactions with the Mi'kmaq, the Abenakis, and the Malisect as well as with the local English authorities, on the other hand, projected an image of well-organised Amerindian policy. In brief, Versailles' acceptance of colonial initiatives constituted unity and integrity in the enunciation and implementation of policies with regard to the Native peoples. This stood in contrast to the Anglo-American colonies in North America.¹⁵⁰

The uniqueness of French policy was particularly obvious in times of political crisis. The 1745 attack on Louisbourg by New England-paid volunteers led by William Pepperrel assisted by a British naval squadron from the Leeward Islands under Commodore Peter Warren was not a co-ordinated land and naval attack. Instead, as one Louisbourg resident observed: "so striking was the mutual independence of the land army and the fleet that they were always represented to us as of

¹⁴⁹ ASQ, Lettres F, No. 66. Maillard à l'abbé de Fau, 18 octobre, 1749; MG 5, B1, vol. 9, pp. 133-134; *Collection de Documents .Documents sur l'Acadie*, vol. 1, pp. 17-19, Déclaration de guerre des Micmacs aux Anglais, 1749.

¹⁵⁰ The advantage the French enjoyed through this local or colonial initiative was reflected in the Albany Congress in the summer of 1754. Delegates from seven northern Anglo-American colonies planned a union in which a colonial administration would have exclusive power to raise troops, regulate trade, build forts and, above all, conduct all relations with Amerindian nations.

different nations.”¹⁵¹ Peter Warren wrote Pepperrel: “I have not been favoured with your answer to the plan of operation I sent you. For God’s sake let us do something, and not waste our time in indolence.”¹⁵² The Isle Royale strategy of co-ordinating the Amerindian raids and colonial forces remained distinct from this disorganised, albeit successful enemy strike.

Isle Royale survived for forty-five years as a French colony positioned to influence the maritime Algonkian peoples, to encourage Acadian resistance to assimilation, and to generally harrass and frustrate the consolidation and extension of British influence in Nova Scotia, but did so largely through local initiative and formulation of French policy for the region. It was after Britain decided to take control of Amerindian policy from London and to bring a European style warfare to North America, based on regular armies with naval support for sieges of French strongholds, that the colonial strategy collapsed.

In conclusion, we can see four major aspects of France’s Amerindian policy. First, the policy was shaped, or reshaped, and directed by the local officials and the missionaries in the colony; second, the nature of Amerindians and their attitude towards *la mission civilisatrice* led to structural changes in policy-making and practice; third, local political, economic, demographic and strategic factors played a pre-eminent role in the localisation of the policy; and fourth, it was diplomacy at the local level, instead of the use of force, that brought the Natives under French influence. Thus, despite metropolitan ideological and theoretical underpinnings and biases, the policy with regard

¹⁵¹ *Louisbourg in 1745: The Anonymous “Lettre d’un Habitant de Louisbourg”*, trans., ed., G.M. Wrong (Toronto: 1897), pp. 37-38.

¹⁵² *MHS. Collection*, 1st series, vol. I, p. 34, Warren to Pepperrel, 26 May, 1745. New Englanders remonstrated that Warren “acted too much as though the command of the place [Louisbourg] belonged to him.” *Ibid.*, p. 50, Dr. Chauncy to Pepperrel, 27 July, 1745.

to the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis was enunciated and practised in line with colonial factors. As the original plan of cultural assimilation failed, cultural relativism and syncretism evolved into a colonial or local cultural symbiosis and brought about a French-Amerindian relationship which promoted French imperialism.¹⁵³

¹⁵³ This study does not claim that this was a unique situation in colonial experiences. Parallels may be found in Spanish America, as demonstrated by Barbara Ganson, "The Evuevi of Paraguay: Adaptive Strategies and Responses to Colonialism, 1528-1811," *The Americas*, vol. XLV (1989), pp. 461-488.

CHAPTER 6

THE IMPERIAL POWER STRUCTURE

As the North Atlantic seaboard empire of France depended predominantly upon the “conquered” peoples of the region - the Mi’kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis - for its existence, the question is whether French rule depended on the support of the Native peoples, or whether the aboriginal peoples had become dependent upon the foreign *métropole* for their well-being and survival. Maintenance of friendship and military alliances with these peoples had become extremely important for the exercise of France’s hegemonic political authority in the region after 1713. Both the French and the Native peoples had their own reasons and motives for forging a military alliance, although the local French authorities at Louisbourg ultimately sought to manipulate this alliance system in favour of their own ambitions. In spite of the apparent independence of the Natives, colonial efforts were aimed at subjecting their interests. The Amerindians were used as an informal standing “army” of the French empire. France’s economic, cultural and military relationships with the Mi’kmaq and other native groups were intended to develop a power basis to repel the English forces and, at the same time, to perpetuate the hegemonic authority of France over the Native peoples. In this process we can see the evolution of an imperial power structure.

A large amount of Louisbourg’s administrative energy was in many ways directed towards the creation of this power structure. It was organised internally at the local level by combining colonial and metropolitan elements. Focussing on the cultural and racial aspects of contacts, Olive P. Dickason and William C. Wicken described the gift diplomacy and ceremonials as a tool for

maintaining French-Amerindian alliances.¹ This chapter will examine the exercise of native diplomacy and protocols as well as the institutional perpetuation of hegemony by the government and its bureaucracy, the church and its servants, and the military, hence, to offer an interpretation that the structure of the French imperial system evolved from below. The French in their “diplomatic relations”² with the Amerindian “nations” incorporated two principles into their imperial policy: native customs and practices were to be used and native participants were to be recognized as legitimate representatives of their political entities. As William Roosen pointed out, in Europe diplomatic relations were established between rulers, not nations. In North America these relations were established between representatives of the French government, often the local governor, and native leaders.³

Gift diplomacy was a key element for the construction of France’s imperial alliance with the Native peoples. Among aboriginal societies gift exchange was a requisite act of traditional etiquette and protocols. All of their public functions, festivities and feasts were celebrated with generous gift exchanges. The Native peoples in general believed that giving makes one great; the more one gives the greater he/she becomes. The local French authorities were able to build on earlier experiences

¹ Olive P. Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians: A Study in Imperial Race Relations* (Ottawa: 1976), pp. 109-125; William C. Wicken, “Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: Mi’kmaq Society, 1500-1760” (Ph.D thesis, McGill University, 1994), pp. 396-410.

² Although diplomacy was a term coined only at the time of the French Revolution, it is used here for relations in an earlier period which fit the modern meaning of the term. The earlier meaning of *diplomatie* was the study of official documents or diplomas. *Dictionnaire historique de la langue française* (Paris: 1992), p. 608.

³ W.J. Roosen, *The Age of Louis XIV: The Rise of Modern Diplomacy* (Cambridge: 1976), pp. 9-11.

in Brazil concerning the significance of gift exchanges.⁴ French-Amerindian contacts at the initial phase started with the acts of gift diplomacy. Eventually, gift diplomacy became a formal policy of French imperialism; it was used as an instrument to maintain France's military alliance with the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and the Abenakis.

Gift exchanges were considered an indispensable prelude to commercial, cultural and political activities. After the initial French encounters with the "new peoples", as early as 1616 Father Pierre Biard had noted the significance of giving gifts or *présents* as government officials called it:

gifts must be presented and speeches made to them before they condescend to trade; this is done, they must have the *Tabagie*, i.e., the banquet. They will dance and make speeches and sing *Adesquidex*. *Adesquidex*. That is, that they are good friends, allies, associates, confederates and comrades of the King and of the French.⁵

Gifts had the power of words; the Native peoples generally considered them irrevocable terms of contract, respect, generosity, friendship and love. Father Barthélémy Vimont said presents can speak, they all have their meaning. He explained:

presents among these peoples despatch all the affairs of the country. They dry up tears; they appease anger; they open doors of foreign countries; they deliver prisoners; they bring the dead back to life; ... presents are given to excite men to war [and] to urge them to make peace.⁶

⁴ Olive P. Dickason, "The Brazilian Connection: A Look at the Origin of French Techniques for Trading with Amerindians" in Thomas C. Buckley, ed., *Rendezvous, Selected Papers of the Fourth North American Fur Trade Conference, 1981* (St. Paul: 1981), pp. 27-42.

⁵ R.G. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791* (New York: 1959), vol. III, p. 81; see also Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 109-110.. I must acknowledge that I have consulted independently some of the same sources used by Olive P. Dickason although for a different purpose, i.e., to explain the evolution of a policy at the local level.

⁶ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. XXII, pp. 291-93.

Offering of presents was also regarded as a means for gaining prestige and high status in the society. Along with gift exchanges symbolic acts of respect and honours were highly appreciated by the Natives. Father Chrestien Le Clercq described:

it is consequently in order to satisfy them that sometimes the guns and even the cannon are fired on their arrival [to trade with the French] . . . Sometimes the leader and chiefs are invited for a meal in order to show all the Indians that they are esteemed and honoured. Rather more frequently they are given something like a fine coat, in order to distinguish them from the commonalty. For such things as this they have a particular esteem, especially if the article has been in use by the commander of the French.⁷

In brief, gifts were a symbol of friendship and respect between the giver and receiver. Father Le Clercq continued:

a good old man who loved me tenderly was never willing to appear in any ceremony, whether public or private, except with a cap, a pair of embroidered gloves, and a rosary which I had given him. He held my present in so much esteem that he believed himself something more grand than he was, although he was then all that he could be among his people, of which he was still the head man and the chief . . . This good man gloried in the fact, and boasted every where, that he was my brother, and said that we were so closely bound together in friendship that his heart and mine were one and the same thing.⁸

Such early reports from the colony underscored the diplomatic significance of gift exchanges before the *métropole* had adopted it as a policy.

At the initial stage of contact the French might not have conceived the quintessential characteristics of Amerindian alliances and their intrinsic relations with ceremonies and rituals although they clearly understood how crucial the gifts were in conducting the fur trade. The beginning of this trade occurred as a part of the ritualistic exchange of presents which the Natives

⁷ Chrestien Le Clercq, *New Relation of Gaspesia*, trans., ed., W. F. Ganong (Toronto: 1910), p. 246.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

considered a fundamental etiquette to be performed at the time of welcoming strangers and guests. Sixteenth-century French fishermen, sailors and ships' captains were the first traders, who bartered furs with the Mi'kmaq when they visited the coastal areas during the summer season. The Mi'kmaq were eager to receive European *présents* in exchange. Both peoples found that these exchanges were extremely valuable and profitable. Discovering an additional source of income through the sale of furs which were in high demand as luxury items in France, the French fishermen began to meet the Natives on a regular basis each summer. The Mi'kmaq adjusted their visits to the coastal regions in accordance with the arrival of these fishing vessels.⁹

When the fur trade passed largely from the hands of fishermen to specialised traders and the variety and quantity of European goods increased in exchange for furs, the Mi'kmaq embarked on intensive hunting.¹⁰ As they spent most of their time and energy collecting furs and processing them and, therefore, having less time for gathering local foods, their subsistence became increasingly dependant upon European supplies. The introduction of intoxicants such as brandy, wine and other alcoholic items, as well as tobacco, had a tremendous impact on them. To obtain increasing quantities of these addictive *présents* the Mi'kmaq engaged in overhunting which further diverted them from their traditional subsistence ways of life. Furthermore, the introduction of European

⁹ Nicolas Denys offers a detailed analysis of the exchanges between the fishermen and the Mi'kmaq in the Maritime regions. N. Denys, *Denys' Description and Natural History of the Coasts of North America (Acadia)*, trans., ed., W.F. Ganong (Toronto: 1908), vol. II, pp. 445-49. For the barter system between the French and the Natives in Brazil see Marc Lescarbot, *A History of New France*, trans. W.L. Grant and H.P. Biggar (Toronto: 1907), vol. I, p. 173.

¹⁰ For a discussion of Mi'kmaq trade with Europeans see Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails," pp. 170-83, 274-77.

technology dramatically changed the course of native life-style. Nicolas Denys described:

the musket is used by them more than all other weapons, in their hunting . . . both for animals and birds. With an arrow they killed only one wild Goose, but with the shot of a gun they kill five or six of them. With the arrow it was necessary to approach an animal closely; with the gun they kill animals from a distance with a ball or two. The axes, the kettles, the knives, and everything that is supplied them, is much more convenient and portable than those which they had in former times.¹¹

Thus, new technology transformed a self-sustaining aboriginal society into a state of almost total reliance upon European manufactures. The increasing demand for manufactures and provisions and, consequently, the enormous growth of the fur trade led the Natives into a vicious circle of dependency from which they were unable to escape. As the North Atlantic littoral gradually drained of sufficient game caused by excessive hunting, the question of subsistence became a serious concern in the eighteenth century. Interference with horticultural activities and fishing due to incessant friction with the English colonists further aggravated the problem of aboriginal people's subsistence. This was the economic condition of the Mi'kmaq and their neighbouring "nations" at the time of the establishment of Louisbourg in 1713.

In this context, the making of alliances with the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis became easier for the French officials at Louisbourg. It was further facilitated by the Native peoples' concern about possible British settlement in Nova Scotia. The cession of Acadia to Britain in 1713 brought the French and the Native peoples closer together in a "military" alliance. Maintaining this alliance was predominantly the responsibility of the Louisbourg government, as was the case in Canada. The governor, a military officer as in all French colonies and metropolitan provinces, as head of the local government and of the military organisation, played the most

¹¹ Denys, *Description and Natural History of North America*, p. 443.

significant role in the preservation and continuation of this alliance. Diplomacy was instrumental in bringing about a vibrant French-Amerindian imperial alliance. The well-established acts of diplomacy ranged from the offering of gifts such as guns, lead, powder, metal tools, utensils, clothing, alcoholic items, tobacco and other commodities, to the conferring of honours and paid commissions, and to the distribution of honorary medals and payment of bounties. In 1696, a Boston merchant, John Nelson, in describing the implementation of French imperialistic diplomacy, had identified four major methods:

first, by seasonable presents, secondly by choosing some of the more notable amongst them, to whom is given a constant pay as a Lieutenant or Ensign & thirdly by rewards upon all executions, either upon us or our Indians, giving a certain sum per head, for as many Scalps as shall be brought them. Fourthly by encouraging the youth of the Country in accompanying the Indians in all their expeditions.¹²

He further indicated that “some of the most eminent and enterprising” Natives were occasionally sent to France so as “to amaze and dazzle them with the greatness and splendour of the French Court and Armie.” They were also taken to Flanders where French armies were mustered expressly to impress them. Subsequently, Nelson advised the London authorities: “no better methods can be taken, than by imitating the French, both as to their encouragements at home, as also to have some chiefs of the diverse nations of the Indians to be sent into England whereby to give a counterpoise unto the French reputation and greatness.”¹³ English evaluations may have been

¹² E.B. O’Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New York* (Albany: 1853-1887), vol. IV, pp. 207-208 [206-211], “Mr. Nelson’s Memorial about the state of the Northern Colonies in America,” 24 September, 1696. Nelson had remarkable knowledge of the French colonies and he represented the New England colonies in their negotiation with Quebec in 1682. In 1691 he was captured by the French and imprisoned in the Bastille until 1694. Nelson died in 1734. Donald F. Chard, “Nelson, John,” *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 493-94.

¹³ O’Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vo. IV, p. 208. There is some doubt that these visitors were entirely favourably impressed with their observation of French life. Dickason,

exaggerated because the despatching of Natives to France was discouraged and cancelled by the Ministry in the eighteenth century.¹⁴

The local French authorities clearly realised that within the framework of the elaborate rules of Amerindian etiquette and protocol their power and influence depended more upon their capacity and generosity to offer gifts than on verbal promises. Therefore, for the French these gift giving ceremonies became an indispensable ritual performed in advance of commercial exchanges, religious gatherings, meetings of military councils and all other consultations with the Natives. The local authorities thus followed the traditions and protocols of native society; they actively participated in native festivities, feasts, and other functions.¹⁵ Such cultural intercourse greatly helped them to create an image of mutual understanding and co-operation with the Native peoples. This cordial atmosphere developed through the diplomatic exercise of native rituals and ceremonials acted as a foundation for the forging of military alliances and an imperial power structure. Of course, military coalitions required periodic renewal with attendant presentation of gifts by the French. The practice of French imperialism was therefore necessarily grounded on the acceptance and exercise of the diplomacies and formalities of the Native peoples, a "subaltern group" in the imperial system. This became an important feature of "imperialism from below".

Louisbourg and the Indians. p. 39.

¹⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 57, pp. 639, Maurepas à Beauharnois, 8 avril, 1732 and vol. 71, p. 83v, Maurepas à Guillot, 2 mai, 1740; MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 120v-21, Bourville, 26 octobre, 1740.

¹⁵ When Versailles considered decreasing colonial expenditure by cutting out presents in Canada's upper country and Acadia, the governor-general protested vigorously: "Nous avons d'ailleurs besoin de nos sauvages plus que jamais. On ne peut les assembler et tenir les conseils avec eux sans avoir les présens à la main." MG 1, C11A, vol. 48, p. 126, Beauharnois au Conseil, 25 septembre, 1727.

A review of the correspondence between Louisbourg and Versailles regarding native affairs vividly explains how interested the French authorities were in the preservation of the French-Amerindian alliance. In 1713 the Minister of Marine Jérôme Phélypeaux, Comte de Pontchartrain warned that if the Mi'kmaq were left in Acadia under the English control,

ils deviendront par la suite anglois et pourroient porter par la suite la guerre au Cap Breton, au lieu que les attirans à cette Isle ce sera un remfort qu'on luy produira d'un peuple qui connoist parfaitement toutes les terres de l'acadie.¹⁶

Subsequent to the cession of Acadia to Britain, Versailles decided to persuade as many Mi'kmaq as possible to retire to Isle Royale to establish their permanent settlement under French protection. In order to attract them, the minister offered three hundred pounds of gun powder and six hundred pounds of lead shot as immediate presents.¹⁷ In spite of this they refused to leave Acadia; they could not fully adjust to the concept of permanent settlement. The Natives were unprepared to sacrifice their interests for those of the French, however they expressed their consent to remain loyal to the king of France. Father Félix Pain explained the Mi'kmaq perspective:

ils disent que de se Renfermer tous dans cette isle du Cap Breton se seroit préjudicieux à leur liberté, et que ce seroit une chose impossible à leur Liberté naturelle et aux moyens de pourvoir à leurs subsistance.

Quant à l'égard de leur attachment au Roy et aux François qu'il est inviolable, et que si la Reine d'Angleterre avoient Les prés de l'Acadie par la cession que Sa Majasté Luy en avoit faite, que pour eux ils avoient Les Bois dont jamais personne ne seroit capable de les débusquer, et qu'ainsi ils vous promettent neantmoins d'estre toujours fidèle aux françois et leur donner la préférence dans la traite des pelletries.¹⁸

¹⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 35, p. 239, à St. Ovide, 20 mars, 1713.

¹⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 29, Pontchartrain à St. Ovide, 25 mars, 1713; *ibid.*, pp. 158-69, Pontchartrain à Vaudreuil, 29 mars, 1713; *ibid.*, pp. 179-83, Pontchartrain à Antoine Gaulin, 29 mars, 1713.

¹⁸ MG 1, C11C, vol. 7, p. 227, Félix Pain à Costebelle, 23 septembre, 1713.

Upon failing to entice them to Isle Royale, the local authorities and the missionaries were forced to apply an alternative strategy to influence the Mi'kmaq and other Native peoples wherever they were living to resist English colonial expansion and to remain under French influence.

Versailles entrusted the local governor and the missionaries with exclusive powers to perform this task. The governor had been given overall charge of the administration of native affairs and missionary services in the region. In general, the king's orders instructed the successive governors at Louisbourg to keep the Natives attached to the interests of France without dictating precise policies to follow.¹⁹ At the same, they were advised to provide protection to the missionaries who were expected to direct the Natives in everyday life. In 1739, when the English were attempting to influence the Mi'kmaq, Governor Issac-Louis de Forant received the following instruction:

Les anglois les [the Natives] craignent et ne négligent rien pour les gagner: On a cependant lieu de compter sur leur fidélité; Et Sa Majesté espère que le S. de Forant ne négligera rien pour les maintenir dans les dispositions qu'ils ont fait paroître jusqu'à présent. Il doit dans cette vue et en même tems pour le bien de la Religion, protéger les Missionnaires qui conduisent ces sauvages, et qui sont continuellement a portée de les entretenir dans les sentimens que l'on doit souhaiter qu'ils ayent.²⁰

Forant was reminded that "Sa Majesté accorde aussy dans le même objet chaque année des présens de Fusils, de Poudre, et de Plomb, et d'outils dont ces sauvages ont besoin."²¹

¹⁹ MG 1, B, vol. 40, pp. 541-41, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'Instructions au S. de St. Ovide, gouverneur de l'Isle Royale, 18 juillet, 1718; *ibid.*, vol. 68, pp. 370v-71, à Forant, 22 juin, 1739; *ibid.*, vol. 89, pp. 309v-10, à Desherbiers, 28 mars, 1749; *ibid.*, vol. 93, pp. 223-23v, à Raymond, 24 avril, 1751; *ibid.*, vol. 99, p. 238, à Drucour, 12 mai, 1754.

²⁰ MG 1, B, vol. 68, pp. 382-83, Mémoire du Roy à de Forant, 22 juin, 1739; MG 1, B, vol. 89, p. 308, Mémoire du Roy à Desherbiers, 28 mars, 1749 and other memoirs of the king in the same series of documents.

²¹ MG 1, B, vol. 68, p. 383; *ibid.*, B, vol. 89, p. 308.

The governor was responsible for the dissemination of presents to the Native peoples. Every year during the months of June and July, after the arrival of the king's *présents* from France, he or his delegates took them to Port Toulouse and Port-la-Joie for distribution.²² Port Dauphin was also visited on occasion, and only rarely was distribution made at Louisbourg.²³ A 1758 publication described gift allocation in the following words:

It is customary to distribute every year to them [the Natives] presents in the name of His Majesty, which consists in arms, ammunition of war, victuals, cloathing, and utensils of various sorts. And these presents are regulated according to the circumstances of the time and to the satisfaction that shall have been given the government by the conduct of these savages.²⁴

Apportioning of presents by the governor in person at the annual meetings was considered more effective than indirect distribution.²⁵ On this occasion the governor delivered speeches and promises to the Natives in order to wean them from the influence of the English. This discretionary power

²² MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 249-54, *Mémoire sur les missions des sauvages Mikmak et de L'Acadie*, s.d. [1739]; MG 1, B, vol. 50, pp. 581-83, Maurepas à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727; B, vol. 68, p. 353, a Bourville, 11 juin, 1739.

²³ *Commissaire Ordonnateur* de Mézy had suggested that Louisbourg should be made the centre for annual gift distribution because he believed that it would avoid abuses and impress the Natives with the fortress and its garrison. MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, p.73v, de Mézy au conseil, 10 décembre, 1722. His suggestion was not accepted. The reason for this must have been the displeasure of the colonists with the annual meeting of the Natives in town. Earlier even Soubras expressed his disenchantment with the Natives at Port Dauphin as "l'affluence désagréable." *Ibid.*, vol. 1, pp. 431-32, Soubras au ministre, 4 décembre, 1716.

²⁴ Abbé Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmakis and Maricheets, Savage Nations Now Dependent on the Government of Cape-Breton* (London: 1758), p. ii.

²⁵ MG 1, B, vol. 49, pp. 705-707, Maurepas à St. Ovide, 26 mai, 1726. This followed the practice at Montreal each summer when the governor-general came to meet with the Native delegates, chiefs and trading captains.

of the governor was a decisive element in “controlling” the native allies. The British grew to appreciate the significance of this exercise of power “from below”, believing that it contributed much to the success the French enjoyed in interacting with the Mi’kmaq. One commentary said: “as is above observed, the governor in the French colonies act in two capacities; but as a military officer, they have discretionary Orders, and proceed according to the Military Law, and from this Latitude they sometimes commit great Acts of Power...”²⁶

Each year the metropolitan government allotted a substantial amount of money for the purchase of gifts. As the demand for (and prices of) these gifts rose steadily, funds for the administration of native affairs became increasingly insufficient. Expenditures reached a peak point during the 1750s when missionaries were forced to purchase essential stores on credit from Acadian farmers and merchants for the subsistence of the Natives. These creditors were later repaid by the local government when they produced the proof of purchase issued by the missionaries.²⁷ In addition, the commanding officers at military posts in Port Toulouse and Port Dauphin dipped into their own funds to meet the demand of the Natives during a time of pressing need; these supplementary amounts were later reimbursed by the government.²⁸ Metropolitan attempts to curtail these expenditures were circumvented by colonial actions to the point that the policy became one of escalating disbursements.²⁹ In 1756 a fund of 37,000 *livres* was established for extraordinary

²⁶ Henry McCulloch, *The Wisdom and Policy of the French in the Construction of Their Great Offices...* (London: 1755), p. 64.

²⁷ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 38, pp. 146-47, 155, Le Loutre, 15 and 16 aoust, 1750.

²⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, pp. 22-23, d’Aillbeoust et Prévost au ministre, 14 novembre, 1753.

²⁹ For details of this crisis see Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 83-84.

expenses. Governor Augustin de Boschenry de Drucour wrote the minister, "il n'est pas possible de se refuser à quelques dépenses extraordinaires que nous causent les sauvages que l'on est obligé d'employer."³⁰ *Commissaire* Jacques Prévost de la Croix advised the minister to grant more funds to the Natives of Nova Scotia who frequently visited Louisbourg and Port Toulouse for provisions and manufactures.³¹

The French actively pursued ties of friendly relations with the Native peoples, but only so far as it benefited their own interests. Such a utilitarian agenda was less concerned with the general welfare and progress of the Mi'kmaq than in the number of Natives who were able to carry arms and fight for the French cause. Allotments of funds and presents were largely made according to the census reports submitted to the Ministry identifying men capable of bearing arms.³² These reports were prepared based on the information provided by the missionaries.

It is impossible to offer an accurate estimate of the total strength of the Mi'kmaq people who were devout supporters of the French along the North Atlantic seaboard in the eighteenth century. Nonetheless, we have some account of their population. According to a 1708 census

³⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 35, p. 125, Drucour au ministre, 18 novembre, 1755. None of these amounts mentioned above included the cost of transportation and other expenses before final distribution.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 194v, Prévost au ministre, 7 novembre, 1755; MG 4, C2, MS 210-f, Itinéraire d'une voyage en Isle Royale par Grillot-Poilly, 1757; see also MG 1, C11B, vol. 12, p. 255v, St. Ovide au ministre, 14 novembre, 1732, vol. 21, p. 77, Forant au ministre, 14 novembre, 1739.

³² For census reports see Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 70-72.

report the population of the Mi'kmaq in Isle Royale and Nova Scotia was 842, which included 236 warriors.³³ In 1722 it was calculated that the total population was 838; of these 265 were warriors.³⁴ A 1735 estimate shows 641 warriors, but no account was given for their total strength.³⁵ In 1739 a memoir from the king to Governor Forant reported that there were 600 "hommes portant les armes."³⁶ A 1745 letter to the Minister of Marine indicated 535 warriors.³⁷ In 1749 a memoir

³³ B.A. Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki: Mi'kmaq Resistance in Cape Breton, 1745" (unpublished manuscript, Fortress of Louisbourg Library, February, 1995).

³⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 2, pp. 54-60, conseil sur les Sauvages, 4 décembre, 1716, C11B, vol. 6, pp. 72-76, Mézy à conseil, 27 décembre, 1722.

³⁵ There are different views of the total Mi'kmaq population in 1735. Balcom's study suggested about 2,136, whereas Bill Wicken proposed that it was 1222. Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki;" Wicken, "Encounter with Tall Sails," Table 2.1, Mi'kmaq settlements and population...1600-1735, p. 96. In contrast to Wicken's figure of 80 people at Chignecto during the years between 1600 and 1650 and the explanations of the unavailability of information for other centres, Father Biard stated in 1612 that there about 2,000 Mi'kmaq and in 1616 he made a revised estimate which shows the population between 3,000 and 3,500. Biard's report, which is considered to be lacking sufficient information according to Wicken, may have under-estimated the size of population, however is quite useful. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. III, p. 111; see also Virginia P. Miller, "The Decline of Nova Scotia Micmac Population," *Culture*, vol. II, no. 3 (1982), pp. 107-120.

Regional distribution of Mi'kmaq warriors in 1735:

Isle Royale	45	Beaubassin	48	
Antigoniche	40	Port Royal	30	
Malpeque	46	Chedaik	39	
Chebnakadic	95	Miramichy	98	
La Hève	58	Richibouctou	26	
Cape Sable	50	Ristigouch	66	Total warriors: 641

Source: MG 1, G1, vol. 466, no. 71, n.p., "Recensement fait cette présente année du nombre des Sauvages Miquamaq portant les armes conformément aux mémoires des missionnaires... 1735."

³⁶ MG 1, B, vol. 68, p. 379, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au S. de Forant, 22 (continued...)

from the king to Governor Charles Desherbiers de La Ralière incorporated about 600 fighting men as existed before the war.³⁸ A 1748 report indicated a total population of over 950 Mi'kmaq for mainland Nova Scotia.³⁹ In 1760 Colonel Frye stationed at Fort Cumberland (former French fort Beauséjour) offered an estimate of the total number of the Mi'kmaq to be 3,000.⁴⁰ According to B.A. Balcom about 30 per cent (28.1 in 1708 and 31.6 in 1722) of the Mi'kmaq were considered

(...continued)

juin, 1739; MG I, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 249-54, Mémoire sur les missions des Sauvages Mikmak et de L'acadie, c. 1739; C11B, vol. 10, pp. 114-20, St. Ovide au ministre, 1 novembre, 1729.

³⁷ O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. X, p. 15, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 12 September, 1745.

Distribution of Mi'kmaq warriors in 1745:

Regions	Missionaries	Warriors
Isle Royale	Abbé Maillard	80
Shubenacadie	Le Loutre	200
Miramichi	La Corne	195
Ristigouche	Le Stage	<u>60</u>
		<u>Total 535</u>

³⁸ MG I, B, vol. 89, p. 306, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'instruction au Sieur Desherbiers, 28 mars, 1749;

³⁹ *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, p. 46. Although we do not have an accurate account, it should be noted that the figure for 1748 represented a tremendous decline of population caused by the spread of epidemics from the Duc D'Anville's fleet at Chibouctou in 1746. It was calculated that about a half of the Mi'kmaq in northern part of peninsular Nova Scotia died during the following years. James Pritchard, *Anatomy of A Naval Disaster. The 1746 French Naval Expedition to North America* (Montreal/Kingston: 1995), pp. 228-29. In 1749 Le Loutre wrote: "j'ay perdu beaucoup de Sauvages...j'en compte cependant cent quatre-vingt en état de porter les armes." *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 461, 4 octobre, 1749; Miller, "The Decline of Nova Scotia Micmac Population," *op.cit.*

⁴⁰ *MHS Collections*, 1st series, vol. X, p. 115, Col. Frye to the governor of Nova Scotia, 7 March, 1760.

capable of bearing arms.⁴¹ In spite of the empirical validity of these statistical information, none of these figures are entirely accurate or reliable as they were mostly derived from the number of the Mi'kmaq who attended annual celebrations at Catholic missionary posts, or at the centres of gift distributions, or other public functions. Many of these figures refer only to the number of men who were above the age of twelve and were able to bear arms (map 3 shows principal centres of native warriors under the jurisdiction of Louisbourg). There are no statistics available on the male/female ratio in the population, or family size.

In the normal functioning of the Ministry of Marine no grant of money or materials would be made, or decisions taken, if there were any dubious or unclear matters of colonial administration. In such cases the minister sought clarifications before taking his final action. With respect to native affairs, the Ministry frequently broke this practical rule. In 1733 Governor Saint-Ovide made a request for an increase of presents without explaining the reason for it. The minister expressed his dissatisfaction, but added: "j'ay cependant ordonné l'envoy de tout ce que vous m'avez demandé pour le présens."⁴² This extraordinary ministerial action emphasises that giving of gifts to the Natives was assigned the highest priority, even if it entailed overlooking official accounting procedure.

⁴¹ Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki."

The Mi'kmaq population in Isle Royale between 1708 and 1745:

Year	Warriors	Total
1708	53	196
1722	33	107
1735	62	99
1745	80	—

Source: Balcom, *ibid.*; MG 1, B1, vol. 466, no. 72, n.p., Recensement des Sauvages Isle Royale; O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. X, p. 15.

⁴² MG 1, B, vol. 59, p. 516v, Ministre à St. Ovide et Le Normant, 19 mai, 1733.

The English did not surpass the French in bestowing presents upon the Mi'kmaq, or any other Native people. Gift diplomacy only slowly infiltrated the official policy of the British colonial administration as officials realised the usefulness of offering presents as a means to withdraw the Natives from the French cause. As early as 1696 English colonists, such as John Nelson, clearly indicated the importance of gift diplomacy to the British government. In the eighteenth century British colonial officials periodically advised the Lords of Trade to send gifts to the colonies and to adopt it as an official policy. In 1718, following the proposal of several Mi'kmaq, Lieutenant-Governor John Doucett of Annapolis Royal wrote Richard Philipps:

if I expected them [the Mi'kmaq] to be our friends they expected presents as was every year made to them by the French king. And if they had such, they should not only be good subjects to king George but esteem him as their father.⁴³

Despite his suggestion, Doucett was unable to offer the Natives a promise of presents for the year because there were no provisions nor fund allowed for it. As a result, the Mi'kmaq did not show any affinity for the English; in November Doucett wrote again:

the Indians now seldome coming near us and who have almost to a month been at Cape Britton this summer, and as they give out for presents they expected there, Now as it [is] my Duty...I offer my opinion which is that if your Lorships can't find some method to send presents to the Indians, they will be entirely estranged to us and be always ready to obstruct us in any undertaking for the good of this colony & His Majesty's subjects and I think there can be nothing done better than weaning the Indians from the interest of the French.⁴⁴

⁴³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 10, pp. 39-40, John Doucett to Colonel Philipps, 24 March, 1718/19.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. 9, p. 142-45, John Doucett, 15 November, 1718, enclosure in Philipps to the Lords of Trade, 11 March, 1719; see also *ibid.*, vol. 9, pp. 53-54, Philipps to the Lords of Trade, 29 April, 1718 and vol. 10, pp. 28-29, Philipps to the Lords of Trade, 11 March, 1718.

The Lords of Trade hesitatingly agreed to send "some Cloathing and Utensils of Small Value" for the Natives, but no policy of annual gift distribution was formulated.⁴⁵ During the 1720s Anglo-Mi'kmaq relations were characterised by severe hostilities. Consequently, by the 1730s officials at Annapolis Royal were strongly convinced that distribution of presents was an essential means of establishing peace and friendship with the Natives. According to Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence Armstrong, "nothing can secure them to our interests, but annual presents."⁴⁶ In spite of local officials' efforts to entice the Natives through occasional gifts, the English were never as successful as the French in the matter.

It is also interesting to note that if any native group had been attracted to the English, or made any move to sign peace with them, the metropolitan authorities commonly assumed that the English must have given them huge amounts of gifts. When a small group of Mi'kmaq from Chebnaquadié (Shubenacadie) signed a treaty of peace and friendship with the English in 1752 the minister believed:

nous avons esté informés de la paix que les anglois avoient faite avec les sauvages Micmaks. Ils avoient mesme insere (sic) dans leur papiers publiés quelques art[icle]s du Traitté; Et cet événement y étoit annoncé co[mm]e le fondement d'une tranquillité durable pour l'Acadie. Mais j'en ai jugé bien différemment, je n'ai regardé cette paix que co[mm]e le fruits de présents prodigues à quelques particuliers sauvages.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists, Indian-White Relations in the Maritimes, 1713-1867* (Vancouver: 1979), pp. 38-39.

⁴⁶ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 23, p. 188, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 8 December, 1735; *ibid.*, vol. 23, pp. 61-62, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 24 October, 1734; *ibid.*, vol. 22, p. 135, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 29 October, 1733; *ibid.*, vol. 19, Philipps, 2 September, 1730; *ibid.*, vol. 23, p. 59, Secretary Popple to Philipps, 13 September, 1734.

⁴⁷ MG 1, B, vol. 97, p. 314, Ministre à Prévost, 17 juillet, 1753.

The English may have interpreted this as a treaty of peace and friendship giving them some authority over the Mi'kmaq, but the French, on the basis of their long-standing relations with the same indigenous people, were convinced that it was only an alliance or amicable pact with limited groups which would require continual renewal at the cost of more presents and provisions. The treaty of 22 November, 1752 came in response to a request from Jean-Baptiste Cope, who claimed he represented the Chebnaquadiac groups (but it was not specified which of these), that they "should be paid for the land the English had settled upon in this country." The Council of Nova Scotia did not address itself to his proposal for compensation but offered terms which granted his people "free liberty of Hunting & Fishing as usual" on unspecified territories. It further provided for semi-annual or annual stores of "Bread, Flour, & such other Provisions as can be procured, necessary for the Familys, and proportionable to the number of the said Indians." They were to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Court of Civil Judicature "as any other of His Majesty's subjects." As the French suspected, within five months a couple of sailors arrived in Halifax carrying six Chebnaquadiac scalps. Cope's group then avenged themselves on the crew of a British supply ship and it is alleged he threw his copy of the treaty into the fire.⁴⁸

The centralised system of the administration of native affairs in the colony was a principal factor for the successful implementation of gift diplomacy.⁴⁹ This facilitated the task of colonial

⁴⁸ Thomas B. Akins, ed., *Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: 1869), pp. 671-73, Council Minutes, 14, 15, 16 September, 1752, p. 682, Governor Hopson to Lords of Trade, 16 April, 1753; W.E. Daugherty, *Maritime Indian Treaties in Historical Perspective* (Ottawa: 1983), pp. 47-51, with the text of the treaty at pp. 76-77.

⁴⁹ The impact of centralised administration on the implementation of Amerindian policy is better assessed in British colonial correspondence and historical writings of the time than in French documents. See MG11, CO 217; Henry McCulloch, *The Wisdom and Policy of the French in the* (continued...)

governments to organise gift diplomacy uniformly and coherently. It had become an established practice that the Amerindians were to approach the governor directly, and not the Ministry of Marine. When the Abenakis sent a letter to Versailles in 1705, the Nippissings sent a Wampum belt to Louis XIV in 1713, and the Iroquois did likewise in 1717, the royal response came as a warning that this was not the proper diplomatic venue, native affairs being centralised locally in the hands of the governor.⁵⁰ The British North American colonies, lacking a centralised Amerindian administration failed to develop a commonly acceptable gift diplomacy which could lure the Natives and challenge the French. The British recognised this for, as Thomas Mante later wrote, the French had the advantage of “being conducted by one chief” as compared to the English colonies “who could not unite their strength on account of the jarring interests of the different provinces.” Historian Francis Jennings pointed out that when the British government sent a commission of four members “to establish its royal authority to the extent possible, to secure liberty of conscience in all colonies” it met with adamant refusal.⁵¹ In 1731 Minister Maurepas said:

(...continued)

Construction of Their Great Offices (London: 1755) and *A Miscellaneous Essay Concerning the Courses Pursued by Great Britain in the Affairs of Her Colonies* (London: 1755); John Entick, *The General History of the Late War* (London: 1763); Edmund Burke, *An Account of the European Settlements in America* (London: 1777); John Mitchell, *The Contest in America Between Great Britain and France* (London: 1757); Thomas Mante, *History of the Late War in the North and South America* (London: 1772); and Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 36.

⁵⁰ *RAPQ*, 1947-48, vol. XXVIII, p. 257, Ministre à Vaudreuil, 7 mai, 1714; MG 1, C11A, vol. 40, p. 182v, à Vaudreuil, 28 octobre, 1719.

⁵¹ Mante, *History of the Late War*, p. 56. For a discussion of “the disunited colonies” see Francis Jennings, *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism and the Cant of Conquest* (Chapel Hill: 1975), pp. 282-297.

Il n'est pas surprenant que le général Philippe soit parvenu a force de présents à appraiser les sauvages de Pegiquit et de Beaubassin mais il est fort heureux que malgré tous ces présents et toutes les sollicitations des anglois ces sauvages demeurent attaches à la france.⁵²

It was only by the mid 1750s that the British government took some active measures to create a "project of general concert for the management of Indian affairs and services under one general Direction."⁵³

Mi'kmaq alliances with the French can be explained in terms of "kinship" relations as well- the king of France as a "father" and the French colonists as "brothers" bound together by baptism in the family of the Catholic faith; whereas the British treaties of peace and friendship can be understood in terms of conflict resolution. Both were intended to make diplomacy a foundation for inter-cultural relations. In the case of the French it was a reaffirmation of an established relationship while for the British in Nova Scotia it was a desire to end hostilities and arrive at some sort of *modus vivendi*. The Mi'kmaq strategies seem to fit the situation described by Russell Barsh and

⁵² MG 1, B, vol. 55, p. 563, Maurepas à Bourville, 10 juillet, 1731. In 1728 Maurepas said that although the Abenakis concluded peace with the English, "ils disent qu'ils conservent toujours le même attachement pour les françois." *RAPQ*, 1941-1942, vol. XXII, pp. 278, Maurepas à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1728.

⁵³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 56, p.20. [pp. 16-23], Report of the Board of Trade on the Plan for a general concert to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, 9 August, 1754; *ibid.*, pp. 24-25, and *ibid.*, vol. 58, pp. 29-30, the Lords of Trade to Secretary T. Robinson, 9 August, 1754 and 16 July, 1755. By 1776 the British government adopted gift diplomacy as a means for establishing friendly relations with Native peoples in other parts of the World. On 6 June, 1776 endorsing an expedition to Tahiti, the Admiralty advised Captain James Cook: "You are to distribute among the chiefs of those islands such part of the presents with which you have been supplied as you shall judge proper, reserving the remainder to distribute among the natives of the countries you may discover in the nother hemisphere" and "to take possession" of the lands "with the consent of the natives." Charles R. Low, ed., *Captain Cook's Three Voyages Round the World*, (London:1886), pp. 251, 254.

Leroy Eid as Amerindian diplomatic alternatives to warfare as a basis for dealing with European intruders.⁵⁴

In spite of the special cultural cohesion, the French did not always find it easy to meet Mi'kmaq expectations. As Cornelius J. Jaenen has observed, presents became confused with war expenditure and with wages paid for services rendered. He explained: "the distinction was never clear in the *état du roy* and probably was even less clear in the minds of the native beneficiaries."⁵⁵ The Natives were very clever in taking advantage of such situations and when the English also began to offer gifts the bargaining power of the Natives was enhanced considerably. The Mi'kmaq threatened to defect to the English if the French could not guarantee that their gifts would become *présents ordinaires*.⁵⁶ The local officials therefore realised that the French should be lenient and less compelling in negotiations with the Mi'kmaq in order to obtain native support to French imperial programmes which were to be directed by missionaries and *métis* leaders.⁵⁷ This strategy can be noticed in almost all of the correspondence concerning native affairs between Louisbourg and Versailles. This temperate diplomacy virtually forced the metropolitan and local authorities to grant whatever presents were demanded by the Mi'kmaq. In 1749, when there was a shortage of

⁵⁴ Russell L. Barsh, "The Nature and Spirit of North American Political Systems," *American Indian Quarterly*, vol. X, no. 3 (1986), pp. 181-198; Leroy V. Eid, "National War among Indians of Northeastern North America," *Canadian Review of American Studies*, vol. XVI, no. 2 (1985), pp. 124-154.

⁵⁵ Cornelius J. Jaenen, "The Role of Presents in French-Amerindian Trade" in Duncan Cameron, ed., *Explorations in Canadian Economic History, Essays in Honour of Irene M. Spry* (Ottawa: 1985), p. 241.

⁵⁶ Jaenen, *The French Relationship*, p. 125.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, *idem.*; MG 1, F3, vol. 50, pp. 4-4v, Ministre à St. Ovide, 10 avril, 1713; MG 1, B, vol. 35, pp. 84-85v, Ministre à St. Ovide, 10 avril, 1713.

présents ordinaires, Governor Desherbiers and *Commissaire* Prévost were obliged to supply the Natives with goods from the king's store at Louisbourg.⁵⁸ Like the French, the Mi'kmaq were also opportunists taking advantage of the situation. At times, it seems that they acted as "the imperialists," while the French became subservient. Despite the Ministry's instructions to local officials to reduce expenditures, the Natives forced them to do otherwise.

The metropolitan authorities made every attempt to satisfy the Natives by increasing the quantity of presents, but the quality of these often came under criticism. The main item of their displeasure was guns. Suppliers of firearms in France often sent poor quality muskets to the colony for the Natives. As early as 1695 the governor of Acadia complained of "une friponnerie manifeste sur les armes des Présens," because a Mi'kmaq was killed while he was using it.⁵⁹ In 1729, on account of complaints from Mi'kmaq about the firearms supplied in the previous year, Governor Saint-Ovide asked the minister to find some solution.⁶⁰ Subsequently, Versailles insisted the suppliers in France to despatch a better quality product to the colony.⁶¹ The Mi'kmaq similarly received other inferior quality manufactures such as axes and steel implements.⁶²

In spite of the distribution of firearms and other goods, from the beginning of French contacts with the Mi'kmaq, it was the former who continued to control the technology. The Native

⁵⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 28, pp. 40-40v, au ministre, 19 octobre, 1749. I have consulted independently the same collections of documents at Louisbourg as Olive P. Dickason and do not disagree fundamentally with her interpretations. (Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*; p. 85.) I have used them for a different purpose and have had access to some new material.

⁵⁹ MG 1, C11D, vol. 2, p. 258, Villebon au ministre, 20 juillet, 1695.

⁶⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 10, p. 189v, St. Ovide au ministre, 1 novembre, 1729.

⁶¹ Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 85-86.

⁶² MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 80-81, L'Hermite au ministre, 8 novembre, 1714.

people were never trained to maintain or repair their guns. Prior to the establishment of Louisbourg, the Mi'kmaq were required to go to Canada to have their muskets repaired. Even at Louisbourg there was no gunsmith until 1720.⁶³ By the beginning of the 1740s, the local government began to display an unprecedented interest in the proper maintenance of the Natives' firearms. The deteriorating political relations between France and Britain, as well as between their colonies, was the main reason for this sudden attention to the quality and reparation of guns supplied to the Native people. In 1740, the governor appointed gunsmiths at Port Toulouse and Isle Saint-Jean chiefly to repair muskets given to the Mi'kmaq.⁶⁴ Hence, firearms had taken on diplomatic significance. A principal factor in Mi'kmaq protests of British incursions onto their territories had been their access to French arms and ammunition. Amerindian societies which adapted in this way were dependent on European arms, ammunition and gunpowder.⁶⁵

Wampum similarly had a prominent place in the field of diplomacy. It was used as a common medium of exchange, its shell beads, also known as grains, each having a fixed value in terms of beaver pelts, deerskins, etc. Wampum was further used as a channel of communication. Moreover, it had a ceremonial value in negotiating alliances, preventing disputes, identifying a messenger of peace and assuring future fidelity.⁶⁶ Wampum belts were owned by almost all

⁶³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, p. 372, St. Ovide à conseil, 27 novembre, 1721.

⁶⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 29-29v, Forant au ministre, 8 février, 1740.

⁶⁵ This strength could also be a weakness if the European supply was cut off as was the case in King Philips War in New England. Ian K. Steele, *Warpaths, Invasions of North America* (New York: 1994), pp. 103-04; Jennings, *The Invasion of America*, pp. 166-68.

⁶⁶ Wilbur R. Jacobs, *Wilderness Politics and Indian Gifts, The Norther Colonial Frontier, 1748-1763* (Lincoln: 1966), p. 23; W. R. Jacobs, "Wampum, the Protocol of Indian Diplomacy," (continued...)

Amerindians including the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis. The introduction of metal tools assisted the making of beads from the linings of conch shells and the quahog clam. Thus, a new technology brought the French colonists and the Natives together.

The awarding of medals held a notable position in imperial diplomacy. The policy of granting medals, as we have seen earlier, was first proposed in 1739 at Isle Royale by Governor Forant. He advised the minister, it would be "fort à propos" to award silver medals "aux chef de chaque village, et ceux qui donneroient des preuves éclatantes de leur fidélité." Furthermore, it would be "le plus sûr moyen de nous les attacher, si vous aprouvés cette idée,...je suis persuadé que cela fera un excellent effet."⁶⁷ Medals were presented at Port-La-Joie and at Port Toulouse upon the recommendation of Abbé Maillard, to the Mi'kmaq leaders who had offered distinguished service to the king in the War of Austrian Succession and who opposed the settlement projects of the English in Nova Scotia.⁶⁸ A remarkable aspect of the award of medals is that it was not the religious or cultural affinity with the French that counted, but their capacity to launch successful military campaigns against the English, which qualified them to receive the medals of merit. Abbé Maillard said that when "il est nécessaire que nous nous assemblions, c'est toujours chez le

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WMQ, vol. VI, no. 3, (1949), pp. 596-604.

⁶⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 21, pp. 77-77v, Forant à Maurepas, 14 novembre, 1739.

⁶⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 22, pp. 107-107v, Bourville au ministre, 28 mai, 1740; *ibid.*, vol. 22, p. 120, Bourville au ministre, 26 octobre, 1740; *ibid.*, vol. 28, pp. 372-72v, conseil, mai, 1750.

commandant du port Toulouse avec le chef décoré de sa médaille.” The Mi’kmaq, like other Amerindians, regarded medals as “titres de noblesse”.⁶⁹

“Military commission” were another effective means to influence and impress the Mi’kmaq who were granted ranks of “major”, “captain” and “lieutenant”. The commissioned Native was given the right to exercise his “military authority” within a particular region. In 1739 Peter Warren, referring to the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia, said: “one of them has a commission from the governor of Canada or Cape Breton to command a particular district and generally bears the title captain.”⁷⁰ “Major” appears to have been the highest commission granted. For all commissioned services the Mi’kmaq received remuneration from the French.⁷¹ Other military honours were also accorded to the Natives. When the chief of Isle Royale died in 1737 he was buried with French military honours. For this purpose a detachment of troops was despatched from Louisbourg.⁷² French authorities at Louisbourg were quite sure that this kind of formal honour, particularly for the dead during the mourning period, would further strengthen their alliance with the Mi’kmaq.

Above all, personal relationships between colonial officials and native chiefs had considerable impact. The hospital at Louisbourg never accepted Native peoples among its patients,

⁶⁹ Maillard, “Lettre de M. L’Abbé Maillard sur les Missions Micmaques,” Casgrain, ed., *Les soirées canadiennes* (Quebec: 1863), vol. III, pp. 370-71; MG 1, C11A, vol. 99, p. 250, Duquesne au ministre, 1 octobre, 1754.

⁷⁰ Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London: 1973), p. 12.

⁷¹ Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 111; MG 1, C11B, vol. 29, p. 63v, Desherbiers au ministre, 27 novembre, 1750 and p. 68, Desherbiers au ministre, 6 décembre, 1750; O’Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to New York*, vol. 6, p. 398, Shirley to Clinton, 14 Septemer, 1747.

⁷² MG 1, C11B, vol. 19, pp. 56v-57, Bourville au ministre, 27 décembre, 1737; *ibid.*, B, vol. 66, p. 300, Ministre à Bourville, 13 mai, 1738.

yet René, a Mi'kmaq leader who was wounded during the first siege of Louisbourg, was admitted due to his well-known friendship with acting-governor Louis Du Pont Duchambon and *Commissaire* François Bigot.⁷³

Pursuant to French custom, military officers at outposts were often transferred, or rotated, from one place to another. It was a practice which the Mi'kmaq did not appreciate as it disconnected their friendship with the officers. As early as 1709, Raudot had advised Versailles that it was essential "qu'on eut toujours des personnes en cette colonie aimés et considérés de ces Sauvages et propre à aller chez eux quand on voudroit, il faut pour cela, Mgr., élever du sujets."⁷⁴ Governor Forant informed the minister that it was inconvenient to transfer officers from military posts on the frontier because it could damage the existing relationship of understanding and co-operation with local Native peoples. Moreover, it would take a long time for new officers to establish similar ties with the Natives and to win their confidence.⁷⁵ Forant's correspondence with the Ministry vividly elucidated the necessity of preserving personal relationships between the officers and the Natives in favour of the latter's opinion.

During the eighteenth century, as French-Amerindian relations were becoming more dynamic and complex, the attitude of the Native peoples began to change drastically. Referring to the Abenakis, Nicolas Perrot once remarked:

⁷³ "Lettre de M. L'Abbé Maillard," p. 377. Maillard said, "René, fort connu de messieurs Duchambon et Bigot et de la pluspart des officiers de l'état major, fut bien reçu. On le mit à l'hôpital, où son mal, bien loin de diminuer, ne fit qu'augmenter."

⁷⁴ MG 1, C11G, vol. 4, p. 186v, Raudot à Pontchartrain, 1 novembre, 1709.

⁷⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 21, p. 60, Forant au ministre, 14 novembre, 1739.

They are just as liberal toward those who give them nothing as to those who carry [presents] to them. This sort of reception is ordinary among the Savages; in point of hospitality it is only the Abenakis, and those who live with the French people, who have become somewhat less liberal, on account of the advice that our people have given them by placing before them obligations...At the present time, it is evident that these savages are fully as selfish and avaricious as formerly they were hospitable.⁷⁶

Perrot's assessment was accurate: Amerindian groups living on the North Atlantic littoral grew increasingly selfish when their subsistence living became an unprecedented problem. They were dependent upon external supplies, especially from France, and exhibited a tendency to amass as many goods as possible.

In this economic setting, offers of bounties for special services constituted powerful instruments of military alliance. The French paid the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis for scalping the English and their native allies. This was to counter the New England precedent of paying scalp bounty. In 1744, when the English declared war on the Natives of St. John River and the Cape Sable, the bounty was fixed at 100 pounds for the scalp of a male, 105 pounds for a male captive, 50 pounds for the scalp of a female, and 55 pounds for a female captive.⁷⁷ The French colonial governments in general offered much less in bounties:⁷⁸ a 1748 memorandum mentioned the payment of 30 *livres* for a scalp and 100 *livres* for an English prisoner.⁷⁹ It appears that the price

⁷⁶ Emma Helen Blair, trans. & ed., *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* (Cleveland: 1911), vol. 1, pp. 134-45.

⁷⁷ James P. Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine* (Portland: 1907), vol. XXIII, pp. 296-298, Declaration of War Against the Cape Sables and St. John's Indians, 19 October, 1744.

⁷⁸ Steele, *Warpaths*, pp. 131, 142, 147, 162.

⁷⁹ MG 1, C11D, vol. 10, pp. 144-54, Sur l'Acadie, n.d, 1748. During the Seven Years' War in Canada the average payment for a live English prisoner was between 120 and 140 *livres*, as
(continued...)

for scalps remained the same in the 1750s. In 1756 two Mi'kmaq chiefs, Joseph Embesne and Bernard Guillaume, were paid 300 *livres* for ten English scalps. In Acadia an Abenaki chief, Martin, was paid 210 *livres* for seven scalps.⁸⁰ On certain occasions the French were forced to grant huge sums for this service. In 1753, Prévost informed Minister Rouillé that missionary Le Loutre had to pay 1,800 *livres* for eighteen English scalps brought to Fort Beauséjour.⁸¹ Bounties for scalping were offered not only to counter those of the English but also to cement the French-Amerindian alliance.

All of the gift exchanges, military alliances, flourishing of friendships and understanding between the French colonists and the Natives were never able to assure a climate of absolute trust. The local authorities were convinced that the Natives were not always faithful to them, and that they would defect if they became dissatisfied for any reason. One military officer wrote: "il est à remarquer que les sauvages sont naturellement intéressés, qu'ils ne s'attachent qu'aux bienfaits et non à la personne."⁸² Another opined, "il me semble que s'ils ne peuvent pas nous faire du bien, ils peuvent nous faire beaucoup de mal sy les Anglais les attirerent à eux."⁸³

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opposed to only 33 *livres* for a scalp. Of course, prominent prisoners taken in some exceptional circumstances could bring as much as 1000 *livres* each.

⁸⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 36, pp. 241-42, Bordereau, 20 décembre, 1756.

⁸¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, pp. 197-201, Prévost au ministre, 16 aoust, 1753.

⁸² Gaston du Boscq de Beaumont, ed., *Les derniers jours de l'Acadie (1748-1758): correspondances et mémoires* (Paris: 1899), pp. 276-277. Natives were described as "mefians, ingrats, traitres, perfides, vindicatifs..."

⁸³ *Ibid.*, pp. 173-74, Joubert à Surlaville, s.d., 1755.

Group factionalism among the Mi'kmaq frequently disturbed France's relations with the Mi'kmaq "nation". Regardless of French gift-diplomacy, some Mi'kmaq groups ventured out of Louisbourg's orbit of influence. The best example is Major Jean-Baptiste Cope and his company of 90 Mi'kmaq of the Chebnakadic-Musquodoboit group in the eastern part of Nova Scotia.⁸⁴ On 22 November, 1752 Major Cope and party established peace with the English at Halifax promising that they would persuade other Mi'kmaq to follow them.⁸⁵ This infuriated the Louisbourg authorities. *Commissaire* Prévost said they were "tous mauvais sujets et tant hommes, femmes qu'enfants."⁸⁶ When missionary Le Loutre learned about this peace he dismissed it, yet was enraged. He retorted that Cope was "the Tail of the Indians" and the English had no right to interact with these Natives without his mediation.⁸⁷ No other groups adhered to the treaty, so it would appear this action had divided the Mi'kmaq temporarily. Cope himself soon changed his mind, which favoured the French.

Despite the lack of confidence and trust, the Amerindian alliance laid the foundation of a French imperial power structure. Gift diplomacy operated as a linchpin of French-Amerindian imperial relations. While the French were primarily responsible for (or forced into) promoting these relations based on native customs, the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis had the advantage of exerting their own influence on the French. The Native peoples had freedom of thought and

⁸⁴ M.D. Johnson, "Cope, Jean-Baptiste Major," *DBC*, vol. III, pp. 146-47.

⁸⁵ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 685-86, "A Proclamation by P.T. Hopson," 24 November, 1752, and pp. 682-85, "Minutes of Council at Halifax," 22 November, 1752.

⁸⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, p. 159, Prévost au ministre, 12 mai, 1753.

⁸⁷ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 54, p. 118, Anthony Casteel's report, 30 July, 1753.

action as demonstrated by their rejection of permanent settlement, their criticism of poor quality *présents*, and their complaint about rotating military officers. Authorities at Louisbourg and Versailles were compelled to consider and accommodate the Natives' interests. What we see as the diplomatic success of a French imperial system in the Maritime region was to a great extent an accommodation to Amerindian desires.

The services of the missionaries and military officers remained a crucial element in the structure of power. Missionaries Abbés Maillard and Le Loutre declared that their foremost duty was to keep the Mi'kmaq and others loyal to both the king of France and the French in the colony.⁸⁸ Le Loutre stated that he was going to Acadia with the purpose of stimulating the Mi'kmaq to oppose the intentions of the English and to expel them from Nova Scotia.⁸⁹ Governor Saint-Ovide concluded that it is only these missionaries who can control the Native peoples in their duty to god and king.⁹⁰ The officers at the military posts on the frontier were advised by the colonial government to act in conformity with the missionaries in the administration of native affairs.⁹¹ This was a striking departure from the practice in Canada where the role of the missionaries as diplomats and interpreters was minimal in the eighteenth century.

⁸⁸ Maillard, *Account of the Customs and Manners*, p. 2; *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 438; "Lettre de M. L'Abbé Maillard," p. 294.

⁸⁹ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 438; MG 1, C11C, vol. 9, p. 130v, Isle Royale, 29 juillet, 1749.

⁹⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 12, p. 37v, St. Ovide au ministre, 25 novembre, 1731.

⁹¹ Norman Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," *CHR*, vol. XI, no. 2 (1930), p. 121; J.C. Webster, Thomas Pichon, *The Spy of Beauséjour* (Sackville: 1937), pp. 151-52.

Missionary centres and military outposts were the steering centres of French imperial power on the Atlantic seaboard. The 1745 conquest of Louisbourg did not undermine the entire French power base; on the contrary, France continued to retain its political domination because of the vibrant functioning of these imperial centres on the frontiers of the colony and in Nova Scotia. In May 1745 a force of Canadian militiamen and Mi'kmaq attacked the British at Annapolis Royal but left without taking the fort in order to return to relieve Louisbourg, then under siege. They arrived too late to save the fortress. With the support of missionaries such as Le Loutre and Maillard, the Mi'kmaq not only harassed English settlers but also menaced the occupation garrison at Louisbourg. These events denote that even though Louisbourg was captured and the French troops were sent home, the real power structure of imperialism remained stable and functioning. After the signing of peace in 1748, and the founding of Halifax, the Mi'kmaq continued their opposition to the English, just as the Abenakis had done for three decades previously.⁹² The prevailing fear of the French-American military alliance among the English officials and colonists as well as repeated onslaughts against their colonies further substantiate this view. Commodore Peter Warren thought British possession of Nova Scotia was endangered:

while so artful and designing a people as the French are surrounding us, and using their influence and application to get such great nations of Indians [into] their interest and obedience, which if once accomplished, will drive us into the sea.⁹³

The British and the Anglo-American colonists, including those in Nova Scotia, felt threatened and developed a kind of siege mentality.

⁹² MG 5, B1, vol. 9, pp. 133-36, *Déclaration faite par les Sauvages Micmacks*, 24 septembre, 1749; *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, pp. 17-19, *Déclaration de guerre de Micmacs aux Anglais*, 1749.

⁹³ Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy*, p. 38, Warren to Corbett, 8 September, 1744.

The return of a French garrison to Louisbourg in 1749 greatly encouraged the Mi'kmaq. They now resolved to take aggressive action against the British who were putting pressure on their Acadian subjects. Le Loutre had returned from Quebec to Beaubassin which had suddenly evolved into a new centre of Mi'kmaq activities. Abbé Maillard informs us:

une partie des nôtres, va s'y ranger aussi, pour garder le pays et de ne pas permettre aux Anglais de faire tout le mal qu'ils voudrant y faire. On y commet même des à présent des hostilités de part et d'autres. Il y a de plus une déclaration guerre formellement fait aux anglais de chebductou, envoyé par lettre au gouverneur de cette place...⁹⁴

Thus, the Mi'kmaq were willing take the offensive.

In contrast, in 1755 when the English declared war on the Mi'kmaq and captured forts Beauséjour and Gasparreau, signs of the collapse of the French empire were manifested within the power structure. Subsequently, as Le Loutre left his Acadian mission and as frontier imperial centres weakened, the hegemonic position of France began to erode despite the existence of a huge fortress and garrison at Louisbourg until 1758. This suggests that the real imperial power structure evolved from the frontier conditions, or from a network of interactive relations established between missionary, military, and Amerindian forces through the practice of various diplomatic exchanges.

The Acadians were another frontier element of the imperial power structure. Being Catholics, French and allies of the Natives, they helped sustain France's informal domination over Acadia. They did not openly align with the French, nor did they fight against the English, but their "neutral" stand was so partial in favour of the former that it compelled the latter to begin deporting them in 1755. Until then, the Acadians provided a base for the perpetuation of the influence of the missionaries and church in a region where France had no legitimate territorial rights. English

⁹⁴ ASQ., Lettres P, No. 66, Maillard à l'abbé Du Fau, 18 octobre, 1749.

officials at Annapolis Royal felt that they were unable to exercise their authority if the priests and missionaries to the Natives violated the regulations of the Nova Scotia government. This powerlessness was graphically expressed in Lieutenant-Governor Paul Mascarene's correspondence with the Lords of Trade in 1742 concerning the deportation of two priests, Jean-Pierre de Miniac and Jacques Girard, for their disobedience to report to the Council and obtain permission to stay in Nova Scotia. Mascarene wrote:

I cannot answer whether they will obey and how far in such a case it will be in the power of this government to force them to it. The Representation I have already made to the nature and inclinations of the Inhabitants and the power we have over them will show the Difficulty we labour under to enforce the orders given in such cases.⁹⁵

These priests were later allowed to stay in the colony.⁹⁶ The officials at Annapolis Royal assumed that it was the Bishop of Quebec who was responsible for sending these priests without any compliance with the rules of Nova Scotia. Earlier in 1732 Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence Armstrong had expressed his discontent: the bishop "sends whom and what number of priests he may think proper and in all other affairs takes the same liberty." Mascarene said, the bishop considered Nova Scotia a part of his diocese and "the power of throwing his missionaries here at [his] pleasure will be a barr ever to bring these French Inhabitants to a due obedience to His

⁹⁵ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 25, p. 253, Paul Mascarene to the Lords of Trade, 3 December, 1742.

⁹⁶ Father Miniac returned to France in 1749 and Girard continued to serve until 1755. According to the regulations priests were forbidden to change their parish without prior approval from the Council, but often the officials failed to implement this rule. MG 11, CO, 217, vol. 25, pp. 190-92, Mascarene to La Goudalie, 16 June, 1742; pp. 247-49, Mascarene to Goudalie, 2 December, 1742; see also Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails," p. 337, fn. 60.

Majesty's Government."⁹⁷ In 1749 when Mascarene learned of the bishop's plan to visit the Acadians, Governor William Shirley of Massachusetts informed Governor-General Galissonière that it was "an extraordinary attempt" to assert a jurisdiction that "cannot be admitted."⁹⁸ These official complaints and concerns vividly illuminate the role the church in maintaining French influence in Nova Scotia. According to Armstrong, the Acadians "follow the dictates of their priests and the Bishop of Quebec (or those of Cape Briton)."⁹⁹ Governor Lawrence claimed to have clear evidence that Acadians had provided both the French and the Mi'kmaq with "intelligence, quarters, provisions and assistance in annoying the Government" of Nova Scotia.¹⁰⁰

Acadia was divided into six parishes: Port Royal, Rivière aux Canards, Grand-Pré, Pisiquid, Cobequid and Beaubassin.¹⁰¹ There were about fifty-eight priests and missionaries of different orders who served here between 1713 and 1758.¹⁰² All these parishes had communication links between themselves and with Louisbourg and Quebec as well as with Boston. The inland routes by rivers, tracks and coasting routes facilitated commercial activities between the French and the Acadians besides assisting easy transportation of military forces and provisions from Louisbourg and Quebec to Nova Scotia. It also helped the missionaries to criss-cross the interior lands to visit the Native

⁹⁷ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 20, p. 177, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 10 June, 1732; *ibid.*, vol. 25, pp. 253-54, Mascarene to the Lords of Trade, 3 December, 1742.

⁹⁸ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 34, p. 66, Shirley to Galissonière, 9 May, 1749.

⁹⁹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 20, p. 177, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 10 June, 1732.

¹⁰⁰ Quoted in Patterson, "Indian-White Relations," p. 51.

¹⁰¹ *Collection de Documents* vol. I, "Description de l'Acadie," p. 44-46.

¹⁰² "Les anciens missionnaires français et canadiens de l'Acadie depuis 1604 jusqu'en 1820," *Bulletin de recherches historiques*, vol. XXXVI, no.3 (1930), pp. 158-162.

peoples and the Acadians. Transportation and communication systems, hence, provided a stable infrastructure to the French imperial power structure.¹⁰³ The English authorities discerned that this communication network was one of the principal channels for French domination in their province. In the 1750s, therefore, the English placed a high strategic priority on dismantling this network, most notably Louisbourg's supply route "by the way of Bay Verte and through the Bay Funda."¹⁰⁴ They proceeded to obstruct Acadian trade with the French. In 1754 the Nova Scotia government passed a Corn Act to prohibit the Acadians from exporting corn from the province.¹⁰⁵ Despite the preventive measures, France remained a predominant influence in the region until the capture of Beauséjour and Gasparcau, the two main communication links between the French of Isle Royale and the Acadians of Nova Scotia.

An examination of the relationship between the missionaries and the Native peoples also highlights the continuation of local institutional power. As we have discussed in the previous chapter, the primary objective of the christianising and civilising mission was to establish the traditional authority of the Church over the Native peoples. This was accomplished not through the establishment of the many educational, social and welfare institutes of the church but through itinerant missionaries. The church, the government, and the military on the North Atlantic seaboard used their powers adopting different ways to bring the peoples of the region into their sphere of

¹⁰³ *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, "Description de l'Acadie," pp. 45-46

¹⁰⁴ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 378, Extract from a letter of Governor Lawrence to Governor Shirley, 5 November, 1754; *ibid.*, p. 380, Shirley to Lawrence, 7 November, 1754.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 219-20, "A Proclamation" by Charles Lawrence, 17 September, 1754.

command and domain. They succeeded in this as their hegemonic existence for about half a century denotes.

In summary, the imperial power structure was a product of the totality of the relations between colonial or local factors and forces. While Versailles was theoretically the nucleus of this power structure, in practice, the motor for generating imperial energy operated "from below", in the colony. Missionary and military posts on the frontier region were strategically more important than Louisbourg in the perpetuation of power and domination. The Native peoples played a double role in the power structure, one as the actual fighters for the French empire and the other, like the Acadians, a medium for the perpetuation of an ideology of regional independence.

CHAPTER 7

COMPETITION FOR EMPIRE, 1713-1758

With the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, maintenance of France's political presence on the North Atlantic seaboard became a matter of utmost importance. France, possessing only a small territorial base in the region and being in a formal state of peace with Britain, had limited freedom to exert its political powers. Furthermore, France's own economic problems and political aspirations in Europe after the War of Spanish Succession compelled it to adhere to the conditions of the treaty for preserving peace and friendship with Britain for the three following decades. Establishment of political domination on the North Atlantic seaboard had become a complicated subject; France could not by any means engage in a direct contest with the English colonies for regional political gains without violating the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht, or hurting the interests of Britain. Nonetheless, France had to safeguard its empire based on Isle Royale for political, economic, and strategic reasons.

In these circumstances, France turned its attention towards the former Acadia, a region belonging to the British Crown since 1713 and peopled by the Acadians and Mi'kmaq who feared British settlements on their lands. The discord between the rulers and the ruled in Nova Scotia had great significance for France's political hegemony in the region. The French policy was to use these peoples, especially the Mi'kmaq, to create a zone of French influence, inducing them to oppose the expansion of English settlements. In other words, this policy was aimed at the

establishment of French ascendancy over these peoples. The French succeeded in this imperial mission as Governor of Nova Scotia Richard Philipps conceded:

I am sorry to find that the French have so well made their advantage of our neglect of this country that their government prevails both among the Inhabitants and Natives...The Indians are entirely in the French interest. They are inspired to assert their native rights to this country in opposition to that of His Majesty's.¹

Expressing a tinge of defeat, on another occasion Philipps bemoaned that it would be "better to hand the country back to the French than be content with the name of government only."² In 1749

Governor Edward Cornwallis observed :

it has been called an English Province these thirty-four years and I don't believe that the King had one true subject without the Fort of Annapolis. I cannot trace the least glimpse of an English government.³

This was not an isolated opinion but the view held by the English colonial government in general.⁴

Referring to the Acadians, Abbé de l'Isle-Dieu wrote in a memorandum that despite all the special rights and privileges granted them by the British Crown, "tout concoure à prouver qu'ils n'avoient point changé de souverain et que l'Angleterre même continuoit à les regarder comme sujets du Roy

¹ T.B. Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia Documents Relating to the Acadian French and the First British Colonisation of the Province, 1714-1758* (Cottonport: 1972), p. 36, Philipps to Craggs, July, 1720 and p. 32, Philipps to Craggs, 20 May, 1720.

² Archibald M. MacMechan, ed., *Nova Scotia Archives II: A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission-Book in the Possession of the Government of Nova Scotia* (Halifax: 1900), p. 68, Philipps to secretary Craggs, s.d., 1720; for Philipps comment on the influence of Louisbourg see MG 11, CO 217, vol. 12, p. 113, Philipps to the Lords of Trade, 26 September, 1720.

³ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 586, Edward Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 11 September, 1749.

⁴ James P. Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine* (Portland: 1908), vol. XI, p. 458, Answer of the Two Houses to His Excellency, 19 April, 1749.

de France.”⁵ Thus, France was able to implement its imperial policy and establish its political dominance without actually retaking territorial possession of Nova Scotia. This hegemonic system can be described as an “informal empire” in contrast to what we commonly call the territorial empire, or “formal empire” (map 4 shows the zone of French imperial influence). This chapter will advance the interpretation that the maintenance of this “informal empire” was more crucial than any other means of imperialism to the existence of French power in the North Atlantic seaboard regions.

The practice of imperialism depended largely upon the strategies and actions of local authorities, including the missionaries, and the effective use of native military force. As the Native peoples were already allies to the king of France and “loyal” to the French colonists, it was not a difficult task for local officials to instigate them against the English. In terms of the practicalities of territorial defence, or the perpetuation of imperial designs, it was the native warriors who championed the cause of the French seaboard empire rather than the *troupes de la marine* during the period between 1713 and 1758. If this seaboard empire remained as a threat to the existence of the British colonies, as the English had believed, it was mainly due to the presence of the Mi’kmaq and other Amerindians. Based on this perspective of historical developments the hypothesis can be put forward that French imperialism was not imposed from above, using conventional means of power such as formal military forces, but was predominantly initiated locally by influencing the Natives to co-operate with the French. This is what the present study describes as “imperialism from below”. The following discussion will examine this hypothesis in terms of French imperial policy and tactics, on the one hand, and in terms of native warfare against the English, on the other hand.

⁵ *Collection de documents inédits sur le Canada et l'Amérique: Documents sur l'Acadie*, (Quebec: 1888-1890), vol. I, p. 7, Mémoire à présenter à Monseigneur le Duc de Choiseul, s.d.

Little attention is given to the Anglo-French conflicts of 1745 and 1758, because their impact was negligible in the exercise of "imperialism from below". Rather, they represented the decline and fall of the French seaboard empire.⁶

The French-Amerindian military alliance had been well established before the founding of Louisbourg with the Mi'kmaq, the Malisect and the Abenakis being close allies of the French. In the War of Spanish Succession the Mi'kmaq were staunch defenders of the French empire. Twenty-five of their families had installed themselves at Placentia to assist the French corsairs and to enjoy the spoils of piracy against the English.⁷ In Acadia, the Abenakis had launched several ambush attacks against English soldiers and settlers despite Governor Dudley attempts to persuade them to remain neutral in the Anglo-French conflict. The Mi'kmaq had declared war against the English on the grounds that their people had been poisoned by the English during a feast at Minas. Whether or not there had actually been attempts deliberately to poison them, a sizable number believed that there had been, and thus acted upon their convictions.⁸ A completely different explanation can be

⁶ A number of studies has been done on the Anglo-French conflicts concentrating on the capture of Louisbourg in 1745 and 1758. J.S. McLennan, *Louisbourg, from Its Foundation to Its Fall* (Halifax: 1979); G.A. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg* (Maine: 1967); Bona Arsenault, *Louisbourg, 1713-1758* (Quebec: 1971); George F.G. Stanley, *New France, the Last Phase, 1744-1760* (Toronto: 1968); for a study based on British records see Julian Gwyn, "French and British Naval Power at the Two Sieges of Louisbourg: 1745 and 1758," *Nova Scotia Historical Review*, vol. 10, no. 2 (1990), pp. 63-93.

⁷ Cornelius J. Jaenen, *The French Relationship with the Native Peoples of New France and Acadia* (Ottawa: 1984), p. 178.

⁸ The complaints of poisoning food, drinks and even clothes were often launched against both the English and the French. In 1746 the English at Beaubassin were accused of killing 200 Natives by issuing poisoned goods. Abbé Maillard, *An Account of the Customs and Manners of the Micmakis and Maricheets. Savage Nations Now Dependent on the Government of Cape-Breton* (London: 1758), pp. 66-67; R.G. Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents, Travels and*
(continued...)

offered as epidemics occasionally caused sudden deaths among the Natives. In 1746 a contagion of serious proportion spread throughout the peninsula of Nova Scotia from Duc d'Anville's naval fleet.⁹

Peace had been concluded between France and Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, yet the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis were unrelenting in their hostility towards the English. They did not believe that they had any reason for making peace with the English who had appropriated their lands.¹⁰ They did not want foreigners to settle on their lands and become their masters, as was reported to Versailles:

Qu'ils ne vouloient point prester serment à personne, qu'ils ne vouloient pas de Roy Étranger, qu'ils avoient leur Roys naturels et leurs gouverneurs qui sont leurs chefs et leurs anciens que le François n'estoit pas leur Roy qu'il estoit leur père parce qu'il les instruit.¹¹

(...continued)

Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France, 1610-1791 (New York: 1959), vol. III, p. 105; MG 18, F. 12, vol. 1, Thomas Pichon Papers, p. 215, Motifs des sauvages mikmaques et marichites de continuer la guerre contre les anglois, s.d., 1751; MG 2, B1, vol. 8, p. 238, sauvages, s.d.; Thomas Pichon, *Lettres et Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire naturelle, civile et politique du Cap Breton* (London: 1760, Reprint, 1966), pp. 134-35.

⁹ James Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster. The 1746 French Naval Expedition to North America* (Montreal/Kingston: 1995), p. 228; Beamish Murdoch, *A History of Nova Scotia or Acadie* (Halifax: 1866), vol. II, p. 94; Thomas C. Haliburton, *History of Nova Scotia* (Belleville: 1973) vol. I, pp. 129; Virginia P. Miller, "The Decline of Nova Scotia Micmac Population," *Culture*, vol. II, no. 3 (1982), pp. 107-120.

¹⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 263-64, [Costebelle, 26 octobre et 12 novembre, 1714] Conseil, 1 avril, 1715.

¹¹ MG 2, B1, vol. 8, p. 218, Bégon au ministre, 25 septembre, 1715; MG 1, C11A, vol. 35, pp. 113-13v, Bégon au ministre, 25 septembre, 1715.

The Mi'kmaq attacked English fishing boats in the coastal areas of Acadia. In St. Georges Bay twenty Mi'kmaq harassed a party of English fishermen, killing one of them.¹² Lieutenant-Governor Thomas Caulfield filed a complaint with Governor-General Vaudreuil at Quebec and later Governor Costebelle at Louisbourg.¹³ When Costebelle inquired about these hostilities the Mi'kmaq replied: "c'estoit pour faire peur aux autres."¹⁴ As there was a formal peace established between France and Britain, Costebelle was officially obliged to openly condemn the Mi'kmaq attacks as "la ferocité inutile." Abbé Antoine Gaulin admonished them that he would not hear their confessions if they did not stop fighting and looting.¹⁵

Costebelle advised the Mi'kmaq chiefs to terminate their raids on English settlers and informed Francis Nicholson, Governor of Nova Scotia, that "il a pris les mesures les plus convenables pour faire ressentir aux sauvages qu'ils ne pouvoient pratiquer rien de plus désagréable au Roy que de tenir une conduite si contraire aux articles de la paix."¹⁶ The Mi'kmaq did not change their minds, but instead continued their raids with more vigour and determination. Were they aware of the duplicity in official policy? There is reason to believe they were.

¹² MG 2, B1, vol. 8, pp. 210-11, Sauvages, s.d.; MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, 123-23v, Costebelle au ministre, 9 septembre, 1715.

¹³ MacMechan, ed., *A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission-Book*, p. 5, Caulfield to Vaudreuil, 7 May, 1714; p. 22, Caulfield to Costebelle, 16 August, 1715.

¹⁴ MG 2, B1, vol. 8, p. 211, Sauvages, s.d.

¹⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 1, pp. 129-29v, Costebelle au ministre, 9 septembre, 1715. These Mi'kmaq hostilities are discussed in Olive P. Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians: A Study in Imperial Race Relations, 1713-1760* (Ottawa: 1976), pp. 73-74; and "La Guerre Navale des Micmacs contre les Britanniques, 1713-1763," C.A. Martijn, ed., *Les Micmacs et la Mer* (Quebec: 1986), pp. 233-248.

¹⁶ MG 1, *ibid.*, p. 334v, lettre par Costebelle, 9 septembre, 1715 dans délibérations du conseil, 28 mars, 1716.

Despite Costebelle's open criticism of native aggressions and his assurances to Nicholson that he would take necessary measures to halt them, it was not the Louisbourg officials' policy and objective to do so. The metropolitan authorities were pleased with the offensive attitude of the Mi'kmaq towards the English. The diplomatic handling of these issues on the part of the governor was highly appreciated at Versailles. In the margin of Costebelle's letter cited above one finds the notation "il fallait maintenir les sauvages dans ces sentiments, sans cependant que cela parut ouvertement, et de ménager la chose avec beaucoup de prudence et de secret pour ne point donner aux Anglais occasion de plainte."¹⁷ In 1719 Governor-General Vaudreuil and Intendant Bégon were supported by the minister in the matter of obstructing Anglo-American intrusion into the region of the St. John River. At the same time, they were advised: "Elle se remet à sa prudence de l'empêcher, soit par le moyen de Sauvages, soit par quelqu'autre qui cependant ne puisse point produire aucun sujet de rupture avec l'Angleterre."¹⁸ Thus well formulated policies of official endorsement of native warfare against the English and diplomatic denial and concealment of these at the level of bilateral relations with the English authorities constituted the basis of French imperial policy and practice.

The years between 1715 and 1730 were the most agitated phase of native reprisals towards the English colonies in a period of global peace between France and Britain following the War of

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 333-36. The minister, who usually expressed his decisions by making notations in the margin, wrote a long note on Amerindian policy, which was exceptionally clear and accurate in expressing the decision of Versailles; it explains how significant the Natives were in the maintenance of France's empire.

¹⁸ *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 40, Mémoire du Roy à de Vaudreuil et Bégon, 23 mai, 1719.

Spanish Succession. At times, the French colonists joined the Natives in threatening or attacking the English. Most often it was the English fishermen who became the targets of these assaults. Such an incident happened to Cyprian Southack who on April 30, 1715, sailed with two sloops and a two masted-vessel from Boston to Nova Scotia on a fishing voyage.¹⁹ He reached Port Rossway on May 14th and went fishing on the 18th of the month. Within a week the fishing party was accosted by a Frenchman and a *métis* leader warning that they would lead one hundred Natives to capture all the vessels unless the party left immediately. The Natives later "threatened him with capture and death." Thereupon, leaving his three vessels behind, Southack returned to Boston. In his absence one of his sloops valued at six hundred pounds was burned by the Natives. He filed a complaint with the Council in Boston that Costebelle had given a present of two hundred pounds to these people to kill him and pillage his vessels, which was eventually forwarded to London.²⁰

In 1718, Governor Samuel Shute of Massachusetts sent Captain Thomas Smart and Cyprian Southack, the complainant, to Louisbourg to request that Governor Saint-Ovide order the removal of the French from the Canso fishery. Saint-Ovide did not agree to an unconditional removal as the delegates hoped. Having failed in his mission Captain Smart returned to Canso and attacked the French fishermen, seizing their fishing vessels.²¹ Undeterred by this action and consequent controversies over fishing rights as well as precautions taken by the British authorities, the Isle

¹⁹ This incident is recounted by Donald Chard, "Southack, Cyprian," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 596-97.

²⁰ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 10, pp. 8-12, Memorial of Cyprian Southack, 22 January, 1719, enclosed in Philipps letter to the Lords of Trade, 1 April, 1719.

²¹ G.P. Browne, "Smart, Thomas," *DCB*, vol. II, pp. 609-10; Baxter, *Documentary History of...Maine*, vol. IX, p. 433, Extract of letter from Smart to secretary Burchett, 22 October, 1718.

Royale fishermen remained at Canso where they often dominated the fishing enterprises.²² In 1720 there were about two hundred French fishermen off Canso, whereas the English had only ninety-six.²³ In spite of the domination of the French in this fishery, in August 1720, the Mi'kmaq with the assistance of about sixty Frenchmen conducted a surprise expedition to Canso. At about two o'clock in the morning the Mi'kmaq captured the English fishermen at the port, killing three of them. All English property was destroyed; the value of fish, goods, clothes, bedding and other items constituted about 18,000 pounds in total.²⁴ In the afternoon a deputation went to Louisbourg to petition this incident, but to no avail, as they did not receive any assurances of compensation or security. Governor Saint-Ovide responded that if any French had taken part in the attack he would take necessary action, but added that he was not responsible for the conduct of the Mi'kmaq. Meanwhile, English Captain Richards captured two Mi'kmaq who told him that Saint-Ovide had ordered them to harass the English. When Governor Philipps of Nova Scotia inquired about these allegations, Saint-Ovide firmly denied any such involvement on his part. Moreover, Philipps was apprised that "M. de Saint-Ovide est Surpris avec raison que vous ayes fait mention dans votre lettre

²² Julian Gwyn, "The Royal Navy in North America, 1712-1776" in Jeremy Black and Philip Woodfine, eds., *The British Navy and the Use of Naval Power in the Eighteenth Century* (Atlantic Highlands: 1989), p. 133.

²³ McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 67. In 1739 Peter Warren observed that "the English fishery at Canso is much decayed in proportion to the improvement and increase of the French fishery within these ten years past, greatly occasioned by their fishing on those banks on our coast." Julian Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America: The Warren Papers, 1736-1752* (London: 1973), p. 12, Warren to Burchett, 9 July, 1739.

²⁴ McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 68; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 49-50; MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 141v-143, St. Ovide et Mézy au ministre, 10 novembre, 1720; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 12, p. 25, John Henshaw, et al., to Governor Philipps, August 1720; *ibid.*, vol. 15, p. 33, Memorial of Lawrence Armstrong, 18 May, 1722.

d'une idée aussi peu convenable au caractère qu'il remplis, en disant que c'étoit lui qui faisoit agir ces Sauvages." Saint-Ovide agreed to make restitution for the losses, but he sought a reciprocal gesture from the English to compensate the French fishermen who suffered losses in 1718 during Captain Smart's attack at Canso.²⁵ This confirmed Philipps' opinion: "the outrage at Canso is in reprisal for what was taken from the French by Captain Smart" and that it was "plain that the French are hostile and the Indians their tools."²⁶ Saint-Ovide appointed Jacques Espiet de Pensens to conduct an investigation into the Canso affair.²⁷ De Pensens met with the Frenchmen who had witnessed and participated in the assault and subsequently some confiscated goods were restored to the English.²⁸

The Mi'kmaq attacks on Canso threatened English control in Nova Scotia. In the report on the *State of the British Plantations in America, 1721*, the Canso fishery was described as "more valuable than any other in America," therefore imperative to the improvement of English commerce, "but for want of protection against the Indians, Inhabiting Nova Scotia, who are entirely in the French interest, few British vessels dare to venture to cure their fish there."²⁹ Governor Shute

²⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 197-99v, Réponse de Mrs. de St.Ovide et de Mézy à la lettre de Mr. Philipps du mois de septembre, sur le pillage de Canso, 27 septembre, 1720; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 12, pp. 25-26, John Henshaw *et.al*, August, 1720.

²⁶ MacMechan, *A Calendar of Two Letter-Books and One Commission-Book*, p. 67, Philipps to Craggs, n.d., 1720.

²⁷ Mary Maude, "Espiet De Pensens, Jacques D.," *DBC*, vol. II, pp. 226-28.

²⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 279-84, De Pensens, 16 septembre, 1720 and pp. 194-95, Ordres envoyes à M. de Pensens par St. Ovide et de Mézy, 27 septembre, 1720. St. Ovide's decisions on the Canso affair were supported by the Ministry. MG 1, B, vol. 44, p. 557, à St. Ovide et de Mézy, 20 June, 1721.

²⁹ E.B. O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to the Colonial History of the State of New*
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similarly expressed his fear of Mi'kmaq "naval warfare" against the English fishermen.³⁰ After the 1720 assault occasional raids on Canso became a part of routine Mi'kmaq activities. Another major assault occurred in 1725 resulting in the seizure of about ten English fishing vessels and looting of goods.

Mi'kmaq aggression was not limited to the Canso area. In 1715 the Mi'kmaq of Cape Sable seized two fishing vessels and held the crew hostage. They were released after paying forty pounds in ransom.³¹ In 1722 the Mi'kmaq captured a total of thirty-six English fishing vessels in the Bay of Fundy and off the coast of Nova Scotia.³² When Governor Philipps received the news of the Mi'kmaq "taking eighteen vessels on the coast and designing to Block up Annapolis Royal" he declared a formal war. All eighteen vessels were retaken by the two sloops commanded by Philipps. One of the sloops was attacked by a group of fifteen Natives on a captured vessel. In this naval skirmish the Mi'kmaq were defeated, five of them were killed and the rest managed to escape by swimming ashore.³³ The heads of those killed were put up on pickets at Canso. The English hoped

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York (Albany: 1853-1887), vol. V, pp. 593-94.

³⁰ Dickason, "La guerre navale des Micmacs", *op.cit.*, pp. 240-41.

³¹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 7, p. 31, Mascarene to the Lords of Trade, 2 July, 1715; and pp. 142-43; Samuel Vetch to the Lords of Trade, 2 September, 1715; Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies* (Vaduz: 1964), vol. 28, p. 261, Col. Nicholson to Popple, 13 August, 1715.

³² Cecil Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers*, vol. 33, pp. 141-42, Philipps to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 19 September, 1722.

³³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, pp. 46v-47, St. Ovide au conseil, 4 septembre, 1722; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 15, pp. 196-97, Abstract of a letter from Philipps, 19 September, 1722; Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers*, vol. 33, pp. 142-143, Philipps to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 19 September, 1722; and pp. 121-123, Thomas Richards, Joshua Norman *et.al.*, to Col. Armstrong, 1
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that such an exhibition would deter the Mi'kmaq from seeking revenge, but the opposite was the result.³⁴ The general support of the French was so pervasive that the Mi'kmaq never relented in their fight against the English; they themselves admitted: "they were sett on by the French governors."³⁵ In 1725 the British authorities in Nova Scotia received information that the Abenakis were prepared to enter into a peace treaty with New England. Lieutenant-Governor Lawrence Armstrong and his Council conceded "that by a separate peace, we may not be left alone to the injury of their [Mi'kmaq] insults."³⁶ The treaty of 1725 eventually included the native groups of Nova Scotia.

This treaty did not arrest Mi'kmaq harassment of Anglo-American fishermen. In 1726 a group of young Mi'kmaq and Abenakis captured and looted an English vessel at La Hève.³⁷ The Mi'kmaq disturbed English fishermen off Newfoundland's west coast in 1727 and in the regions of Isle St. Jean in 1729 and 1730.³⁸ Olive P. Dickason, on the basis of Louisbourg's correspondence with Versailles, concluded that between 1713 and 1760 the Mi'kmaq had captured well over one

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August, 1722.

³⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 6, pp 46-47v, St. Ovide au conseil, 4 septembre, 1722. See also English raids according to Gaulin in MG 1, C11B, vol.6, pp. 75-76v, Mézy au conseil, 27 décembre, 1722.

³⁵ MG 18, F 12, vol. 1, p. 373, Guillaume Clarke Papers, observations sur la conduite actuelle des françois à l'égard des colonies anglois dans l'Amérique septentrionale, n.d., 1755; Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State papers, op.cit.* p. 142.

³⁶ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 16, p. 130, Armstrong to the Lords of Trade, 5 September, 1725.

³⁷ MG 1, C11B, vol. 8, pp. 47-52, "Sauvages," 16 novembre, 1726.

³⁸ MG 1, C11B, vol. 9, pp. 64-70v, St. Ovide "sur les Sauvages," 20 novembre, 1727; C11B, vol. 10, p. 11v, Conseil de Marine, 26 juin 1731. Referring to the Mi'kmaq aggression the minister said "bon." MG 1, C11B, vol. 11, p. 93, Bourville au ministre, 28 novembre, 1731.

hundred English vessels.³⁹ The Mi'kmaq continued their "naval warfare" even after the fall of Louisbourg in 1758, although it was short-lived. Yet Governor Lawrence wrote to the Lords of Trade in 1759 clearly expressing the naval threat still posed by the Mi'kmaq: "Your Lordships will be surprised when I assure you that these land ruffians, turned Pirates, have had the hardiness to fit out Shallops to cruise on our coast, and that sixteen or seventeen vessels some of them very valuable have already fallen into their hands."⁴⁰

Hostilities were not limited to these naval exploits. In 1721 fighting erupted between the Natives and the English over a matter of a cattle raid by some of the Abenakis. The English made several arrests, including a Malisect chief who was in Boston to trade some furs. A ransom for the prisoners and the chief was set at six hundred beaver pelts. When the Abenakis arrived to pay the ransom, the English doubled the price; however, the ransom was paid and the prisoners were released, but in retaliation the cattle raids were intensified within twenty-five leagues of Boston.⁴¹

In 1724 the Mi'kmaq and Malisect jointly attacked the fort at Annapolis Royal, killing a sergeant and a soldier and wounding several others. Governor Philipps had no effective means to retaliate but to bring out an Amerindian, who had been held in the prison of the fort for two years, and execute him on the same spot where the sergeant had been murdered. Governor-General

³⁹ For further discussion see Dickason, "La Guerre Navale", *op.cit.*, pp. 233-48; Olive P. Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Toronto: 1992), p. 159; Dickason, "Amerindians between French and English in Nova Scotia, 1713-1763" in J. R. Miller, ed., *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: 1991), p. 52.

⁴⁰ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 308, Lawrence to the Lords of Trade, 20 September, 1759.

⁴¹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 5, pp. 341-42v, Conseil de marine, 25 novembre, 1721; Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 78.

Vaudreuil reported to Versailles that the English burned three houses of Acadian farmers for every English settlers' house destroyed by the Natives during their incursion. This prompted further reprisals; the Mi'kmaq burned five or six English houses and killed about ten people.⁴² Faced with these molestations, Lawrence Armstrong wrote the Lords of Trade in 1725:

I hope you will take into your consideration, and to lay the same before His Majesty as may forward the security of its settlement by a royal fortification, for the subjects are as yet discouraged, having no shelter from the daily insults and cruel Massacres of the Indians, who are supported and clandestinely encouraged by the French.⁴³

The lieutenant-governor offered no proof that the French had incited these attacks. It would not have been polite to intimate that British disregard for Mi'kmaq sensitivities may have been a factor in setting off hostilities.

These Amerindian attacks abetted by the French prevented the growth of English settlements in Acadia. In 1732 Armstrong had to abandon the plan for constructing a fort at Minas. The English garrisons seemed to dwindle in number in the province of Nova Scotia. The Mi'kmaq lifestyle based on seasonal migration throughout the province, for fishing at the sea or rivers and lakes, and hunting in the interior regions, was a serious disturbance to English settlers. As late as the end of the 1730s the Mi'kmaq did not permit the English to settle down or cure fish in the southern areas of the province. Commander Peter Warren most succinctly described these issues:

In the present situation, the French, by their missionaries and the presents the Crown make annually of powder and shot, and triennially [of] a new gun to each Indian fit to bear arms,

⁴² *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 108, Vaudreuil au ministre, 25 octobre, 1724, p. 112, Vaudreuil au ministre, 18 novembre, 1725; MG 1, C11D, vol. 8, p. 65, Extraits des nouvelles de l'Acadie rapportées par le Père Félix Pain, missionnaire Récollet de l'Acadie, 1724; Murdoch, *A History of Nova Scotia*, p. 409.

⁴³ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 62, Armstrong to Lords of Trade, 5 September, 1725.

has so riveted them to their interest that they will not suffer an Englishman to settle or cure fish in any of the ports on the south side [of] Nova Scotia. In all which there are a few Indians; one of them has a commission from the governor of Canada or Cape Breton to command a particular district, and generally bears the title of captain of the fort to which they belong.⁴⁴

Hence, having their own “captains” commissioned and paid by the French, the Mi’kmaq remained as a buffer “army” to resist any moves of the English to expand their settlements.

The Abenaki nation also provided a powerful buffer zone between the French and the English. Like the Mi’kmaq, they vehemently opposed English attempts to colonize an enlarged Nova Scotia, favouring the French. According to Father Jean-Baptiste Loyard, “of all the savages of New France, those who have rendered, and who are in a condition to render, the greatest services are of the Abenakis.”⁴⁵ When the governor at Boston, following the Treaty of Utrecht, advised the Abenakis not to join the French but to remain neutral in future, the chief responded:

Great Captain,....We have the same prayer, he [the French] and I; and we are in the same cabin with two fires; he has one fire, and I have the other. If I see thee enter the cabin on the side of the fire where my brother the Frenchman is seated, I watch thee from my mat, where I am seated by the other fire. If, in watching thee, I perceive that thou carriest a hatchet, I shall think, What does the Englishman intend to do with that hatchet? Then I stand up on my mat, to behold what he will do. If he raise the hatchet to strike my brother the Frenchman, I take my own, and I run toward the Englishman to strike him. Could I see my brother struck in my cabin, and I remain quiet on my mat? No, no, I love my brother too well not to defend him.⁴⁶

The Abenakis showed their inseparable friendship with the French and remained opposed to English expansion. They continued their successful fight against the English until 1724, the year

⁴⁴ Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy and North America*, p. 12, Warren to Burchett, 9 July, 1739.

⁴⁵ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, p. 121.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 201.

in which the English led an invasion into their village at Norridgewock.⁴⁷ Their houses and church were burned down, families dispersed, thirty Abenakis were killed, and fourteen others were injured. Father Sébastien Rasle, who had “become very odious to the English,” was considered responsible for the Anglo-Abenaki conflicts. Father de la Chasse, Superior General of the Jesuit Missions in New France, wrote that the English authorities believed that Rasle’s “endeavours to confirm the Savages in the Faith constituted the greatest obstacle to their plan of usurping the territory of the Savages, they had put a price on his head.”⁴⁸ Governor Samuel Shute accused Rasle of “using his utmost endeavour to engage them in a war against the English.” This allegation was confirmed by Versailles: “Sa Ma[jest]é est satisfait des soins que le Père Ralle Jesuite continue de se donner pour Exciter les Sauvages de sa Mission...à ne point souffrir que les anglois etendent sur leurs Terres.”⁴⁹ Finally, the English succeeded in removing Rasle from the Abenaki village. He was shot dead in warfare and seven Abenaki warriors who tried to protect Rasle were also killed in the massacre as the others escaped into the woods.⁵⁰ With the death of Father Rasle, Abenaki resistance lost its morale, strength and guidance; their fight against the Anglo-Americans came to a virtual termination

⁴⁷ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 108-110, Vaudreuil au ministre, 25 octobre, 1724.

⁴⁸ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, pp. 231-35.

⁴⁹ Headlam, ed., *Calendar of State Papers*, vol. 33, p. 27, Shute to the Council of Trade and Plantations, 13 March, 1722; MG 5, B1, vol. 7, pp. 146-47, Extrait du Mémoire du Roy à Vaudreuil et Bégon, 8 juin, 1721.

⁵⁰ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. LXVII, pp. 231-35; Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of...Maine*, vol. X, p. 175, Lieutenant-Governor Dummer to Vaudreuil, 19 January, 1724.

after the battle of Norridgewock. Governor-General Vaudreuil opined, "La mort du Père Rasle n'a pas decouragé les Sauvages, mais ils ont besoin d'être aidés."⁵¹

In 1725 the Abenakis signed a treaty with the English at Boston. Following this a series of treaties of peace and friendship were established in 1727, 1749, and 1752, which were signed by different groups of Natives including some groups of Mi'kmaq and Malisect.⁵² These treaties did not prevent the Amerindians, particularly the Mi'kmaq, from committing further hostilities against the English. The missionaries were determined that the Native peoples should not remain conciliatory towards the English. Governor Armstrong informed the Secretary of State that "the French missionary priests" at Beaubassin and Minas "have assembled a great body of Indians with a resolution to begin the war against his Majesty's Subjects of this Province [Nova Scotia] and New England."⁵³ As the Abenakis were more predisposed to neutrality, the Minister of Marine chose to

⁵¹ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 110. Vaudreuil au ministre, 25 octobre, 1724.

⁵² MG I, B, vol. 49, p. 706, à St. Ovide, 28 may, 1726. For treaties see, *Indian Treaties and Surrenders, 1680-1890* (Ottawa: 1905), vol. II, pp. 198-204; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 49, pp. 39-44, enclosure in a letter of Hopson to Lords of Trade, 16 October, 1752; *ibid*, pp. 118-19, Hopson to Lords of Trade, 18 October, 1752; and CO 217, vol. 50, pp. 2-8, Proposals signed by P.T. Hopson, Charles Lawrence *et.al* and Jean-Baptiste Cope, *et.al.*, 22 November, 1752; *ibid*, pp. 9-17, Traité ou Articles de la Paix et de l'Amitié Renouvellé Entre Son Excellence P.T. Hopson et Le Major Jean-Baptiste Cope, Endorsed, 6 December, 1752; MG 5, B1, vol. 9, pp. 569-74, Traduction d'un Traité [entre P.T. Hopson et Major Jean-Baptiste Cope, 22 novembre, 1752] publié dans le London Gazettier du 22 juin, 1752; *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 134-35, Traité de paix entre les Anglois et les Abenakis, Caske Bay, le...août. 1727; Colin G. Calloway, ed., *Dawnland Encounters: Indians and Europeans in Northern New England* (Hanover/London: 1991), pp. 111-14, Dummer's Treaty, 1725-1727; see also W.E. Daugherty, *Maritime Indian Treaties in Historical Perspective* (Ottawa: 1983); Henry F. De Puy, *A Bibliography of the English Colonial Treaties with the American Indians Including a Synopsis of Each Treaty* (New York: 1917). For treaties and conferences before 1720 see Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of...Maine*, vol. XXIII, pp. 29-97, and vol. X, pp. 7-11.

⁵³ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 71, Armstrong to Secretary of State, 30 April, (continued...)

incite them to action and Governor Saint-Ovide was instructed that "l'intention du Roy est que vous fomenties la guerre des abenaquis avec les anglois."⁵⁴ When the minister learned that the Mi'kmaq around the region of the St. John River were invited by the English to establish peace he wrote Saint-Ovide: "Je ne doute pas que vous ne fassiez tout ce qui pourra dépendre de vous pour détruire leurs desseins." In addition, referring to the confrontation between some young Mi'kmaq and the English at La Hève, the minister advised Saint-Ovide that "vous devez saisir cette occasion pour fomenter ces querelles" which would lead to the collapse of peace negotiations.⁵⁵ In 1734 the minister had been informed that "les Sauvages se sont fort opposés à la bâtisse que les anglois vouloient faire aux mines. Ils ont mesme deffendu avec fermeté aux habitans d'y travailler." The minister marked on the margin of the letter "bon les entretenir dans ces sentiments."⁵⁶ The Mi'kmaq were an important instrument in obstructing British consolidation in Nova Scotia.

The formal treaties which were forged to establish friendship, or at least neutrality and peace with the English, ultimately resulted in arousing the resentment of the Mi'kmaq and Abenakis. The reason for this adverse effect was the ideological difference, or conflict, between the Native peoples and the English. For the Natives each person was his or her own master; even during warfare warriors were not under the command of anyone but acted according to their own decisions.

(...continued)
1727.

⁵⁴ MG 1, B, vol. 49, p. 706v, à St. Ovide, 28 mai, 1726.

⁵⁵ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 133-34, Ministre à St. Ovide, 10 juin, 1727.

⁵⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 15, pp. 10-11v, Conseil de Marine, 9 mars, 1734.

Individual liberty and authority characterised their way of life, which shaped their approach to treaties as well. The opinion communicated to the Board of Trade in 1763 was the following:

as it has always been the custom to make presents to the sachems and their followers when treaties were signed; and as the Indians inhabiting the coasts of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton have no chief sachem or commander over the whole, but are divided into a number of small tribes and take their denomination from the river or bay they chiefly frequent; so the government were under the necessity of treating with them separately and making presents to the several tribes as they come in, which enhanced the expense.⁵⁷

The Native peoples were unable to comprehend the idea of formal treaties determining the course of relations between themselves and the British, because, according to their customs, friendships and alliances were established on the basis of personal interactions and consensus. When they signed treaties, or confirmed old ones, they rarely understood the full meaning thereof in European terms. They considered all treaties as new agreements, requiring constant renewal as in the case of their alliances with the French, and ratification by giving and receiving of gifts appropriate to the existing relations at the time. In contrast, the British tried to retain the treaties intact irrespective of new conditions evolving at the time of renewal. Furthermore, the British appear to have failed to appreciate the meaning and significance of native protocols and attendant ceremonies. They insisted upon the strict enforcement of the terms of agreement, which were seen as restrictive instruments of European power designed to describe, even to circumscribe, Mi'kmaq or Abenaki rights and activities. The French had entered into ententes which were more acceptable to local wisdom and conventions by avoiding the European concept of formal treaties. If the signing of treaties with the British fostered feelings of insecurity in the Natives, the absence of such

⁵⁷ PRO, CO-217, vol. 20, p. 164, Governor and Council of Nova Scotia to the Board of Trade, 5 April, 1763 as cited in Dennis A. Bartels & Olaf U. Janzen, "Micmac Migration to Western Newfoundland," (paper presented to CHA, Victoria, B.C., May 1990), p. 10 [Pp. 31].

documented agreements made them feel more comfortable with the French. This was a remarkable difference between the British and French ways of approaching the Native peoples of America.⁵⁸

The Treaty of 1725 at Boston included the "Cape Sables and other tribes Inhabiting within His Majesty's Territories of New England and Nova Scotia," but it was signed by only three native delegates, none of whom was Mi'kmaq. In May 1728, delegates of the St. John River groups declared their assent at Annapolis Royal. It was not until 1749 that four Mi'kmaq delegates signed on behalf of unspecified "said tribes inhabiting within His Majesty's said territories of Nova Scotia or Acadia." There was no indication of the areas they represented or exactly how many Mi'kmaq were covered by the treaties.⁵⁹ What is apparent is that the groups of Abenakis and Maliseet, who were more directly threatened by Massachusetts' armed forces, signed the treaty; whereas Mi'kmaq, who felt somewhat less menaced, were unwilling to adhere to any "submission and agreement" drafted by the Boston authorities. Unlike the Abenakis, who were promised "all their lands, liberties and properties not by them convey'd or sold," as well as "the privilege of fishing, hunting, and fowling as formerly," the Mi'kmaq were to take a pledge of "submission to His said Majesty in as ample a manner as we have formerly done to the Most Christian Majesty,"⁶⁰ Governor Edward Cornwallis may not have been fully aware of the limited degree of Mi'kmaq "submission" to the king of France.

⁵⁸ Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, pp. 78-79.

⁵⁹ The texts of the treaties are found in Daugherty, *Maritime Treaties in Historical Perspective*, pp. 37, 67-75.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 37, 76-78.

By the beginning of the 1740s, the dominant European powers were on the brink of the War of Austrian Succession. Minister Maurepas wrote Governor Duquesnel in February 1741 about the imminent possibility of a war with Britain and advised him to take precautionary measures to defend the colony and its fishery.⁶¹ The declaration of war with Britain was issued on 15 March, 1744 and Louisbourg officials were instructed once again to take defensive steps, particularly to protect the fishery.⁶² The offensive campaigns were to be based chiefly on the capacity of the Natives to continually harass the English in all their settlements in Nova Scotia.⁶³

During the war of Austrian Succession the Mi'kmaq were strong supporters of the French; they actively participated in offensive campaigns. The Abenakis were threatened by the Boston officials with Mohawk retaliation if they did not maintain strict neutrality. The Maliseet received similar warnings from the British, but they felt less susceptible to Mohawk attacks than their Abenaki neighbours and consequently paid no heed joining the French and the Mi'kmaq in the war against a common enemy.

When the French at Louisbourg learned about the outbreak of war earlier than the New Englanders, Governor Duquesnel planned a surprise attack on Canso. On 24 May 1744, an expedition was sent out under the command of François Du Pont Duvivier and a privateer captain

⁶¹ MG 1, B, vol. 72, pp. 415-15v, à Duquesnel, 25 février, 1741.

⁶² *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p.196, Ordonnance du Roy Portant Declaration de Guerre Contre le Roi D'Angleterre, 15 mars, 1744.

⁶³ MG 1, B, vol. 78, p. 2, aux Duquesnel et Bigot, 18 mars, 1744; McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 109.

Joannis-Galand d'Olabarats.⁶⁴ The force was composed of twenty-two officers, thirty-seven Swiss mercenaries and eighty French soldiers, two hundred and eighteen sailors and a body of Mi'kmaq fighters.⁶⁵ As the English troops were unaware of the declaration of war between France and Britain they were unprepared to make any resistance in the face of a sudden attack. Canso surrendered immediately. All British soldiers were taken prisoner and brought to Louisbourg but women and children were permitted to go to Boston. Later, the soldiers were also released and sent to Massachusetts on the usual condition that they should not participate in any war against France for twelve months from the date of their release.⁶⁶

The significance of the capture of Canso was not the success of the surprise attack, but the demonstration of the dynamic role of the local government in formulating offensive policies and launching a military campaign. According to the instructions of the king, the governor had no authority to declare an offensive war without prior metropolitan approval. Duquesnel had not received any such approval or order to execute the Canso campaign. It appears from the Ministry's correspondence that the metropolitan policy was devised to concentrate more on defensive

⁶⁴ MG 1, C11B, vol. 26, pp. 230-30v, Duvivier, 24 mai, 1744. Historians Bernard Pothier and Terrence A. Crowley declared that both primary and secondary sources "frequently fail to distinguish between, and in some instances confuse, the careers of François Du Pont Duvivier and his brother Joseph." Yet describing these brothers' military careers they copied the same information word for word in five paragraphs and elsewhere in B. Pothier, "Du Pont Duvivier, Joseph," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 205-207; T.A. Crowley and B. Pothier, "Du Pont Duvivier, François," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 251-255.

⁶⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 26, pp. 32-36, Duchambon et Bigot au ministre, 4 novembre, 1744; McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 111; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, (Orono: 1967), p. 4.

⁶⁶ MG 1, C11B, vol. 26, pp. 230-30v, Duvivier, "Capitulation de Canceau," 24 mai, 1744; *Collection des Manuscrits*, vol. III, pp. 201-202, Capitulation de Canso, 24 May, 1744.

actions.⁶⁷ In opposition to this policy, Duquesnel pursued an offensive operation which displayed the eminence of local government in the competition for empire. It should be noted that the Canso expedition was not a formal military invasion, but more in the nature of a privateering enterprise. The expedition was dominated by personal interests of military officers, merchants and sailors seeking to profit from plundering the English.⁶⁸ A large quantity of goods, arms and ammunition were taken as booty from Canso.⁶⁹

Following the success at Canso, Duquesnel decided to organise a military expedition against Annapolis Royal aimed at recapturing the entire province of Nova Scotia. After the establishment of Louisbourg this plan had first been proposed by Duvivier in 1735 and later by Governor Isaac-Louis de Forant in 1739.⁷⁰ Duquesnel was well aware of the insufficient manpower at Louisbourg to undertake such an enterprise. As a result, he planned a joint French-Amerindian invasion and urged Jean-Louis Le Loutre to assemble Mi'kmaq war parties and lead them as chaplain in their expedition to Annapolis Royal.⁷¹ Until the end of June 1744, Le Loutre appeared to be on cordial terms with the Governor of Nova Scotia Paul Mascarene and other English officials. When the

⁶⁷ MG1, B, vol. 78, pp. 388-88v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 18 mars, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 389-89v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 29 mars, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 391-91v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 17 avril, 1744; *ibid.*, pp. 409-409v, à Duquesnel, 30 avril, 1744; see also the discussion in chapter 4, pp.130-31.

⁶⁸ For a discussion of the commercial interests behind the Canso expedition see T.A. Crowley, "Privileged Entrepreneurs: The Louisbourg Officer Corps and Commerce" (unpublished article, Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1978).

⁶⁹ MG 1, C11B, vol. 26, pp. 194-94v "Prise de Canceau," Carrerot, Sabatier et Bigot, 20 juin, 1744.

⁷⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 21, pp. 72-74, Forant au ministre, 1 décembre, 1740; Murdoch, *History of Nova Scotia*, vol. pp. 508-11

⁷¹ "Une Autobiographie de L'Abbé Le Loutre," *Nova Francia*, vol. VI, no. 1 (1931), p. 6.

garrison at Annapolis Royal was threatened by an attack from Louisbourg Mascarene hoped that Le Loutre would make every effort "to maintain peace, law and justice and thereby prevent the calamities that may otherwise fall upon the inhabitants of this country."⁷² Regardless of his relations with the British officials, as a French citizen, Le Loutre was obliged to serve his own country first and foremost. Le Loutre received his directions from Louisbourg and proceeded accordingly. His appearance in front of the fort at Annapolis Royal on 1 July, 1744 with a war party of three hundred Mi'kmaq and Malisect warriors surprised the British garrison.⁷³ His action was described as treachery; and thereafter Le Loutre was perceived by the British to be as much a military commander as a missionary.⁷⁴ Equally important was Mascarene's realisation that the Treaty of 1725, and all other promises not to undermine British authority in Nova Scotia, had little weight with the Mi'kmaq. He observed:

since 9th June last, the emissarys of the French at Louisbourg have stirred up and prevailed with the Indians to side with them, and accordingly having broke their faith with us, being wholly devoted to the false tenet of their much more deceitful Priests came on ye first of July to the number of about 300 as I have been informed to assault and demand the Fort...⁷⁵

In keeping with the original plan of Duquesnel, Le Loutre and his Amerindian war party waited near Annapolis Royal for the arrival of Duvivier's troops from Louisbourg. When these were delayed Le Loutre and his native troops were forced to retire to Minas after failing to induce

⁷² Quoted in Norman Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," *CHR*, vol. XI, no. 2 (1930), p. 111.

⁷³ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 141, Mascarene to Shirley, 1744; MG 12, ADM 1, vol. 3817, n.p., Mascarene to Peter Warren, 22 October, 1744.

⁷⁴ Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre", pp. 111-12; L.H. Gipson, *The British Empire Before the American Revolution 5: Zones of International Friction* (New York: 1942), pp. 176-77.

⁷⁵ T.B. Akins, ed., *Selections from the Public Documents of the Province of Nova Scotia*, (Halifax: 1869), p. 131, Mascarene to the Lords of Trade, 20 September, 1744.

Mascarene to surrender the fort. Soon Mascarene received reinforcements from Massachusetts consisting of some Mohawks and English wood rangers.⁷⁶ Upon reaching Annapolis Royal they found no Frenchmen or Mi'kmaq fighters but only Mi'kmaq women and children. They at once killed five women, two of whom were pregnant, and three children. The Mi'kmaq, according to Thomas Pichon, were shocked to learn of this cruelty against these non-combatants, which intensified their desire for revenge.⁷⁷

By the time the Louisbourg troops under the command of Duvivier reached Annapolis Royal, gathering over a hundred Mi'kmaq warriors on the way, there was a strong garrison in place to defend the fort.⁷⁸ Duvivier's aim was to launch a sudden assault. He set up his camp about a mile from the fort and ordered the Natives to attack the garrison while his men built scaling ladders.⁷⁹ Meanwhile, he asked Governor Duquesnel to despatch two warships, *l'Ardent* and *le Caribou*, which were anchored in the Louisbourg harbour, to his assistance. When Duquesnel ordered the captains of these ships to proceed to Annapolis Royal they refused, explaining that they had not been instructed by the minister to conduct offensive campaigns when ordered to Louisbourg, nor had they received any new orders since.⁸⁰ Consequently, Duquesnel had to find

⁷⁶ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 26, pp. 124-131, Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 25 July, 1744; MG 12, ADM 1, vol. 3817, n.p., Mascarene to Warren, 22 October, 1744; Rogers, *op.cit.*, p. 112; Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, p. 7; Maxwell Sutherland, "Mascarene, Paul," *DBC*, vol. III, p. 473.

⁷⁷ MG 18, F 12, vol. 1, Pichon Papers, pp. 213-14. *Motifs des sauvages Mikmaques et Marichites de continuer la guerre contre les anglois s.d., 1757.*

⁷⁸ Sutherland, "Mascarene, Paul," *op.cit.*, p. 473.

⁷⁹ Stanley, *New France, the Last Phase*, p. 2.

⁸⁰ MG 1, B, vol. 78, pp. 388-89v, à Duquesnel et Bigot, 29 mars, 1744; Blaine Adams, "Le Prévost Duquesnel Jean-Baptist-Louis," *DBC*, vol. III, pp. 422-24; *Louisbourg in 1745: The* (continued...)

an alternative; he sent three merchant vessels *l'Atlas*, *la Tempête*, and *l'Aimable* with arms and men to reinforce Duvivier. During the course of these developments at Louisbourg, Duvivier issued an ultimatum to Mascarene to surrender the fort but the latter continued the defence.⁸¹ With the arrival of John Gorham's reinforcement force which consisted of Mohawks and wood rangers from the province of Massachusetts, Mascarene took an offensive stand. The vessels from Louisbourg arrived too late to provide any assistance to Duvivier, who had been already forced to pull back his troops to Minas early in October "without attempting anything against the Fort or doing any mischief except taking a little schooner and a sloop loaded with a small quantity of lumber and stoves for the garrison."⁸²

The project for the conquest of Annapolis Royal, and perhaps all of Nova Scotia, ended in complete failure due to the lack of co-operation and unity among French officials. Had Duvivier and his force joined Le Loutre and the native warriors without any delay, they would likely have captured the fort quite easily as the British had insufficient forces at the time. Or if the two warships had arrived at Annapolis Royal and provided artillery support to Duvivier as scheduled the French might have been able to alter the course of events. If the Governor-General Beauharnois

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Anonymous "Lettre d'un Habitant de Louisbourg", trans., ed., G.M. Wrong (Toronto: 1897), pp. 12-17. See also Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, p. 14; A.J.B. Johnston, *L'été de 1744: La vie quotidienne à Louisbourg au XVIIIe siècle* (Parks Canada: 1983), p. 75; Bernard Pothier, *Course à L'Accadie: Journal de campagne de François Du Pont Duvivier en 1744* (Moncton: 1982), p. 49.

⁸¹ MG 1, G2, carton 188, pp. 289-290v, Duvivier à Paul Mascarene, 15 septembre, 1744; pp. 290-91v, Mascarene à Duvivier, 15 septembre, 1744; for further correspondence see *ibid.*, pp. 292-303. These documents are also found in Pothier, *Course à L'Accadie*, pp. 166-171.

⁸² MG 11, CO 217, vol. 26, p. 215, Shirley to the Lords of Trade, 9 November, 1744; MG 12, ADM 1, vol. 3817, n.p., Shirley to the Lords of Admiralty, 28 December, 1744.

had despatched troops immediately as requested by Duquesnel, events at Annapolis Royal might have gone in favour of the French. Rather, Beauharnois was as "prudent" as the captains of the king's ships who "wished to have the authority of the court" at Versailles before joining Duquesnel's local campaign against the British.⁸³ The failure to take Annapolis Royal was a result of the inability to carry through with a local initiative.

The British also appear to have gained valuable insights from these developments. Governor Mascarene was willing to acknowledge that the assistance of Native warriors was paramount in maintaining one's hold on the region. He wrote:

This shows how much the preservation of this place is owing to the Reinforcement we have received from the Province of Massachusetts Bay, & how necessary it is to set Indians against Indians; for tho[ugh] our men out do them in Bravery yet being unacquainted with their sculking way of fighting and scoring to fight undercover expose themselves too much to the Enemy's shot.⁸⁴

Although he refused to concede any outstanding bravery to native warriors he recognised their superior tactics in combat.

After the failure at Annapolis Royal the French focused their attention on privateering. From the harbour of Louisbourg privateers sent their armed merchant vessels to seize British and Anglo-American fishing boats and commercial ships. Pierre Morpain, Philippe de Beaubassin, Joannis-Galand d'Olabaratz and other corsairs were actively engaged in this activity during the summer and autumn of 1744. By October the Louisbourg privateers had captured about twenty-

⁸³ *The Anonymous "Lettre d'un Habitant"*, p. 42.

⁸⁴ Akins, ed., *Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, pp. 133-34, Mascarene to the Lords of Trade, 25 December, 1744.

eight vessels.⁸⁵ The Anglo-Americans were also engaged in privateering throughout this period. French losses at sea were so damaging that petitions were despatched to Quebec seeking the assistance of armed convoys for merchant ships making their voyage via the Gulf St. Lawrence. New England privateers even captured the famous Louisbourg privateer, d'Olabaratz, and took him to Boston. He was later released in exchange for a New England captain.⁸⁶ While hectic privateering between the French and the English was going on, the latter had planned a military and naval expedition to Louisbourg. This news was brought to Louisbourg by d'Olabaratz following his release.

It was Governor William Shirley who proposed a major offensive war against Louisbourg to oust the French from Isle Royale and to establish an English monopoly in the fishery and commerce.⁸⁷ He outlined the importance of such a plan to the governor of New Hampshire:

I have to add that it may be urg'd with respect to your Province that it seems to be more deeply interested in the Event to this Expedition than any of the other colonies: For if Cape

⁸⁵ MG 1, C11B, vol. 26, p. 103, Bigot au ministre, "Pêche de morue commerce," 12 octobre, 1744; Guy Frégault, *François Bigot, administrateur français* (Montreal: 1948), p.201; Julian Gwyn, "War and Economic Change, Louisbourg and New England Economy in the 1740" in Pierre Savard, ed., *Mélange d'histoire du Canada français offerts au Professeur Marcel Trudel* (Ottawa: 1978), p. 122 and fn. 25.

⁸⁶ T.A. Crowley, "Olabarats (De Laubara d'Olabarats) Jonnis-Galand D," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 588-89.

⁸⁷ Gwyn, ed., *The Royal Navy*, p. 48-50, Shirley to Warren, 29 January, 1744/45; Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. I, pp. 173-77, Shirley to the Lords of the Admiralty, "Scheme for Attacking Louisbourg," 29 January, 1744. Stanley pointed out that the idea of attacking Louisbourg was not Shirley's alone. John Bradstreet, a returned Canso prisoner and William Vaughan suggested this in 1744. Stanley, *ibid.*, p. 5. Rawlyk, *Yankees at Louisbourg*, pp. 27-40. Peter Warren said: "nothing cou'd be a greater acquisition to Great Brittain, and its Dominions than dispossessing the French of Cape Bretoon and Quebec, by which the whole Furr, and Fish, Trade wou'd be in our hands." Cited in Julian Gwyn, *The Enterprising Admiral. The Personal Fortune of Sir Peter Warren* (Montreal/Kingston: 1974), p. 12.

Breton is not reduced, there appears to be great danger that the French will soon be masters of Nova Scotia, the consequences of which would be an addition of 4 or 5000 fighting men to the Enemy immediately from the Inhabitants of that Province, who in conjunction with the Indians of all Tribes, and assistance from Canada would irresistibly overrun and destroy our eastern settlements as far as Portsmouth itself in your Province, and whether they would stop there may be some Question. Whereas the reducing of Cape Breton would on the other hand be the Destruction of Canada.⁸⁸

He appealed to the Duke of Newcastle for the approval of his plan and for a British contingent to assist the colonial force in the attack on Louisbourg. In addition, he explained to the Admiralty officials the necessity of naval support from Commodore Peter Warren's squadron at Antigua.⁸⁹ Newcastle concurred and promised to send Commodore Peter Warren's squadron "to attack and distress the Enemy in their Settlements, and annoy their Fishery and Commerce."⁹⁰ This ambitious expedition to Louisbourg was intended, as Shirley said, for "the preservation of Neva Scotia" and for the eventual conquest of Cape Breton as well as Canada. English officials were also counting on the success of this expedition to secure the whole North Atlantic fishery, "the nursery of seamen for the Royal Navy."⁹¹

In March, 1745 an Anglo-American force consisting of recruits from all New England colonies assembled at Boston under the command of William Pepperrell. The naval operation was under the command of Peter Warren. On 10 May the British-American forces headed for

⁸⁸ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. I, p. 177, Shirley to B. Wentworth, 31 January, 1744.

⁸⁹ MG 12, ADM 1, vol. 3817, n.p., Shirley to the Lords of Admiralty, 27 March, 1745.

⁹⁰ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. I, p. 155-56, Duke of Newcastle to Shirley, 3 January, 1744.

⁹¹ Gwyn, ed. *The Royal Navy and North America*, p. 50, Shirley to Warren, 29 January, 1744.

Louisbourg and on the following day they reached Gabarus Bay, only two miles from Louisbourg. The English experienced little serious difficulty in besieging the fortress of Louisbourg as the French troops did not make any effective defence. By 13 May they took possession of the Royal Battery abandoned by the French. On 18 May acting-governor Duchambon was asked to surrender, but he declined. Although the French tried to defend the fortress, by 28 June Louisbourg, "the key to the continent," came under the control of Britain.⁹² Historian Gerald Graham said "defensively, Louisbourg remained of little more than symbolic value."⁹³

The Amerindians had been active participants in these military campaigns. When the French were engaged in privateering after the failure at Annapolis Royal, the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet persisted in their attacks on the English. They "kept the garrison upon continual Alarms" attempting to block the fort and captured several English fishing vessels. Consequently, the English declared war on the Natives in October, 1744.⁹⁴ While the English forces were busy with the siege of Louisbourg, a Mi'kmaq contingent of one hundred and fifty warriors under the direction of Abbé Maillard conducted a series of raids against the New England force.⁹⁵ Pepperrell said he was forced

⁹² For a description of the first siege of Louisbourg see Julian Gwyn and Christopher Moore, *La chute de Louisbourg Le journal du 1er siège de Louisbourg du 25 mars au 17 juillet 1745 par Gilles Lacroix-Girard* (Ottawa: 1978). For an analysis of the role of the British navy in the siege of Louisbourg see Gwyn, "French and British Naval Power at the Two Sieges of Louisbourg" pp. 63-93; W.A.B. Douglas, "Nova Scotia and the Royal Navy, 1713-1766," (Ph.D thesis, Queen's University, 1973), pp. 57-90.

⁹³ Gerald S. Graham, *Empire of the North Atlantic: The Maritime Struggle for North America* (Toronto: 1950), p. 154.

⁹⁴ Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of ... Maine*, vol. XXIII, pp. 296-98, Declaration of War Against the Cape Sable's and St. John's Indians, 19 October, 1744.

⁹⁵ B.A. Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki: Mi'kmaq Resistance in Cape Breton, 1745"
(continued...)

“to keep out large detachments to range the woods in order to intercept and disperse the Indians who were gathering to attack the New England troops from behind.”⁹⁶ According to Maillard, the Mi’kmaq were very enthusiastic, under the leadership of “René, chef des sauvages de l’Acadie, un des plus vaillans mikmaques qui fût alors...marchant en chantant leurs chansons de guerre.”⁹⁷ The Mi’kmaq made two attempts to reach Louisbourg in 1745,⁹⁸ but these were thwarted by the Anglo-American force attacking the town. On 22 May a party of twenty-five New Englanders plundering at North East Harbour were assaulted by a group of about one hundred Mi’kmaq and French.⁹⁹ Most of the New Englanders were killed, the remainder escaped to the Royal Battery. After the attack the Mi’kmaq withdrew to avoid reprisal from the English. Later in May a group of about twenty-five Mi’kmaq surprised thirteen English, of whom seven were killed, three were taken prisoner and the rest managed to escape.¹⁰⁰ In addition to these skirmishes, the Mi’kmaq under the leadership of René and Petit-Jean fought a major battle with a group of 154 English at Petit

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(unpublished manuscript, Fortress of Louisbourg Library, 1995).

⁹⁶ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 27, p. 35, Pepperrell to Duke of Newcastle, 28 June, 1745.

⁹⁷ “Lettre de M. L’Abbé Maillard sur les Missions de L’Acadie et particulièrement sur les Missions Micmaques,” H. Casgrain, ed., *Les Soirées Canadiennes*, vol. III, pp. 371-72.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 321, 338, 377.

⁹⁹ Balcom, “Defending Unama’ki.”

¹⁰⁰ De Forest, ed., *Louisbourg Journals*, p. 20, “First Journal - Anonymous”; *ibid.*, p. 77, “Fifth Journal -Anonymous.”

Lorembec.¹⁰¹ The Mi'kmaq were assisted by Philippe Le Neuf de Beaubassin¹⁰² and his troops from Louisbourg. Fourteen boys below twelve years of age were among the Mi'kmaq warriors to participate in the war.¹⁰¹ During the fighting sixteen Mi'kmaq were wounded including their leader René and four boys; French casualties were two dead and about twenty wounded including commander Beaubassin. New Englanders had at least six or seven dead and thirty wounded.¹⁰⁴ The Mi'kmaq could not change the course of the Anglo-French struggle at the Fortress of Louisbourg, although they intilled sufficient fear and panic among the invaders, who refused to venture out of the town as a result. Governor-General Beauharnois and Intendant Gilles Hocquart remarked that "the English do not dry any fish on the east coast of Acadia since the war, through fear of being surprised there and killed by the Micmacs."¹⁰⁵ Hence, despite the capture of Louisbourg, the Mi'kmaq remained a force to be contended with on Isle Royale. Julian Gwyn pointed out: "though Louisbourg fell, neither Cape Breton itself nor peninsular Nova Scotia were secure British possessions during the remaining years of war with France."¹⁰⁶ Peter Warren was enraged by the Mi'kmaq actions because "subjects of His Britanick Majesty have by the chance of war fallen into

¹⁰¹ According to Girard La Croix's account the Mi'kmaq and French attacked 400 English at Petit Lorembec. Gwyn and Moore, ed., *La chute de Louisbourg*, pp. 81-82.

¹⁰² Beaubassin was the son of Michel Le Neuf de la Vallière, a garrison officer who had family connections with the Mi'kmaq. Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki"; Christopher Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits: Life in an Eighteenth-Century Garrison Town* (Toronto: 1982), p. 270.

¹⁰³ Balcom, "Defending Unama'ki."

¹⁰⁴ Balcom, *ibid.*; Gwyn and Moore, eds., *La chute de Louisbourg*, pp. 35, 82; Moore, *Louisbourg Portraits*. p. 270.

¹⁰⁵ O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. 10, p. 11, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 12 September, 1745.

¹⁰⁶ Gwyn, "The Royal Navy in North America, 1712-1776," p. 136.

the hands of some French and Miqmaq scouts who have barbarously murdered and scalped them, contrary to the usage of war with civilised nations."¹⁰⁷ On another occasion Warren asked Duchambon "to send some gentlemen to desire them [the Mi'kmaq] to leave this island [Isle Royale] and not to appear on it any more" to harass the English.¹⁰⁸ By the end of 1745 Abbé Maillard, who was primarily responsible for encouraging the Mi'kmaq, was captured by the English and taken to Boston whereupon he was sent to France.¹⁰⁹

A contemporary witness of these developments at Louisbourg assessed that "France, if she ever wishes to recover our colony by force, will always find in them [the Mi'kmaq] assistance all the more valuable."¹¹⁰ He believed that the Mi'kmaq would have provided great help by making frequent sorties for the defence of the fortress had they been present within the fortress of Louisbourg before the arrival of the English force. Criticising the Louisbourg officials, he said:

our commanders excuse, that one of the causes of the surrender [of the fort in 1745] was that they had not enough men to make sorties and dislodge the enemy as they pushed forward new works, is not valid; ...they [commanders] were given advice but paid no heed.¹¹¹

The accuracy of such an assessment may be questioned because the Mi'kmaq, like other native warriors, had no desire to be involved in the defence of a fort and certainly had no experience to make sorties in the manner of European infantry.

¹⁰⁷ MG 1, F3, vol. 50, p. 309, Peter Warren à De la Maisonfort, 6 juin, 1745; *ibid.*, p. 311, De la Maisonfort à Duchambon, 18 juin, 1745.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 347, Warren à Duchambon, 19 juin, 1745.

¹⁰⁹ M.D. Johnson, "Maillard, Pierre-Antoine-Simon," *DBC*, vol. III, p. 450.

¹¹⁰ *The Anonymous "Lettre d'un Habitant"*, p. 53.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

Despite the capitulation of Louisbourg, Abbé Le Loutre and his Mi'kmaq warriors in Nova Scotia did not remain inactive. The British authorities were determined to capture Le Loutre and to obtain the submission of the Natives who had assisted Duvivier and Captain Paul Marin de la Malgue in the attacks on Annapolis Royal. Le Loutre was ordered by Peter Warren and William Pepperrell to report and surrender at Louisbourg without delay. He paid no heed, but went to Quebec with Mi'kmaq deputies to inform Governor-General Beauharnois of the developments in Acadia and Louisbourg. Beauharnois endorsed his actions, offered him assistance and sent him back to Acadia with 4000 pounds of powder and lead to continue hostilities against the English in the hope of recapturing the province.¹¹² He also made arrangements for despatching a land force from Quebec against Annapolis Royal in conjunction with the arrival of a naval force from France. The responsibility of Le Loutre was to organise the native warriors under his command and to maintain powerful resistance to the British until the arrival of the fleet of the Duc d'Anville which would assist them in recapturing Acadia and Louisbourg. This demonstrates that strategic planning was originating once again in the colonies.

It was not until 1746, with the despatch of the Duc d'Anville's squadron comprising 11,000 soldiers and sailors, that France embarked on a policy of offensive war against the British in North America. Instructions given to d'Anville were less flexible than usual and clearly recommended taking the offensive.¹¹³ The despatch of this 1746 naval expedition, according to historian James

¹¹² "Une Autobiographie de L'Abbé Le Loutre," pp. 6-7; O'Callaghan, ed., *Documents Relative to... New York*, vol. X, pp. 11, 14, Beauharnois and Hocquart to Maurepas, 12 September, 1745.

¹¹³ MG 1, B, vol. 84, p. 87, Mémoire du Roy pour servir d'Instructions au Duc d'Anville Lieutenant-Général des Armes Navales et des Galères, pour les opérations de son Escadre, 25 mars, (continued...)

Pritchard. "might be interpreted as a perfect illustration of the intent and purposefulness of French overseas imperialism."¹¹⁴ Unfortunately the Duc d'Anville's expedition met with disaster as a result of adverse weather, a hurricane which scattered the fleet in the Atlantic, followed by an outbreak of disease which claimed the lives of many men, including the Duc d'Anville himself.¹¹⁵

The Duc d'Anville's fleet arrived at Chebouctou carrying only weak survivors, but it brought back from France a strong "commander" in the person of Abbé Maillard. From 1746 onwards, Maillard was to continue his missionary activities and organise Mi'kmaq expeditions against the Isle Royale installations set up by the British during their occupation of Louisbourg.¹¹⁶ At this time in Nova Scotia the French under the command of the Chevalier de Ramezay, with the help of Le Loutre's war party, tried to capture Annapolis Royal. Having failed they retreated to the Minas region. It was reported that most of the Mi'kmaq were unable to participate in this campaign against the fort due to the epidemic spread by the d'Anville expedition. A large number of Mi'kmaq who visited Chebouctou to receive the presents brought from France were infected with various diseases and died. James Pritchard suggested that "perhaps, half the Micmac warriors of the northern part of peninsular Nova Scotia died in 1746."¹¹⁷ Shortly after the attack on Annapolis

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1746; B, vol. 84, p. 160-63 à Duc d'Anville, 8 septembre, 1746.

¹¹⁴ Pritchard, *Anatomy of a Naval Disaster*, p. 35.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 96-144; see also MG 12, ADM 1, vol. 480, pp. 179-84, Philmon Saunders, 22 October, 1746.

¹¹⁶ MG 1, C11A, vol. 91, pp. 126-128v, La Gallisonnière au ministre, 6 septembre, 1748.

¹¹⁷ Pritchard, *Anatomy of Naval Disaster*, p. 229; Miller, "The Decline of Nova Scotia Micmac Population," p. 109; see also *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, p. 89, "Journal historique en forme de lettre d'un officier capitaine dans le régiment de Ponthieu embarqué sur le vaisseau le Prince (continued...)"

Royal, Le Loutre departed for France. He was twice captured by British vessels as he attempted to return to Acadia and each time succeeded in concealing his true identity. He would finally return in 1749 with Charles Desherbiers, the new governor of Isle Royale, following its restoration.

Meanwhile, Mascarene decided to take action against the French at Minas. Lieutenant-Colonel Arthur Noble with five hundred New England troops was sent out in December 1746 to oust the French from the Minas basin and set up winter quarters at Grand Pré amid the Acadian settlements. The French under Ramezay had already withdrawn to Chignecto. Later, without giving any prior warning, the French Canadians and Mi'kmaq forces attacked the New Englanders at three o'clock in the morning in a blinding snowstorm of 31 January, 1747. They killed at least seventy soldiers and their commander, Noble, before the British force capitulated.¹¹⁸ It may be described as a hollow victory as it had no impact on the forging of a European peace treaty, even though British hold on Nova Scotia was further shaken.

The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) did not yield any solutions to the longstanding and controversial question of the boundaries of the French empire, specifically of Acadia, in North America. Those vexed issues were again assigned to the deliberations of a joint commission, hence the treaty prolonged the conflicting claims until the outbreak of another war. Politically and

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d'Orange"; *ibid.*, pp. 40-44, Liénard de Beaujeu, "Journal de la compagnie du détachement du Canada à l'Acadie et aux Mines, en 1747-1747"; Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. I, p. 366, Shirley to William Greene, 4 November, 1746; Haliburton, *History of Nova Scotia*, vol. I, p. 129; *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 460-61, Le Loutre au ministre, 4 octobre, 1749.

¹¹⁸ Barry Moody, "Noble, Arthur," *DCB*, vol. III, pp. 483-484. According to one report, about one hundred and forty English were killed. *Collection de Documents*, vol. II, p. 12-13, "D'une Expédition faite sur les Anglois dans le pays de L'Acadie le 11 Février, 1747."

economically. France gained little by the treaty, apart from the restoration of Louisbourg in exchange for the Austrian Netherlands.¹¹⁹

From the year 1749 onwards Britain had been trying to implement a new policy with regard to Nova Scotia, i.e., the establishment of new settlements in the province along with a new port and a naval base at Halifax. Governor Edward Cornwallis received orders to open two settlements at Chebucto, each consisting of twelve hundred people. In addition, Minas, Whitehead, Baie Verte and La Hève were to be settled, each with five hundred settlers.¹²⁰ From Chebucto the colonies advanced to Dartmouth, to Chezzetook, and on to Mahone Bay and Lunenburg. For the colonisation of Nova Scotia the Board of Trade in Britain had received about three thousand applications from British subjects by the spring of 1749. In May about fifteen hundred colonists set sail for the colony.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ For the text of the treaty see Fred. L. Israel, ed., *Major Peace Treaties of Modern History, 1648-1967* (New York: 1967), vol. I, pp. 269-304. Many historians believed that Louisbourg was exchanged for Madras in India. G. Stanley, *New France*, p. 32; Stephen E. Patterson, "1744-1763: Colonial Wars and Aboriginal Peoples" in Philip A. Buckner and John G. Reid eds., *The Atlantic Region to Confederation: A History* (Toronto: 1994), p. 127, and some argued that it was exchanged for both Madras and the Netherlands. W.J. Eccles, *France in America*, (Toronto: 1973), p. 177; Fairfax Downey, *Louisbourg: Key to a Continent* (Englewood Cliffs: 1965), p. 136. Conversely, James Pritchard stated: "it is important to insist that Louisbourg was restored in exchange for France's agreement to vacate the Austrian Netherlands." Pritchard, *Anatomy of Naval Disaster*, p. 225. There is no reference to Madras in the article on the restitution of Isle Royale. Israel, *op.cit.*, p. 278-79, article IX.

¹²⁰ L.F.S. Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists: Indian-White Relationships in the Maritimes, 1713-1867* (Vancouver: 1979), p. 48.

¹²¹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 33, pp. 235-36, Board of Trade to the Duke of Bedford, 20 April, 1749; CO 217, vol. 39, Memorial of Chauncy Townsend, Contractor for victualling 3000 settlers of Nova Scotia, p. 224, enclosed in J. West's letter to the Lords of Trade, 12 December, 1750.

The expansion of English settlements occupying some of the traditional lands of the Natives alarmed both the French and the Mi'kmaq. The Mi'kmaq were further vulnerable since many of the Abenakis had abandoned their traditional territories to settle on *réductions* in Canada. The founding of Halifax therefore induced the Isle Royale authorities to employ the missionaries and the Natives to safeguard the boundaries of what remained of the seaboard empire. Legally France had no right to oppose these settlements or the foundation of Halifax, as they were clearly within the limits of Acadia ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Utrecht and confirmed by the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. France, nonetheless, had no choice but to resist this consolidation of British settlement for imperialistic reasons. A 1749 memorandum declared:

as it is impossible to openly oppose them, for they are within their rights in making in Acadia such settlements as they see fit, as long as they do not pass its boundaries, there remains for us only to bring against them as many indirect obstacles as can be done without comprising ourselves... The only method we can employ to bring into existence these obstacle is to make the savages of Acadia and its borders feel how much it is to their advantage to prevent the English fortifying themselves, to bind them to oppose it openly, and to excite the Acadians to support the Indians...The missionaries of both have instructions and are agreeable to act in accordance with these views.¹²²

The French laid their claims to the Isthmus of Chignecto and to the western mainland side of the Bay of Fundy. They argued that the territory ceded to Britain in 1713 comprised the whole of Acadia within the former boundary, but did not include the western mainland region up to the Baie des Chaleurs (Gaspé) as claimed by the British commissioners in Paris. In keeping with this claim it was the governor-general at Quebec who maintained communication with the Abenakis. Le Loutre set up his headquarters at Beauséjour on the boundary line between Nova Scotia and French territory, from where he continued to abet Mi'kmaq aggression on English settlements and

¹²² Quoted in McLennan, *Louisbourg*, p. 189-90.

to convince the Acadians to move to Isle St. Jean. The policy to counter the English was entrenched in the control, or removal, of the Acadians and the influencing of the Mi'kmaq, which was "a usual game" as described by Governor Cornwallis.¹²³

When Cornwallis asked Desherbiers if he were in any way responsible for inciting the hostile attitude of the Mi'kmaq towards the English, or for the alleged role of Le Loutre in instigating them to attack English settlements, Desherbiers replied that he had no connection with Le Loutre and his native followers. He said: "si le missionnaire [Le Loutre] a fait quelque chose contre les Règles de votre gouvernement, et qu'il ait outrepassé les fonctions de son ministère, ce n'est ni directement ni indirectment par mes ordres, ainsi je ne suis ny comptable ny responsable de ses actions."¹²⁴ Cornwallis observed that the "answer the French always give... that they [the Natives] are a people we [the French] can not manage, they are not their subjects but allies." Cornwallis added that the Canadian government had considerable interest in instigating the Natives; "it can be proved that the governor of Canada through his emissary Le Loutre gives a premium to the Indians for every prisoner head or scalp of Englishmen."¹²⁵

While Louisbourg's relations with Le Loutre and his actions were denied by Desherbiers, the Minister of Marine had been informed that Le Loutre was leaving for Acadia to provoke the Natives to resume their war against the English.¹²⁶ Le Loutre also wrote the minister:

¹²³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, p. 101, Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 17 October, 1749.

¹²⁴ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, pp. 79-81, Desherbiers to Cornwallis, 15 October, 1749.

¹²⁵ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 42, pp. 198-99, Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 24 June 1751.

¹²⁶ MG 1, C11C, vol. 9, p. 130v, à Isle Royale au ministre, 29 juillet, 1749.

j'ay vu Monsieur Desherbiers, MM. Bigot et Prévost qui m'ont promis tous les secours pour conserver les Sauvages dans la religion et la fidelité qu'ils doivent à Sa Majesté, je vais partir en consequence pour l'Acadie, je feray mon possible pour rassembler mes Sauvages et comme on ne peut s'opposer ouvertement aux entreprises des anglois, je pense qu'on ne peut mieuc faire que d'exciter les Sauvages a continuer de faire la guerre aux anglois mon dessein est d'engager les Sauvages de faire dire aux anglois qu'ils ne souffriront pas que l'on fasse de nouveaux établissemens dans l'Acadie, qu'ils prétendent qu'elle doit rester dans l'état ou elle étoit avant la guerre, que si les anglois persistent dans leur dessein les Sauvages ne seront jamais en paix avec eux et leur déclareront une guerre éternelle.¹²⁷

Le Loutre's letter casts sufficient light on the relationships between government officials and missionaries. More importantly, it specifically illuminates the responsibilities of the missionary in the competition for empire. Le Loutre added:

mes Sauvages en conséquence vont envoyer des députes chez les autres nations pour les convier de s'unir avec eux afin de s'opposer aux entreprises des anglois et de les empêcher de former leurs établissemens.¹²⁸

Since the arrival of Le Loutre in Nova Scotia in 1749, the Mi'kmaq accelerated their war against the English. In September 1749, they captured about twenty English at Canso and took them to Louisbourg, where they were later released by Desherbiers. Near Halifax a group of forest workers was surprised by an ambush, four of them were murdered and the rest were taken prisoner.¹²⁹ In November 1749, at Minas a Mi'kmaq war party captured English Lieutenant John Hamilton and his detachment of twenty-four soldiers.¹³⁰ In the same year, at Chignecto, the

¹²⁷ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 438, Le Loutre au ministre, 29 juillet, 1749; see also John Fortier, "Des Herbiere de La Ralière, Charles." *DBC*, vol. III, p. 196.

¹²⁸ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 438.

¹²⁹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, pp. 74-75, Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 2 October, 1749; pp. 101-106, to the Duke of Bedford, 17 October, 1749; pp. 107-108, to the Lords of Trade, 17 October, 1749.

¹³⁰ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, pp. 175-76, Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 10 December, (continued...)

Mi'kmaq attacked two British ships and killed many of the crew and raided a sawmill near Halifax. These attacks were supposedly in retaliation for the occupations of their ancestral lands to make way for English settlements. The Mi'kmaq were particularly upset by the founding of Halifax on their summer camping site. Their chiefs lodged a formal protest:

Seigneur, L'endroit où tu es, où tu fais des habitations, où tu bâtis un fort, où tu veux maintenant comme t'inthroniser, cette terre dont tu veux présentement te rendre maître absolu, cette terre m'appartient, j'en suis certes sorti comme l'herbe, c'est le propre lieu de ma naissance et de ma résidence, c'est ma terre à moy sauvage; oui, je le jure, c'est Dieu qui me l'a donnée pour être mon pais à perpétuité...montre-moy où moy sauvage me logerai? tu me chasses toy; où veux tu donc que je me réfugie?¹³¹

Governor Cornwallis informed the Lords of Trade that it was the French who incited the Mi'kmaq in these cases by distributing presents which Le Loutre had brought from Louisbourg. He offered a solution:

Tis firmly my opinion, my Lords, that if the Indians do begin [to attack us] we ought never to make peace with them again. It will be very practicable with an addition of force by sea and land to root them out entirely.¹³²

(...continued)

1749; According to Beamish Murdoch, the Natives had captured about sixty English in two years [1749-51]. The total ransom money for their release was 17,651 *livres* (882 pound Halifax currency). Murdoch, *A History of Nova Scotia*, vol. II, pp. 204, 166.

¹³¹ MG 5, B1, vol. 9, pp. 133-136, Declaration faite par les Sauvage Micmacks, 24 septembre, 1749; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, pp. 69-71, The Micmac Indians to Cornwallis, 23 September, 1749; *Collection de Documents*, vol. I, pp. 17-19. This is also quoted in Upton, *Micmacs and Colonists*, pp. 51-52; Gipson, *Zones of International Friction*, p. 189; and Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, Appendix A. 131-132, and "La Guerre Navale des Micmacs Contre les Britanniques," p. 242.

¹³² Akins, ed., *Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, p. 584. Cornwallis to the Lords of Trade, n.d., 1749.

This intimation of mass deportation would be applied six years later to the Acadians. At a meeting of the Council on 1 October, 1749 it was decided not to declare war on the Mi'kmaq because such an action would be tantamount to recognising the Mi'kmaq were an independent people. Rather, "they ought to be treated as so many Banditts, Ruffians, or Rebels to His Majesty's government" and a company of volunteers was to be organised and paid ten guineas "for every Indian they shall take or destroy."¹³³ The next day a proclamation was issued authorising all British subjects to "annoy, distress, take or destroy" any Mi'kmaq they encountered.¹³⁴ Moreover, Cornwallis ordered the capture of Le Loutre who was considered responsible for all the Mi'kmaq hostilities. He instructed Captain Silvanus Cobb to go to Boston to gather sufficient men to proceed to Beaubassin in order to arrest Le Loutre. Cobb would receive ten pounds for each Mi'kmaq scalp or prisoner and for capturing Le Loutre dead or alive he was offered fifty pounds and another fifty for his crew.¹³⁵ This enterprise was later cancelled by Cornwallis himself because Cobb, instead of keeping the plan secret, publicised it in Boston for the recruitment of his crew.¹³⁶

¹³³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 35, pp. 72-73, Resolution of Council, Halifax, 1 October, 1749; Akins, ed., *Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, p. 581, Minutes of Council, 1 October, 1749.

¹³⁴ Akins, *ibid.*, pp. 581-82, Proclamation of 2 October, 1749.

¹³⁵ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 36, pp. 15-16, Orders to captain Silvanus Cobb, 13 January, 1749; pp. 17-19, Instructions to Cobb, 13 January, 1749/50; see also *ibid.*, vol. 35, p. 76, Cornwallis to Duke of Bedford, 17 December, 1749; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 178-79, Cornwallis to Cobb, 13 January, 1749; pp. 181-84, Cornwallis to Duke of Bedford, 19 March, 1749/50.

¹³⁶ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 36, pp. 33-34, Advertisement by Silvanus Cobb, Boston, 30 January, 1749/50; p. 182, Cornwallis to the Lords of Trade, 19 March, 1749/50.

The Mi'kmaq were so firm in their resolve to expel the English from Halifax that they chose to persist in their struggle despite the formal peace between France and Britain.¹³⁷ In October, 1750 Prévost informed the minister that an Acadian vessel arrived at Port Toulouse carrying 37 English prisoners including seventeen soldiers and six women, captured by the Mi'kmaq around Chebouctou. For their release Le Loutre had to settle a ransom of 8155 *livres* and 7 *sols*.¹³⁸ A contemporary British historian, John Entick, wrote: "their Indian allies alarmed the very city of Halifax by an incursion on 27 March, 1751, to the town of Dartmouth.... which they plundered and left reeking with the blood of the English inhabitants."¹³⁹ New settlements were begun in 1749, but as late as 1752 little progress had been made in the planting of outlying settlements on account of incessant Mi'kmaq hostilities.¹⁴⁰ Meanwhile, the French established a permanent settlement on the northern side of the Isthmus of Chignecto and built Fort Beauséjour at the location where Le Loutre's headquarters existed in 1750. Cornwallis, anticipating further encroachment of the French in the Beaubassin basin, south of the Isthmus of Chignecto, decided to occupy the region and prevent the construction of the fort "if possible".¹⁴¹ To this end Major Charles Lawrence and a party of four hundred men were despatched to Beaubassin. When this expedition reached Beaubassin, the French inhabitants set fire to their own houses as ordered by Le Loutre and escaped to the northern part crossing the river Missequash under the protection of a French force

¹³⁷ MG 18, F 12, vol. 1, Pichon Papers, pp. 215-16, *Motifs des sauvages mikmaques et marichites de continuer la guerre contre les anglios*, s.d., 1751.

¹³⁸ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. III, p. 497, Prévost au ministre, 15 octobre, 1750.

¹³⁹ John Entick, *The General History of the Late War* (London: 1763), vol. 1, pp. 62-63.

¹⁴⁰ Gipson, *Zones of International Friction*, p. 200.

¹⁴¹ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 42, p. 198, Cornwallis to the Duke of Bedford, 24 June, 1751.

commanded of Louis La Corne.¹⁴² Later in 1750 the English constructed Fort Lawrence on the southern side of the river Missequash. As the troops in Nova Scotia were unable to oust the French from Chignecto, Cornwallis proposed a combined operation with Massachusetts forces.¹⁴³

In the 1750s the policy of withdrawing the Acadians from the British territories became indispensable to the French for political, economic and demographic reasons. The responsibility for the execution of this policy fell to Le Loutre and his native warriors. It was Le Loutre who periodically informed and advised officials at Louisbourg and Quebec about the developments in Acadia. In 1749 when the English officials asked the Acadians to take a new oath of allegiance to the British Crown and to be prepared to fight against the French and the Mi'kmaq, Le Loutre promised French officials that "ils [the Acadians] quitteront plustost l'acadie que de s'y soumettre et qu'ils se retireront sur nos terres." The latter part of this statement denotes that Le Loutre knew full well that the English had a legitimate right to Nova Scotia which he said once "a été cédè aux anglois dans toute son étendue."¹⁴⁴ While Le Loutre made frequent visits to Minas, Cobequid and other settlements to interview the inhabitants and urge them to move to Isle Royale or at least beyond the Isthmus of Chignecto, the Mi'kmaq informed him about the interior settlements where they were contacting the inhabitants. John Entick described:

¹⁴² MG 11, CO 217, vol. 37, pp. 8-9, Cornwallis to the Lords of Trade, 1 May, 1750; *ibid.*, p. 15, Cornwallis to the Lords of Trade, 3 May, 1750; *ibid.*, vol. 36, pp. 250-269, Journal of the Proceedings of the Detachment under the Command of Major Lawrence after entering the Basin of Chignecto, 26 April, 1750.

¹⁴³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 40, p. 33, Cornwallis to Spencer Phipps, 26 January, 1751/51.

¹⁴⁴ MG 1, C11C, vol. 9, p. 126v, Bigot au ministre, 29 septembre, 1749; *ibid.*, p. 131, à Isle Royale, 29 juillet, 1749.

The Sieur le Come and father Loutre...have made use of repeated and innumerable promises and menaces in order to persuade all the inhabitants of the province to leave the country. They even threatened them with a general massacre from the Indians if they remain in the province.¹⁴⁵

The terror and fear generated by Le Loutre and his Mi'kmaq had tremendous impact upon the Acadians. One author claimed that by November 1751 over four hundred and fifty Acadian families left Nova Scotia, some going to Isle St. Jean, others to the St. John River valley with a large number remaining near Beauséjour.¹⁴⁶

The administration of Acadian refugees came under the direction of Le Loutre. Norman Rogers said:

In all matters that concerned the Acadian refugees, the commanders at Beauséjour had orders to consult Le Loutre. In civil and religious affairs he was virtually a dictator, and, even on military questions his strong personality and indomitable will gave him a unique authority.¹⁴⁷

Le Loutre's role in the removal of the Acadians received considerable support from Versailles. In 1752 when he visited the metropolitan authorities seeking financial assistance to sustain his activities

¹⁴⁵ Entick, *The General History of the Late War*, p. 31; For further evidence see MG 11, CO 217, vol. 37, pp. 5-7 Cornwallis to the Lords of Trade, 1 May, 1750; *ibid.*, pp. 17-18 Cornwallis to Spencer Phips, 3 May, 1750; *ibid.*, p. 110, Lords of Trade to the Duke of Bedford, 4 June, 1750.

¹⁴⁶ Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," p. 121.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 121. Illustrating the authority of Le Loutre, Thomas Pichon "les uns et les autres m'ont fait rediger, corriger leurs lettres, celles qu'ils croyent de consequence. M. Le Loutre m'occupe le plus. Il croit avoir une sorte de droit de le faire." Gaston du Boscq de Beaumont, ed., *Les derniers jours de l'Acadie, 1748-1758: correspondances et mémoires* (Paris: 1899), p. 130, Pichon à de Surlaville, 12 novembre, 1754.

in the colony, he presented a proposal for the resettlement of the Acadians, which was drafted with the help of Abbé de l'Isle-Dieu. He was promised a sum of fifty thousand *livres*.¹⁴⁸

In 1750 the governor of Isle Royale was instructed to disrupt all peace negotiations between the English and the Native peoples.¹⁴⁹ The following year when the Abenakis were invited to conclude peace with the English, Governor Raymond sent a few Mi'kmaq to induce them to break off the negotiations.¹⁵⁰ During the period Le Loutre was away in France in 1752, there was a slight relaxation of Mi'kmaq activity in Acadia.¹⁵¹ They had been left in the charge of Abbé Jean Manach, Le Loutre's assistant, and the authorities at Quebec who had been unwilling to give them much direct support. Some had even agreed to make peace with the English. The minister was notified that at Halifax the English were able to get Jean-Baptiste Cope, "chief Sachem of the Tribe of Mick Mack Indians," and other delegates to sign a treaty of peace and friendship.¹⁵²

Following the return of Le Loutre to his mission in Acadia in August 1753, the Natives were again inspired to intensify their aggressions against the English. Le Loutre was infuriated by the treaty of 1752. He said, if the English wanted peace they "ought to write to him and not treat with"

¹⁴⁸ Boscq de Beaumont, *ibid.*, p. 91, Ministre à Raymond et Prévost, 17 juillet, 1753. According to Norman Rogers the Ministry granted 65,00 *livres* to Abbé Le Loutre. Rogers, "The Abbé Le Loutre," p. 122.

¹⁴⁹ MG 1, B, vol. 91, pp. 352-53, à Desherbiers, 14 juin, 1750.

¹⁵⁰ MG 1, C11B, vol. 31, pp. 81-84, Comte de Raymons au ministre, 19 novembre, 1751.

¹⁵¹ British correspondence demonstrated this interval of relative peace. MG 11, CO 217, vol. 52, pp. 134-35, Hopson to the Lords of Trade, 14 April, 1753.

¹⁵² MG 1, C11A, vol. 99, p. 193v, Abbé d'Isle-Dieu au ministre, 19 juillet, 1753; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 683-85, "Treaty or Articles of Friendship Renewed between governor Thomas Hopson...and Major J-B Cope...." 22 November, 1752.

chief Cope who was, in his view, “the Tail of the Indians.”¹⁵³ As Stephen E. Patterson remarked, Le Loutre might have exaggerated his influence with the Mi’kmaq, but his role in directing the Mi’kmaq activities is evident in the signing of peace treaty with the English, the relative tranquillity during his absence and the revival of hostilities after his arrival.¹⁵⁴ Referring to the Natives of Cape Sable one English official said that before the return of Le Loutre and the arrival of French troops they were living peacefully, but “soon after the arrival of their troops with Le Loutre the Indian missionary, the Indians drew off” and “hostilities commenced.”¹⁵⁵ So it was in 1753 that *Commissaire* Prévost could apprise the minister that the Natives were again harassing the English without respite. They had recently brought eighteen English scalps to Fort Beauséjour and Le Loutre had paid them about eighteen hundred *livres* as remuneration which had been reimbursed by Prévost.¹⁵⁶

By 1753 the Anglo-French boundary commission on the Acadian question was dissolved having failed to reach any agreement, leaving the outcome to be determined through war.¹⁵⁷ Since the British authorities in the colonies failed to root out the Mi’kmaq, or to establish permanent peace with them, Le Loutre proposed an alternative solution. On 27 August, 1754 he wrote

¹⁵³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, p. 159, Prévost au ministre, 12 mai, 1753; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 54, p. 118, Anthony Casteel, 30 July, 1753.

¹⁵⁴ Patterson, “1744-1763: Colonial Wars and Aboriginal Peoples,” p. 137.

¹⁵⁵ *Collection de Manuscrits*, vol. II, p. 108, Morris’s papers on the causes of the war in 1755.

¹⁵⁶ “M. Le Loutre a été obligé de les payer 1800 livres argent de l’acadie...” MG 1, C11B, vol. 33, p. 197v, Prévost au ministre, 16 aout, 1753.

¹⁵⁷ In 1755 Versailles tried to renew negotiations with Britain, but London authorities did not pay any attention. MG 4, A1, vol. 3424, pp. 265-68, *Projet d’une convention préliminaire*, 25 mars, 1755.

Governor Lawrence on behalf of the Mi'kmaq, proposing that they receive a perpetual grant of the entire northeastern part of Nova Scotia (counties of Cumberland, Colchester, Pictou, Antigonish, Guysborough, and the whole Halifax county east of Musquodoboit).¹⁵⁸ It would appear that Le Loutre had no intention of making peace, unless the English were willing to pay a high price. This solution would have required the British to remove their settlements in a vast area of the province and dismantle some of their military posts. The other facet of his proposal reflected Le Loutre's strategy to carve out a buffer zone of Mi'kmaq settlement between the British and French colonies. This was fashioned after a plan that he had drawn up in Paris in 1753 with the help of Abbé de l'Isle-Dieu on the boundaries of the British and French colonies for presentation to the court.¹⁵⁹ Once again the initiative was coming from the local level although no immediate action was taken in Versailles apart from an offer of generous subsidies for Acadian relocation, Amerindian presents and the recruitment of new missionaries for Acadia.

The Council at Halifax considered Le Loutre's project for an independent Mi'kmaq buffer state to be "both insolent and absurd" and not worthy of a reply. Captain Hussey, commander of the Fort Lawrence, was alerted to what they thought was Le Loutre's strategy :

He will doubtless tell these poor wretches [Mi'kmaq] that he has made such overtures of peace for them to us, as we might well have granted, and by that means endeavour to make

¹⁵⁸ In the words of Le Loutre Mi'kmaq territorial space "shall extend from the south of Bay Verte, comprising Fort Lawrence and lands depending on it, to the entrance of Mines, thence ascending into Cobequid as far as and comprising Chigabenakady, and leaving this latter place, formerly my mission, in ascending and descending afterwards as far as the river Mouskedaboveck; and from this place which is one the coast of the east to about eight leagues from Halifax, passing by the bay of all islands, Saint Mary's bay, and Moukoudome as far as Canceau, and from Canceau by the passage of Fronsac to the said Bay Verte." Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 217, Letter from Le Loutre, 27 August, 1754.

¹⁵⁹ "Une Autobiographie de Le Loutre." p. 22.

them believe they can never have peace with us, in order that he may still have them under his influence and dependence, this we can easily see in his drift.¹⁶⁰

In this colonial propaganda warfare, the British colonial authorities continued to over emphasise French influence while discounting the Mi'kmaq's self-interest.

In October, 1754, Governor-General Marquis Duquesne de Menneville wrote Le Loutre congratulating him that "your policy of threatening the English with your Indians is excellent," and he continued:

I consider that your proposals of peace between the English and your Indians would be advantageous if they were accepted; but I have reason to believe that there would be no pretence of such a peace...The more familiar I become with this project the more inclined I am to think that our Abenakis, Malachites, and Micmacks should never be permitted to conclude peace with the English. I consider that these Indians are the mainstay of the colony in order to maintain this spirit of hatred and vengeance, they must be deprived of every opportunity to yield to corruption [peace]. The present position of Canada requires that those nations which are strongly allied should strike without delay, provided it does not appear that it was I who gave the order, for I have definite instructions to remain on the defensive. Therefore, I leave you to keep the balance in connection with this peace, which I regard as a pretence on the part of your Indians.¹⁶¹

This letter reveals an ulterior motive behind the French pretence to remain at peace with the English. Duquesne further reminded Le Loutre: "you have doubtless noted in the English plan their desire to confine us...it increases the necessity for striking with vehemence, for you know, better than I, that the lifting of ten scalps would stop an English army."¹⁶² In other words, the governor-general stressed the significance of using native aggression in the competition for empire.

¹⁶⁰ Akins, ed., *Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, p. 237, Lawrence to Hussey, 9 September, 1754.

¹⁶¹ J.C. Webster, *The Life of Thomas Pichon. "the Spy of Beauséjour"* (Sackville: 1937), pp.55-56; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 238-40.

¹⁶² Webster, *The Life of Thomas Pichon*, p. 56.

The position of the Church was strongly in favour of French policy, although Le Loutre had often been admonished by the Bishop at Quebec for his excessive and aggressive participation in political and military ventures. The Bishop reminded him that "the government thought it advisable to assist them [the Acadians] in the evacuation of their lands; that was no concern of our profession. It was my advice neither to protest against nor to encourage them in any way." He added: "I told you long ago that a priest should not meddle in temporal affairs, for he would create enemies and cause discontent among his people."¹⁶³ The Bishop's advice had no influence on Le Loutre who was wholeheartedly dedicated to the cause of the French empire. While in France in 1753 he had asked his religious superior at the Mission Étrangères if he were justified in withholding the sacrament from those Acadians who took the oath of allegiance to the British Crown, or if he might encourage Mi'kmaq to scalp English settlers in peace time.¹⁶⁴ We do not have any information available as to what replies he received, but his conduct with respect to these matters implied aggressive designs..

The British took their own initiatives to rectify two unresolved issues: the lack of submission from the Acadians in Nova Scotia and the continuing threats from the Mi'kmaq on behalf of the French ambitions. In 1753 Governor Hopson proposed a radical solution to each of these problems:

I am now fully convinced that very little progress can be made in the service I have the honour to be employed in, until the French Flag is removed out of this Province by some means or other; when that happens I have hopes that the Indians when their allies are

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

¹⁶⁴ Gérard Finn, "Le Loutre, Jean-Louis," *DCB*, vol. IV, pp. 453-58.

withdrawn will no more be able to disturb us and that they will make proper submission to His Majesty's Government and live under it in Peace and quietness...¹⁶⁵

London did not oppose such a programme for the expulsion of the French from the region.

In May 1754, Governor William Shirley received information that French inhabitants of Chignecto along with the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet around Fort Beauséjour were making plans for an invasion of all eastern settlements in Nova Scotia.¹⁶⁶ Charles Lawrence, Governor of Nova Scotia, wrote Shirley that "it [is] high time to make some efforts to drive them [the French] from the North side of the Bay of Fundy." Lawrence had even suggested that Colonel Monckton lead the expedition against the French.¹⁶⁷ He had frequently corresponded with the authorities in London regarding the necessity of removing the French presence in Nova Scotia, underscoring the strategic value of the Isthmus of Chignecto where Fort Beauséjour was located.¹⁶⁸ This fort provided security to both the Natives and the Acadians and it was the principal distribution centre of supplies from Louisbourg and Canada.

Shirley was convinced that "when the French were drove off the Isthmus and out of the River St. John, it would be very easy to secure the whole Peninsula and Bay of Funda."¹⁶⁹ In 1754

¹⁶⁵ Akins, ed., *Public Documents of Nova Scotia*, p. 200, Hopson to the Board of Trade, 23 July, 1753.

¹⁶⁶ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. II, p. 69, Shirley to the Lords of Commissioners, 23 May, 1754; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 382, Shirley to T. Robinson, 23 May, 1754.

¹⁶⁷ Akins, *ibid.*, p. 377, Lawrence to Shirley, 5 November, 1754; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 56, pp. 154-61, Lawrence to Shirley, 5 November, 1754.

¹⁶⁸ MG 11, CO 5, vol. 16, pp. 155-57 Lawrence to T. Robinson, 18 October, 1755; CO 217, vol. 57, pp 4-16, Lawrence to the Lords of Trade, 12 January, 1755.

¹⁶⁹ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. II, p. 63, Shirley to T. Robinson, (continued...)

Shirley obtained permission from the Board of Trade and Plantations to launch an expedition against all the French settlements on the eastern seaboard. With the assistance of Lawrence he arranged the assault on Fort Beauséjour. Shirley raised about two thousand soldiers in New England and Lawrence provided a body of four hundred troops in Nova Scotia. This combined squad marched to Fort Beauséjour in May 1755.¹⁷⁰ Despite all the defensive efforts taken by the Commander Duchambon de Vergor, and the sorties to obstruct the advance of the besieging force, the English “attacked and reduced the French forts upon the Isthmus and cleared the Peninsula of those dangerous Encroachments.”¹⁷¹ On 16 June, Commander Vergor was compelled to surrender the fort in spite of the protest from Le Loutre and some of the officers. The next day Fort Gaspareau, an important centre for supplying the Natives, was also captured by the British.¹⁷² Subsequently, Lawrence ordered the seizure of the French fort at St. John River, but before the arrival of his

(...continued)

8 May, 1754; MG 11, CO 5, vol. 15, pp. 36-50. Shirley to T. Robinson, 8 December, 1754. In 1755 Shirley also outlined a scheme for the conquest of Canada. MG 11, CO 5, vol. 46, pp. 71-78, Shirley to T. Robinson, 15 August, 1755.

¹⁷⁰ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. II, pp. 62, 134, 146, 316, 594; Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 391-92, Instructions to Col. Monckton, 7 November, 1754; MG 11, CO 5, vol. 46, pp. 64-65, Shirley, 12 August, 1755.

¹⁷¹ Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, p. 594; MG 1, C11A, vol. 100, p. 227, l'Isle-Dieu au ministre, 29 septembre, 1755; “Une Autobiographie de Le Loutre”, pp. 28-30.

¹⁷² Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 243, Lawrence to Sir T. Robinson, 28 June, 1755; MG 4, A1, vol. 3424, pp. 443-44, lettre de Vaudreuil et Duquesne, 2 juillet, 1755 dans correspondance de M. de Rouillé avec le Comte de Baschi, ambassadeur à Lisbonne, 1754-55. For the terms of capitulation see Boscq de Beaumont, ed., *Les derniers jours de l'Acadie*, pp. 144-45; MG 1, C11C, vol. 16, p. 16, Vergor au ministre, 4 juillet, 1755.

troops the French had abandoned the fort after blowing it up.¹⁷³ The deportation of the Acadians began shortly thereafter.

Le Loutre, realising that his life was in danger, slipped away in disguise for Quebec via the St. John River.¹⁷⁴ The capture of Beauséjour and the departure of Le Loutre was the first severe blow to the existence of the empire after the 1745 siege of Louisbourg. The following days were characterised by desperate attempts to save a crumbling empire. With the fall of Beauséjour the role of the Native peoples as the chief guardians of the colony came to an end. Thomas Mante noted that “the balance of power in North America was now [1757] in the hands of the savages.”¹⁷⁵ but in the context of Louisbourg’s seaboard empire in North America after 1755 there was no balance to be maintained.

The capture of Louisbourg in 1745 and Beauséjour in 1755 were the two occasions in which the British and French forces fought face to face. In both cases the military inferiority of the French was quickly evidenced. Yet the British believed that they were inferior to the French in terms of military power, despite the fact that they possessed superior naval forces. There was little assurance in Britain that it would be able to oust the French from North America either by the use of diplomacy or by force.¹⁷⁶ This lack of confidence was largely a product of three factors: an

¹⁷³ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 58, pp. 4-5, 32-33, Lawrence to the Lords of Trade, 28 June and 18 July, 1755.

¹⁷⁴ MG 1, C11A, vol. 100, p. 226, L’Abbé de l’Isle-Dieu au ministre, 10 octobre, 1755; “Une Autobiographie de Le Loutre,” p. 30.

¹⁷⁵ Thomas Mante, *The History of the Late War in North America* (London: 1772), pp. 96-97.

¹⁷⁶ Gwyn, “French and British Naval Power at the Two Sieges of Louisbourg: 1745 and (continued...) ”

exaggerated concept of the strength of French forts erected from Louisbourg to Mobile; military support of the local Native people to the French; and a fear of French colonial militia forces expert in frontier fighting. John Mitchell wrote:

our colonies are all open and exposed, without any manner of security or defence. Theirs are protected and secured by numbers of forts and fortresses. Our men in America are scattered up and down the woods, upon their plantations, in remote and distant provinces. Theirs are collected together in forts and garrisons. Our people are nothing but a set of farmers and planters, used only to the axe and hoe. Theirs are not only well trained and disciplined, but they are used to arms from their infancy among the Indians....While we mind nothing but trade and planting. With these the French maintain numbers of Indians. We have none. These are troops that fight without pay, maintain themselves in the woods without charges, march without baggage and support themselves without stores and magazines.¹⁷⁷

Edmund Burke argued: "we have overvalued our own strength and under-rated the force of the enemy, ... which is certainly much superior."¹⁷⁸

These fears were not shared by all the English in Britain. As early as 1741 John Oldmixon, a British historian, explained:

(...continued)
1758," p. 64.

¹⁷⁷ John Mitchell, *The Contest in America between Great Britain and France* (London: 1757, reprint, 1965), pp. 137-38

¹⁷⁸ Edmund Burke, *An Account of the European Settlements in America* (London: 1777), vol. II, p. 31. For more information about the British and American perspectives of French superiority see Mante, *The History of the Late War. op.cit.*, pp. 478-480; John Husk, *The Present State of North America* (London: 1755), part I, pp. 60, 69; Henry McCulloh, *Proposals for Uniting the English Colonies on the Continent of North America* (London: 1757), pp. 35-36, 122-23, 127, and *The Wisdom and Policy of the French in the Construction of Their Great Offices* (London: 1755), p. 124; William Livingston, *A Review of the Military Operations in North America* (Dublin: 1757), p. 187; John Entick, *The General History of the Late War* (London: 1763), vol. I, pp. 15, 26; Thomas Pownall, *The Administration of the Colonies* (London: 1768; New York: 1971 reprint), pp. 12-13; Pargellis, ed., *Military Affairs in North America 1748-1765*, p. 19, Cadwallader Colden to Halifax, 3 August, 1754.

the militia of New England is now so powerful, that in case of a Rupture in Europe, they need not be in so much Apprehension of the French and Indians together as the latter need to be afraid of them with or without Indian confederates... and I can not imagine why certain writers, that always terrifying themselves and others, by looking on the French power in Canada through magnifying glasses.¹⁷⁹

Captain Charles Knowles did not hold a positive impression of the fortress of Louisbourg as a centre of military power. He believed that the superior naval power of Britain could defeat France. After the 1745 capture of Louisbourg Knowles asserted:

Neither the Coast of Accadia nor any of the Harbours in Newfld. (except St. John's and Placentia) are fortified (and those but triflingly). Yet we continue masters of them, and whatever nation sends the Strongest fleet into these seas will always be masters of the Cod fisheries for that year whether there be a Louisbourg or not.¹⁸⁰

In 1755 Shirley wrote in the same optimistic vein:

the French Incroachments being entirely removed from the peninsula of Nova Scotia and the mouth of St. John's river (the Indians of which have made their submission) and the Sea Coast being under the protection of his Majesty's Ships, every thing seems at present so far secured to the Northward.¹⁸¹

By the following year Shirley was convinced that the French would be unable to reverse the tide that was running against them:

As to the Apprehensions you [Lawrence] express in your letter, Sir, concerning an attempt being made upon Annapolis Royal by a body of French and Indians early in the spring, I can't but hope, that if the Isthmus is well guarded with the mouth of St. John's River, as the Province is so well clear'd of French, tho they may threaten that fort with a visit in the spring, it is most probable that they will consider better of it, since they have been already foil'd in so many attempts upon it; once when the garrison was much weaker...; besides, the difficulty they must have to support themselves in their acquisition, if they should succeed

¹⁷⁹ John Oldmixon, *The British Empire in America*, 2 vols. (London: 1741), vol. 1, p. 229.

¹⁸⁰ Gwyn ed., *The Royal Navy*, pp. 382-83, Knowles to Newcastle, 20 January, 1746/7; MG 11, CO 217, vol. 30, pp. 14-15, Knowles to Newcastle, 20 January, 1746/47.

¹⁸¹ MG 11, CO 5, vol. 46, p. 66, Shirley to T. Robinson, 12 August, 1755; Lincoln, ed., *Correspondence of William Shirley*, vol. II, p. 226, Shirley to T. Robinson, 12 August, 1755.

in the attempt against Annapolis, unless they can at the same time make themselves masters of the Bay of Funda and the Isthmus, seems to discourage the thought of it.¹⁸²

The tide had already turned against the French before the fall of Louisbourg. From 1756 onwards the Mi'kmaq war was essentially a struggle for their own survival, and they no longer provided substantial support for the maintenance of the French colony. The British authorities were able to quickly suppress the Mi'kmaq. When a group of French and about two hundred and eighty Natives assembled at Port Toulouse in July 1757, the former harangued them with promises but nothing concrete ensued. Governor Drucours later sent a request to Versailles for more presents to distribute to about seven hundred Natives who were supposed to be employed in the defence of Louisbourg.¹⁸³ Even after the siege and fall of Louisbourg in 1758 the Mi'kmaq continued their fight for their own cause, attacking the English settlement of Lunenburg. It was their last effort to retain their land and territorial rights. Thereafter Mi'kmaq resistance gradually disappeared. Between February 1760 and June 1761 the Treaty of 1726 was renewed with several native groups, and Abbé Maillard informed the Mi'kmaq that they were now the subjects of a "merciful Conqueror."¹⁸⁴

An overview of the region's history during the period between 1713 and 1758 illustrates that it was largely the native warriors who maintained France's seaboard empire on the North Atlantic. Had they not fought so fiercely and frequently, the British would have occupied and settled the

¹⁸² Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, pp. 435-36, Shirley to Lawrence, 13 March, 1756.

¹⁸³ MG 1, C11B, vol. 37, pp. 81-82, Drucours au ministre, 12 juillet, 1757; *ibid.*, pp. 94v-95, Prévost au ministre, 12 juillet, 1757.

¹⁸⁴ MG 11, CO 217 vol. 66, p. 39 [pp. 38-54], "Ceremonials at concluding a peace with the several Districts of the general Mickmack Nation of Indians," 25 June, 1761.

entire province of Nova Scotia; and the French would have been relegated to their possessions of Isle Royale, Isle St. Jean and the St. John River region. A British parliamentary memorandum to Governor Lawrence of Nova Scotia accurately pointed out the role of the Native peoples in restricting English settlements: "the almost constant state of alarm and Hostility in which the province has been hitherto kept by the Indians...seems to us to have been the only cause which has prevented all settlement and cultivation beyond the Town of Halifax."¹⁸⁵

The unique methods and tactics of Amerindian warfare caused difficult problems for British troops. In general, native warfare was characterised by four unique features: speed and surprise; tactics of encirclement; fighting in different scattered groups; and combined application of mobility and firepower.¹⁸⁶ Another aspect of Mi'kmaq warfare was that they never waged defensive wars, but they always considered offensive attacks to be the best means of defence. Above all, Mi'kmaq attacks were totally unpredictable, they launched their campaigns without any advance declaration of war, without any prior provocation or any other preliminary formalities of warfare that Europeans considered normal practice. Edmund Burke commented: "The savage people commence

¹⁸⁵ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 55, p. 65, To Charles Lawrence in relation to the sums granted by the parliament, 4 April, 1754. Concerning the settlement of Nova Scotia Judge Morris said in 1753 that "in the first place it must be allowed that the cause which has retarded the settlement has been owing principally to the disturbances give the Indian army. The advantage of a wild people...is so great that it has hitherto rendered all [our] attempts to surprise them ineffectual." *Le Canada-Français Documents sur l'Acadie*, vol. I, pp. 97-98.

¹⁸⁶ John K. Mahon, "Anglo-American Methods of Indian Warfare," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, vol. XLV, no. 2 (1958), pp. 254-75; Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 91. Father Sébastien Rasle described Abenaki warfare: "As soon as they have entered the enemy's country, they divide into separate companies, -one of thirty warriors, another of forty, and so on. They say to some: To you is given this hamlet to eat (that is their expression) to others : To you is given this village etc. Afterward the signal is given to strike all together, and at the same time in the different places...on the appointed day they made simultaneous attacks, very early in the morning." Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, p. 203, Father Sébastien Rasle to his brother, 12 octobre, 1723.

hostilities against us without any previous notice and without any provocation. They commit the most horrid ravages for a long time with impunity."¹⁸⁷

In addition to their own methods and tactics, the Natives had completely different concepts of war and discipline from that of the Europeans. According to European rules military discipline meant obedience to superiors and ability to proceed in close co-operation with other soldiers. Hence, European warfare was based on organised companies and strategies under the control of superior commanding officers. Conversely, for the Amerindians, military discipline was an individual matter. Ability to wage wars for long periods with little food, sometimes without any food, and ability of a warrior to resist fatigue and to think for himself in battle were the features of Amerindian warfare.¹⁸⁸ They had no superior commanding officers to enforce strategies and tactics of warfare, although they did design preliminary plans of attack as a group. In the actual combat each man exercised his own judgement as to how the general strategy applied to his immediate situation.

As a result of organisational and ideological differences, British regular troops were ill-equipped to fight against unconventional assaults in the forests of America. The Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Abenakis, who believed in the power of individual operations rather than collective campaigns, pursued guerrilla strategies and tactics, and remained an impressive military force as well as a dangerous threat to the British until the middle of the eighteenth century. Referring to the Abenakis, Father Sébastien Rasle reported: "the manner in which these tribes make war renders a

¹⁸⁷ Burke, *An Account of European Settlements in America*, vol. II, p. 31.

¹⁸⁸ Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians*, p. 91.

handful of their warriors more formidable than a body of 2 or 3,000 European soldiers would be."¹⁸⁹

The authorities in London were at loss to instruct Governor Lawrence how to best proceed against such attacks.

It is impossible for us at this distance without a more perfect knowledge of the geography or the country and the strength and numbers and situations of the Indians to form any such plan or point out with precision the most effectual methods of making such attacks against them...Whether hostile attempts of this nature can be most properly made with the regular military force stationed in the province or whether it is a business to which the Irregulars you now have are best suited to this service, or whether some other of different kind must not be provided are points for your attentive examination.¹⁹⁰

The French had already come to the conclusion that adaptating to native methods and to the local environment were essential to their survival and success against adversaries. The British government urged its colonial officials to find a practical local solution. It was precisely such a local adaptation or adjustment that Lawrence found incapable of achieving in 1754:

I can not at present well say whether the Regular military force or the Irregulars or a mixture of both would be best adapted to this purpose [of repelling the Indians]. As that depends greatly upon circumstances that can not be foreseen, such whether the Indians may be joined with French or no, what part of the province they are to be attacked in whether by land or by water and such like circumstances.¹⁹¹

These uncertainties produced by the nature and methods of Amerindian warfare always remained a problem for the British. By the middle of the eighteenth century large numbers of British regular troops were sent to America to expel the Native peoples from the frontiers of the colonies. Yet they sometimes failed as Braddock's disastrous expedition into Western Pennsylvania

¹⁸⁹ Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations*, vol. 67, p. 203.

¹⁹⁰ MG 11, CO 217, vol. 55, pp. 68, 71, To Charles Lawrence, 4 April, 1754.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, vol. 55, pp. 204-205, Charles Lawrence to the Lords of Trade, 1 August, 1754.

demonstrates.¹⁹² With his defeat English colonial officials realised that European armies should have supplementary forces, such as the native allies and colonial militia employed by the French. Shirley concluded that, "the expertness of the Indians in Bushfighting gives them a great superiority over the best troops who are not accustomed to it."¹⁹³

The practice of French imperialism in the North Atlantic littoral was predominantly dependent upon the success of Amerindian warfare against the British colonies. It was not France's military forces concentrated at Louisbourg, or troops stationed at different military posts, which protected the boundaries of the seaboard empire. Rather, we have found, as W.J. Eccles stated, the real rulers were the Mi'kmaq, the Malisect and the Abenakis.¹⁹⁴ They were the peoples who guarded the controversial frontiers of France's seaboard empire; they were the imperial fighting force that maintained an "informal empire" in Nova Scotia, an empire which provided the basis for the functioning of a French hegemonic system. Thus, considering the predominant role of local factors in maintaining France's political dominance, it is reasonable to state that French imperialism exercised at Isle Royale was in large measure a product of the colony, not of the *métropole*.

¹⁹² Mahon, "Anglo-American Methods of Indian Warfare," p. 265; W.J. Eccles, *Essays on New France* (Toronto: 1987), p. 91.

¹⁹³ Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia*, p. 385, Shirley to T. Robinson, 11 November, 1754.

¹⁹⁴ Eccles, *France in America*, p. 66. Peter MacLeod's study of French-Amerindian military relations in the Great Lakes region pointed out that the Odawas, the Ojibwas and the Potawatomis remained paramount powers in the region. D. Peter MacLeod, "Une Conspiration Générale: The Exercise of Power by the Amerindians of the Great Lakes during the War of the Austrian Succession, 1744-1748" (Ph.D. thesis, University of Ottawa, 1992), pp. 17, 187-88.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

The preceding discussions have presented a reinterpretation of French imperialism, demonstrating that, in the case of Isle Royale, it was local initiatives that created an “informal empire”. Louisbourg as a centre of colonial administration played a significant role in the evolution of imperial policy. The establishment of a colony on Isle Royale and the subsequent developmental activities, such as selection of a site for the colony’s capital and principal port, and construction of its fortifications and public buildings, reflect the influence of local officials in important colonial matters. The idea of colonising Isle Royale originated from a proposal made by colonial officials in 1706, which the Ministry of Marine and Colonies adopted as part of metropolitan policy in 1713. Right from the initial stage of colonisation the government of France began to display vacillation and inefficiency in making firm decisions and in formulating consistent policies.¹

According to metropolitan statements, the principal purposes of the establishment of Louisbourg were the maintenance and protection of the fishery and commerce. Materialisation of

¹ Historian Frederick J. Thorpe, in analysing the various aspects of constructing fortifications and public buildings, points out that a remarkable feature of Louis XV’s colonial policies was that the different elements were often inconsistently co-ordinated. The metropolitan government established strict controls over the administration and planning of fortress construction, but it was unable to successfully implement them. F.J. Thorpe, *Remparts Lointains, La politique française des travaux publics à Terre-Neuve et à l’île Royale, 1695-1758* (Ottawa: 1980), pp. 163-168, *passim*.

these objectives required the construction of an Atlantic seaboard fortress and development of a naval base for safeguarding of the entrance to the Gulf of St. Lawrence and access to Canada as well as the resettlement of the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq on Isle Royale. All these plans were, in one way or another, underpinned by a policy of mercantile imperialism, yet none of these proved to be fruitful as initially anticipated. The largely incomplete and twice besieged fortress of Louisbourg remained an example of France's monumental failure. The fortress and its garrison could not protect the colony, or its fishery and commerce,² nor did it safeguard the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the eastern frontiers of New France. Contrary to metropolitan plans and hopes, Louisbourg never became a "key to Canada," nor a "bulwark of New France," and the fortress existed as an effete outpost of empire, an unsuitable work of European conception and imagination in the New World". Had there been a powerful and permanent naval squadron at Louisbourg, France might have changed the course of events. France's hopes for the settlement of the Acadians and the Natives on Isle Royale and, hence, the demographic strengthening of the colony, were also unfulfilled in large measure. Such failures suggest that metropolitan policies of colonial development were incompatible with colonial realities.

By the beginning of the eighteenth century, France's rigid control over colonial governments was in a state of decline. The metropolitan government began to adopt more liberal approaches towards colonial matters. This change was produced primarily by contemporary political crises. Metropolitan administrative dynamics in conjunction with the Ministry's flexible stand in supervising colonial matters, favoured a situation in which the government of Louisbourg assumed important

² The fishery remained a prosperous and successful industry as a result of the relatively long period of peaceful relations between France and Britain and as well as the Mi'kmaq threat to New England intruders.

initiatives and exerted its own power and influence in the administration of regional commercial, political and diplomatic affairs.

The governor, as the head of the colonial government and the military organisation and as the sole authority empowered to deal with native affairs as well as the colony's external relations, possessed indisputable prerogatives. The *commissaire ordonnateur*, the second most important official in the colony, had exclusive powers in the administration of finance, justice and police. In his study of colonial administration at Louisbourg, T.A. Crowley argued that the "governor's areas of jurisdiction had been narrowed" in comparison to that of the *commissaire*, so that the civil administration had greater influence and power than the military. His study paid little attention to the fact that the governor had extensive powers and the military administration was as influential as civil authority in its own realm. Crowley's study failed to identify one of the principal functions of the government of Louisbourg: the maintenance of a French imperial system; he did not search beyond "the Great Fortress Myth."³ The findings of the present study concerning developments at Louisbourg are confirmed for other French outposts in the research of several scholars, particularly Patricia Galloway and Michael Foret for Louisiana and Yves Zoltvany for the *pays d'en haut* of

³ T.A. Crowley, "Government and Interests: French Colonial Administration at Louisbourg, 1713-1758" (Ph.D. thesis, Duke University: 1975), p. 370, *passim*; T. A. Crowley, "France, Canada and the Beginnings of Louisbourg: In Search of the Great Fortress Myth," *Papers and Abstracts for a Symposium on Ile Royale During the French Regime* (Ottawa: 1972), pp. 45-69. Crowley repeated J.F. Boshier's thesis about the collusion between public and private interests. Referring to Louisbourg Boshier later stated that "the growth of Louisbourg fortress and trading centre was part of the Anglo-French imperial rivalry." J. F. Boshier, "Government and Private Interests in New France," *Canadian Public Administration*, vol. X, (1967), pp. 244-57; and *The Canada Merchants, 1713-1758* (Oxford: 1987), p. 2.

Canada.⁴ The decisions and actions taken by the governor and the *commissaire* in the routine administration of the colony constituted the foundation of official colonial and imperial policy as eventually articulated by the Ministry of Marine.⁵ Metropolitan officials did not have sufficient knowledge of colonial conditions and priorities, thus they often sought the opinions and “decisions” of local officials. It appears that at times local officials even had to provide “lessons” in colonial geography and local affairs to the minister and his assistants at Versailles. In 1753, Governor Comte de Raymond wrote Minister Rouillé, “je joins ici une lettre que l’abbé Maillard m’écrit de

⁴ In opposition to Crowley’s argument, this study finds that Dr. Patricia Galloway, examining the role of the governor at Louisiana, pointed out that “an important contributing factor in terms of local application of imperial policy was the influence the governor in the colony.” P. Galloway, “The Barthelmy Murders: Bienville’s Establishment of the *Lex Talionis* as a Principle of Indian Diplomacy” in E.P. Fitzgerald, ed., *Proceedings of the VIIIth Annual Meeting of the French Colonial Historical Society 1982*, (New York: 1985), pp. 91-103. Michael James Foret, analysing Indian policy in Louisiana, explained: “the minister ... was only concerned with the actual administration of the colony in times of extreme emergency. The governor of Louisiana charged with the safety and management of the colony, often proposed grand schemes for great Franco-Indian adventures, but usually had to fashion a realistic Indian policy on what he [Governor Le Moyne] considered to be inadequate support from France.” Moreover, indicating the absence of metropolitan supervision, Foret said that there was no single Indian policy for Louisiana, but rather each governor saw problems in a different light and formulated his own policy. M.J. Foret, “French Colonial Indian Policy in Louisiana, 1699-1763” in E. P. Fitzgerald, ed., *ibid.*, pp. 82-90. See also Yves F. Zoltvany, “The Frontier Policy of Philippe de Rigaud de Vaudreuil, 1713-1725,” *CHR.*, vol. XLVIII, no. 3 (1967), pp. 227-50. All these studies demonstrate that colonial governors possessed influential and extensive powers in the administration.

⁵ In some cases business organisations also played an important role in the creation of imperial and colonial policies of France. John F. Laffey’s study in the case of Lyon explains that it was the local chamber of commerce which most clearly formulated the imperial policy with regard to Algeria, the Near East and South East Asia. See J. F. Laffey, “Roots of French Imperialism in the Nineteenth Century: The Case of Lyon,” *FHS*, vol. VI, no. 1 (1969), pp. 78-92.

l'Isle St. Jean, où il est actuellement; qui vous donnera une idée de la position où est présentement cette colonie . . .”⁶

The issuing of local ordinances at Louisbourg, and their subsequent acceptance by the Ministry, demonstrates the significance of colonial administration from below. This subaltern trend in colonial administration is best illustrated by Le Normant's draft regulations concerning the fishery and commerce, which the Ministry had approved and promulgated as a comprehensive royal decree in 1743. The management of military matters similarly indicate the influence of local officials. Minister Maurepas's agreement with Governor Saint-Ovide on the appointment of cadets, after an initial disapproval, the authorisation to the governor to exercise his military prerogatives over the Karrer Regiment in the colony following a long period of jurisdictional wrangling, Governor Duquesnel's orders to capture Canso as well as to launch a military expedition against Annapolis Royal without prior permission from the king, and the neglect of the Ministry's plan for soldier settlements are some of the examples of local initiatives taken in consideration of local interests.

The official treatment of native affairs further explains the role of the local government. The governor's reports and suggestions essentially formed the foundation of France's Amerindian policy. The despatch of presents, medals, guns, ammunition, and other goods for the Mi'kmaq and Maliseet was based on the requests and recommendations of the governor. As the support of the Natives was indispensable to the maintenance of France's imperialistic interests, the governor was given almost unrestricted powers in managing them.

⁶ Gaston Du Boscq de Beaumont, ed., *Les derniers jours de l'Acadie (1748-1758): correspondances et mémoires* (Paris: 1899), p. 100, Raymond au ministre, 6 août, 1753.

The administration of Isle Royale's relations with Nova Scotia and New England was under the control of the local government, except for the Canso question and the Acadian boundary issues arising out of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. While France was formally at peace with Britain and, thus, not in a position to oppose British colonial expansion overtly, it was the government of Louisbourg which directed the bilateral diplomatic relations between the colonies on the North Atlantic seaboard. The governor was in charge of formulating the external policies of the colony. Governors such as Saint-Ovide showed exceptional diplomacy in upholding formal and peaceful relations with the British colonies while at the same time using the Natives and the missionaries to halt British territorial expansion. The controversial issues between France and Britain over the boundary of Nova Scotia, or "Acadia", and the Canso fishery remained unresolved despite metropolitan efforts to solve them.

The metropolitan government could not implement, or impose, mercantilistic regulations, as demonstrated by the need to continually reissue royal ordinances on the matter. Authorities at Louisbourg were forced to delay deliberately, or ignore considerably, the implementation of restrictive trade policies of the Ministry, which did not fall in line with colonial interests. In terms of commercial activities, the colony always exhibited a tendency to slip out of the mercantilistic controls. This suggests that the so-called traditional and closed mercantilist imperial system of France was neither as entrenched nor effective as its proponents desired.⁷ In addition, conflicts between the governor and *commissaire* in the local government, overlapping jurisdictions, maladministration and collusion between local officials and merchants and even with metropolitan

⁷ D.H. Usner's study of Louisiana clarifies the ineffectiveness of mercantile regulations. Daniel H. Usner Jr., *Indians, Settlers and Slaves in a Frontier Exchange Economy* (Chapel Hill: 1990), p. 276, *passim*.

officials (such as chief clerk La Porte), reflected the impossibility for the Ministry of Marine to effectively control the colonial administration. This indicates that the government of Louisbourg functioned without the close supervision and direction of the Ministry. Furthermore, delays in communicating with the *métropole*, especially when it was necessary to make urgent decisions, often forced the local government to function without metropolitan authorisation or guidance.

Contrary to the perception still evident in the historiography that the colonial government was strictly under the authoritarian control of Versailles, the case of Louisbourg explicates that the colonial government functioned to a considerable degree from local levels of decision making in terms of political, military, diplomatic, and commercial activities. In other words, although the king acting through his appointed metropolitan ministers was the only supreme authority, for practical reasons, the government of Louisbourg operated in great measure within a self-regulating system.⁸ This administrative system was absolutely imperative to facilitate the exercise of effective local rule and to guarantee the survival of a semblance of a French imperial system.

⁸ Analysing the destabilising elements in the mercantile “imperial system” of the eighteenth century, Richard L. Merritt stated that the absence of rigid controls by the metropolitan country (a “dominant subsystem”) over the activities of its colony (a “dependant subsystem”) especially in the area of commerce, would lead the latter to function independently. Moreover, the opportunities offered by slow and generally irregular means of transportation and communication would further help the colony to create an independent subsystem in terms of the management of its domestic and external affairs. Thus Merritt is suggesting that the mercantile “imperial system had an inherent bias in favour of instabilities” that led to the disintegration of empires. Therefore, the metropolitan country had to use every means at its disposal to prevent the disintegration of the imperial system. R.L. Merritt, “Systems and the Disintegration of Empires” in Ludwig von Bertalanffy and Anatol Rapoport, eds., *General Systems. Yearbook of the Society for General Systems Research*, vol. VIII (1963) pp. 91-103. Although his system-based study of imperialism is not squarely applicable to the French imperial system as its disintegration in North America was not due to the formation of any new and independent overseas “subsystems”, it shows that mercantile imperialism as a “system” to maintain metropolitan domination did not succeed during the eighteenth century.

French imperialism in the context of North Atlantic seaboard regions came into existence through two different processes. The first was the establishment of France's hegemonic influence over the indigenous peoples: the Mi'kmaq, the Maliseet and the Abenakis. This was achieved through attempts at a civilising mission and ideological indoctrination, on the one hand, and the diplomatic recognition of native nationhood and territorial rights under French sovereignty, on the other hand. By the time of the establishment of Louisbourg almost all of the Mi'kmaq identified with Catholicism. In spite of all missionary work and optimism, the policy of "civilising" the Mi'kmaq and other eastern Amerindians and their "assimilation" into French culture did not make any progress beyond an acknowledgment of "conversion". Rather, the cultural gulf between the French and Native peoples may have widened. Catholicism became an effective barometer of native attachment to the French cause and its hegemonic influence was recognised by both the French and the British.

The Native peoples believed and claimed that they were not subjects of the king of France, but only his allies. In practice, the French championed the Natives' fear of and resistance to British expansion in order to further their own objectives. It is possible that by the recognition of native nationhood France meant only limited Amerindian independence under its sovereignty. The Native peoples possessed the right to use their land to make a livelihood in their own manner, to follow their own customs, and to pursue their traditional lifestyle. Acadian settlements had never required their displacement. The cession of Acadia to Britain without the consent of the Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis seemed to imply that their territorial rights were appropriated by the French in an imperious manner and they were treated like subjects of the king. Despite tacit French "recognition" of native claims as "brothers" and allies, a closer examination of their relationship

demonstrates that at best they were perceived as *hommes priants*. What we see in French-Amerindian military co-operation in the region was not an alliance between two equal partners, but a system of imperial operation, in which each pursued its own objectives. There was a congruence of interests particularly in the face of British activity in the region, which resulted in the formation of a defensive coalition between the French and the Native peoples. The latter's interest was of utmost consideration in the enunciation of Isle Royale policy. The missionaries, who by the nature of their evangelical objectives, would have sought to dominate and redirect Mi'kmaq activities found themselves in the role of diplomatic agents to the colonial authorities and advisors to the Native groups in their struggles to retain their lands and liberty. None of these was directed from Versailles, although the *métropole* approved the process. When Versailles ordered a course that did not suit local objectives or conditions, metropolitan wishes were ignored.

There has been a tendency to adopt a research framework in which the concept of imperialism is overlooked in explaining French-Amerindian relationships. Rather, the relative military weakness of the French locally that forced them to forge an alliance with the Natives is highlighted. It should be noted that cordial relations, military alliances, or cultural associations, are not the fundamental criteria for identifying the presence, or absence, of an imperial system. We can see these kinds of relationships between the Natives and colonisers in other contemporary French or European colonies. The first and foremost criterion for identifying imperialism is "concrete interest"⁹ underscoring the contacts between the Natives and the colonisers. In the context of North Atlantic seaboard regions, France's concrete interests were focused on building an empire and,

⁹ For a definition of "concrete interests" see Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Imperialism and Social Classes* (New York: 1955), pp. 3-4.

hence, on maintaining its political and economic dominance, whereas the Natives were trying to retain their means of survival. In contrast to Canada where the fur trade was an instrument of imperialism, on the seaboard regions the fishery and commerce were the interests for imperialism. Olive P. Dickason proposed that the interactions between the French and the Mi'kmaq in the colonial cultural milieu reversed the original metropolitan plan for obtaining the Amerindian "recognition of and submission to the authority and domination of the Crown of France."¹⁰ Recent studies, describing the cultural relations, argued that the Natives of Isle Royale and Nova Scotia were not pawns but merely allies of the French, who retained their social and political structures intact.¹¹ The Native peoples were not completely subservient to the French, but their acceptance of Catholicism and some elements of French culture paved the way for the operation of cultural imperialism.

The second process of French imperialism was the foundation of an "informal empire" in Nova Scotia, which was crucial to the political and economic survival of France along the seaboard regions. This empire had no recognised territorial base, but it established an indirect rule and the influence of France over peoples in Nova Scotia - the Mi'kmaq and the Acadians - who were

¹⁰ Dickason concluded that "the Micmac and Malecite paid the final tribute to French policy in their continuing loyalty to the French not only when they were present, but also long after they had gone. And to this day they are still Catholics." Olive P. Dickason, *Louisbourg and the Indians: A Study of Imperial Race Relations, 1713-1760* (Ottawa: 1976), p. 128-130; see also Olive P. Dickason, "Amerindians between the French and English in Nova Scotia, 1713-1763" in J. R. Miller, ed., *Sweet Promises: A Reader on Indian-White Relations in Canada* (Toronto: 1991), p. 50.

¹¹ For examples see Stephen E. Patterson, "Indian-White Relations in Nova Scotia, 1749-61: A Study in Political Integration," *Acadiensis*, vol. XXIII, no.1 (1993), pp. 23-59, William C. Wicken, "Encounters with Tall Sails and Tall Tales: Mi'kmaq Society, 1500-1760" (Ph.D thesis, McGill University, 1994); A.J.B. Johnston, "Report on the Current Presentation of Aboriginal History at National Historic Sites Administered by Parks Canada and at National Parks" (Draft, Parks Canada, 1995), pp. 93.

legally the subjects of the British Crown. In other words, although France lost its sovereignty over Acadia to Britain in 1713, in terms of real control over the peoples of the region France retained more than its rival gained. The Mi'kmaq and the Abenakis, in spite of their criticism of the French for the cession of Acadia, generally remained staunch supporters of the French. The Acadian's reluctance to take the oath of allegiance to the British Crown, their decision to remain neutral, and the interim permission given them to retain their customs, traditions and Catholic religion considerably favoured French interests in the region. Even when the Mi'kmaq and Abenakis signed treaties with British colonial authorities [as in 1713, 1717, 1725, 1749 and 1752] they did not renounce their special relationship with the French through missionaries, or abandon all claim to their territories and resources. They were obliged by military pressure emanating largely from Massachusetts to make peace and promise friendship. By manipulating these new circumstances, France's local authorities were able to develop a zone of influence in Nova Scotia and even beyond.

French imperialism in Isle Royale was grounded in a structure of power created within the colony. This imperial power structure evolved from interactive military and cultural associations between the French and the indigenous peoples. This network of associations was nurtured by the exercise of gift-diplomacy and traditional local ceremonies and protocols. The friendship and intermarriage of the Acadians with the Mi'kmaq and their support of the institutional power of the state and church further strengthened the imperial power structure. To a greater degree than in any other parts of New France, or in any other overseas colonies of France, in the Atlantic seaboard region Catholic missionaries played a pivotal role in maintaining and promoting the power structure. Without the service of such missionaries as Pain, Gaulin, Maillard, and Le Loutre, the French imperial system could not have functioned in the region. Missionary posts were not only the venues

for preaching the gospel to the Natives, but also the centres for perpetuating French political domination, combining local forces and facilities, within the zone of “informal empire”.

French military and naval forces were expected to play a dominant role in preserving the political power of France in the North Atlantic region. The Natives were often the genuine fighters in the competition for empire. Mi'kmaq and Abenaki incursions successfully resisted British colonisation in Nova Scotia and in the northern parts of New England. The Native peoples had no decisive influence in the eventual outcome of conflicts between the French and the British, especially in the sieges of Louisbourg. They were “instruments” of French imperialism, whether enthusiastic allies or initiators of action. The governor at Louisbourg developed plans of imperial policies and strategies in such a manner that would keep them as an informal “standing army” for the French in Nova Scotia which, according to Abbé Le Loutre, was a *théâtre de guerre*.¹² The missionaries, as we have seen, had a prominent position in formulating imperial policies and strategies. The most vivid example of this was Le Loutre's proposals for establishing peace between the Mi'kmaq and the English, which would have created a buffer zone of Mi'kmaq settlement between the French and the English colonies. Le Loutre's strategic proposals were highly appreciated by colonial officials.¹³ Native warriors were placed directly under the supervision of the missionaries “qui avoient bien plus

¹² *Collection de manuscrits contenant lettres, mémoires, et autres documents historiques relatifs à la Nouvelle-France* (Quebec: 1884), vol. III, p. 461, Le Loutre, 4 octobre, 1749.

¹³ T.B. Akins, ed., *Acadia and Nova Scotia. Documents Relating to Acadian and First English Colonisation of the Province, 1714-1758* (Halifax: 1869), pp. 238-40; J.C. Webster, *The Life of Thomas Pichon. “the Spy of Beauséjour”* (Sackville: 1937), pp. 55-56.

d'autorité en temps de guerre qu'en temps de paix."¹⁴ Nevertheless, the tactics and practices of warfare remained totally Amerindian.

In conclusion, French imperialism in the context of Louisbourg and surrounding territories was characterised by four principal aspects: first, the absence of large-scale successful combined land and naval operations designed to "conquer" the Native peoples and expel the British from Nova Scotia; second, the absence of the imposition of a centralised metropolitan policy of imperialism; third, the formation of an imperial power structure in the colony based on a linkage of colonial forces and facilities; and fourth, the enunciation and implementation of imperial policy and diplomacy initiated locally under the direction of the colonial government with, or without, the collaboration of the *métropole*. In general, policies, strategies, tactics, and military operations of France's imperial system in Isle Royale and the "informal empire" under British sovereignty were directed fundamentally from within the colony. This phenomenon of empire building can be defined, in a conceptually meaningful, theoretically reasonable, and historically applicable scheme of interpretation, as "imperialism from below". The survival of France's North Atlantic seaboard empire between 1713 and 1758 comfortably fits into this framework and conception of imperialism as initiated in good measure at the local level.

¹⁴ Gaston du Boscq de Beaumont, ed., *Les derniers jours de l'Acadie 1748-1758: Correspondances et mémoires* (Paris:1899), p. 86. Members of the clergy could not bear arms or engage in warfare; they acted more as advisors and supervisors. In contrast, Marine officers had no power of command over native warriors and could only plan strategy and joint action with the war captain.

ABBREVIATIONS

AC	: Archives des Colonies
AFO	: Archives de la France d'Outre-mer
AG	: Archives de Guerre
AM	: Archives de la Marine
AN	: Archives Nationales
CHA	: Canadian Historical Association
CHR	: <i>Canadian Historical Review</i>
CO	: Colonial Office
DCB/DBC	: <i>Dictionary of Canadian Biography/ Dictionnaire biographique du Canada</i>
FHS	: <i>French Historical Studies</i>
MG	: Manuscript Group
MHS	: Massachusetts Historical Society
N.P.	: No Pagination
RAPQ	: <i>Rapport de l'Archiviste de la Province de Québec</i>
RHAF	: <i>Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française</i>
S.D.	: Sans Date
SH/HS	: <i>Social History/ Histoire Sociale</i>
WMQ	: <i>William and Mary Quarterly</i>

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MG 1 [AC], C11B, Correspondance générale, Isle Royale.

MG 1 [AC], C11C, Amérique du Nord.

MG 1 [AC], C11D, Correspondance générale, Acadie.

MG 1 [AC], C11E, Des limites et des postes.

MG 1 [AC], C11G, Correspondance Raudot-Pontchartain, domaine de l'Occident et Isle Royale.

MG 1 [AC], D2C, Troupes Coloniales.

MG 1 [AC], E, Dossiers personnels.

MG 1 [AC], F2C, Colonies en général.

MG 1 [AC], F3, Collection Moreau de Saint-Méry.

MG 1 [AFO], G1, Registres de l'état civil, recensements et documents divers.

MG 1 [AFO], G2, Registres des greffes du conseil supérieur de Louisbourg.

MG 2 [AM], A1, Archives de la Marine, ordonnances, édits, arrêts, lettres patentes.

MG 2 [AM], B1, Archives de la Marine, Décisions.

MG 2 [AM], B2, Archives de la Marine, Ordres et dépêches.

MG 2 [AM], C7, Dossier personnel individuel.

MG 3 [AN], K, Archives Nationales, monuments historiques.

MG 4 [AG], A1, Correspondance générale, opération militaire.

MG 4 [AG], A4, L'administration de la marine et des colonies.

¹ The series title MG (Manuscript Group) refers to National Archives of Canada and the titles in the square brackets refer to copies of the same documents in the Archives of the Fortress of Louisbourg.

- MG 4 [AG], B1, Service historique de l'armée, archives historiques.
- MG 4 [AG], C2, Archives de la guerre, comité technique du génie.
- MG 5 B1, Archives du ministère des affaires étrangères, Mémoires et documents.
- MG 7, A1& A2, Fonds étranger: fonds Américain.
- MG 7, II, Fonds de la Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal.
- MG 8, A1, Nouvelle France, correspondance officielle.
- MG 11, CO5, America and the West Indies, Original Correspondence.
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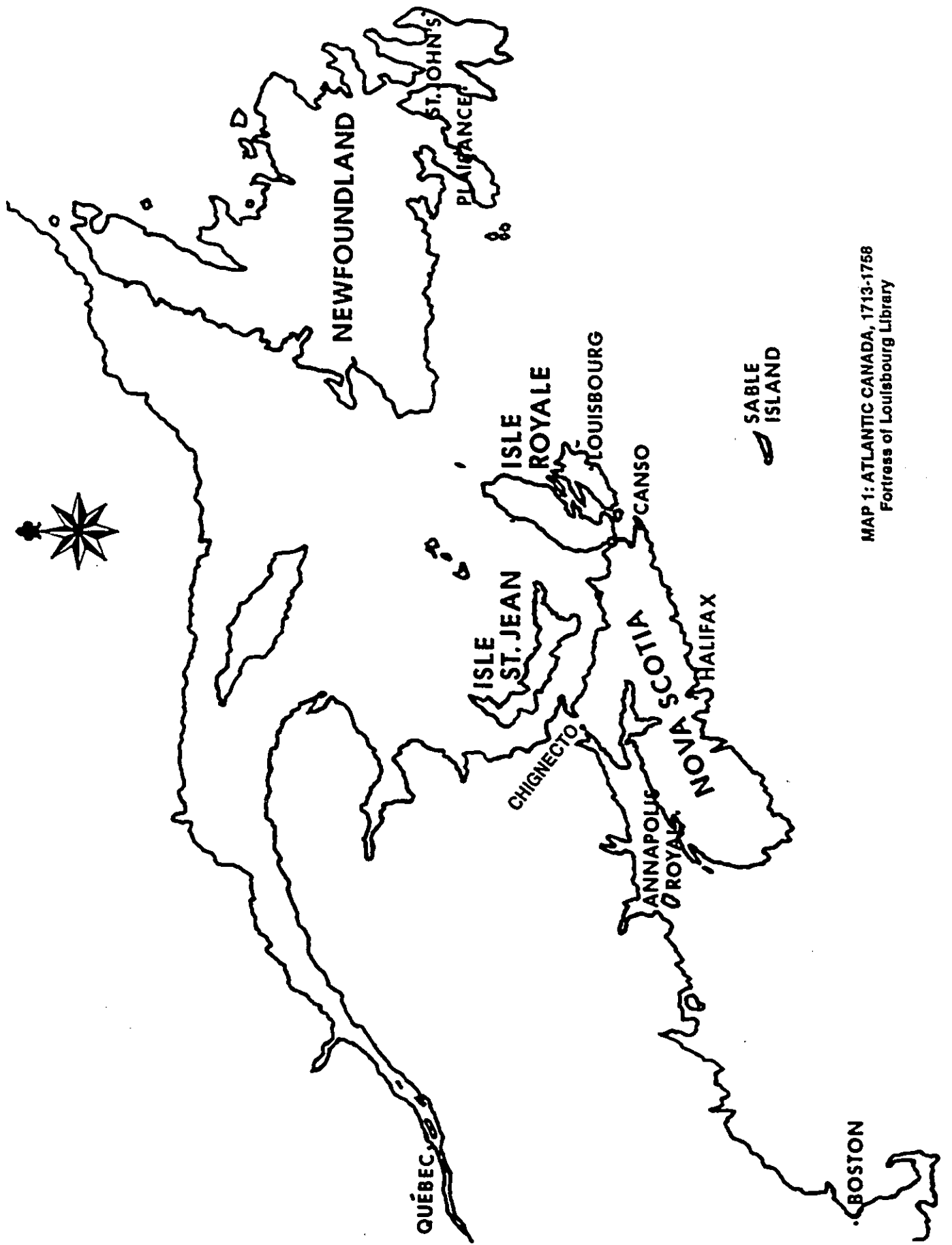
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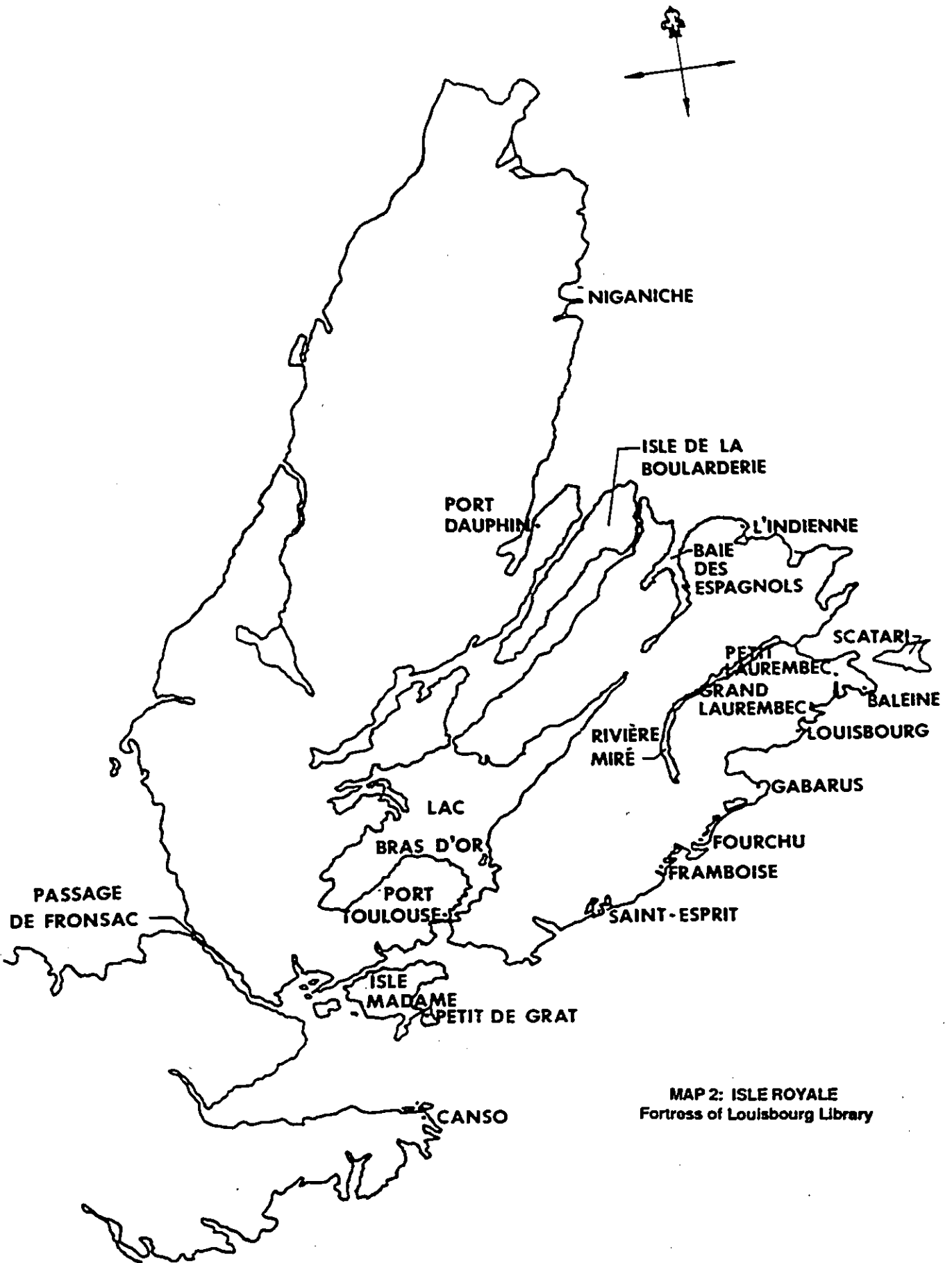
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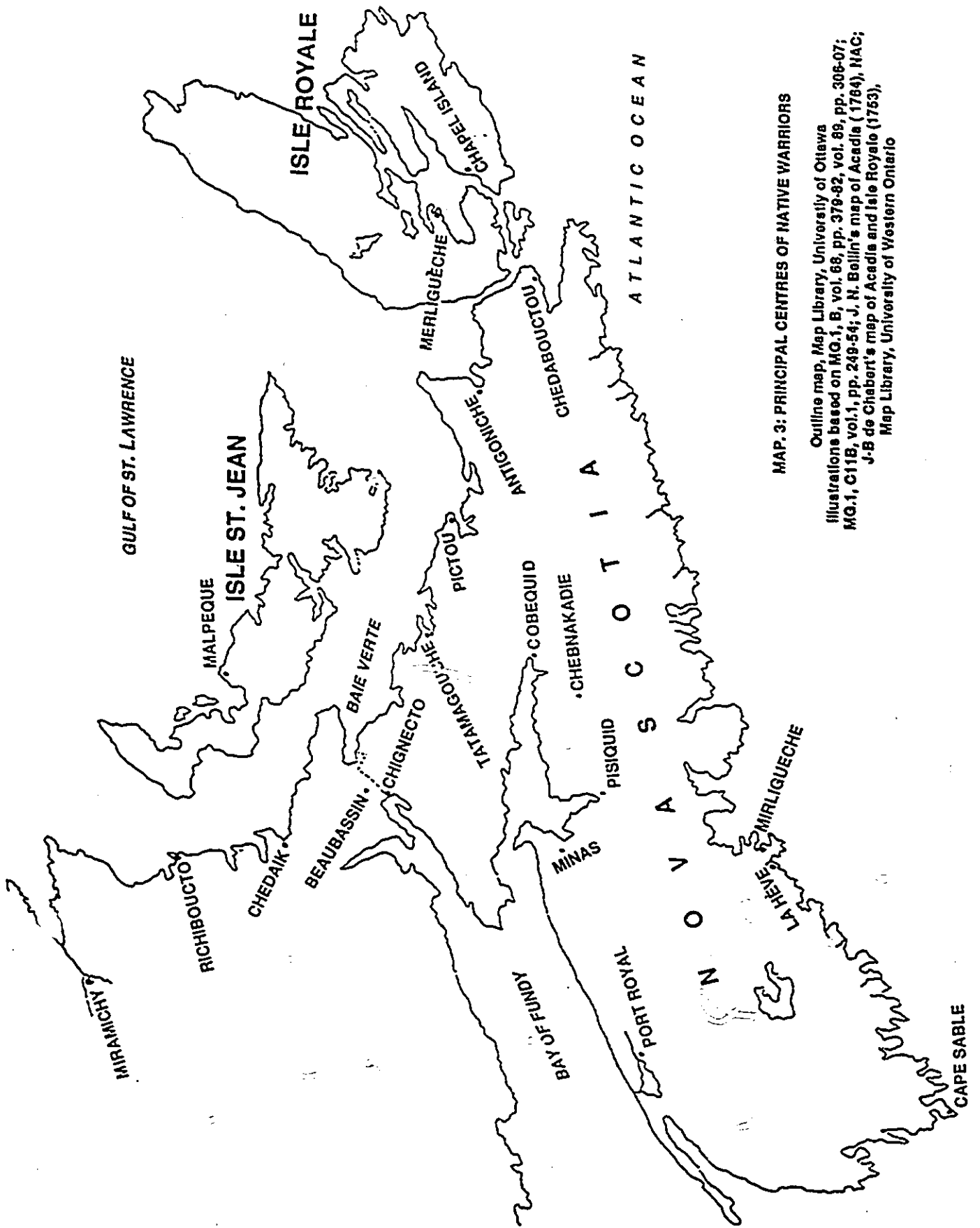
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MAP 1: ATLANTIC CANADA, 1713-1758
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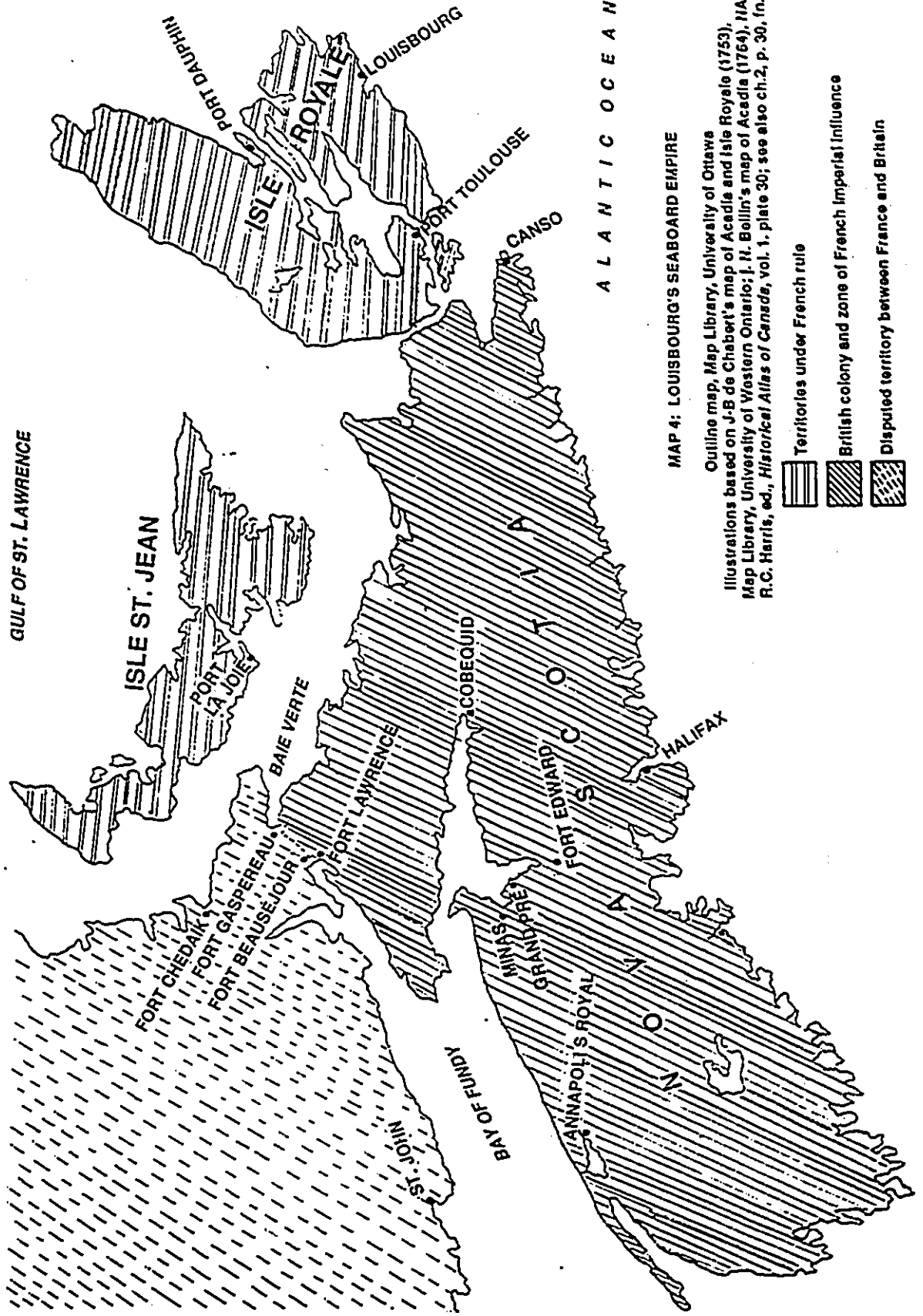


MAP 2: ISLE ROYALE
Fortress of Louisbourg Library






MAP. 3: PRINCIPAL CENTRES OF NATIVE WARRIORS

Outline map, Map Library, University of Ottawa
 Illustrations based on MG.1, B, vol. 68, pp. 379-82, vol. 89, pp. 308-07;
 MG.1, C11B, vol.1, pp. 249-54; J. N. Bellin's map of Acadia (1784), NAC;
 J-B de Chabert's map of Acadia and Isle Royale (1753),
 Map Library, University of Western Ontario



MAP 4: LOUISBOURG'S SEABOARD EMPIRE

Outline map, Map Library, University of Ottawa
 Illustrations based on J.B. de Chabert's map of Acadia and Isle Royale (1753).
 Map Library, University of Western Ontario; J. H. Bellin's map of Acadia (1764), IAC;
 R.C. Harris, ed., *Historical Atlas of Canada*, vol. 1, plate 30; see also ch.2, p. 30, fn. 3.

-  Territories under French rule
-  British colony and zone of French imperial influence
-  Disputed territory between France and Britain