

Chapter Ten

POLICE-COMMUNITY RELATIONS

L. Clairmont and A. Thomson

On the surface, small towns and rural communities may appear to be islands of continuity contrasting sharply with the ever-changing landscape of urban life. This image persists despite the effects of industrial capitalism and urbanization which have had profound consequences for many rural areas, depleting populations, undermining social traditions, and destroying communities. However, stereotypes of stable, closely-knit, crime-free rural life persist as urban myths, fuelling a fashionable counter-trend of middle class migration from the city to the country. In some cases, these new arrivals consciously attempt to re-create the semblance of community life in otherwise moribund villages and small towns. Ironically, their intention of living a de-urbanized life style contributes to the transformation -- the partial urbanization -- of the rural. Sociologically, the perennial dualism of continuity and change illuminates the rural and well as the urban environment.

This dualism is also reflected in the experiences of small town and rural policing. The contemporary rhetoric surrounding Community-based Policing -- the latest change in urban police departments -- suggests that, in the small towns, policing has remained relatively constant, while changes in urban departments have swung back towards the traditional style which has apparently persisted in rural areas. Whether new-style community policing in urban departments is more than mere window-dressing has been the subject of much analysis and debate (D. Clairmont 1991, Loree 1988, Murphy 1988, Mastroski 1991). Our concern has been with the transformation of small town and rural policing -- the impact of such external forces as modernization and professionalization on small town police and the extent to which the contemporary trend towards community policing represents a traditional or, rather, a new model for the small town. It is our position that the professional policing model contained elements which created or re-created a more genuine style of policing, consistent with the requirements and possibilities of small towns, while simultaneously introducing practices which contradicted the needs of small communities. The contemporary Community-based movement evolved, in part, as a counter-point to these deficiencies.

Police Community Relations

The 1989 survey of Valley residents allowed a more detailed breakdown of responses because the specific area was specified in the data. These findings provide a profile of attitudes in the Valley, broken down by specific areas, that serves as a baseline. The Valley citizens who were surveyed were asked to rate police-community relations in their area. As expected, most considered relations to be excellent (24%) or good (57.5%). There did not appear to be a consistent relationship by police type or

town size: both Hantsport and Kentville rated lower than the RCMP, while Wolfville residents (a medium-sized town) reported the most positive relationship.

Table 10-1 Respondents' Rating of Police-Community Relations in Their Area (1989)

Area	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	(n)
RCMP	22.2	58.1	16.7	3.0	659
Hantsport	21.3	63.8	12.8	2.1	47
Middleton	28.1	63.2	8.8	0.0	57
Berwick	38.9	47.2	13.9	0.0	36
Wolfville	46.0	38.1	11.1	4.8	63
Kentville	17.1	61.8	18.7	2.4	123
Total	24.0	57.5	15.8	2.7	985

The great majority also felt adequately served by the police in their area (87.8%), though only the RCMP was rated below 90% (85.1%). Most people rated policing in their area to be the "same" as other areas, though there was a tendency for the MPDs to be deemed better by more citizens (Kentville was the lowest, 22.3%) than those who rated the RCMP "better" (11.6%). Similarly, the great majority of residents did not agree that the police do not pay enough attention to what the public wants from them, although there was a slight tendency for those policed by the RCMP to agree (17.2%) when compared to the small towns (11.3%). While a small proportion of citizens said they did not feel positive about policing in their area, a somewhat larger minority (38%) tended to believe that the police did not receive the respect and co-operation from citizens more generally that they deserved, with municipal police seen as slightly less respected than the RCMP.

Town police officers are generally expected to have close relations with the majority of the people in the town. The most frequently-cited definition of CBP by officers was a partnership between the police and the community. Robert Peel's dictum about the police being the public and vice versa was an oft-repeated mantra. This close relationship is one of the benefits of municipal policing in a small town that has both negative and positive aspects. Dealing with the same offending population over an extended time leads to its own kinds of difficulties, and problems may persist off-hours. There was little evidence that police-community relations were deemed problematic. Community members were asked whether contact between police and residents was a problem in their area. About 4% regarded it as a "big problem", for 17% it was "somewhat" of a problem. For most, 79%, it was not considered a problem. Only Kentville was notably different, with 8% considering police-community relations a "big problem" and almost a quarter (23.5%) thinking it was somewhat of a problem. The difficult issue to determine was whether this reflected the possibility that relations varied by community size or, at least in part, the history of policing in a specific community. In the case of Kentville, the report of the N. S. Police Commission Inquiry into the police department had taken place less than a decade previously.

Policing in a small town, it was argued above, is more intimate than would be the case in either a rural setting, where the police are spread thinly over a large area, or in a city where the population is large and relatively more anonymous. In the Valley, as would be expected, a higher proportion of the residents reported “knowing” the municipal police in the small towns than those who knew the RCMP. The officers who police the small town were known by almost all residents by sight, and generally by name. In the smallest towns, almost 40% of the residents claimed to know the officers personally or socially. This knowledge is also a function of turn-over, with the MPDs at the time of the study basking in a period of stable membership. One officer, for example, said that he had good rapport with 80% of the people in the town. He knows everyone, “if not by name, then by sight”. He added that he enjoyed this aspect of his job, and likes to talk to people. It makes it easy to come to work and adds enjoyment to the job. It is important to get out and walk and talk to the people, he added. What make this important are the officer's job satisfaction and the public relations benefits which the department derives. Most Valley residents agree that it is important to know the police in their area, a statement agreed to be 85.7% of those surveyed. There were small variations within this large majority. In the three smallest towns, 100% of respondents agreed. The corresponding figures were 86% for the larger towns (Kentville and Wolfville) and 83% for the RCMP.

In 2002, residents in Kings County were asked to rate the job done by their police department in a number of areas.

Table 10-2 - Valley Residents’ Perceptions of Local Police (2000)

	Good	Average	Poor
Enforcing the laws	54.3	43.6	2.2
Promptly responding to calls	51.4	43.3	5.3
Investigating and solving crime	41.1	53.4	5.5
Being approachable and easy to talk to	64.9	31.3	3.8
Supplying information to reduce crime	53.2	41.5	5.3
Ensuring the safety of citizens	49.5	47	3.4
Helping people with neighbourhood problems	40.1	52.8	7.1
Being careful not to arrest innocent people	42.7	52.2	5.1

While the answer categories were different in the 1989 and 2002 surveys, the overall ratings are average or good; in both surveys, relatively few respondents believed the police did a “poor” job. Among respondents who reported that, within the last year, they had contact with the police through “a traffic violation”, 57.3% agreed the police did a good job of enforcing the law; only 21% said they did a “poor job”.

As usual, age made a difference in respondent's perceptions of the police. Consistently, in all questions, the youngest grouping (aged 15-25) were the least likely to claim the police were doing a "good job" while the oldest group (55 or more) were the most positive. The educational variable also tended to be insignificant statistically; however, while university-educated respondents tended consistently to give the highest rating for the police, those with a community college diploma or certificate tended to rate the police less highly than those with only high school.

An important factor in the ideology of Small Town policing (and in Community-Based Policing) is the degree to which the public come to know the police in the area. The 1989 base-line survey specifically asked respondents to indicate how well they knew the police. The following Table indicates a substantial difference between the RCMP and small town police forces. The RCMP figures reflect the policy of relatively frequent transfers and the function of the New Minas detachment as a good training ground for rookie members. The knowledge of the police in the small towns was somewhat lower in Wolfville, a university town where the population is not representative of the Valley as a whole; in addition, the police force in Wolfville was experiencing some turn-over at the time of the survey. Similarly, the lower level of recognition afforded the RCMP is also a function of the policy of transferring members.

Table 10-3 - Residents' Knowledge of Police in their Area (1989)

	Know Police		Know Police		Know Police	
	by Sight (%)		by Name (%)		Socially/Personally (%)	
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
RCMP	48.4	51.6	30.6	69.4	16.6	83.4
Hantsport	89.4	10.6	78.7	21.3	36.2	63.8
Middleton	93.0	7.0	86.0	14.0	43.9	56.1
Berwick	91.9	8.1	75.7	24.3	40.5	59.5
Wolfville	78.0	22.0	46.3	53.8	27.8	72.2
Kentville	86.7	13.3	61.7	38.3	30.5	69.5
Total	61.5	38.5	42.6	57.4	22.8	77.2

One of the related advantages of community policing is that the close contacts the police maintain with the public gives them greater access to freely-given information from the community about offences in the town. Although the RCMP also makes considerable use of informants in day-to-day investigations (in addition to such areas as drug enforcement in which the existence of informants is an absolutely necessary element), the formal enforcement style and the tendency to move members around rather than allow them to develop community ties would likely hamper the development of a relationship which cultivates many informants. On the other hand, police in a small town ought to be able to rely on a number of contacts, derived from activities in the community other than police work. Such contacts would, presumably, help investigations considerably. This difference between RCMP and municipal policing,

however, has been reduced as members stay longer in detachments than had been the norm. There is still considerable movement in and out of RCMP detachments but, on the other hand, officers are staying longer in one posting and many have substantial careers in one community.

Police-community relations are affected by contact with the police. Slightly over half the citizens contacted in Wolfville and Middleton reported some contact with the police over the year prior to the survey; for other areas the proportion was about one-third. The majority of citizens (two-thirds) claimed to have been treated “very well” by the police. There was some variation in the sample. Citizens from the smaller towns reported 81% favourably compared with 70% from the larger towns and 63% from RCMP areas.

Table 10-4 - Respondents’ Contact With Police Over Last Year (1989)

	Contact With Police? (%)			How Treated by Police? (%)			
	Yes	No	TOTAL	Extremely Well	Fairly Well	Somewhat/ Very Poorly	TOTAL
RCMP	35.4	64.6	732	62.9	29.6	7.5	240
Hantsport	27.7	72.3	47	84.6	15.4	0.0	13
Middleton	50.9	49.1	57	81.5	14.8	3.7	27
Berwick	35.1	64.9	37	75.0	25.0	0.0	12
Wolfville	53.7	46.3	82	69.2	20.5	10.3	39
Kentville	34.4	65.6	128	71.1	21.1	7.9	38
TOTAL	37.1	62.9	1083	66.9	26.0	7.0	369

Where this contact took place was not an important source of variation, although slightly more citizens who had contact on the “street” rather than in their “home” or in an “other” place reported negatively (10.9%). The majority of those who felt “somewhat poorly” or “poorly” treated by the police (57.7%) contacted the police over a traffic or parking matter. The majority of victims (68.4) and witnesses (59.6) said they had been extremely well treated; 20% of suspects said they had been “poorly” treated by the police.

In 2000, at least 15% of Kings County residents reported coming into contact with the police. The survey asked respondents a number of contexts in which this contact could have been made, and multiple answers were possible. Almost 13% said their contact was through a public education session, considerably more than those who reported coming into contact as victims (5.8%) or witnesses (4.9%). Five residents claimed that their contact was through “being arrested”, while 8.6% (n=146) made contact “for a traffic violation”.

Just as the public knows the town police by name and sight, so too, the police possess a store of knowledge about local residents. One trait which is commonly attributed to small town policing is the extent of knowledge about townspeople possessed by the police. In one case, for example, a report of suspected child abuse

was received by the Middleton Police Department. One constable commented on the file that he had "personal knowledge of problems with the child" and noted that the family was seeking professional help. He concluded, on the basis of his existing knowledge that the child has: "Not now or never has been" abused, "to the best of [his] knowledge". In another case, a mother complained that her son seemed to have more money than was reasonable. The police investigated and received several stories, one of which was that he had stolen the money from his mother. He was described as "slow", in his 30s, as never having been in trouble and as a "nice, likeable person" who wants to be a police officer. The police decided that the matter was best handled by the mother who had "raised eight children, two of them retarded".

Our observation suggests that the constables are very aware of the need to know the people. They claim to know the town very well, mentioning where individuals live and where they work. For example, constables will describe a family as one that had just moved into town "from over on the bay". Some cases of vandalism are solved by talking to neighbouring kids. However, despite many sources of information, some significant local cases go unsolved.

Another factor in living in a small community is that the police are constantly under scrutiny. This is a serious concern in a town given the small size of the department and the easy complaint from a resident that he or she is paying the salaries of the officers. In Berwick, as part of their public order function, the police routinely check crowd situations such as wrestling matches and ball games. This leads to complaints that more spectating than patrolling is occurring. On the other hand, some residents have recently complained that the RCMP members are not visible in the arena or the ball park. Police officers in small towns become quickly integrated into the town culture. Since the new members tend to be younger, they are more likely to have young families. As their children become involved in community sports and recreation they develop local community ties.

Part of this personal connection depends on where an officer resides. Only a minority of the members of the Police Department resided in the town. Some towns even attempted to make it a requirement of employment by the town that the officer live within town limits. The police believed this was to ensure that town employees paid town taxes. The official justification was that the officer would be readily available on call, which is an important issue in a small force. With so few officers on duty at any given time, finding reinforcements at times of trouble means bringing in off-duty officers. Union contracts provide for paying on-call officers, whose freedom during their time off is restricted by the potential for recall. It became an issue in Berwick when the Chief decided to move out of town. He argued that he was sufficiently close to be available when necessary and preferred to avoid some of the day-to-day difficulties of being readily available to the public on his time off. When the Chief is a resident, he is frequently approached on police matters which ought to have been directed to the constable on duty or that could wait for on-duty time. A constable who lives in town complained that this proximity has often meant that people would call on off-duty hours to make a complaint or ask for police information. Similarly, RCMP officers choose to live near the centre of the County for a number of practical reasons. Members who live

in more outlying villages, however, also have their off-duty hours interrupted by citizens who approach them on what they think is police business. As one member put it, "I am not the police department" for the village.

The basic impression is that living a private life in a small town is difficult for a police officer. "People in the town are always watching you", one officer said, "Which is why it is better to live outside of town." While the town council was aware that it could not enforce a requirement that the new RCMP officers live within the town boundaries, the RCMP apparently agreed, at least informally during negotiations, that they would encourage their members to live in town. In part this reflects the lower property values in the town and the expansiveness of the market. In the neighbouring town of Wolfville, for example, where very few of the municipal officers had resided in the town, it was understood that such an expectation could not be justified given the town's narrow market, higher prices, and greater tax burden.

Police Community Relations are also at issue when constables issue tickets. One Constable in Kentville noted that townspeople get exceptionally irate over the issuing of parking tickets, and one \$5 fine issued by the police can un-do a great deal of positive public relations through other types of pro-active policing. While police in other valley towns seldom issue parking tickets, moving violations can create the same types of image problems. One constable in Middleton complained about an officer in another town who handed out "Chicken-Shit SOTs" and was "in love with the radio". There was a problem, he concluded, in giving out too many Summary Offence Tickets, and living in the same town.

One of the factors which operate as a counter tendency is the claim that many offenses are, in fact, perpetrated by people from outside the town. Most of them are permanent Valley dwellers who travel throughout the region. It is not uncommon for suspects to cross jurisdictions, making inter-departmental information important, as noted above. At times, especially in the summer and fall, the Valley population expands marginally as transient workers arrive to seek employment in agriculture. At times they also commit offenses in the towns.

For two decades, rural parts of the province have expected an increase in crime as criminals expand their range of operations from the metropolitan centre. Some robberies and some mobile shop-lifting sprees originate from outside the County. The geographical dispersion of people who commit crimes in the small towns justifies, in part, the move to regional policing. A crime that occurs in a town is investigated by the town police even if the suspect lives outside of town. The corollary of having a town become the work and consumption centre of a larger district is the necessity for the police to travel throughout this district to interview suspects, serve summonses, and investigate crimes. As the need for more specialized resources has increased, the RCMP has emerged as the front-runner for non-metropolitan regionalization. The formal, national structure of the RCMP fosters the adoption of programmes of many types, which can then be implemented across the country. There are many different specialisations in the RCMP, such as polygraph technicians, dog-handlers, divers, and surveillance specialists. Regional tactical squads combine trained members from a number of detachments for such purposes as riot control and special-weapons units.

Within the last twenty years another priority has been grafted onto the standard police operation: community involvement. As noted above, the original RCMP philosophy endorsed the maximum separation of the member from the community. Contemporary trends in policing have, to some extent, bridged the distance between the police and the policed. Most of these initiatives come under the general umbrella of the "Community-based Policing" movement, the examination of which has framed most of the work undertaken in this monograph.

The RCMP is in a good position to both develop and implement community programmes. Once policy is determined by the planners in the national headquarters, it can be diffused throughout the system. In this respect, the federal force has been in the forefront of adopting crime-prevention programmes in Canada, such as Neighbourhood Rural or Coastal Watch, and Block Parents. Bicycle patrols, in-school liaison officers, Halloween safety and public talks have all become part of the standard expectations of detachment members. In addition, the RCMP has initiated other direct community contacts, such as citizens' patrol, victim services, youth ventures, and community consultative groups that involve many community volunteers in some of the peripheral work of policing. The structure of the RCMP facilitates the rapid spread of these programmes once they are adopted. Presently, some detachments are becoming involved in family conferencing initiatives, as the gulf between the enforcement and service functions of policing becomes blurred.

R.C.M.P. involvement in this myriad of programmes is enhanced by specialisation, as larger detachments can post dedicated personnel into the community-relations, crime prevention role. Ordinary detachment members, however, are expected to do some of this work as well. Members may be assigned to schools in the detachment area where they will be responsible for maintaining contacts and making presentations. Community-based Policing in the RCMP has been adopted as official policy. From the point of view of the members, it originated in Ottawa and was generated "top-down". When asked their opinions about the public relations emphasis in modern policing about one third of the members were quite positive: "and police department that doesn't have it is outdated". One member said the emphasis was "part of the new breed, there's no more choking the information out of people". A constable claimed that, when the first push for community relations was instigated, he thought the whole thing was a farce. "I used to think that it was a joke." He has since learned, however, how useful that type of work was, saying "you really have to work at it."

Those who viewed the PR emphasis positively felt that it benefited the Force by encouraging integration and cooperation with the community: "We are part of the community." Without a good relationship with the public, a constable said, "We can't do the job properly." "It keeps the door open.... People perceive us as being human and it puts us in touch with the public and makes us more accountable." Another member viewed public education and community interaction as a deterrent: Teaching people about crime and the law "helps instil a fear of the consequences."

Half of the members agreed that good public relations was beneficial but felt that too much emphasis was being placed on PR. As one constable said, "I'm not driven by

it. It's "OK in small doses." Similarly, another member replied, "I agree with it to a point but you can oversell yourself." Good contacts can make the job easier, but it can also "be a pain". You need to strike a balance between being close to the community and doing your job effectively, which requires some distance; public relations is a "double-edged sword". A few thought that the RCMP had gone too far with their "PR emphasis". "Public relations has suddenly become a high priority", one said. "It looks great on paper", but is not effective enough to justify the money or time they are spending on it. "They don't have any idea how to apply it." For another member, it was just "statistical PR". The RCMP was "pushing education over law enforcement".

Valley residents were asked whether they participated in a range of formal crime preventions programmes. Variations here reflected both the types of formal programmes available in the various communities and the commitment of police forces to a formalized CBP approach. Overall, Wolfville and the RCMP had the highest rates of citizen participation in these initiatives.

Table 10-5 - Respondents' Participation in Formal Crime Prevention Programmes, 1989 and 2002

1989	Neighbourhood Watch	Block Parents	Crime Stoppers	Crime Prevention Talks	Operation Identification	Bicycle Safety
RCMP	9.6	12.3	4.0	12.5	19.9	19.0
Hantsport	4.3	21.3	4.3	8.5	12.8	19.1
Middleton	7.0	7.0	10.5	3.5	28.1	17.5
Berwick	8.1	5.4	2.7	5.4	18.9	13.5
Wolfville	4.9	18.3	6.1	17.1	24.4	19.5
Kentville	7.0	10.2	0.8	11.7	14.8	21.1
TOTAL	8.5	12.4	4.1	11.8	19.7	19.1

2002						
Kings Co.	13.8	11.8	5.8	4.7	8.7	7.1

The effectiveness of various programmes is difficult to measure. The clearest indication is that Community-based Policing initiatives make the public feel safer and enhance the popularity of the police force. There is sometimes the question of who does -- or is assumed to -- represent the "community" in CBP. In many cases, formal political bodies are by-passed in favour of creating hand-picked consultative committees. The more organised the community, on the other hand, the more genuinely representative bodies can demand a presence and influence the policing mandate. Despite the public relations component and the issue of representation, however, CBP is arguably part of progressive policing.

The quality of Community-based Policing is dependent, to a considerable extent, on the dedication of the individual member to that aspect of the work. It is certainly

not part of the conventional enforcement mentality which has shaped so many of the traditions of the police culture. Older members, especially, resist the "apple dumpling" work. Newer members, though, encounter the CBP philosophy in Depot and emerge prepared for a wider police role.

RCMP officers in the Detachment, especially those with experience elsewhere in the province (such as Cape Breton or the South Shore), tend to remark on the excellent relations which prevail between the public and the police in this agricultural area. If the police represent social order, then their presence is consistent with the general conservatism of the Annapolis Valley. This observation also tends to reflect the nature of the complaints in the area, which tend to be "run-of-the-mill" and not usually serious (for example, there are few gun complaints) as well as the tendency to respond to the majority of citizen calls. It also reflects expectations about the level of service. In the public surveys which were conducted as part of this study on attitudes towards policing and victimization in the valley, as expected, citizens rated the police very highly overall. This was true for the RCMP as well as the town police. In general, with municipal policing, this positive public attitude to the police varies according to the size of the municipality, with the larger towns scoring somewhat lower than the rural RCMP or the smaller towns. RCMP officers, who do not walk the beat (or the "block", as it is called in small towns) and who, therefore, do most of their policing in a car, actually have fewer civilian contacts than town police officers. One of the most frequently voiced public concerns is that officers are seldom seen. Much of their investigative work, or response to "run-of-the-mill" complaints, is done on the phone whereas town police are more likely to contact complainants in person.

The majority of public responses were highly supportive of the police in their community. Reciprocally, the majority of police officers believed that the public was supportive of them. In the view of most officers, there was a small proportion of the public that was "hostile", variously estimated at between 5% and 20% of the population. As one member put it, while only 5% of the public was hostile, another 30% had a negative attitude toward the police. Another man said that 40% of the public are really "indifferent". Another member put a different spin on the question. While "5% of the public are hostile to the police," he said, "5% of members were anti-public." The majority perspective, however, was that 80% to 90% of the public was supportive of the police. Most people were "God fearing and police respecting", one member said, "Good, law-abiding people." Only one constable appeared to evince a "we versus them" attitude. An officer's perceptions of the public, one member said, had a great deal to do with the area policed. He said the Valley was a good place to work because most people were respectful and friendly. People often wave to members, let them out into traffic, and have been known to drop baskets of fruit off at the detachment. Not everywhere was like this. He had worked in other areas where the police were not given much respect. He said he would drive by people in the community and be called names and be given "the finger". That, in turn, affected his perceptions of the public and detracted from his job satisfaction.

The degree to which members of the RCMP Detachment are known in the community and know citizens tends to vary by the length of time the member is in the

Detachment. As noted above, in the discussion of styles of policing, RCMP officers are less likely to have a career in one location but are expected to be geographically mobile. In 1987, however, at the start of our study, not only was the Detachment relatively senior, transfers had slowed down to the point where members were developing community ties. This was partly a consequence of the length of time in the area and of the general policy which encourages members to be active in community organizations. By the early 1990s, however, given a considerable turn-over of complement and the accumulation of younger, less experienced members, the quality of citizen relations, overall, decreased. There was certainly turn-over among town police, but not as thorough as in the Detachment where, over the decade, very few of the officers posted to the area in 1987 remained ten years later, and many officers who had arrived during the period were also transferred.

Clearly, the quality of the good relationship in the towns is a consequence of the frequency and type of interactions with the public. As officers are hired from outside the community, as in increasingly the case, the more detached and legalistic policing model is reinforced. However, regardless of the origins of the officers, there is a different public perception of the RCMP and the town officers. While the federal Force has become a national symbol, and the RCMP member derives considerable prestige from this, the recent history of town policing (as suggested below under "management") has resulted in less respect for municipal police officers. Town officers are more likely to find themselves in physical confrontations with their citizens; they are closer in status to the average person and therefore not regarded with the degree of deference with which the RCMP in the area are treated. This generalisation is less valid when other parts of the province are used as the comparison point. For example, RCMP members have said they were treated with less respect and were more likely to be physically challenged in small communities in industrial Cape Breton, or Pictou County, or along the South and French shores. In other words, the characteristics of the communities play a major part in determining the nature of police-community interactions. Nevertheless, municipal police in these same areas may be treated with even less respect, deference and fear.

It is not only among the more unruly citizens that disrespect for the police may be more overt concerning the municipal police. The derogatory term "town clowns" is seldom directed at RCMP officers in the Valley, even in towns with RCMP contracts. Routine stops may also become more confrontational for municipal officers. In Middleton, for example, a motorist stopped routinely for a tail-light simply sped away in a cloud of dust in the middle of the stop. Such demonstrations of public hostility and disrespect, in the recent past, would have made the offender subject to police harassment and, perhaps, brutality. In the era of community policing, different methods may be used, in particular, resort to legalistic penalties only. In the case above, one of the officers went to the offender's workplace the next day to serve him with appearance notices for the offences. This action was challenged later, not by the Chief, but by senior constables who would have responded to such public contempt in a more aggressive manner. The majority of citizens, however, would not have acted in this openly defiant way.

The most significant generalization about police-community relations in the Valley is that police forces tend to have high public approval ratings, with the degree of support varying by the size of the municipality. Approval ratings elsewhere also vary by ethnicity and social class, differences which are less apparent in the Valley than in urban areas or other, more socially diverse, regions of the country. This support, insofar as it is specific, is affected by the history and social standing of the federal police in Canada, and in spite of any negative stereotypes of small town policing which may also persist in the public perception.

Political Control and Police Management

A more immediately serious issue in small town policing concerns the relationship with local politics. In the past in Nova Scotia, problems were caused by the absence of police independence. The Chief was beholden to the municipal authorities for his job and the police force was oriented towards political bidding. Interference could also be more direct through such practices as ticket fixing. These are not simply historical relics and the occasional episode still comes to light in the province.

While police professionalism and unionism have helped to distance police departments from political influence, "resource dependence" demands at least some degree of "political responsiveness" (Murphy, 1986, p. 188). One consequence of increased demands for revenue is the reciprocal demand from Council for accountability, quantifiable evidence of police productivity. This means that policing styles are, necessarily, transformed from a peace-keeping function to a more legalistic style emphasizing close monitoring of complaints and calls for assistance, as well as proactive management of public order complaints. Although they ask the advice of local political authorities, and meet with them both formally and informally, the style and level of policing is, at the explicit level, determined by central authorities within the department more than by the local municipalities. Concern about the precise role of extra-departmental authorities was expressed in the Marshall Inquiry report on public policing in Nova Scotia.

Berwick had a five-man Police Commission. The day-to-day operations of the Police Department were up to the Chief. Much of the independence of the Police Department depended on the independence of the chief, but also on the perceptions of Commission members that the Chief is managing his officers effectively. In Berwick, the Chief did not get involved in enforcement or investigations and, therefore, he said he could talk about problems about enforcement in a fair manner. "Complaints come to me and I handle them as I see fit." At times, the police have to settle disputes between individuals who are both town officials. This emphasizes the need for a police force that is not tied to individual favours. The issue of political interference is usually regarded as resolved when an RCMP contract is awarded for municipal policing. It should be noted, though, that the cost of this independence is that the town ceases to have an effective means of accountability. In Kentville it has been said by some older officers that the Mayor visited the police frequently, even reviewing complaints that had come in the previous night. This degree of political supervision and interference breeds

a form of corruption. But the other side of the coin is accountability to the community. Even now town officials with municipal police departments are aware that they do the performance assessment on their Chief and thereby have some means of ensuring that their general policy directions to the police are carried out.

The issue of police independence may be more serious in some towns than others. In Berwick, the Chief claimed, the independence of the police force is well established. Municipal police officers, the Chief stressed, owe their allegiance to the Queen not to the Municipal government. The employee/employer relationship between the police department and the town that funds it must not interfere with the political neutrality of the force. Concerning day-to-day policing, the Chief said, Town Councilors may call the office with suggestions, the same as any other citizen, and every complaint and suggestion is taken seriously. However, he concluded, the decision is made by the police department on appropriate grounds and the police are not beholden to any local politician.

Police and Council relationships are, however, quite variable from town to town, and from administration to administration. Much depends on the relationship between the individual occupying the various offices. A new mayor can bring quite a different atmosphere to the relationship. Also, the police department functions within a budget that is determined by Town Council. It is an important lever of control which the town can wield to shape policing practices. There are also differences of opinion among the Councilors. In any town there are likely to be a few Councilors who think that the municipality would be better served by an RCMP contract. The issue of departmental size is a frequent bone of contention, primarily because of the financial implications. In Berwick, for example, not all Councilors agreed with the need for 24-hour patrol or for adding the fifth constable.

Valley residents almost uniformly (93%) agree that the political independence of the police is an important part of the police role. Political interference in municipal policing has been reduced by the introduction of local Boards of Police Commissioners (Police Act, 1976), to which police departments report and to which they are accountable. However, the Council retains control over the police budget. Political interference, however, is not confined to municipal forces. One factor that is said to allow the RCMP less political interference is funding. Despite this, as the Marshall Inquiry indicated, the RCMP is not immune to political pressure from the Province. In Middleton, while individual members of the Police Commission or Town Council may be critical of police expenditures and seek to reduce police service, at the time of the study there was a close relationship between the Town and the Chief, on a basis which left the day-to-day management of the force with the Chief.

The level of political interference varies from town to town. As Murphy (1986) indicates, police organizations are dependent on the local municipality for resources. Towns with municipal police departments presently fund 87% of the total cost of such services, with the remaining 13% provided by the province. Consequently, the police chief is required to be politically sensitive in his discussions with local power brokers in the effort to have his budget approved as the acceptance or rejection of the budget

"can be used to reward or punish the performance of the entire police department" (Murphy, 1986, p. 198).

The appropriate role for the community to play in this control, in particular, in determining policy and supervising policing, is very controversial and the police departments themselves have been emphasizing organizational autonomy to avoid political interference. Certain reformers, however, who envisage a democratic community structure, believe that the police should be responsive to the needs and demands of their constituency. Chiefs guard their autonomy from the elected officials, public interference, media misrepresentation and even threats from other police departments, for example, in the case of some proposals for regionalization.

Small town policing is likely to continue to experience change in the next decade. The question of police budget will be pivotal. Financially strapped municipalities are suffering a decline in revenue from provincial bodies and in towns like Middleton, bare-bones budgets allow for basic subsistence of the police department, at the expense of some of the hallmarks of modern, professional policing, such as training and crime prevention. Town citizens pay taxes directly for policing, as well as other municipal services. These special taxes are not paid to the same extent by County residents who are policed by rural RCMP under provincial contracts. Municipal politicians are likely to take on the challenge of this unfair tax burden and, through the process, they will place changes in provincial policing high on their agenda. Some forms of regionalization of policing in areas such as the Valley may well be one of the consequences of the Marshall Inquiry.

Arguably, it is in the relationship between policing and the local civic authorities that the greatest differences arise between the town forces and the RCMP. The position of Chief of Police in small town Nova Scotia was initially subject to considerable political interference. Prior to 1977, the Chief was hired at the pleasure of the Town Council and could be removed at will by the Council. Such was the fate of more than one Chief in the province. The political precariousness of the position made the Chief extremely vulnerable to the interests of local town politicians and the local elite. Small town policing, which was by nature discretionary, was characterized by a three-tiered system: favouritism towards the local elites, maintenance of minor matters of public order and enforcement effecting the majority who seldom came into contact with the police, and a third tier which was repressive with respect to the underclass in the small town -- members of minority groups as well as others whose deviance was public and troublesome.

If policing in the town was not everyone's business, it was certainly the direct business of the elected politicians. In Kentville, for example, the Police Chief visited the Mayor each morning, it was said, in order to get his orders for the day. The Mayor would come into the Police Station and read the reports on occurrences from the previous evening. In this respect, policing was a "Department" of the Town, and the Chief was under the direction of the town officials.

By the 1960s, however, laws on labour standards in general had been improved and the principle that good cause had to be shown before an employee could legitimately be removed from office was affecting local practices. In Kentville in 1978,

for example, Chief Graves was ordered to be reinstated as Police Chief and awarded a financial settlement after a court found that he had been fired improperly.

Given the inherent instability of the "at pleasure" designation, as well as the difficulties for policing caused by political interference, the Nova Scotia Association of Chiefs of Police had both a vested interest and an ideological reason to demand changes in legislation which would establish tenure for their position and independence for their department. Chief Stan Holt of the Middleton Police Department was one of the primary activists responsible for introducing a Police Act to the House of Assembly. The resulting Police Act in Nova Scotia included major safeguards ensuring a degree of independence for the police department from local politics. The Chief of Police could be fired only for just cause and the police department was to operate at arms length from the Town Council, through the creation of a Police Commission in the town, which included elected individuals as well as citizens' appointees and a member appointed by the (then) Attorney General's Department.

Again, Kentville tested this new legislation. Town Council hired a Police Chief from Ontario. Chief MacRae proceeded to establish the independence of the Police "Force" from the town. Had that been all he did then, under the new Act, there was little the elected officials could have done. However, MacRae's style of policing was divisive in the department and encouraged the more negative kinds of police discretion. In order to establish just cause for dismissal, Town Council expanded the terms of an internal review of the Police Department being conducted by the Nova Scotia Police Commission. MacRae was fired subsequent to the publication of the results of this Inquiry. The important point, however, was that the police "force" was established on more of an independent footing.

The basic principle underlying the Police Act in Nova Scotia is that the Police Commission, as a sub-committee of the Council, establishes general principles and guide-lines for policing in the town while leaving the details of day-to-day management up to the Chief. In addition, decisions about law enforcement and the laying of charges were entirely the prerogative of the police force. This model of independence is not the whole story, however. Just as police officers in a small town come to know those members of the underclass who are well known to the police establishment, so too do they come to recognize the power brokers in the town. As geographical mobility increases, a smaller proportion of a town's officers are native to the vicinity and, hence, do not police in the town in which they have long-standing relatives and friends, nor established patterns of deference towards specific members of the elite, nor long-standing animosity towards groups or individuals. Nevertheless, these problems continue to persist somewhat in the smaller towns and, since mobility within the small town police profession is limited, officers tend to stay for relatively long periods in the same town and develop some of these patterns. As has been argued, in this manner the RCMP model has been substantially different.

More important to the independence of the police force in small towns is the continuing role of the Council. Given the nature of small town policing (in the absence of significant regionalization or a movement towards provincialization), finances are controlled by the Council. The Police Commission can recommend a budget to Council,

but the elected representatives have the final word on the allocation of money. In Berwick, for example, dissatisfaction with another Police Chief who had been hired from Ontario manifested itself in a very tight-fisted Council which maintained control over the purse strings as part of a battle with the Police Chief over policing styles and personalities. On the other hand, newly appointed Chiefs, and those who maintain astute relations with the Council, have had a less difficult time in realizing the material interests of the police department.

However, the quality of the relationship between the Police Chief and the police force and the local political elites is a key element in the establishment of police style and has profound effects on day-to-day police management. At worst, the elite is unsympathetic to the priorities of the local police and seeks to undermine the independence of the Chief and regain control over the force. At best, the needs of the police force are shaped and partly determined by the vagaries of local politics and fought over annually in budget allocations. Despite the Police Act, then, there is still a considerable difference in the relationship between the town police forces and municipal politics which makes MPD policing different from the RCMP. Even in municipal contracts, the Council virtually abdicates any control over policing, other than the negotiations over the initial contract (for example, over the number of members and, hence, the degree of coverage).

As the "detachment" model implies, the RCMP established themselves as independent from local politics and elites. The detachment commander will give a yearly presentation to the Town or County Council, usually on crime patterns, and will provide a monthly and yearly summary of crime statistics (referred to as "Mayor's Reports"), but this information is also supplied to Statistics Canada and does not correspond to the much closer and more dependent relationship between the town police and the Police Commission. In the towns, the Police Chief, usually in dress uniform, attends monthly Police Commission meetings and reports on the activities of the Police Departments. The Police Commission scrutinizes not only the statistics on criminal activities and calls for service, but police expenditures. For example, in Wolfville, Police Commission members demanded justification for the number of miles driven by the police vehicles, on the grounds that the officers were spending too much of their time on random patrol. This kind of questioning, to which the RCMP detachment commander is not subject concerning the local politicians (control and supervision is within the detachment hierarchy), does have implications for day to day policing. Typically, members of the Council and the Police Commission want to see more foot patrol, more enforcement of town by-laws, and greater police visibility, and through the monthly meetings and control over the budget, they have some mechanisms to realize these desires.

With the RCMP, on the other hand, the shoe tends to be on the other foot. The town contracts for police service and the level of service provided is conditional on the amount of money paid. The RCMP is only minimally accountable to the local politicians in terms of the actual, day-to-day policing in the town. Detachment members may not enforce by-laws, for example. Shift schedules and hours of coverage may be shaped by

negotiations establishing the policing contract, but otherwise are largely determined by the detachment commanders.

That is not to say that the RCMP determines its activities in an autonomous fashion. Each detachment commander is limited by the policies of the Force overall. The accountability is to the Force rather than to civilian controllers. From the point of view of the RCMP, the local political elite is comprised of citizens; demands from citizens are taken into consideration in the policing of the community, but informally and always at the discretion of the detachment. As the RCMP seeks greater citizen approval, more citizen requests are being responded to positively, but it is clear where the decision-making power lies.

On the other hand, there are indirect provincial controls. Most notably, since policing is expensive, control is exercised through provincial budget allocations. When the RCMP was growing in size and expanding its role in the country, in the 1960s and 1970s, expenditures could be justified as necessary for professionalization. Modern equipment, bullet-proof vests, replacement vehicles, even the number of personnel were more easily rationalized and obtained. During the 1980s and 1990s, however, the money allocated to policing by the federal and provincial governments has not grown as dramatically as hitherto. The effect, at one level, is the same as the budget restrictions affecting town policing. The RCMP responded by restructuring overtime, reducing the number and distance of transfers, maintaining and repairing rather than replacing police cruisers, and even limiting the number of applicants in basic training and not guaranteeing graduates positions in the Force. The cause behind these various moves is fundamentally fiscal, the same problem affecting the municipalities.

In fact, fiscal difficulties are likely to be worse for smaller municipalities because the tendency is to devolve the costs of services, including policing, from larger to smaller units. As the federal government reduces transfer payments, or demands greater fees from the provinces for services (for example, in negotiations with provincial governments over the cost of RCMP policing), the provinces are passing the burden on to the municipalities which are the most vulnerable. The more local and dependent the policing, then, the greater the potential effect of the most recent fiscal crisis.

In Middleton, for example, the size of the police force, which was established following a Nova Scotia Police Commission Review in 1979, became a political hot potato until it was finally resolved with the RCMP take-over. The police/citizen ratio was particularly low during the MPD period and considerable energy was exerted by the Police Chief lobbying Police Commission and Council members on behalf of the existing department and developing arguments to refute demands for a reduction in services.

While the attempts to reduce policing and make it more efficient during the 1990s were rooted in the perceptions of the need for tighter fiscal management and allocation, and some of the consequences were the same for the municipal and Mounted Police, the way these cut-backs work were different because of the greater dependence among town police on local politicians. In the RCMP, cut-backs are handled within the Force; in the towns, the budget of the police department was open to minute political scrutiny and fiscal initiatives were largely out of the hands of the police department.

Unionization

The modernization of small town policing was enhanced by unionization. It was not simply that the town was being asked to pay higher salaries for police officers but, rather, to pay for more professional policing. Unionization entailed a commitment on the part of municipal governments to increase the police budget in other areas as well, such as training, equipment and quarters.

One of the most substantial differences between a municipal force and the RCMP involves the power of the officers' union. The Police Commission and the Chief often feel overly constrained by the terms of the police contract. For example, a contract can specify the times of the shifts (12-hour shift schedules were common among municipal police departments in the Valley), and how many officers must be on patrol. Additional call-outs for busy shifts or town events entailed over-time expenditures that, for many towns, were quite high. The RCMP is not unionized and, within the policy of the RCMP, management can alter shift schedules with greater flexibility. Contracting out to the RCMP is a way to avoid the union and the negotiations with union representatives. From a management perspective, the union was a bulwark of police autonomy and the police culture. In Wolfville, for example, the 12-hour, two-officer shifts was changed to over-lapping 10-hour shifts allowing management the option of having fewer officers on duty at certain times of the week.

The advent of police unionization has altered the prerogatives of police management and the relationship between police officers and the towns. From the argument mentioned above, that the Chief was hired at the discretion of the Council, it follows that the jobs of police officers were equally insecure. Unionization of the police forces was brought about by factors familiar with observers of other work situations, principally by demands for improvements in wages and working conditions. In the RCMP arbitrary acts by management are limited by procedural manuals, military discipline, and a bureaucratic hierarchy of control and accountability. In small towns, there were few safeguards for police officers other than in the police culture and aspects of on-the-job control of policing, which were numerous given the general problems of police supervision and the absence of a hierarchy of management other than a single Chief.

Unionization, then, provided municipal officers with some way to shape the policies of the department concerning such fundamental items as shift scheduling, overtime payment and calculation, paid holidays and other fringe benefits. As in most work settings, these demands were won rather than given, in some cases only after the police officers exercised their right to strike. Rank-and-file dissatisfaction did, apparently, play a role in the extension of these rights to members of the federal force. Officers in the more politicized provinces, such as Quebec and Alberta, made the most significant demands for modifications in the militaristic regime. Career RCMP officers recall the early days in the 1960s when they were married to the Force, had to remain single for a number of years after joining, lived in RCMP quarters, worked when it was necessary without compensation, and obeyed the words of the officers to the letter and

without question. Social changes in Canada undermined these practices. Newer recruits were career conscious in a wider sense and put their individual interests often ahead of the "Force." The Charter of Rights and Freedoms also changed relationships within the Force and also changed the strict, military regime in Depot, making it less capricious and demeaning.

The demand for rights won by other workers, then, arose in the rank-and-file among the RCMP and was relatively easily granted by the Canadian state which recognised the need to maintain the loyalty and morale of the agents of social order. A similar extension of rights and benefits occurred in the Canadian Armed Forces without the necessity of the employees becoming militant. Being granted improved material benefits undercut the more political demands for more democratic management, or for more control over work-place decisions, or for meaningful negotiation and representation. RCMP managers adopted the least conflictual style of "consultation" in their dealings with the rank-and-file. This is successful when it is accompanied by a pay scale which is among the top for police departments in Canada and which provides a wide range of employee benefits, including a substantial pension after 25 years service, allowing members, while still comparatively young, to embark on another career and have two incomes. Political complacency is maintained by relatively generous wages and benefits. To a member, all RCMP officers interviewed described themselves as "anti-union". One said, "We get everything we want and aren't treated unfairly." The biggest bugbear for them was the right to strike which many saw as synonymous with unionization. As one member put it, as "a federal police force we shouldn't have the right to strike. There are better solutions to problems. I believe in essential services legislation.

Many RCMP members also tended to be anti-union more generally. According to some of the interviewees the problem with unions is the type of people they attract. One man described union leaders as "leaches", another as "too radical" and another as "too many fools". One constable said that unions tend to attract "those radical fellows". One member viewed unions in the following manner: "They are greedy and ruin everything". Lastly, many constables said that they did not want to pay union dues. Part of this anti-union sentiment is police concern with organized opposition. Policing is normally a matter of dealing with individual people. People in groups, however, such as enraged community residents or union members trying to maintain a strike in the face of police assistance for legal strike-breakers, are more difficult for the police to control, incite more fear among officers, and are perceived as greater threats to authority.

Small town policing, on the other hand, is relatively poorly paid. This is not the case if comparison is made with the recent past, and unionization has had a great deal to do with raising the standards of pay. This has directly affected the professionalization of the police department since recruitment into municipal policing has become a more financially rewarding occupation. In some large cities, wages and benefits rival the RCMP. In small town Nova Scotia, while the salaries are as much as 40% lower than the federal force, compared with many civilian salaries in the vicinity, the police are solidly remunerated.

The reference to strikes above, however, serves to make it clear that the gains of the local police have not been won without a struggle. Unionization of the municipal police is at the root of some of the difficulties police departments have with their respective Town Councils and with the RCMP. Ultimately, unionization implies that towns can no longer determine certain aspects of the police budget but, rather, these are determined in the process of negotiation with the Commission and Council. Like employers anywhere, Town Councils have resisted this form of structured employee influence. Minimally, unionization has meant a considerable greater effort for small town politicians in terms of the time and cost of negotiations, the hiring of expert legal assistance, the process of arbitration, and so on. Were there no other disadvantages from the point of view of the town, these considerations would still remain. In addition, should negotiations be difficult -- and in many towns in Nova Scotia, first contracts were extremely difficult to negotiate -- the newly unionized officers often found themselves on the brink of a strike, as they did in Berwick and Kentville, for example.

Police strikes can easily become political footballs. Certainly there is an increase in public order offences and some property offences (such as damage to property), although it is unclear whether there is an increase in more serious criminal activities during a police strike. However, it can be made to appear life-threatening and "blackmail" imagery can be used to undermine the relationship between the police and the citizens. Town Councils reacted several ways to this gradual erosion of control over their police departments. Some resisted fiercely, compelling their employees to go on strike. Others such as Kentville and Berwick, reached agreement at the eleventh hour. In other towns, more frequently after innovations were established elsewhere, contracts were negotiated in a less conflictual way.

There was an irony in the response of some town politicians to the loss of control over the police department: some opted to disband the municipal police altogether and contract for policing with the RCMP. From a situation in which they had to compromise the degree of control over policing they exercised, these towns moved to a policing style which was almost completely out of their hands. In some cases, some less rational motivations may have been behind this apparently contradictory move. For example, it was one way to end strained relations between a Council and a Police Department, and fire the Chief. In most respects, however, it was an eminently practical move. In the light of the growing independence of policing, a move to what was perceived as the most professional and even-handed policing was reasonable. Even more crucial were monetary considerations: the RCMP contract was a bargain, heavily subsidized by the federal government which was attempting to expand the national role of the federal Force. In many towns in Nova Scotia in the 1970s, then, municipal police departments were disbanded and RCMP officers took over. Such changes took place in Liverpool, Springhill, Pictou, Parrsboro, Antigonish, and elsewhere. The RCMP entered Yarmouth in the midst of a labour dispute with the newly-disbanded police department. The relationship between the RCMP and the Municipal police forces is structured, in part, by this potential for replacement, either temporarily during a labour dispute, or permanently. While this threat has existed for two decades, recently there have been suggestions that the pendulum has begun to

swing in favour of the town police. In this event, however, it is unlikely that change would simply take the form of a return to small, single-municipality-based community police forces. Instead, the direction of change is likely to encompass some degree of regionalization and the place of the RCMP in this scheme is uncertain. This will be discussed further in the concluding section.

RCMP-MPD Relations

Peer relations among police officers are profoundly affected by the socialization into the "brotherhood", as one police officer referred to the bond between officers. In the Valley there were two main aspects to peer interaction: among members of the same force (within the RCMP or MPD) and relations between municipal police and the RCMP. Among the RCMP the majority of constables had few problems with other members, although it was clear that there were exceptions. There were one or two members who "didn't go with the flow" but "we work around them." The few individuals who were seen as less comradely, one claimed, were motivated by "attitude and ego problems." A few members felt that there were more than just a couple of trouble-makers. One said that there were very noticeable cliques. One senior constable complained about the new members, who "won't go that extra foot anymore." In a few cases, clear hostility between two members was apparent. Most members explained such problems as "personality clashes".

Reflecting on a police culture that persists outside work, as many as 50% of the RCMP members claimed that they did not socialize with other members outside the job and kept their working and private lives separate: "It's not conducive to mental health," one said. "I need my eight hours away". The other half said they had between one and three "close friends" among the members although even they claimed that the majority of the friends were outside the Force. One member found that it was hard to get away from the job when you are always talking about it. "To the best of my ability I try to stay away from shop talk in my spare time", one member claimed. This was difficult because non-members were also interested in talking about police work. Part of the difficulty of maintaining a close intra-Force friendship is the transfer policy. Friendships take a while to form. In addition, married members with families develop a wider set of non-police related friendships and community ties.

Police solidarity, then, did not extend as deeply into off-hours as expected. Nevertheless, it was evident on the job. Police were very aware of the need to trust that other members would provide back-up. Despite bad feelings, one constable said, everyone tries to get along. "How could I expect him to come and help me after an open conflict"? asked one constable. Police officers protect each other. No response is quicker or involves more officers that threats to other members. A call for help will bring cruisers to the scene from outside the normal jurisdiction of a detachment. This solidarity extends to relations between the RCMP and MPDs. In small towns with few officers, the Mounties provide assistance when trouble develops. This is despite any hard feelings that exist between members of the two police forces.

One of the foundations of the relationship between the RCMP and local police officers is this role of the federal Force. At the beginning of the ethnographic phase of our study of Valley policing, the threat to MPDs was no longer current. In the Valley region, while many Town Councils during the 1970s gave serious consideration to the RCMP -- in Kentville, for example, plans were well advanced for an RCMP presence during an expected labour dispute -- only Bridgetown contracted with the RCMP prior to the late 1990s. In the 1980s and early 1990s, in most towns with established police forces, the threat that the Council would contract with the RCMP had become remote -- although Police Commission members would sometimes raise the specter of replacement during difficult negotiations. In some of the smaller towns, with police forces of two or three members, however, the threat is real and not necessarily irrational in terms of the demands of the town for policing. The move to regionalization in the 1990s has changed this particular dynamic and led to increasing uncertainty about the future direction of policing in the area.

In Hantsport and Annapolis Royal, with three and two member police departments respectively, some members of Town Council and the Police Commission actively promote RCMP policing. The crucial difference appears to be in the level of service offered the town. Not only would the R.C.M.P likely provide essentially a drive-through service based in the rural detachments in Windsor or Bridgetown, but they would also not provide some of the municipal services performed by the town police, such as parking and traffic control, especially necessary in the summer months. There would be a considerable reduction in police visibility, particularly with foot patrols, most likely a reduced response time, and a diminution in the level of service on low priority police matters. On the other hand, some of the more formal, packaged crime prevention initiatives would be introduced, as noted in the discussion above.

This role of the RCMP as subsidized competition -- the federal Force is not seen as competing evenly with the municipal police -- is exacerbated during police strikes. Rather than have a town or city go un-policed, Town or City Councils temporarily contract with the RCMP for policing during the "emergency". In Dartmouth, for example, a police strike in 1989 was largely unsuccessful because of the level and immediacy of the RCMP response. As soon as the strike began, the RCMP initiated a saturation policing strategy in which officers, temporarily reassigned to Halifax Detachment from all over the province, descended en masse on Dartmouth streets to create a high police presence and prevent a break-down in public order, which had occurred in the beginning of a strike in Halifax a number of years previously. Municipal police officers know that the minute they strike, the RCMP will be in to police their towns, rendering their strike ineffectual and, potentially, threatening their jobs. From the point of view of the RCMP officers involved, it is an opportunity to earn considerable overtime and any inconvenience caused in their relationship with the municipal police is secondary. The RCMP will bill the municipality for the service rendered as strike-breakers, and the municipalities, which temporarily lost some degree of police protection, will be unlikely to be able to recover any money from the provincial government.

The relationship between the federal and municipal forces is also structured in another way by the dependency of the latter on the former. Municipal police departments, which are comparatively limited in resources, rely on the RCMP for assistance in matters requiring specialized services. The relationship of dependency is largely one-way. Identification and forensic services are provided by the RCMP, as are tracking dogs and polygraph testing services. In the small towns, the RCMP is called to provide back-up for municipal officers who encounter disturbances beyond their capacity to control.

Furthermore, some criminal matters are beyond the investigative control of the municipal forces. Despite jurisdictional divisions, in certain criminal code areas, such as homicide and attempted murder, the RCMP is authorized to conduct an investigation in another police jurisdiction. For example, a 1991 case of second degree murder in Kentville, which was first investigated by two Kentville Police officers, was handed over to the GIS section of the Detachment. Furthermore, allegations of criminal wrong-doing in municipal police departments are usually investigated by the RCMP, in the role of an outside and neutral agency. In one case, when Detachment constables investigated a Police Chief, the rank disparity was seen by town police as a sign of disrespect.

The existence of these fundamental structural facts and the resulting competitiveness are two of the principal rocks upon which the relationship between the RCMP and the Municipal Police departments founder. The relationship between the RCMP and the town police occurs along several, in part, distinct lines. In many respects, the Chief of Police is the most likely to express antagonism to the RCMP while many members of municipal police departments have a more ambivalent relationship. In addition, relations between constables in the towns and the RCMP vary from department to department and detachment to detachment for a number of reasons.

Many contacts between MPD and RCMP officers are routine in nature, involving such things as delivering summons and warrants, or maintaining a flow of information. Much of the latter was done on the phone. Calls for assistance were another source of direct contact. RCMP relations with the small town forces were seen by members as generally good, although part of that depended on the attitudes of the Chiefs. In one department, a detachment member said, the Chief "for some reason doesn't like the RCMP. "It's like you're not welcome." In order to save money, an RCMP member alleged, the Chief has instructed his members not to serve warrants if they are one foot outside the town boundary. The Chief's attitude was attributed to his fear that the RCMP may take over policing in the town. In other municipal units, a member said, "You're one of the boys when you walk in."

When asked directly what they thought about the effectiveness and efficiency of MPD officers, most RCMP members were careful in their choice of words. One member termed relations between the two forces as "a touchy situation". Judging from the more informal discussions, most RCMP members did not place local police officers on the same level as themselves. A common reply to the direct question was, "They do the best with what they have", implying that the problem was not with the individual officers but the limitations of town policing. Some more senior members said that the quality of town policing was on the rise. According to one member, ten years ago

municipal police departments in the province “dragged anyone of the street.” Now they have a higher quality of officer. In general, RCMP members felt that police officers in the Halifax Police Department were more comparable to themselves than personnel in the smaller towns.

Officer-to-officer interactions were usually unproblematic. Detachment members evaluated Wolfville Police Department highly, for example: “You couldn’t ask for a better police department for a small town.” Another member said that relations with Wolfville PD were excellent because they called for RCMP assistance only when they truly needed it and the feeling was reciprocal: “They’d give us a hand any time.” Problems were cited in other towns only with specific officers. One MPD officer, several claimed, tended to “cry wolf”. They said that, on several occasions, they had responded to calls for assistance only to find the situation not as described and minor in nature.

Many factors contribute to the antipathy expressed by some Police Chiefs. Beyond the potential threat to the existence of the town police, many municipal police officers perceive RCMP members to be frequently arrogant, condescending and ill-informed about municipal policing. The most inexperienced RCMP constable, from the point of view of the municipal department, feels and acts superior to a veteran town police officer. The two forces are competitive in a way the various town police departments, among themselves, are not. Anecdotally, among the RCMP officers, the least competent members of the local town police forces are used as negative examples from which generalizations are made to municipal policing as a whole.

For a multitude of reasons, then, there is a very ambiguous relationship between the federal and the local police forces. Among the RCMP members, Chiefs are criticized for the gold braid on their uniforms and their status is challenged by referring to the fact that Chiefs of very small departments are members of the Nova Scotia Association of Chiefs of Police, while commanders of large detachments are excluded. For their part, municipal policemen adopt epithets for the “federal” police such as the “saviours of Canada”. A constable came back from court and told of how an RCMP officer had managed to get a conviction on a speeding charge on the basis of a visual estimate of speed. He said that the RCMP member made an estimate of 123 km/hr and had it accepted in court. He suggested that maybe he should change the blue stripe on his leg to a yellow one and maybe then he would get the same treatment from the judges. Another constable described the relationship between town police and the RCMP as “friendly competition”; however, he does feel that he has to compete with the RCMP or that they are competing with him. Much of the anti-RCMP banter is defended as no more than healthy competition. Whatever resentment about “the feds” is indicated by these remarks, the fact is that, at the level of the constables, there is considerable assistance. The most obvious example is the use by the municipalities of the RCMP Identification unit. Kentville at one time had some identification facilities but these were disbanded when a new Chief decided that it would be more economical to use the RCMP than to do this work within the department. Such an option is unavailable in the smaller towns. In Annapolis County, at the constable level, a close relationship has developed over the years between the Middleton Police and the Bridgetown RCMP. This

is structural in origin, reflecting the small size of the Detachment and the concrete need for co-operation in the more populous, but not always well-covered, eastern end of the county. Not only will the RCMP respond to provide back-up (the town police argue that they have established a reputation for only calling for assistance if it is absolutely necessary B contrary to the reputation of some officers from another town), but town officers will investigate traffic matters out-of-town when the RCMP is unavailable.

At the enforcement level, there is some sharing of information and practical assistance rendered in both directions such as at the occasional Valley Investigator's Meetings which involve municipal and RCMP members. In a specific example, an RCMP member requested assistance on a hit and run. He had radioed about an accident and asked if the Berwick Police Department knew the driver who had been involved. A Berwick constable said that he not only knew him but he also knew that his landlord owned a restaurant in Kingston where he might be located. He then showed the RCMP officer to the man's house where they located him. In this case, local knowledge possessed by the town officer was shared with his RCMP counter-part.

Several members of Valley departments commented that the difference between RCMP and municipal policing had narrowed considerably over the last decade. One constable commented that, years ago, Town Council would hire the biggest man on the block as the town enforcer and give him no formal training. The RCMP, on the other hand, had a well established training depot. Over the years, however, the two forces have converged. The RCMP have come closer to municipal style policing in terms of community contacts while municipal policing has come closer to the RCMP in its professionalization and the legalistic style. The former meant that the RCMP had to become more closely involved with the community rather than having a policy of maximum distance for the purposes of enforcement. The Force was now less remote and community contacts were encouraged. In addition, several Valley officers remarked, municipal policing has also changed a great deal over the last 20 years, particularly concerning recruitment and training. The training cadets receive in the Police Academy, they acknowledged, is comparable to the Regina depot, and most municipal police were now as professional as their federal counterparts.

According to another Municipal Police officer, one of the main differences between the RCMP and municipal forces was that, for the RCMP, policy was dictated from above while, for a municipal police force, policy was determined by the Department. He recalled a breathalyzer course offered by the RCMP at Debert which he attended. The instructor kept referring to "the policy", by which he meant RCMP policy. The municipal officer said that he kept reminding him that wasn't the only policy and it did not apply to town police departments. Problems with the RCMP, he said, do not occur at the level of the constables. Rather, it is something bigger (he implied something structural) having to do with their image and the fact that each detachment commander cannot determine his or her own policy.

Aside from the problems other town police departments perceive with individual offices in Berwick, relations are generally cordial between municipal police departments. Kentville Police, for example, will attend the jail to assist Berwick police with the processing of a prisoner. There is also a willingness to go to the assistance of officers

in other towns, although this is not practical in most circumstances. The main exceptions, apart from the sharing of information, are assistance during high-speed chases and raids which require considerable man-power. Drug information is often shared, for example, although the RCMP Drug unit operates in any area of the county, including within the towns, and town police are not always informed of these operations. In Middleton, however, municipal officers are sometimes included in a drug raid on a household in the county.

In conclusion, two main forces are at work in rural and small town policing. A combination of environmental and demographic changes is altering the nature of non-metropolitan communities in the face of wider pressures towards regionalization and modernization. In this context, distinct police forces such as the RCMP, small municipal forces and larger urban police departments are adopting the style and image of community involvement. In many respects the Valley study does indicate that the adoption of Community-based Policing is more rhetoric than reality, more public relations than organizational change. At the same time, this conclusion must be qualified. The ideology does shape some programmes, does open the police department to public influence, and does affect the quality and style of police recruitment. The main weakness of Community-based Policing in the Valley is that such initiatives have not resulted from community demands. The initiative has come from the police department and, hence, it is stamped with the imperatives of organizational control, most clearly in the RCMP.