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# Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration

Study No. 30

The Social Characteristics

of

One-Industry Towns in Canada

A Background Report

by

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## FOREWORD

In April 1975, the Royal Commission on Corporate Concentration was appointed to "inquire into, report upon, and make recommendations concerning:

- (a) the nature and role of major concentrations of corporate power in Canada;
- (b) the economic and social implications for the public interest of such concentrations; and
- (c) whether safeguards exist or may be required to protect the public interest in the presence of such concentrations."

To gather informed opinion, the Commission invited briefs from interested persons and organizations and held hearings across Canada beginning in November 1975. In addition, the Commission organized a number of research projects relevant to its inquiry.

This review of the research on characteristics of one-industry towns was prepared as a discussion paper for the Commission by Professor Alexander Himelfarb of the Department of Sociology, University of New Brunswick. Professor Himelfarb received his doctorate from the University of Toronto, and while at that institution conducted research on the characteristics of smaller Canadian communities for the book Minetown, Milltown, Railtown.

The Commission is publishing this and other background studies in the public interest. We emphasize, however, that the analyses presented and conclusions reached are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Commission or its staff.

Donald N. Thompson  
Director of Research

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## SECTION I

### INTRODUCTION

We almost inevitably think of the social transformation of Canada in terms of the growth of ever larger urban conglomerations. Often ignored, but crucial to Canadian industrial development, are the small, isolated communities built mainly around resource-based industries and transportation--mining towns, milltowns, railway towns and so on: Grand Falls, Newfoundland; Glace Bay, Nova Scotia; Black's Harbour, New Brunswick, Murdochville, Quebec; Copper Cliff, Ontario; Snow Lake, Manitoba; Drayton Valley, Alberta; and Kitimat, British Columbia. These "one-industry towns" are a pervasive feature of Canadian society. Lucas (1971), for example, counted 636 such communities in Canada.<sup>1</sup> About one million Canadians live in these communities and many more have been raised there and have later migrated to larger urban centres.

The patterns of life in these communities are to a large extent shaped by their small size. Only a handful are over 10,000 in population; therefore, they share many of the features of any small town, regardless of its economic base. Despite the "urban myth", about one half of all Canadians live in communities of fewer than 30,000 and should be familiar with some aspects of life in one-industry towns. Canada is very much a "small town" country.<sup>2</sup>

One-industry towns are also shaped by their physical isolation. The majority of the communities are found in the sparsely settled north, far from the densely populated agricultural belt. Because of this, they will share a number of features with non-industrial communities in the Canadian North, the rugged interior of Newfoundland, and other "wilderness areas".

The one-industry town is, at the same time, distinctive. Many of the studies of small town life in the United States, for example, have focused on the effects of industrialization on previously stable, autonomous communities. One-industry towns, on the other hand, are new, very much the creation of an age of industry.

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<sup>1</sup> Lucas uses the working definition that at least 79 per cent of the community labour force must be employed in the single-industry and its supporting institutions. Unfortunately, he provides no list of these communities. Partial lists may be found in Robinson (1962) and Marsh (1970: 183-188). The Center of Community Studies, University of Manitoba (1968) presents a map showing the general distribution of these communities.

<sup>2</sup> Lucas (1971: 4-11) does an excellent job of debunking the myth that Canada is an urban nation.

...Canadian communities of one industry are twentieth century products of an age of industry and technology. They are communities of today, relevant, with few past memories. They are new communities.... Their inhabitants have no lingering myths of days gone by; they know that their community, jobs and lives depend upon twentieth-century science and technology .... These are men, women and children of the twentieth century.

(Lucas, 1971: 19-20)

The central "fact of life" in these communities is dependence. Members of the community are dependent on a single employer. Their economic and social well-being is highly dependent on outside factors--the commodity market, the availability of capital, and so on. In fact, as these communities are typically "branch plants", decisions critical to community life are made in distant, often foreign, cities.<sup>3</sup> Not only does the single-industry--the company--determine, to a great extent, the economic and social well-being of the members of the community, it also shapes their view of the world.

### Approach

This report attempts to summarize and synthesize what is known about the social characteristics of single-industry communities in Canada. While preliminary publications sponsored by UNESCO suggest that there may be strong parallels between the Canadian experience and the experience of some other nations, particularly Australia,<sup>4</sup> the paucity of cross-cultural research makes national comparisons extremely hazardous.<sup>5</sup> Because systematic comparison is impossible, this report will focus on Canadian research.

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<sup>3</sup>Little research attention has been given to this feature of one-industry towns. See, however, Watkins' (1973: 115-121) comments on the foreign domination of Canadian resource industries.

<sup>4</sup>There are prospects of a long-term study of isolated mining towns in Western Australia. Oeser's comments suggest that there may be a number of important cultural and geographical parallels (in Siemens, 1973). See UNESCO (1974).

<sup>5</sup>Much of the literature that is available on resource communities in other countries is historical and narrative. For example, Armstrong (1965) describes isolated mining towns in Northern Russia. Although he discusses the high degree of government control over settlement and migration, he does not discuss the social consequences of this except to describe the various populations which have historically settled in these communities.

It is difficult, in fact, to draw a general picture of these communities in Canada. Their social characteristics vary by region, size, relative isolation, history, stage of development, and extent to which they have been planned. Much of the literature in the past has been of a popular rather than a scientific nature, often portraying a romantic version of the Canadian North. Only in the last decade has the topic become the focus of substantial systematic research. The bulk of this research has taken as its starting point the well-documented problem of high population turnover in one-industry towns. This turnover not only creates great expense for the company in these towns, but also inhibits community development and makes long-range planning difficult.<sup>6</sup> It is not surprising, then, that a good deal of the research has focused on the causes and consequences of this turnover. This research might be broken down into five broad categories:

1) Social characteristics of the migrants.

This research attempts to identify the social characteristics of the people attracted to these communities and of those most likely to leave.<sup>7</sup> These studies indicate that the communities attract a young and highly mobile population, primarily couples and single males and few single females. Those most likely to remain in the communities are families with children.

2) Community perceptions regarding "quality of life".

Matthiasson (1970), for example, has surveyed members of a single-enterprise community regarding their expectations and evaluations of life in their community.<sup>8</sup> Findings of this and other studies show that residents of one-industry towns are most concerned about the availability of physical and social amenities--recreation and housing, for example--and find most problematic their limited access to centres in the south.

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<sup>6</sup>Moss itemizes the replacement costs which include advertising, interviewing, travel and training (in Siemens, 1973: 21). Clearly even in those cases where the turnover rate does not exceed that of industry more generally, the costs of this turnover are likely to be greatest in a one-industry town. See also Macmillan et al. (1974).

<sup>7</sup>See, for example, Matthiasson (1971) and Jackson Poushinsky (1971).

<sup>8</sup>See also Barclay et al. (1974), and Cram (1972).



3) Objective assessments of "quality of life".

This research is perhaps the most problematic as the criteria for evaluating such things as physical design, recreational facilities, and housing are vague, and researchers have used somewhat different criteria.

Also, much of this research continues to be impressionistic. Nonetheless, certain persistent themes do emerge in the findings.<sup>9</sup> The physical and social amenities in one-industry towns seem to be better than are found in most small towns. Recreational facilities, housing, and schools, for example, tend to be of high quality, often because of financial assistance from the company. Like other small towns, health and social services tend to be underdeveloped. The availability and quality of these services takes on particular importance in one-industry towns because they are isolated from other communities.

Some limited research has examined the more abstract area of "social problems".<sup>10</sup> Although there is some indication of community concern about delinquency among the youth, heavy alcohol consumption, particularly among native peoples, and "mental health problems" among wives, these topics have not received systematic research attention.

4) Assessment of working conditions.

Most of this research has concentrated on the objective features of working conditions--work hours, shifts, safety--and has found that they are comparable to conditions in industry more generally.<sup>11</sup> Income and fringe benefits may be somewhat higher to offset the higher cost of living.

5) Community participation.

Wichern (1972) has recently pointed out that an important dimension of the quality of life is the citizens' participation in community life, particularly in local decision-making. A number of studies have examined community participation in voluntary associations and Wichern himself has provided the most extensive discussion of political participation.<sup>12</sup> The

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<sup>9</sup>A useful recent summary of this literature can be found in Riffel (1975). See also Robinson (1962).

<sup>10</sup>See, for example, Nickels and Kehoe (1972) and Spearman (1975).

<sup>11</sup>Macmillan et al. (1974) and Cram (1972) are among the few studies that examine working conditions.

<sup>12</sup>See also Kerri (1971), Laskin (1961), Reid and Frideres (1971) and the Queen's University study (1953).

findings indicate that although there is a good deal of participation in social activities, there is little sense of community or "belonging". This is quite different from the possibly over-romanticized picture generally drawn of small town life.

While there is much that is useful in existing literature on one-industry towns, it also has serious gaps. Several important topics, such as social stratification, religious institutions, and interpersonal relations, have received comparatively little attention. Furthermore, while a handful of communities, Churchill and Thompson, for example, have received close examination, most of the smaller one-industry communities, small sawmill and railway towns, have been virtually ignored. Perhaps the most serious problem, however, is that the research is fragmented. Most studies examine aspects of one or two communities; there are few comprehensive comparative studies.

One notable exception is the work of Rex Lucas (1971). Using quantitative and qualitative data, his own and others', on communities in every region of Canada, he has provided a much needed comparative overview which has become the basic source-book on life in single-industry towns. He has also attempted to treat many of the areas neglected in the earlier literature. Drawing heavily on Lucas, then, and on later research which modifies and extends his work, I shall trace the hazardous course of describing what most single-industry towns are like.

#### Organization of the Report

It must be recognized that community life occurs in the context of a larger society and that communities develop and change over time. Section II discusses these issues in order to provide a context for the rest of the report. Section III looks at a community structure through an examination of the system of social stratification. Section IV describes the major community institutions: recreation and leisure, goods and services, health services, school, and church. Section V examines how the "system" is articulated in everyday interaction. Section VI provides a summary of the major findings and a discussion of their social implications.

## SECTION II

### THE CONTEXT

#### The "New" Single-Industry Community in Canada

In the past, "company towns" were often viewed by the companies as temporary settlements; when the resource was exploited, the town would usually be abandoned. These towns offered employment opportunities, though little else, to unskilled workers. Accommodations were makeshift and there were no social amenities. Today, however, industrialists, planners, and government officials recognize that one-industry towns are an important and permanent feature of Canadian society. Riffel (1975) identifies four major factors which have produced changes in the "new" single-industry town:

- 1) The communities are more isolated.

Opportunities for creating resource industries in or near established communities have decreased; therefore, the "resource frontier" has moved further away from the established communities in the south--and, of course, from the physical and social amenities these communities offer. Moreover, because of this isolation, opportunities for economic diversification are severely limited.

- 2) The communities are more technologically intensive.

Because of a greater need for technological sophistication, industry has had to import more skilled workers and professionals. These workers generally hold expectations of a higher standard of living and quality of life.

- 3) The communities are more carefully planned.

In the past, "planning" had often been in the hands of a company manager who was unqualified in this area and had little time to devote to community matters (Wichern, 1972: 110, 124). Because of the demand for a higher standard of living and the difficulties of providing this in small isolated communities, private enterprise has made greater use of professional planners in the construction and development of the communities.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Kitimat provides an excellent example. A description of the planning of Kitimat is available in Architectural Forum (Anonymous, 1954).

4) "Company towns" are becoming "public towns".

Historically, the communities were created and developed largely by the principal employer, who provided not only wages, but also housing, utilities, and an even broader scope of services. Aspects of the company-built town continue today, but recently, there has been a shift to greater government participation and intervention in community development. However, the respective roles of private enterprise, government, and citizens in the planning and development of the community are unclear.

Some researchers have argued that many of the planners of single-industry towns have failed precisely because they did not consider the unique demographic and social characteristics of these communities.<sup>2</sup> Any examination of these aspects of life in single-industry communities, however, must recognize that no community is static and that as the community develops, its social and demographic characteristics will change.

#### Stages of Development

Lucas (1971) has identified four stages in the development of single-industry communities.<sup>3</sup> The first stage, construction, is also the first boom period. As construction work is temporary, the community at this stage attracts a highly mobile population willing to make many short-term sacrifices for quick money. The ratio of males to females is often as high as ten to one and population turnover is extremely high (Robinson, 1962). During this stage, local labourers, generally natives, may be hired but they are in the minority.<sup>4</sup> It is this largely male, transient world that explains the features commonly associated with frontier towns--drunkenness, public disorder, minor crime, etc. (Spearman, 1975; Lucas, 1971: 35-39).

While construction proceeds, the corporation is engaged in the recruitment of professionals and labourers as company employees. In this recruitment stage, the incoming employees

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<sup>2</sup>Siemens (1973) provides an excellent discussion of the importance of often neglected social factors in community planning.

<sup>3</sup>Riffel (1975) provides a more detailed analysis of the early stages of development.

<sup>4</sup>They are, however, more likely to find employment in this stage than in later stages.

begin to arrive long before the physical town itself is constructed. Many are recruited from other branches of the company. While geographic mobility tends to be accepted as a way of life among professionals, this is less the case for lower-level employees who have been relocated. They tend to find resettlement much more difficult. In addition to relocated company employees, professional personnel are recruited from among graduating classes of universities, and sub-professionals from the general labour force, particularly those who have in the past been very mobile geographically (Matthiasson, 1971). These incoming workers define the attractiveness of the community almost solely in terms of occupational opportunities (Jackson and Poushinsky, 1971: 32-40).

Population turnover remains high in this stage, especially among unmarried men (Robinson, 1962). Many young couples also leave, often because of pressure from the wives who have almost no occupational opportunities and so are most affected by the lack of physical amenities and the absence of entertainment and recreational facilities.<sup>5</sup> As housing and community facilities improve, there is a slowing in the rate of turnover and a reduction in the "social problems" characteristic of the early stages. Nevertheless, citizen complaints about services and facilities provided by the company persist. Lucas suggests that the company becomes a convenient scapegoat for a broad range of complaints, a focus for discontent. Community participation in decision-making is low, and there is little "sense of community" (Wichern, 1972).

During the stage of transition, control of non-industrial facilities and community responsibilities are gradually passed from company or provincial administrators to the citizens of the community. This includes the transfer to residents of housing previously owned and maintained by the company. The citizens, however, are often ambivalent about this shift in ownership and control. There are a number of reasons for this. Rarely have the residents been involved in the early decisions about the construction and development of the community; company or provincial administrators did little to encourage community action or local civic government.<sup>6</sup> In the past, a "let the

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<sup>5</sup>See Nickels and Kehoe (1972) for a discussion of "housewife's psychosis".

<sup>6</sup>Wichern (1972) provides an excellent discussion of the role of town administrators in one-industry towns.

company do it" attitude prevailed even for such mundane matters as home maintenance. The citizens, then, are inexperienced with community action. Moreover, although many citizens complained about the undue authority of the company, this "paternalism" also had its rewards. Up to this point, most people had little investment in, and therefore little commitment to, the community. With the shift of control and ownership, however, they would have not only to purchase their houses but also to pay more for municipal services. In fact, the company may continue to exert a leadership role, particularly when the citizens' reluctance to participate in local decision-making creates something of a political vacuum. Nevertheless, during this stage we see the genesis of a stable community, a substantial reduction in the population turnover, fewer tentative settlers, and the first stirrings of community participation.

After a number of years, the community may reach the stage of maturity. At this stage, local civic government has succeeded company government, though leadership is vested in relatively few individuals (Wichern, 1972; Forcese, 1975: 30-31). With "maturity", there is very little mobility in the adult work force. Even as the workers reach retirement age they tend to remain in the community. The employees have invested a good deal of their lives in the company, not only in terms of seniority and benefits achieved, but also in terms of the skills developed which may be obsolescent elsewhere. In addition, as we have indicated, the workers have invested money in their homes.

As time goes on, their children are also likely to be employed within the industry. In fact, it appears that parents often feel that the company has an obligation to hire their children. Moreover, many of the children are reluctant to leave the community in search of employment. One union official described occupational inheritance as a taken-for-granted feature of one-industry towns:

'One of the basic problems of the Union is that it is a one-industry town and the dominance of the one industry in the community. Many people have grown up in this community and have lived all their lives here. The isolation is quite noticeable and many of the people here have never been outside. A good number of the youth are raised here and, of course, work in the plant because it is the "natural" place to work.'

(Lucas, 1971: 93)

It is impossible, however, for the company to absorb the children of all its workers, nor are the companies likely to expand extensively, dependent as they are on a fixed resource base. The difficulties are even greater for daughters as there are few job opportunities for females. To avoid leaving town or settling for poor jobs, girls may choose the traditional small town option of early marriage. Many of the young people, however, are forced to emigrate. Some go on to higher education and find careers different from those of their parents. More, particularly drop-outs, are simply forced to look for work elsewhere, often in newly developing--"booming"--one-industry towns.

The youth in these communities, then, have a precarious future. This is true as well, though in a different way, for the adults. Again we return to the key feature of single industry communities--dependence. The members of the community are aware--at least episodically--that the company could close because of factors beyond their control. Obviously, for example, the exploitation of a non-renewable resource cannot go on forever. Feelings of insecurity and periods of pessimism and resignation are characteristic for many of the citizens. As Riffel (1975: 12-13) rightly points out, only with a diversified economic base can a community achieve "full maturity".

To Lucas' four stages, then, we might add a fifth stage--decline. When the company closes, the town closes. The non-mobile work force is left with virtually nothing. There is little market value in a house located in a ghost town. The workers may have nothing to sell, not even their own skills. Several researchers have attempted to describe the bitterness and desperation of the citizens who have invested their lives in a dying community.<sup>7</sup>

The company town<sup>8</sup>--the community developed, maintained, and managed solely by private enterprise--is a thing of the past. Nevertheless, it remains that the company has an extraordinary impact on the lives of the members of the community. In the remaining pages, we shall examine the persistent social patterns which characterize single-industry towns.

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<sup>7</sup>See Forcese's (1975) description of Timiscaming, Quebec. Cottrell (1951) provides a description of a declining community in the United States.

<sup>8</sup>For a definition of the "company town", see Eberts (1958).

## SECTION III

### COMMUNITY STRUCTURE

As we have seen, the company is at the centre of community life. In order to understand community organization, then, we must first examine the organization of work within the company.

#### Organization of Work

Hiring. Although the companies are generally branches of larger corporations, hiring is for the most part decentralized and accomplished not through formal corporate policy but through the informal practices of local company officers. There are few formal qualifications necessary for most non-managerial industrial jobs, and little room within these industries for the university graduate.

Hiring procedures in one-industry towns might be characterized as community-supported nepotism. Once a community has reached maturity, most vacancies are filled from within the community. Lucas (1971: 139-140) suggests that these informal hiring practices are generally met with favour by both employers and employees. By hiring the sons of employees, the company is able to recruit workers about whom a good deal is known and who are familiar with the unique character of life in these small, isolated communities. At the same time, the company is fulfilling the expectations of its employees that their sons will find work in the company, often within the same department or trade. Some companies have attempted to introduce more universalistic hiring practices by demanding that new employees have high-school graduation. Even when this is done there are usually more high-school graduates than there are jobs (Lucas, 1971: 116-117).

The hiring of managerial and supervisory personnel, however, follows a very different pattern. These men have generally been transferred to the community from another, often distant branch of the company. Most of them expect to be moved again and are therefore reluctant to play a major role in community affairs. They are not from the community, nor are they "of the community";

...their loyalties are not bound up in local community affairs, but in the company as a whole and particularly on the next move. Their administrative techniques vary: some do not want to rock the boat, others are sent in to carry out a long overdue shake-up; but these people are not part of the community, and they know it and so do the inhabitants.

(Lucas, 1971: 154)



Promotion. Lines of promotion tend to be clearly defined and are based, for the most part, on the seniority rights within each trade and skill. As transfer between departments and trades generally means a loss of the employee's accumulated seniority rights, such transfers are rare. Employees cannot look elsewhere in the community for a better position; there are no other employers. Most employees tend to live out their work lives within the department or trade for which they were hired. To the extent that promotion is possible, it is generally achieved slowly and within a limited range.

Work hours. The company, in its determination of work hours, shifts, and so on, determines to a large extent the amount of time a worker has to interact with family and friends and to participate in community activities. This is, of course, the case in communities other than single industry (Riffel, 1975: 39; Downie, 1963: 15-16). The influence of industrial time requirements, however, takes on added significance in the one-industry town. This perhaps becomes most evident when we examine some of the social implications of shift work.

In single-industry communities, men who are on rotating shifts or fixed night-shifts have an extremely restricted range of leisure-time activities available to them. These communities rarely have restaurants, bars, and recreational facilities which are open twenty-four hours a day. Moreover, the men are rarely able to participate fully in the various voluntary associations in the community. They usually find that their choice of friends is restricted to their work companions who share the same shift. This is also the case for their wives who are likely to adapt their hours to their husbands' work schedules. In short, "the working times impose restrictions upon the activities of men and their families, and this in turn influences the institutions of the community," (Lucas, 1971: 162).

### Social Stratification

The occupational hierarchy within the company provides the basis for the system of stratification within the community; social stratification is therefore simpler and more visible than that of most communities.

Occupational hierarchy. Regardless of the specific industry, most companies exhibit "infinite gradings of rank and salary" (Leyton, 1975: 15). The sharpest distinction, of course, is between management and other employees. There is, however, a more subtle system of ranking among positions in terms of salary and prestige. In Minetown, for example, there is sharp differentiation between men who work on the surface and men who work in the mine. Further distinctions are made between those who actually remove ore and those who work in the mine in some subsidiary capacity (Lucas, 1971: 151). Such fine distinctions

are characteristic of most industries, but they take on added significance in the closed world of the single-industry community.

It is the occupational position of the husband that determines the social position of the family within the community. The fact that most of the residents are employed by the same company "eliminates the subtle gradations and vagueness of social stratification prevalent in a more open society" (Robinson, 1962: 84). Moreover, the husband's income and occupational status are known throughout the community. Because of this, social divisions may take on a caste-like appearance. While urban working people may not be substantially more upwardly mobile, they are able, to some degree, to enhance their status by surrounding themselves with the props and symbols of a middle-class life-style, even if they must rely on credit and time purchase. Such attempts at status enhancement are likely to be ineffective for the worker in a one-industry town, where the system of stratification is rigid and is clearly reflected in patterns of association and residence (Clegg, 1958).

The second hierarchy. A number of people within the community do not work for the company. Doctors, clergymen, teachers, service personnel, small businessmen, and town labourers are not captured in the system of stratification we have described. Those employed outside the company form a second and separate hierarchy (Lucas, 1971: 148-149). Doctors and clergymen, for example, are generally accorded very high social standing within the community, but are simultaneously defined as dependent upon the company and its workers. It is difficult then to compare their position to that of, say, the company manager. In the same way, the members of the community would rarely compare the status of a taxi-driver, for example, with that of an industrial worker. They are considered to be separate and are treated as such although it is generally agreed that the unskilled town labourer falls at the bottom of any system of ranking. We have, then, two parallel systems of stratification which are based essentially on the system of ranking within the company.

Ethnic stratification. There is a long history in single-industry communities of occupational allocation on the basis of ethnic-group membership.<sup>1</sup> The resultant ethnic stratification typically reflects the larger society. Managers and professionals

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<sup>1</sup> An excellent historical account of this relationship can be found in Bradwin (1928).

are generally Anglo-Canadians, the rank and file workers generally European immigrants, French-Canadians, and Native Canadians. In particular, a good deal of evidence documents the great difficulties experienced by Canada's Native Peoples--Indians, Inuit, and Métis--in their attempts to achieve a more acceptable standard of living, though this is by no means peculiar to single-industry towns (see, for example, Riffel, 1975: 56-57). However, ethnic differentiation may be more rigid and persistent in single-industry communities because of the sharp dichotomy between management and workers. The nepotism and informal hiring practices typical of the company often produce patterns of ethnic sponsorship and, as we have indicated, once an employee has been hired, his mobility is restricted.

Mobility. Stratification in one-industry towns is remarkably closed; there is little vertical mobility. Workers do not penetrate the level of management. While workers are part of a "local system", management is part of a "cosmopolitan system".<sup>2</sup> In fact, the very top echelons of the corporation--owners and top management--reside elsewhere. Obviously the barriers to mobility within the company take on particular significance in a one-industry town; there are not alternative channels for upward mobility (Jackson and Poushinsky, 1971: 131).

Because professionals and management personnel have a high degree of horizontal mobility, or at least expect to be residentially mobile, they are often reluctant to participate fully in civic affairs or to participate in instrumental voluntary organizations (Reid and Frideres, 1971: 56-57). This has often meant that the local businessman, clergyman, and doctor take on many of the community leadership roles and become inordinately influential (Forcese, 1975: 30-31; Laskin, 1969: 20-22).

Unions. Most industrial workers in one-industry towns are union members (Riffel, 1975: 39). Local unions, however, are not strong and certainly not militant. Attendance at union meetings is low. The union seldom participates in community affairs. There are few strikes and when negotiations are carried on, they are typically friendly.

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<sup>2</sup>Tribble (1973) has made these local and cosmopolitan patterns the focus of his study on a New Brunswick pulp town.

The workers in these communities seem to show little consciousness of themselves as a "we group" with similar interests. For example, there is no reliable labour vote in one-industry communities. Nor does there appear to be much concern among the workers about their town's branch plant status, about absentee ownership, whether Canadian or foreign. Any "we feeling" expressed by the workers is usually in terms of shared membership in a single-industry community vulnerable to impersonal factors over which they feel they have no control.<sup>3</sup> That "the Company" is generally considered to be a part of the "we group" is clearly illustrated by the comments of a miner who was dying of lung cancer:

'You can't very well blame the Company, I suppose. They owns the job, they're not going to tell me what's there, probably close down the mine. They're going to keep that mine going as long as they can. You can't blame the Company.'

(In Leyton, 1975: 99)

To this miner, the interests of the company and the community coincide: to keep the mine going.

The lack of union support and class consciousness may be due in part to the "precarious prosperity" in these communities (Forcese, 1975: 29). Incomes tend to be higher than the Canadian average and there is little unemployment among the adult male population (Riffel, 1975: 32, 39). Most workers express satisfaction with their working conditions (Matthiasson, 1971). In addition, workers recruited to the community in earlier stages typically did not have a union background<sup>4</sup> and the high personnel turnover in these stages made the formation of a strong union difficult and provided the union and company with a shared problem (see Reid and Frideres, 1971: 56-57). Finally, the local union leaders often see themselves as separate

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<sup>3</sup>Although this discussion is based primarily on Lucas' data, Lucas himself recognizes that this important area of "in-group/out-group" sentiments requires much more research attention. See Cram's (1972) discussion of the stated "need priorities" of miners in a one-industry town.

<sup>4</sup>See, for example, Clark's (1971) discussion of the migrant worker from rural Quebec.

from their own headquarters; they feel the union management usually has little understanding of the local situation. In general, there seems to be a feeling that a militant union could jeopardize the community.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps we can best summarize by quoting a worker in one of these communities: "We have a job, we live in this community; the rest is political stuff. It doesn't really matter who they say really owns it" (in Lucas, 1971: 145). Apparently the "it" may refer to either the company or the community.

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<sup>5</sup>Willmott (1962) makes this same point in his description of an "almost one-industry" town in the prairies.

## SECTION IV

### COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS

#### Recreation and Leisure

There is an increasing concern among social scientists and social practitioners about the use of leisure, particularly as workers are given more and more free time. The "problem" of leisure is probably most pressing in small communities where recreation and entertainment facilities are limited. However, almost all research reports on one-industry towns stress the high quality and variety of activities available and the high degree of community participation.<sup>1</sup>

Participation in recreational activities was noted as a conspicuous characteristic of single enterprise life, including bowling leagues, boy and girl scouts, rod and gun clubs, voluntary organizations of a fraternal and social nature and community clubs.

(Wichern, 1972: 109)

The availability of opportunities for recreation and entertainment appears to be one of the highest priority concerns among the members of these communities (Matthiasson, 1970: 12).

This concern has typically been met by the companies which have been generous in their financial assistance; management generally shares the view that these activities are important, particularly in maintaining a stable work force (Queen's University, 1953: 173).

Often one of the first services provided by the company is a community recreation centre. Aside from the obvious function of providing leisure activities outside the home, these centres may also have unanticipated consequences. They may perform an integrative function, bringing together people who otherwise would be unlikely to interact (Lucas, 1971: 199-201; Kerri, 1971). This, of course, is less likely if the recreational centre is simply the auditorium of a church or separate school.

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<sup>1</sup>Sociologist and planner Lois Murphy appears to have made recreation and entertainment facilities a special concern in the planning of Kitimat (Anonymous, 1954: 135).

Activities may be restricted to the members of the denomination and the church may exercise control over the use of the auditorium; in both cases social activities are likely to be segmented (Lucas, 1971: 202).

Aside from the recreational centres, the large number of voluntary associations and social and special-interest clubs supports the view that there is a well-organized, perhaps over-organized, system of recreational activities in single-industry communities. This view, however, does require some qualification. First, the range of activities in these communities is quite limited. The small population cannot support all of the special-interest groups that arise, and what club leaders often refer to as community apathy may in reality be a reflection of the fact that there are "not enough people to go around" (Lucas, 1971: 219). Because only a limited number of activities can be supported by the population, there are few commercial enterprises. For example, there are few, if any, cinemas, theatres, first-class restaurants, or drinking establishments. When there is a "pub", however, it is often a focal point of activity (Riffel, 1975: 26). Because of the limited commercial opportunities, the emphasis is on active-participatory rather than passive-spectator activities. This emphasis may demand leadership and expertise not always available in a small town and rarely available on a continuous basis.

Second, opportunities for spontaneous leisure activities seem to be limited. Most of the activities we have mentioned are carried on in an organized fashion and generally demand membership in an association or club. One cannot, on the spur of the moment, go bowling, attend the theatre, etc. This places added importance on the family and small friendship networks in which informal leisure-time activities are pursued (Riffel, 1975: 45).

Finally, most organized recreational activities are designed to meet the demands of children, particularly boys (Robinson, 1962; Spearman, 1975: 57). Apparently little attention is given to the "needs" of women in the community (Riffel, 1975: 25-26). This is particularly ironic as most of the women are unemployed and might be seen to have the greatest need for such services (Nickels and Kehoe, 1972: 21). Particularly in isolated northern communities, housewives are said to suffer from "cabin fever" or "housewife's psychosis", whatever these may be, and reportedly make much use of various mood-elevating drugs (Siemens, 1973: 24).

The problem is aggravated if the community is small and isolated. The smaller the community, the less likely it will be able to provide a wide range of leisure-time activities; the more isolated it is the less likely it will provide ready access to larger communities where these services are available.

### Goods and Services

Another frequently expressed concern among members of the community is their income in relation to the high cost of living (Matthiasson, 1970: 12). This is particularly the case in the more isolated communities where transportation costs may be reflected in the cost of living, particularly in housing. However, since many companies offer a variety of direct and indirect subsidies to their workers, the high cost of living, in itself, is less frequently a complaint than one might expect (Riffel, 1975: 30).

A complaint that does persist, however, is the lack of competition among retail buyers (see Barclay et al., 1971: vi). This may create feelings of exploitation among members of the community who may feel that "retail monopolies" may result not only in higher prices--beyond that caused by transportation costs--but also in inferior services and products. There is dissatisfaction, for example, about the lack of variety and choice in such products as clothing (Barclay et al., 1974: 80).<sup>2</sup> Feelings of exploitation may be sharpened when one ethnic group--Jews or French Canadians, for example--operates most of the retail establishments. In fact, that can have a circular effect in that ethnic stereotypes may be reinforced. Lucas, for example, suggests that such references as "Jew store" are not unusual (Lucas, 1971: 227-228).

Single-industry communities generally cannot offer the range of professional services taken for granted in urban centres. Few lawyers, for example, find practice in a single enterprise community worthwhile. Most of the legal work of the company or the union is handled at headquarters by city lawyers and there is little turnover of real estate (Lucas, 1971: 235-236).

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<sup>2</sup>Ironically, some members of the community were sufficiently upset at the retail situation that they suggested that the companies should take over the stores (Lucas, 1971: 229). For a description of "goods and services" in the old "company town", see Herring (1949). The Queen's study (1953) devotes a chapter to a comparison between the company-owned store and the privately-owned store.



One of the ways of dealing with the high prices and limited goods and services is to make periodic trips to larger cities in the south, particularly for larger purchases like furniture and appliances (Nickels and Kehoe, 1972: 23). Those who earn the lowest incomes and who are therefore most hard-pressed by the high cost of goods and services are, of course, least likely to make regular trips to larger centres.

### Health Services

A concern in single-industry communities, expressed particularly by women, is the low quality of health services available (Matthiasson, 1970: 17). Most single-industry communities are simply too small to support complete medical services. In fact, many of the communities--particularly those with less than 10,000 population--have no doctor at all.<sup>3</sup> Clearly this creates particular difficulties in emergency situations and, more generally, makes medical care expensive in both time and money.

Nevertheless, for the more mundane aspects of medical care, "alternatives" are soon developed.

Traditional patent medicine, cold cures for instance, take on much greater significance in this type of community. The purveyor of patent medicine takes over an informal advisory role; he recommends the nostrum that is successful in "curing" coughs. "Common sense" remedies are passed from family to family; ailments are treated with mustard plasters, salt solutions, hot toddys, Kruschen Salts, backache and kidney pills, baking soda, cod liver oil, tonics, liver pills, and liniments. These communities are the preserve of the patent medicine almanac.

(Lucas and Himelfarb, 1971: 9)

Grandparents, local nurses, and anyone with some medical background become part of this informal system of maintaining health services at a minimum level. Such an informal system is less likely to develop, however, in communities which have had a doctor in the past but were unable to keep him (Lucas and Himelfarb, 1971: 9-10).

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<sup>3</sup>Quantitative data relating size of community to health services in Ontario are available in Lucas and Himelfarb (1971).

It is interesting to note that when these small communities do have a doctor it is generally through the influence of the company. The company has traditionally played an important role in providing some sort of community health services. The larger communities can more easily attract one or more doctors, though this situation also presents some unique problems. These doctors are insulated from other colleagues, but are highly visible--professionally and socially--to the members of the community, their clients. A doctor may more likely gain a reputation for making errors in a small community where his services are a topic of community discussion. Even the doctor's social life is subject to community scrutiny (see Magill, 1967: 26-27). This high degree of role visibility sometimes makes it difficult for the members of the community to maintain confidence in their physician; this obviously becomes a problem when he is the only doctor.

Even when there are several doctors practicing in the community, there is never what might be called a complete medical team. While urban medical practice moves toward greater specialization, these small communities have few medical specialists and limited medical facilities. Dentists are rare (Lucas, 1971: 269-270). There are almost no psychologists, psychiatrists, or social workers (Spearman, 1975:25). Hospitals are few and their facilities limited (Riffel, 1975: 44).<sup>4</sup> There is a high turnover among the health professionals who practice in these communities, which means a lack of continuity in health services. This may be particularly disadvantageous when dealing with problems of mental health and may create a greater reliance on "treatment" by medication (Nickels and Kehoe, 1972: 16; Siemens, 1973).

This rather dismal<sup>5</sup> picture of health services seems to be a function of the small population in these communities, their isolation, and the related difficulty of attracting and keeping medical professionals. In the face of these difficulties, the company has often been instrumental in attracting at least some doctors to work for the company and community. Again, as Lucas (1971: 272) suggests, the members of the community typically have no direct target for their blame, feel powerless to change things, and are therefore resigned and fatalistic.

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<sup>4</sup>See also Spearman's (1975) discussion of welfare services.

<sup>5</sup>As Riffel (1975: 58) indicates, the situation seems even worse for Native Canadians.

## School

The members of single-industry communities generally do not express concern about the quality of education available (Riffel, 1975: 36). In part this may simply be due to the relatively high quality of general education up to the end of secondary schools which is available in these communities (see Husby, 1971). The facilities are certainly comparable to those in urban centres. There are, however, two additional factors which may account for this lack of concern about education.

First, there is a low average level of education among the residents in the community. As we have indicated, most of the industrial jobs do not require formal education. In the past particularly, it was possible to get relatively highly paid semi-skilled jobs which required only a minimum of on-the-job-training. Many of the families in these communities, then, devalue education. In other words, the limited educational achievements of the residents are often translated into low educational aspirations for their children (Riffel, 1975: 36). This does not mean that the children in one-industry towns have particularly low occupational aspirations (Peach, 1970). Rather, they do not see the relationship between their education and their occupational goals.

There is, however, substantial variation in family attitudes regarding education. These attitudes are related to ethnic background and socio-economic level within the stratification system. British parents, for example, are most likely to value education highly for sons and daughters. They seem to believe that it is important for their daughters to have some kind of career and independence and that sons should find a career "better" than that of their fathers.<sup>6</sup> These families are most likely to teach their children that there is a relationship between educational achievement and occupation (Lucas, 1971: 288).

Many French-speaking parents, generally employed in the semi-skilled or unskilled jobs, show little interest in education, often claiming that it offers little preparation for their sons who are likely to take on similar jobs in the company (Lucas, 1971: 289). High-school education may be seen as more appropriate for daughters. The devaluation of education is most apparent among the Native families. The parents have rarely

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<sup>6</sup>For data on parental attitudes regarding the employment and education of daughters, see Himelfarb and Wisniewski (in progress).

attended school themselves, nor are they likely to encourage their children to pursue educational goals (Riffel, 1975: 58; Lucas, 1971: 289). It is not surprising, then, that the children of workers, especially in some ethnic groups, find the attractions of highly paid, low skill, temporary or seasonal work difficult to resist if it is available.

Second, the attitudes of many of the lower level workers seem to reflect the lack of articulation between the educational and occupational structures in one-industry towns. Rarely do these communities offer alternatives to general secondary education. They do not offer advanced academic training or, what might be particularly important in one-industry towns, advanced vocational training or re-training programmes (Spearman, 1975: 24; Riffel, 1975: 36). Few industries have a well-developed apprenticeship programme.<sup>7</sup> The lack of vocational or technical educational alternatives creates a rather strange situation. The schools do not train the students for work within the community. This system seems to encourage students either to drop out of school to take low skill jobs, or to pursue an education which prepares them for white-collar work generally unavailable in their own town.

Schools, of course, play an important part in the process of selection which determines who drops out and who goes on. Countless studies in Canada, the United States and England have documented how students from a working- or lower-class background, for example, have limited access to educational opportunities. This may be even more pronounced in a single-industry community. The teacher who has lived in this small, rigidly stratified community for a long time "tends to incorporate and perpetuate community definitions within the school system" (Lucas, 1971: 296). They are likely, then, to hold very strong stereotypical notions about behaviour appropriate to various ethnic, religious, and occupational groups--in addition to the more generally shared sexual stereotypes. Males, with British background, whose fathers hold high positions are, predictably, the most likely to be encouraged by the teacher. The transient teacher may help perpetuate these inequalities in a different manner. He is unlikely to be aware of, and therefore take into account, the special difficulties faced by some students in the community.

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<sup>7</sup>For a fuller discussion of the apprenticeship system, see the Department of Labour (1960) and Lucas (1971: 276-280).

As Carlton writes:

Many of these teachers have only the most superficial awareness of the history, structure, and problems of the community, or of their impact on the students whom they face daily.

(Carlton, 1967: 299)

In any case, it appears that:

The streaming of students, and their encouragement or discouragement and guidance, takes on the nightmarish qualities of a perpetuated cycle of self-fulfilling prophecy. Indians are inferior because they cannot get through school, and they cannot get through school because they are inferior.

(Lucas, 1971: 296)

This situation may be aggravated by the fact that the teachers attracted to these communities are often minimally qualified (Riffel, 1975: 36).

Despite the general lack of concern about quality of education, these community schools do have a number of important unanticipated consequences. For example, good school facilities can be important to the growth of the community. The school becomes a major employer, thus bringing more "consumers" into the community; it also attracts more stable families with young children (Molgat and MacMillan, 1972: v-vi).

Schools are generally viewed in our society as one of the most important channels of upward mobility, although as we have already indicated, not all students have equal access to this mobility route. The situation in one-industry towns, however, is somewhat more complicated. Children who have lived all their lives in these communities and who aspire to occupational enhancement through further education confront a problem which does not face their urban counterparts. For the students in single-industry towns this mobility route almost inevitably means that they will have to leave the community, probably permanently. For some this may be a difficult choice to make. The children of the highly mobile managers and professionals, on the other hand, are likely to find the school a useful channel of emigration, their chance to "get out".

### Church

One-industry towns, like most small towns in Canada, are characterized by an accentuated sectarianism.<sup>8</sup> The small

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<sup>8</sup>Excellent historical background material can be found in Clark (1948).

community that has one church shared by all denominations is indeed rare. The large number of churches each serving a different denomination is a concrete indication of the deep religious cleavage in most of these communities, and this is further reflected in the disproportionately high number of denominational schools. Children in these communities are educated and more generally socialized within their religious groups (Lucas, 1971: 306-307).

The sectarianism may be somewhat more pronounced in single-industry communities because of the central role the church plays in community life. In one-industry towns not only does the church provide a "ready made in-group", it also often provides physical facilities for recreation and sponsorship of a variety of clubs and associations. The role of counselling is also often left to the churches (Riffel, 1975: 46).

Perhaps the clearest indication of the strength and importance of religious affiliation is the "religious vote".

In over 100 communities of single industry, in which interviews were carried out, there were no indications of a union vote, but respondents in every community noted the religious vote.

(Lucas, 1971: 319)

The central role of the church and the importance attached to religion may place a good deal of pressure on the local clergymen. They and their families are encouraged to take a leadership role and are then subjected to community scrutiny. Thus, while they can be very influential within the community, they share some of the difficulties of "role visibility" which confront the local doctors.

This, then, concludes our discussion of community structure and institutions. In the next section, our concern shifts to how the system is articulated in everyday life, to patterns of interaction and association.

## SECTION V

### INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Much has been written about small town life, where everyone knows everyone else and where the business of the community is carried out in informal personal relationships, rather than formally prescribed roles.<sup>1</sup> In terms of this lack of anonymity and the personalization of relationships, the one-industry town is the "small town" par excellence.

#### Information and Social Control<sup>2</sup>

In the one-industry town not only does "everyone know everything about everyone else", they know it in detail. The majority of the men work for the company and therefore have little choice but to interact with one another. Work companions are also likely to be fellow club members, fellow members of at least one voluntary association, and neighbours. Even supervisors and workers, although rarely part of the same friendship groups, can scarcely avoid meeting one another at some association, at the store, and in the pub.

Wherever people meet, exchanges are commonplace, and their particular significance in the smaller community is the continual interaction day after day, year after year, and the relevance of the information exchanged. People in small communities have great knowledge of fellow citizens and this is particularly characteristic of the isolated one-industry town.

(Lucas, 1971: 166-167)

This shared knowledge has two important consequences: personalization of relationships and increased role visibility. We have already noted that personal relationships are introduced into the company in the form of informal hiring practices and nepotism. The introduction of these relationships can also create problems for management in achieving industrial discipline. Apparently, company managers who have been transferred from urban centres to one-industry towns find that they must make greater use

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<sup>1</sup>Two classic studies are Blumenthal (1932) and Vidich and Bensman (1960).

<sup>2</sup>Lucas' (1971) study is the only research that treats this topic in detail.

of "strategic leniency" on such matters as temporary absence, for example.<sup>3</sup> Nor can the manager successfully delegate the role of disciplinarian to lower-level management such as foremen, as they are generally even more reluctant to discipline workers who are usually friends, neighbours, and even relatives (Lucas, 1971: 175). Managers, then, are faced with greater responsibilities regarding discipline than is the case elsewhere and often find decisions about hiring and firing more problematic. This "personalism", however, is reciprocal; workers view local management not so much as distant "bosses" whose decisions influence their lives, but more as people doing a job badly or well (Lucas, 1971: 335-336). It is important to emphasize, however, that the personalized approach adopted by most managers is an effective means of establishing authority.

...Tolerant supervisory practices, in contrast to disciplinarian ones, are neither democratic nor an indication that controlling power over subordinates has been surrendered. On the contrary, leniency in supervision is a potent strategy, consciously or unconsciously employed, for establishing authority over subordinates, and this is why the liberal supervisor is particularly effective.

(Blau, 1956: 71)<sup>4</sup>

The lack of anonymity in one-industry towns has more far-reaching consequences for the community. We have already described some of the pressures experienced by doctors and clergymen because of the high degree of role visibility. To a lesser extent, perhaps, the other members of the community experience similar strain. Close observation restricts the range of permissible behaviour. The threat of negative gossip and the resultant loss of status serves as an effective mechanism of social control.<sup>5</sup> This lack of "private space", typical of

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<sup>3</sup> This concept is developed by Blau (1956: 70-74).

<sup>4</sup> However, it may be difficult to transfer "personalized" authority to a new manager. See Gouldner (1954).

<sup>5</sup> Researchers disagree about the amount of gossip that actually goes on in these communities. In any case, it remains that the threat of gossip is real and effective except, perhaps, for those on the bottom of the status hierarchy.



small towns and heightened in the small isolated one-industry community, appears to be the major complaint that residents express about the quality of life in their town.<sup>6</sup> The various reports on residents' perceptions of quality of life consistently found the major complaint to be limited access to the large towns. When there is another community nearby residents can get outside of the range of visibility.

Insofar as the new community is planned,... it may have no room for the disreputable activities which are typical of recreation and leisure in a modern community. These questionable activities are likely to migrate to one or more of the towns on the periphery of the new community; the peripheral town becomes a sort of moral garbage heap for the planned community.

(Hall in Lucas, 1971: 183)

However, when access to other communities is limited residents must find other means of insulating themselves from social observation. In a sense, the heavy alcohol consumption and the use of mood-elevating drugs<sup>7</sup> may constitute an attempt to achieve social insulation. The dominant response, however, is to associate primarily with others in the same occupational or kinship group. In fact, Lucas reports that a number of the residents placed greatest importance on interaction within the family and very small friendship networks. The social insulation provided by the family in single-industry towns explains, in part, why

[the family] may be of special significance to people as the source of personal identity and of the satisfaction of basic emotional desires.

(Riffel, 1975: 45)

Nickels, for example, has found that a wife's relationship with her children is a strong predictor of her satisfaction with life in the one-industry town (reported in Riffel, 1975: 45). In any

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<sup>6</sup>See Siemen's (1973) discussion of the importance of privacy and the importance of creating housing which allows maximum social insulation.

<sup>7</sup>It is difficult to get reliable data on the incidence of drug-use. Siemen's (1973) impressionistic account suggests that it is disproportionately high, particularly among the unemployed women. Riffel (1975), on the other hand, reports that a study in progress has failed to replicate this finding.

case, the high degree of role visibility in one-industry towns seems to encourage interaction within small cliques which in turn sharpens the distinctions we described in our discussion of stratification. While the residents in one-industry towns can scarcely avoid each other, intimate interaction occurs among those who share occupational interests, and often ethnic and religious background as well.

### Social Conflict

As we have seen, one-industry communities are sharply divided along socio-economic, ethnic, and religious lines. Nevertheless, Lucas indicates that overt social conflict is rare. Riffel (1975), for example, suggests that while there is a good deal of ethnic and religious prejudice, there is little overt discrimination. Others point to the lack of militancy of the unions as an indicator of the "placidity" of the community. This does not mean that the citizens are unconcerned about local issues, on the contrary, they are more likely to talk about local issues among themselves and with community leaders and to vote on these issues, than are members of other larger communities (Wichern et al., 1971). However, they typically avoid controversy in these discussions, and voting, the local referendum for example, provides a non-threatening mechanism for settling disputes.

Overt conflict may be inhibited because the basic social divisions, the various inequalities,

...become legitimated, patterned, a part of the normative system and integrated into the sets of mutually-shared expectations. Unsuspectingly, ethnic and other differences, potentially sources of serious conflict, become patterned and so blunted.

(Lucas, 1971: 329)

They become taken-for-granted features of everyday life. In addition, it seems plausible that those who felt most hostile to the system emigrated in the early stages of development.

There may, however, be another more powerful inhibitor of social conflict in one-industry towns. Brooks and Emmert (1976: 276-277) discuss how conflict and deviation are inhibited among members of a group if they perceive that they share a common fate. As we have indicated throughout the report, residents of one-industry towns are aware of the precariousness of their prosperity. One would expect that the corporation which controls their lives would become the focus of hostility, but this does not seem to be the case (Lucas, 1971: 334-340; Jackson and Poushinsky, 1971). Lucas offers one possible explanation. He suggests that the workers have a sophisticated view of power, which, to Lucas, means a view that power is diffuse. Local managers, then, are, just like

everyone else in the community, following other people's orders. But even at the top of the corporation at headquarters, power is diffuse.

It has something to do with thousands of workers, their productivity, their reports, their suggestions, along with information coming from many departments including accounting, and...research.

(Lucas, 1971: 338-339)

The "real culprit", the focus of community hostility, becomes "things that just happen", "Acts of God", vast impersonal forces, commodity markets, changes in technology, climate--forces over which they have no control. It is not surprising, then, that they perceive that the community, the local plant, and ultimately even the corporation share a common fate.

One could, however, examine the question from a different perspective. It may be that the power is not so much diffuse as invisible. The citizens are no doubt aware that the fate of the community does not rest with decisions made by local managers. However, they have no access to the decisions made by absentee owners; they are too remote. Top management and their decision-making processes are not visible in the branch plant community. What the residents of the community define as the consequences of impersonal forces, then, might from another perspective, be seen as the decisions of real people with real power. Whichever explanation one accepts, the results are the same. According to Lucas (1971: 338-339), most residents of one-industry communities experience feelings of powerlessness, resignation, and "fatalism, disguised by a veneer of grumbling".

## SECTION VI

### SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

#### Summary

The system of stratification in one-industry towns is based upon the occupational hierarchy within the company, and is therefore highly visible, rigid, and closed. Ethnic differentiation, while a reflection of larger society, is also more rigid and persistent and is maintained by a system of nepotism and ethnic sponsorship. Employment opportunities for women and youth and promotion opportunities for all workers are restricted.

One-industry towns, for the most part, provide their residents with a "respectable" standard of services and amenities, largely through the sponsorship of the company. Less well developed, however, are shopping facilities, and health, welfare, and other professional services. As well, the schools, though of comparatively high quality, do not seem to train students for work within the community. The church plays an important part in the life of the community and provides an additional basis for social differentiation. The role of these institutions takes on added significance because these communities are isolated from other centres which could offer alternatives.

In terms of the personalism of relationships and the high degree of role observability, one-industry communities come close to being archetypal small towns. The lack of anonymity produces strains within the industry and the community and makes access to other communities particularly important. The communities seem to be characterized by a high degree of "privatization"; the family and small friendship groups take on special significance. Interaction patterns reflect the larger divisions in the community. Privatization and restricted interaction make it unlikely that residents will develop a strong "sense of community". Nevertheless, the precariousness of the community does encourage residents to perceive that they share a common fate. In this context, we can understand the lack of overt social conflict. Feelings of dependency, powerlessness, resignation, and fatalism prevail.

#### Implications

Researchers, particularly planners, have indicated a concern about enhancing the quality of life in one-industry towns by taking into account many of the social characteristics we have discussed. Jackson and Poushinsky (1971: 130-131) recommend, for example, that health facilities, dental care, and shopping facilities should be improved. Riffel (1975: 70) adds a number of important suggestions which recognize the limited opportunity structure in one-industry communities. He recommends, for example,

the provision of a wider range of education and re-training programmes for the communities, and day-care centres and employment opportunities for the wives of workers. Almost all reports indicate the importance of involving the citizens in the planning of the community.

Unquestionably, these would be important innovations. However, they would not serve to change the most problematic and fundamental features of one-industry towns: their small size, their isolation, and their dependence. The uncertainty and the strains and tensions of everyday interaction would persist. Recognizing this, planners have been encouraged to search for alternative community arrangements. Parker (in Siemens, 1973: 36-41) has suggested three possibilities:

1) The development of regional centres.

These centres would have a diversified economic and employment base and thus would provide the community with permanence and stability.

2) The development of a central residential and commercial centre.

This centre would serve as a home base for a number of resource operations within commuting distance. This would mean a community with a much larger population which could more readily support many services, commercial enterprises, and secondary industry.

3) The creation of non-permanent communities.

Such communities would provide maximum flexibility since they could be transferred in whole or in part if the resource operation should be terminated.

No doubt, as well, there are other possibilities. Decisions about the "best" arrangement for any region would be a matter for intensive research and analysis. The important point is that it is no longer accepted as inevitable that resource development also means the development of one-industry towns.

### Further Research

Although an inevitable section of any report, the call for further research serves as more than simply a nod to tradition. It is an acknowledgement that any report asks more questions than it answers. There is no shortage of unanswered questions about communities of single-industry. Even such elementary, though often questionable, data as crime rates, incidence of divorce, etc., are unavailable in published form. Simply, there are not enough published data. One of the first tasks must be to identify types of one-industry towns, so that systematic comparisons can be made.

As we have indicated throughout the report, research has been uneven and a number of important areas have received little or no attention. We conclude, then, by suggesting a few areas which might profitably be researched: What are the consequences of absentee or foreign ownership on community definitions and participation? How are wives affected by their limited employment opportunities and the generally restricted range of alternatives? And what happens to the young people who are "forced" to leave their community? The answers to these questions may tell us as much about Canadian society as about one-industry towns.

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