



Liberal Party of Canada | Parti libéral du Canada

81 rue Metcalfe Street, Suite 400
Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 6M8
T (613) 237.0740 F (613) 235.7208

Fax

To/À: Premier Dunderdale From/De: Michael Ignatieff

Date: April 20, 2011 Time/Heure: 3:30pm EDT

Fax/Télécopieur: 709-729-5875

Re: _____

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Message: Michael Ignatieff's reply to the Premier's letter of April 7, 2011.

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April 20, 2011

The Honourable Kathy Dunderdale, M.H.A.
Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador
P. O. Box 8700
St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador
A1B 4J6

Dear Premier Dunderdale:

Thank you for your letter of April 7, 2011, in which you outline issues of importance to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador and the citizens of your province. On the subjects that you have identified, the Liberal Party's positions are below:

Fisheries

The Liberal Party agrees that conservation and protecting the long-term sustainability of our fisheries is the best way to protect our fishing industry. We will work with the industry and Newfoundland and Labrador on a range of measures including fleet rationalization and license retirement programs for fisheries in crisis, along with older worker retirement and retraining programs. Harvesting capacity must be better aligned with the resource and some workers need more effective assistance to transition to new opportunities.

Fisheries Adjacency and Historic Participation

The 2004 Policy Framework for the Management of Fisheries on Canada's Atlantic Coast, completed under a Liberal government, underscored that "fisheries management decision-making processes must be fair, transparent and subject to clear and consistent rules and procedures."

We are opposed to the decision taken by the Conservatives to apply a 'Last in - First out' criteria in allocating shrimp resources. We would reverse the decision in government and would go back to using the established criteria of conservation, aboriginal inclusion, adjacency, historical attachment and maximization of economic benefit as the proper guideposts in its place.

Fisheries Science

Liberals will work to increase funding within Fisheries and Oceans Canada's departmental budget for improved science and research programs, improvements to fisheries management, and more effective enforcement.

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Seal Harvest

The Liberal Party is very concerned with the EU's recent trade actions against Canada's seal hunt and we will continue to challenge restrictions on our seal products. The Liberal Party stands with our environmentally sustainable and humane seal hunt.

Lower Churchill Development

We support a loan guarantee for the Muskrat Falls project, and will treat similar clean energy projects elsewhere in Canada in a similar fashion. When another significant commitment was made on Newfoundland and Labrador's natural resources – the Atlantic Accord – the Liberal Party kept its word. Stephen Harper did not.

Federal Transfers

The Liberal Party has committed to maintaining the 6 percent annual increase of the Canada Health Transfer and to convene a First Ministers meeting within 60 days of being sworn into government. We will launch work on new funding arrangements, and system-wide reforms to secure the future of health care in Canada.

As Prime Minister, I also look forward to working with you and the other Premiers on the future of the Canada Social Transfer and how best we can ensure stable funding for education and social programs.

Child Care

Every child in Canada deserves the best possible start in life and a comprehensive approach to learning in Canada must begin with Early Childhood Learning. A Liberal government will establish a new Early Childhood Learning and Care Fund that will begin with \$500 million in the first year, rising to an annual commitment of \$1 billion by the fourth year.

Administered as a new social infrastructure fund, provinces and territories will be able to apply to the Fund for cost-sharing of early childhood learning and care plans that create and operate new, affordable, high-quality early childhood learning and care spaces across Canada, with well-trained professional staff.

Offshore Occupational Health and Safety

The safety of offshore workers would be a priority for a Liberal government. Liberals salute the steps that have already been taken by the government of Newfoundland and Labrador and will work with you on the implementation of Recommendation 29 from the Offshore Helicopter Safety Inquiry.

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Search and Rescue Response Times

The Liberal platform commits to a review of Canada's search and rescue requirements to ensure our coastal communities are receiving the service that they need. We will consider all aspects of search and rescue including the appropriateness of response times. It is our view that a 15-20 minute response time should be the objective for all industries.

Hibernia Shares

As we have already committed, Liberals are prepared to begin negotiations with Newfoundland and Labrador on the sale of the Canada Hibernia Holding Corporation (CHHC)'s 8.5% equity share to the province.

Defence –Goose Bay

The Liberal Party recognizes the inherent value of 5 Wing Goose Bay to the Canadian Forces because of its strategic location, the incredibly vast flight training area, and the infrastructure already in place at 5 Wing.

Liberals will maintain current operations, and would expand 5 Wing's "operational requirement". Under a Liberal government, 5 Wing Goose Bay assets would play a vital and ongoing role in the exercise of Canadian sovereignty in the eastern Arctic. This expanded mandate would include designating Goose Bay as a staging area for Coast Guard, fisheries and surveillance patrols, in line with the Senate committee report, "Rising to the Arctic Challenge". Goose Bay would also stage sovereignty patrols, pollution control, and Arctic training.

Federal Presence and Spending – Jobs in provinces

A Liberal government will ensure that all regions of Canada are treated equitably in terms of the location of federal activities. In this campaign, the Conservatives have committed to \$11 billion in unspecified cuts to federal program spending - cuts that threaten long-term health-care funding and the delivery of government services. Liberal priorities are focused instead on helping families with the economic pressures that they are facing, and ensuring we have a strong health care system.

Broadband

A future Liberal government will commit to achieving the goal of 100% high-speed internet connectivity within three years of being elected. We will be pleased to work directly with the Newfoundland and Labrador government in the achievement of this objective.

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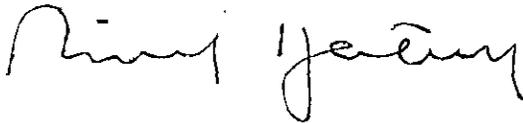
Correctional Services

Liberals have been clear in our opposition to the Conservative's U.S. style prison-building agenda, and so will undertake a careful review of all correctional service funding. We will certainly work with the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador on the subject of financing a new facility to replace Her Majesty's Penitentiary.

I would like to thank you again for your letter. In the last Parliament, Newfoundland and Labrador was represented by six outstanding Liberal Members of Parliament. They continued a proud tradition of integrity and keeping our word as a party. This is a tradition that Stephen Harper as shown through his Atlantic Accord betrayal, cannot offer.

I look forward to working with you, and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, in the future.

Sincerely,



Michael Ignatieff
Leader of the Liberal Party of Canada