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**POLICE AND COMMUNITY: SMALL  
TOWN AND RURAL POLICING IN  
THE ANNAPOLIS VALLEY**

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

Between 1987 and 1991 a study of small town and rural policing, funded primarily by the Donner Foundation, was undertaken in the Annapolis Valley region of Nova Scotia. The Annapolis Valley occupies an area extending from Hantsport in the east to Annapolis Royal in the west. Within the Valley three rural detachments (New Minas, Kingston and Bridgetown) are responsible for provincial policing, while six small towns (Hantsport, Wolfville, Kentville, Berwick, Middleton and Annapolis Royal) operate municipal police departments.

The Valley study was one small component of a larger comparative study of policing styles and community linkages focusing on the emergence and evolution of community policing initiatives in urban and non-urban settings. The Valley component of this comparative policing project consisted of four distinct research phases. The first of these was an ethnographic phase, involving participant observation in four municipal police departments and one R.C.M.P. detachment between 1987 and 1989. During this period, interviews were conducted with police officers and managers concerning many aspects of policing, police community relations as well as relations between the R.C.M.P. and the municipal police. Annual crime statistics for the region were obtained from the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. The reports on the individual departments, which appear above, were written during this phase of the project. The following sections summarize and discuss some of the generalizations which were made to compare and contrast R.C.M.P. rural policing with Municipal Policing in small towns.

## POLICE FUNCTIONS

From the foregoing discussion, two basic themes emerge in the study of non-urban policing. One is the degree to which a convergence has occurred as a consequence of Community-Based Policing (C.B.P.) initiatives. The C.B.P. ideology has been adopted both by the small towns in the Valley and by the federal R.C.M.P. The second is the extent to which there are continuing profound differences between municipal policing and R.C.M.P. policing which can be demonstrated in the Valley study.

One way to discuss policing is to classify the varied tasks of the occupation into specific "police functions". During the ethnographic phase of the study of small town and

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<sup>1</sup> This summary was written for inclusion as a chapter in the Final Report prepared for the Donner Foundation funded project, "Police and Community: Policing Styles and Linkages in Canada", Dalhousie University: Institute of Criminology. See the reports, "Kentville Police Department ..." and "Berwick Police Department: Size, Structure, and Organization" (Halifax: Atlantic Institute of Criminology, (1990).

rural policing, interviews were conducted with the R.C.M.P. and municipal officers. In part, they were asked to discuss their job in terms of six police functions: response, enforcement, crime solving, prevention, referrals, and public consultation and education.

### Response

R.C.M.P. members tended to rate police response as their "highest priority". This attribute was also generally shared by most municipal police officers largely because it is part of the ideology of police professionalism. However, municipal police officers were more likely to mean a quick and professional response to the variety of community needs and complaints rather than focusing primarily on responding to criminal code or enforcement matters.

One of the main differences between the municipal police departments and the R.C.M.P. relates to response time. The detachment will get more calls for service during the course of a 24-hour period than the towns (except in rare circumstances, such as during annual town celebrations). Despite the larger complement overall, at any one time there will be only four or five constables on "detachment duty" to respond to public calls. Overall, the population of the detachment area is greater than any of the towns and, while per capita complaints are lower in the rural areas than in small towns, the larger population and the larger officer/population ratio means that the work-load is heavier.

In addition, while response is regarded as a priority, relative to the town police in many cases response time is necessarily longer. This problem with rural policing arises primarily because of the relatively large detachment area. With few officers available, it can take some time before an officer can arrive on a scene. In more difficult situations, such as a gun complaint or potential break and enter in progress, more time passes before sufficient officers can arrive to handle the situation. This difference, however, must be qualified in several ways. First, the detachment is located in the most populous part of the county in which most of the complaints are generated. Officers on patrol, particularly in the evening when response is the practical priority, tend to remain centrally located. In the towns, on the other hand, while response can be quick for routine complaints, there is often only one officer (or even only the Chief) working at a given time. Escorting prisoners to jail, or attending court (which is usually done during regular hours to avoid overtime), or having papers served or authorized, may take the officer out of town. Response time for immediate complaints, than, can be problematic.

In addition, with few town police officers working, in serious situations requiring back-up the police response must await the arrival of an off-duty, on-call officer, although this can be very quick -- in general, officers live in or in close proximity to the town and are encouraged to do so. Some towns put considerable pressure on their employees to live within town limits and, therefore, pay property taxes to the town. Berwick, for example, is most insistent on this policy although attempts to have it written into the by-laws have failed. When Kentville hired its most recent Chief, one of the issues for candidates for the

job concerned whether they would live in or near the town. In general, then, town officers live near their work and, if on call, a second officer can respond quickly. In very serious situations, such as disturbances involving larger numbers of people, the town police must rely on the R.C.M.P. for back-up.

The response is affected by the time of day or night, the season, and by other factors. The nature of the calls is another important variable. Some of these calls require a relatively brief response; others generate "files" which demand follow-up investigation. Working as constable generalists, R.C.M.P. officers spend their time between working on their files and responding to public complaints. At times, they perceive the job as being driven by the vagaries of public demands -- responding to a call, returning to the detachment, responding to another call, and so on.

With respect to the nature of the calls, whether at the municipal police department or the detachment (citizens may call directly or, during the evening, through a dispatcher which, in the case of the R.C.M.P., is in Halifax), the most common calls are answered first by civilians. In some cases, for example involving social agency workers who deal regularly with the police, specific officers are called directly. In the usual situation, the civilian employee screens the calls to determine whether they are police matters and makes an initial decision to refer the matter or hand it over to a police officer.

Many of these calls are determined to be "not police business". The civilian employees screen many of these out. From the point of view of the R.C.M.P. officers, they still take many "nuisance calls" which are not really police matters. Some members conclude that the detachment tends to "pamper" the public in this way. However, despite this perception, municipal police officers in the small towns respond more frequently and directly to such calls. One officer in Middleton responded to a call concerning a pregnant cow which had strayed into the Annapolis River. The officer helped extract the animal from the mud and then assisted the vet in the delivery of the still-born calf. The R.C.M.P. response might be to talk to the complainant on the phone, but take no other action. The officer's discretion is involved in the decision about what kind of action to take and, consequently, there are cases in which roaming cattle or horses, for example, will get a police response. But these are more arbitrary decisions based on the officer's interest or current work-load.

In the towns, the on-duty officer is more likely to respond in person, for example, in cases of dog complaints. Other calls sometimes involve civil matters which do not warrant the laying of charges by the police. In these cases, there is greater public contact and the officer has an opportunity to explain the legalities of the situation. A Video Store owner in Berwick had a VCR returned in damaged condition and called the police. The constable regarded the matter as civil since there was no indication that the damage was wilful or intentional. This conclusion was directly communicated to the owner who understood that, in the absence of charges, no police action was warranted. Store owners are more likely to call the police if they receive a cheque which is returned because of insufficient

funds. In the past, the town police have acted as collection agents. The weight of the authority of the police officer was often sufficient to have the offender pay the bill. Now, however, the police forces in the towns take a more legalistic approach to such frauds, investigating and laying charges if these are warranted, and being less concerned with restitution.

With regard to the complaints which are often regarded as not police business, most importantly, it is the stated policy of small town police departments that all calls from the public will receive a response. This is part of the "service" ethic of policing. In the rural R.C.M.P. detachment, such matters are routinely handled by the civilian staff and officers are bound by a more formalistic procedure distinguishing between matters which are or are not of concern to the police. More practically, the municipal police response reflects the more politically sensitive nature of small town policing. Maintaining the good will of the public is a "preventive" measure in terms of maintaining the image and the security of the department. It should also be noted, however, that the differing responses of R.C.M.P. and town police officers may reflect the different levels of work-load.

### Enforcement

Generally speaking, enforcement refers to the maintenance of order. There are two areas in particular which the targets of police enforcement are: the Motor Vehicle Act and the Liquor Control Act. Much of this work is referred to as "self-generated". With respect to liquor violations, which is the subject of some of the responses to public complaints, in both the towns and detachment area the number of incidents and charges has tended to diminish over the last decade.

With respect to motor vehicles, the main difference is in the structure of policing. The detachment has a Highways Unit which specializes in enforcement. In the towns, which are more likely to have stationary rather than moving radar, constables enforce traffic in the course of routine patrol as part of the work-load. However, consistent with their role as constable-generalists, R.C.M.P. officers have an informal quota system, a "level of expectations", with respect to issuing warnings and charges. Overall, the enforcement level is higher in the detachment than the towns, although much of this can be attributed to the Highway Unit. In some of the towns, there is a wide discrepancy among officers with respect to the issuing of tickets. This reflects different orientations towards enforcement on the part of some small town officers as well as inconsistent management.

One important difference is that fines generated by municipal police officers from the enforcement of these statutes generate money for the towns in a direct fashion: a portion of the fine is returned to the town and is, therefore, a means to generate revenue. Tickets issued by the R.C.M.P. are paid to the province. Indirectly, this money returns to the community because the province does subsidize the costs of this policing. However, there is a considerable difference in the form of this revenue collection and sharing. The

point is that the towns can increase their revenue directly by directing the police department to increase the level of enforcement.

In one case, in which a police department had been successful in expanding its size and resources, part of the justification was that a higher level of enforcement would ensue, which would directly benefit the town. This practice would justify their increased number and offset some of the expanded costs incurred by the town for the new members. For many years, for example, Wolfville had a reputation as being merely a "speed trap" town as the police generated revenue for the municipality.

Despite this immediate effect, however, it is important to note that the level of enforcement is, in some respects, higher in the detachment area than in the towns. This reflects differences in the style of policing (with the R.C.M.P. being more formal), which over-rides other considerations. In addition, although there are fewer officers in the towns, the area of patrol is relatively small -- a situation which tends to generate dissatisfaction among town police officers -- and the town's population is more closely policed than in rural areas. A frequent public complaint about the R.C.M.P. outside New Minas and Coldbrook is that you see them too seldom.

Finally, there is a closer identification between the town police officer and the town including its citizens who may be subject to relatively tighter enforcement. It is difficult to say whether people from out of town are more frequently the targets of enforcement by town police officers. Certainly this would be qualified by the tendency among town police officers to enforce differentially between, for example, substantial citizens and members of the town's underclass. High enforcement may also be detrimental to the business in the town and, indirectly, to town revenues. Middleton, for example, had a reputation among some outsiders as a place to avoid driving through because of the high level of police presence and the fear of being caught in a radar trap. Some business owners claimed that a strict enforcement policy was detrimental to their level of sales.

Police departments are also required to enforce municipal by-laws. Over the last few years, the R.C.M.P. detachment has increased the number of municipal by-law complaints it has investigated, as part of the community relations initiative and the desire to open up policing to a greater degree of public influence. It is still true, however, that municipal police departments do more of this work. The most significant example of this is in Kentville which has established a two-hour parking time limit which the police department enforces. Consequently, officers spend time on each shift making caulk-marks on tires and issuing parking citations. This is not a general rule in the other Valley towns where free parking is deemed an inducement to attract out-of-town customers. In any town the police will sometimes issue other parking infractions, perhaps most commonly in Wolfville. In addition, most police officers will enforce handicapped parking zones.

The R.C.M.P. response to parking violations tends to be less a matter of routine enforcement and to be more sporadic. In response to particular problems, for example, the R.C.M.P. will enforce parking bans on specific streets, issuing large numbers of tickets at

one time. They do so under orders from their supervisors and then say that it will be up to these same supervisors to deal with the resulting public complaints.

One important by-law concerns a prohibition against loitering. Under the direction of town businesses, again principally in Kentville, the municipal police force tries to prevent youth from congregating downtown using mostly informal means but sometimes also laying charges. Such concerns are not as pressing in the other small towns where there are fewer opportunities to "hang-out", although riding bicycles on the sidewalk may be handled informally while on patrol. Generally, such enforcement is not done by the R.C.M.P. In New Minas, however, where youth tend to congregate in areas of mass private property such as malls, citizens have complained about "noise pollution" from youths in cars, in the parking lots after hours. The R.C.M.P. response was to direct members to patrol on foot and lay charges.

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### Prevention

If strict enforcement sometimes seems to go against the interests of both the elite and the citizens of the towns, crime prevention initiatives offer several benefits. There are two main aspects to police crime prevention work. First, the notion of police visibility and presence is, in itself, believed to deter crime. Police patrols, whether on foot or in vehicles, are deemed to be preventive. Second, as part of the move towards what is termed community-based policing, police departments have organized, usually with civilian assistance or initiative, programs designed to prevent specific kinds of crimes. This second aspect will be discussed in more detail below.

Regardless of the type of policing, officers spend part of their time on patrol. In the detachment, the majority of the time in the Highways Unit is spent on random patrol, searching for violations and enforcing the provincial statutes. Among detachment personnel, random patrol (termed "waving the flag") is infrequent, although visibility is increased as officers respond to complaints or conduct investigations in person. There is more random patrolling in the towns. Some of this is foot patrol, which tends to be unpopular among the officers and required by the Chiefs (and demanded by powerful citizens). Such patrol is primarily for visibility and for citizen contacts. There is also a great deal of random patrolling in the police vehicle in small towns. In Wolfville, for example, a

member of the Municipal Council and Police Commission made an issue of the number of kilometres the police vehicles covered in the run of a month. The amount of random patrol is partly caused by the lower level of complaints that require a response and because of the organization of policing in the small towns, which, increasingly, are specializing the investigative function within the limits of their resources.

More significantly, in terms of patrol, are the more focused business and property checks. During the quieter hours of the night shift, R.C.M.P. members will drive around some business and public properties (such as schools), checking to see if they are secure and whether violations are occurring in these areas. It tends to be random and self-generated, and is interspersed with other types of patrol, such as "fishing" for impaired drivers. This is related to the dispersed nature of substantial property in the county. Unless they are responding to an alarm, it is unlikely that this random property checking will entail actually getting out of the vehicle.

In the towns, however, this preventive patrolling is often more systematic. In some towns, officers in the police vehicle are required to check specific properties and record the times of these checks, day and night, on a log sheet. In other towns, these "outer checks" (performed while remaining in the vehicle) are done less systematically, although they are still accorded a priority by the police management. In addition, foot patrol is done and, in the process, door and windows are physically checked. The degree to which this checking is systematized varies from town to town, but it is not as random or self-generated as in the detachment which, as noted, does not require foot patrol.

Another significant difference with respect to patrolling and prevention concerns household property. Citizens can call the R.C.M.P. and provide them with notice about their vacant houses, but it is only kept on file in case a problem arises. In the towns, particularly the smaller towns, the police will systematically check vacant properties, checking windows and door on foot. This work is sometimes denigrated by the officers as "mere security work", but it is very popular among the citizens who believe that their personal property is receiving special police protection.

The second prevention initiative involves the development of strategies designed to reduce the incidence of crime in communities. Initially these programmes were based on urban life experience. Block Parents, Neighbourhood Watch, street-proofing and identifying children were all programmes which emerged from the urban experience of anonymity, fear and social dislocation. Arguably, the experience of residents in small towns and rural areas has been different. In situations of long-term community residence, the practices which such prevention programmes were designed to replicate occurred informally as a matter of course.

On the surface, a road sign indicating: This is a Block parent Community posted along a rural road dotted with farm houses and a few scattered bungalows seems anomalous. In part, however, it also reflects the changing nature of rural life. Changes in communities, shopping, education, living arrangements and employment patterns are

slowly transforming rural Nova Scotia. Such changes are particularly apparent in Kings County which has the third highest population density of any county in the province. In the absence of "real communities", crime prevention programmes provide some degree of organization for the citizens. The actual effectiveness of specific crime prevention initiatives, however, is not generally known and is in need of detailed research.

The other key issue with respect to crime prevention in the County is that these programmes have resulted from initiatives taken by the police, especially the R.C.M.P. In detachment areas with full-time crime prevention officers, considerable effort has gone into mobilizing community resources and heightening awareness of the need for Hallowe'en safety, safe graduations, peer counselling of teens and public education. More significantly, programmes have been developed for rural areas which respond more directly to the perceived needs of the citizens. Rural Watch, for example, expresses the concern over private property and helps to control public access whether on foot or on motorized vehicles in the summer and winter. Coastal watch, while centrally instituted, has involved some citizens in a strategy which has been linked to some of the major drug seizures on the eastern coast of the province.

In addition to the question of the usefulness of specific programmes and the opportunities they present for enhanced police community interaction, there is a difference in the approach to crime prevention work between the R.C.M.P. and the Valley towns. Even though the detachment has a full-time crime prevention co-ordinator, the R.C.M.P. constable generalists are expected to give some prevention talks to community groups and to students in the school which each is assigned. The quantity and quality of this involvement tends to vary according to the inclinations and abilities of the officers, but the expectation of such work is formalized in force policy and in assessments.

Similarly, in the city of Halifax, the Community-Based Policing initiative was meant, in part, to increase the generalist work for the uniformed constables. In the small towns, where presumably there would be more time to promote and organize programmes, crime prevention work tends to become specialized in the hands of the officer who has the greatest proclivity for the work. The actual involvement of the various departments tends to vary according to the philosophy of the Chiefs. Aside from this generalization, however, it was in the area of crime prevention that steps towards regionalization have been taken. With the assistance of a private company, a crime prevention van was purchased for the co-operative use of the six Valley municipal departments. The van is used primarily during ceremonial occasions such as escorting parades and as part of routine crime prevention displays. Like crime prevention initiatives in general, the van tends to be under utilized. In general, most municipal officers have adopted the view that such work is not as significant as enforcement or investigation.

### Crime Solving

If crime prevention tends to be minimized in importance in the police ideology, the

essence of police work is considered to be crime investigation. Among the R.C.M.P., the priority attached to crime solving tends to vary according to the Unit. The General Investigative Services (plain clothes) Unit, for example, would spend the majority of the time on files generated by complaints which come under the Criminal Code or Narcotics Control Act. The Highways Unit, on the other hand, would spend only a small proportion of its time on these duties. In between are the detachment members, the constable-generalists. The majority of these members hold that crime investigation (from the initial complaint, through the investigation, to the court hearing) is their highest priority. This is certainly consistent with police ideology -- crime solving is what is most often meant by "real police work". Detachment members claimed that between 40% and 80% of their time was spent in such investigative work. Among detachment members, many indicate that the majority of this work involves "run-of-the-mill" cases which are minor in nature. Similar to their concern about having to do non-police work, some suggested that many of their files were investigated to "coddle" the public; they were important only to the complainants.

Detachment members carry between 20 and 50 open files; the number of files which a member has is partly a result of her or his own initiative. While open, not all of these are active, that is, under investigation at that time. The number of these is smaller, between five and twelve. The workload is sufficiently heavy that officers are expected to continue their investigations in the evening, and one officer is designated in this role so that he or she will be free from answering public order or other complaints during that evening.

This level of workload and perception of time spent on investigations is considerably higher than among the municipal police officers. While they would agree that crime solving was a high priority, relatively less of their time is spent in such investigations. This reflects both the actual level of occurrences, which is smaller and, more importantly, the way work is divided in the towns. In those towns with a G.I.S. constable, the bulk of investigative work is handled by one member. In Kentville, the G.I.S. section handles about the same number of files as a busy member of the detachment. In Middleton, the plain clothes detective has sufficient work to justify the position. The other side of the coin of this tendency in small towns to specialize is that other officers become primarily patrol officers, who respond to situations, investigate as far as they can (the plain clothes officer not usually available at night), and then hand the case over to the G.I.S. in the morning.

## **POLICE COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

R.C.M.P. officers, especially those with experience elsewhere (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 survey which was 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 R.C.M.P. as well as the town police. In general, with municipal policing, there seems to be a variation concerning this positive public attitude to the police which varies according to the size of the municipality, with the larger towns scoring somewhat lower than the rural R.C.M.P. or the smaller towns.

It is ironic to point out that, with respect to the R.C.M.P., there are "good relations" with the public on the one hand but that one of the most frequently voiced complaints is that officers are seldom seen. The issue becomes the quality of the relationship.

R.C.M.P. 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. 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 degree to which members of the R.C.M.P. 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], R.C.M.P. officers are less likely to have a career in one location but are expected to be geographically mobile. In 1989, however, 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 1991, however, given a considerable turn-over of complement and the accumulation of younger, less experienced members, the quality of citizen relations, overall, decreased.

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, a more detached and legalistic policing may result. However, regardless of the origins of the officers, there is a different public perception of the R.C.M.P. and the town officers. While the federal force has become a national symbol, and the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. in the area are treated. It is rare that an R.C.M.P. member has to resort to physical confrontations. This generalization is less valid when other parts of the province are used as the comparison

point. For example, R.C.M.P. members are likely to be treated with less respect and are 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 part. 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 police disrespect may be more overt in relations with the municipal police. The derogatory term "town clowns" is seldom directed at R.C.M.P. officers (who don't work with town contracts in the county). Routine stops may also become more confrontational. In Middleton, for example, a motorist stopped routinely for a tail-light simply took off 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).

## **QUALITY OF WORK AND JOB CONTROL**

In Halifax, community based policing has meant a larger patrol area, more work demands, more job diversity, but also greater accountability and closer supervision (Clairmont, 1988). Clairmont has identified 18 aspects of the working conditions of constables in Halifax in order to assess the consequences of Community Based Policing in that city. Many of these elements can also be utilized to compare the quality of working life experienced by R.C.M.P. officers and municipal police constables.

One of the major day-to-day differences in routine policing between town and rural police concerns the size of the patrol area. This issue has been addressed above in terms of response time. From the point of view of the working constable, however, the size of the patrol area is one key advantage of rural policing. Although R.C.M.P. Constables on Detachment sometimes feel that public complaints operate as strings which pull them from place to place, there is much random patrol, particularly in the evening, and place and times are determined autonomously and subject to very little routine monitoring. A car can be off the radio for twenty minutes and, until radio contact is again made, its location is not precisely known. Some constables have been known to "disappear" for a considerable time. The main check on this is done through the files, the case load and investigations undertaken. Consequently, career-conscious members balance their activities and operate areas known to require preventive patrol or spots which generate more checks and violations. At times, management will direct special attention to certain villages or streets, but such directions are not very intrusive. In short, R.C.M.P. members experience considerable autonomy on patrol.

In the towns, the confined geography and stipulations from Town Councils have

the effect of restricting the local officers to the Town. This is justified in terms of serving the immediate tax payers, and citizens do take note of departures from this requirement, informing the Council or the Chief. In one town, for example, citizens expressed concern that the town police were taking long coffee breaks at a cafe outside of town. This more circumscribed patrol area contributes to the overly routine nature of many of the duties of town police officers. In some towns, certain exceptions are made and streets out of town are designated as appropriate exit and entry points. In another town, however, which is fairly distant from the R.C.M.P. detachment for the County, and in which town police provide services in the rural area at the behest of the R.C.M.P., not only this close relationship but also the opportunity to police outside of town enhances the working conditions to a degree. Even here, however, the fiscal crisis has meant that such assistance cannot be provided if it means overtime (for example, the use of a town police officer as a breathalyser technician). With respect to patrol, then, the patrol within the town may largely be random, but the choices are relatively fewer.

The question of work demands is complicated because the issue is whether the demands are optimal. Demands, then, can be both too frequent and too infrequent. In the R.C.M.P. rural detachment, the calls for service are relatively high -- the detachment has one of the heavier work loads in the province, as determined by average cases and workloads per member. This leads to a sense of being over-worked, or as losing control over the working day (being directed by dispatch, for example, or by calls for service). However, there is a real question about how absolutely heavy the load is. On the one hand, there is a sense that investigations should be thorough -- and the results will be reflected in the case files and, later, in assessments. Certainly, in many cases promotions have gone to constables who demonstrated considerable investigative doggedness or highly motivated self-generated work and, hence, long hours, high productivity and high assessments. On the other hand, much goes on during an 8-hour shift which, at best, is routine patrol and may involve opportunities for non-police tasks, even leisure activities.

In the towns, for a combination of reasons, including greater visibility and (in the larger municipalities) closer direct supervision, the work-load may either not be heavy enough -- too much dead time, an insufficient number of complaints -- or be overly routine. Business checks, downtown foot patrol, checking private residences, enforcement of parking regulations, and other such duties may be time-consuming, and therefore keep the officer "busy", but be regarded as overly routine, uninteresting and tend to lower morale. Certainly, the investigators in the Valley towns have a steady case load. This work is generally seen as desirable, not only because it is primarily day-shift but also because, in the midst of cases which are still routine (bad cheques, theft from automobiles, damage to property), there are opportunities to investigate more complex cases. In small towns, however, the creation of this investigative position is at the expense of converting the other officers primarily to routine patrol, a tendency to reproduce the patrol/C.I.D. division of a large, urban police force into a small town department.

In the rural areas and small towns, job tension is generated by a number of factors. For example, relations with the public can make policing tense. In the Valley, however, there are few visible minorities, greatly reducing the potential tension of inter-racial policing. Similarly, the Valley is not noted for crimes of violence, particularly involving guns or serious assaults. While policing is potentially a dangerous occupation, officers in the Valley seldom encounter situations in which the potential threat materializes in a substantial way. That is not to say that over their career, officers cannot recall situations of immediate danger, only that the probability of such an occurrence in the Valley is relatively lower than many other places in the province.

Tension can be generated even in less potentially dangerous situations when police and citizens interact. As noted above, the R.C.M.P. officers may have fewer direct contacts with citizens which may reduce this potential source of tension. This is now less frequently the case, however, as the R.C.M.P. has developed a brochure to assist citizens to place complaints (members complain that the force is actually soliciting complaints) and developed a review process which has been used elsewhere in Nova Scotia although not yet in the Valley. Even so, it appears that there may be a greater propensity for citizens in a town to complain about the municipal police force, placing officers under closer scrutiny, and thereby increasing tension. To the extent that the town police are treated with less respect or less fear, relations with citizens may also be more tense and threatening.

In general, however, job tension in the Valley is not generated so much by citizen encounters or complaints, but by internal work relations, particularly with supervisors. In the towns, tension is generated between some officers and the Chief. It is a very close working relationship in small towns, and there are few buffers. In each town which has been policed for some time by the same Chief and the same officers, certain relations are very difficult and a vicious cycle of low motivation, low productivity, strained relations with management, and threats of discipline is set into motion. In some cases, there are clashes in the style of policing between officers who exhibit an informal type of policing and Chiefs who are trying to establish more legalistic norms. For Chiefs, job tension is generated with respect to relations with political authority. While some Chiefs have what they regard as a supportive council, and newly appointed Chiefs often have a relatively freer hand, there is always the likelihood of having to justify policing matters publicly to elected governments. In some cases, Chiefs have to maintain constant vigilance and marshal defensive arguments to maintain their department's resource and manpower. This makes the job of police Chief particularly stressful.

Within a department job tension is also created by relations among the officers. In some cases, officers who are more highly favoured by Chiefs -- for a variety of reasons, from being more productive to being more obedient -- have difficulties with police officers who are not. Whatever perquisites are available in departments, from preferred access to training to accommodation about shift changes, can be differentially handed out by the Chief. Some officers also differ markedly in their style of policing, and conflicts can arise

on the job between officers who handle difficult situations in different ways. Again, in small departments, animosity between officers over real and imagined faults and slights can make working relations difficult, and increase job tension.

Many of these same factors are also evident in the R.C.M.P. although the high degree of organizational loyalty tends to limit these disagreements. However, working in a large, bureaucratic organization itself generates complaints and problems of morale. In many respects, problems of supervision noted above with respect to the municipal departments are also common in R.C.M.P. detachments. In an organization which has produced scores of procedural manuals, it is paradoxical to note that arbitrary management is also seen as problematic. In some cases, for example, supervision is still primarily militaristic, and is compounded by the tendency of middle managers who have risen from the ranks to utilize less sophisticated techniques of control -- the slam-the-door mentality as well as other forms of arbitrary intimidation. Members complain that senior supervisors are inconsistent, practice favouritism (which affects assessments), and primarily offer only negative inducements.

The phenomenon of the career constable is the most visible symbol of a widespread dissatisfaction with the system of assessment and promotion. It is believed, for example, that 20-year constables are now beyond promotion. This is greatly in contrast to their expectations on first joining the force, according to which they would have had their "hooks" in half that time. While members can apply for specific promotions, there are still deep feelings that career advancement is hindered by a number of capricious circumstances and that the most qualified member does not always receive the benefit. Furthermore, there are a number of fast-track possibilities such as the movement to detachment work from the now disbanded Marine Division. Male officers frequently allege that female constables will be fast-tracked, for example, being promoted and transferred to depot in Regina as trainers. Career profiles, promotions and transfers comprise a considerable amount of the informal discussion among members.

During the four-year observation period, there was considerable mobility among personnel in the Detachment. Part of this reflects the policy of frequent transfers. Early in their careers, most senior members reported being transferred, on average, about every three years. Overall this rate appears to have slowed down. In the Detachment in 1987 there was an accumulation of senior constables. Consequently over the course of the next four years there was considerable lateral movement and several promotions.

Of the 26 original members, which represented some under-staffing -- two below complement -- eleven (42%) were still in the detachment on 1 July 1991. This does not represent the full extent of movement, however. Within a detachment there are several units, such as Highway Patrol or G.I.S. and members are frequently re-assigned from one posting to another. Of the eleven original members remaining four years later, only two were in the same position they occupied in 1987. Seven others were re-assigned to other units within the detachment at least once -- one member was posted to three different

units in four years. For the other two original members, one had been promoted but remained in the unit and another was promoted and re-assigned to another unit in the detachment.

Fifteen original (in 1987) members (58%) had left the detachment by 1 July 1991. Of these, three retired, seven were promoted and transferred and five were transferred. Over the four-year period, 49 members had served in the detachment. Of the 23 members who came after July 1987, 15 remained in their initial position four years later, four were re-assigned to other duties in the detachment, two were promoted and transferred and two were transferred. Eleven of these new members in the detachment came from Depot in Regina. Ten of these were still in the detachment indicating a considerably more junior complement that had been the case when the study began. As of July 1991, then, there were 30 members out of a total complement of 32; two other members have been transferred in but were not yet present in the detachment.

Whether this amount of movement is typical of an R.C.M.P. detachment cannot be answered, other than to note that there had been, up to 1987 or 1988, considerably fewer promotions and transfers in the detachment but, as the complement of senior constables was replaced by newer recruits, the character of the members changed considerably. Despite this amount of movement, it is still the case that issues of transfer, promotion or job re-assignment are fundamental issues producing dissatisfaction with the quality of the work in the R.C.M.P. Any on-the-job difficulties and grievances are compounded by the absence of a genuine grievance policy. There is a Divisional Representative to whom complaints can be made, but the D.D.R. has little more than an advisory or consultative role. This is quite distinct from the procedure followed by the town departments which, in the Valley, are all unionized in the Police Association of Nova Scotia. It is particularly in the area of some small job control which is gained through the collective bargaining process that unions have given municipal policemen a benefit that is less evident in the R.C.M.P.

On the other hand, with respect to wages and benefits, the R.C.M.P. reaps the rewards without having to negotiate. With the standard being established by some large municipal forces (such as Metro Toronto), the R.C.M.P. basically keeps pace with pay demands in the country. The R.C.M.P. officer, within three years of service, climbs to the plateau of first-class constable and reasonably high pay, between 40,000 and 50,000 dollars annually. This is at least 10,000 dollars more than the pay received by municipal police officers, and this rate tends to vary between towns. This is the source of some resentment among municipal police officers who argue that they do the same work for considerably less pay.

Furthermore, the R.C.M.P. has a very attractive set of benefits, from free university tuition to dental care, which is unavailable to the municipal officers. For the town police, major benefits are available through the Union, but important benefits such as pension plans and disability schemes are considerably superior in the federal force. Benefits also

vary according to town and according to the quality of the relationship between the Police Commission and Town Council and the officers and their union.

## **POLITICAL CONTROL AND POLICE MANAGEMENT**

Arguably, it is in the relationship between policing and the local civic authorities where the greatest differences arise between the town forces and the R.C.M.P. 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 the three-tiered system noted above: favouritism towards the local elites, the general 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 relatively 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. For example, in Kentville, Chief Brown 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 Chief activists responsible for introducing a Police Act to the House of Assembly. The resulting Police Act in Nova Scotia included major provisions in each of these areas. The Chief of Police could only be fired for just cause and the police department was to operate at arms length from the Town Council, through the creation of Police Commissions in the Towns 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. The Town 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 do. 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, the town sought an independent review from 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 guidelines of 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 or 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 R.C.M.P. 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, members of the elite are unsympathetic to the priorities of the local police force and seek 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. Despite the Police Act, then, there is still a considerable difference in the relationship between the town police forces and municipal politics which makes municipal policing different from the R.C.M.P.

As the "detachment" model implies, the R.C.M.P. 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, sometimes 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 R.C.M.P. detachment commander is not subject with respect to the local politicians, 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 R.C.M.P., on the other hand, the shoe tends to be on the other foot. The town (or province) contracts for police service and the level of service provided is conditional on the amount of money paid. The R.C.M.P. is only minimally accountable to the local politicians in terms of the actual policing in the town. For example, the detachment may not enforce by-laws. Shift schedules and hours of coverage, although subject to negotiation in terms of the level of the contract, are largely determined by the detachment commanders.

That is not to say that the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P., the local political elite is comprised of citizens; demands from citizens are taken into consideration in the policing routine, but informally and always at the discretion of the detachment. As the R.C.M.P. 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 budget allocations. When the R.C.M.P.

was growing in size and expanding its role in the country, in the 1960s and 1970s, expenditures could be justified on professional grounds. Modern equipment, bullet-proof vests, replacement vehicles, even the number of personnel were more easily rationalized and obtained. During the 1980s, 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 R.C.M.P. has begun to restructure overtime, reduce the number and distance of transfers, maintain and repair rather than replace police cruisers, and even limit the number of applicants in basic training. In these moves the cause 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 the recent negotiations with the provinces over the cost to the provinces of R.C.M.P. 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, has been a political hot potato ever since and considerable energy is exerted by the Police Chief in lobbying Police Commission and Council members on behalf of the existing force and developing arguments to refute demands for a reduction in services.

While the recent attempts to reduce policing and make it more efficient are rooted in the perceptions of the need for tighter fiscal management and allocation, and some of the consequences are the same for the municipal and R.C.M. police, the way these cut-backs work are different because of the greater dependence among town police on local politicians. In the R.C.M.P., cut-backs are handled within the force; in the towns, the budget of the police force is open to minute political scrutiny and fiscal initiatives are largely out of the hands of the police department.

## **UNIONIZATION**

The advent of police unionization has altered the prerogatives of police management and the relationship of police officers to the towns. The argument mentioned above, that the Chief was hired at the discretion of the Council, also suggests 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 R.C.M.P. 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 with respect to 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 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 R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. 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 demand for rights won by other workers, then, arose in the rank-and-file among the R.C.M.P. and was relatively easily granted by the Canadian state which recognized 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 the 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. R.C.M.P. 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 which allows members, while still comparatively young, to embark on another career and have two incomes. Political complacency is maintained by relatively generous wages and benefits.

Small town policing, on the other hand, is relatively poorly paid. This is certainly 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 force since recruitment into municipal policing has become a more financially rewarding occupation. In some large cities, wages and benefits rival the R.C.M.P. In small town Nova Scotia, while the salaries are as much as 25% lower, compared with 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 R.C.M.P. 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 employees anywhere, town councils have resisted this structure of 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. Other union locals, such as those in 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 R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. officers took over. Such changes took place in Liverpool, Springhill, Pictou, Parrsboro, Antigonish, and elsewhere. The R.C.M.P. entered Yarmouth in the midst of a labour dispute with the newly-disbanded police department. The relationship between the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. in this scheme is uncertain.

### **R.C.M.P.- M.P.D. RELATIONS**

One of the foundations of the relationship between the R.C.M.P. and local police officers is this role of the federal force. In the Valley region, while many town councils during the 1970s gave serious consideration to the R.C.M.P. -- in Kentville, for example, plans were well advanced for an R.C.M.P. presence during an expected labour dispute -- only Bridgetown and Digby contracted with the R.C.M.P. While in most towns with established police forces, the threat that the Council will contract with the R.C.M.P. has become remote -- although Police Commission members will sometimes raise the spectre of replacement during difficult negotiations -- in some of the smaller towns, with police forces of two or three members, the threat is real and not necessarily irrational in terms of the demands of the town for policing.

For example, in Hantsport and Annapolis Royal, with three and two member police departments respectively, some members of Town Council and the Police Commission actively promote R.C.M.P. policing. The crucial difference is in the level of service offered the town. Not only would the R.C.M.P. likely provide only 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 respect to foot patrols, most likely a reduced response time, and a diminution in the level of service on low priority police matters.

This role of the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. response. As soon as the strike began the R.C.M.P. 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 an overwhelming 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. Similarly, municipal police officers know that the minute they strike, the R.C.M.P. will be in to police their towns, rendering their strike ineffectual and, potentially, threatening their jobs. From the point of view of the R.C.M.P. officers involved, it is an opportunity to earn considerable overtime and any inconvenience caused in their relationship with the municipal police is secondary. The

R.C.M.P. will bill the municipality for the service rendered as strike-beakers and the municipalities, which temporarily lost some degree of police protection, will be unlikely to seek 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 R.C.M.P. for assistance in matters requiring specialized services. The relationship of dependency is largely one-way. Identification and forensic services are provided by the R.C.M.P., as are tracking dogs and polygraph testing services. In the small towns, the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. 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 G.I.S. section of the detachment rather than handled cooperatively. Furthermore, allegations of criminal wrong-doing in municipal police departments are usually investigated by the R.C.M.P., in the role of an outside and neutral agency.

The existence of these fundamental structural facts and the resulting competitiveness are two of the principal rocks upon which the relationship between the R.C.M.P. and the Municipal Police departments founder. The relationship between the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. while many members of municipal police departments have a more ambivalent relationship. In addition, relations between constables in the towns and the R.C.M.P. vary from department to department and detachment to detachment for a number of reasons.

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 R.C.M.P. members to be frequently arrogant, condescending and ill-informed. From the point of view of the municipal police, the most inexperienced R.C.M.P. constable 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. Among the R.C.M.P. officers, the least competent members of the town police force 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 with the federal police force. Among the R.C.M.P. members, descriptions of incompetent municipal police officers and applied stereotypically to the entire category. 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 R.C.M.P. officer had managed to get a conviction on a speeding charge on the basis of a visual estimate of speed. He said that the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. as "friendly competition" -- he feels that he has to compete with the R.C.M.P. or that they are competing with them. Much of the anti-R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. Identification unit. Apparently Kentville at one time had some identification facilities but this was disbanded when the new Chief decided that it would be more economical to use the R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. This is structural in origin, reflecting the small size of the detachment and the concrete need for cooperation in the more populous, but not always well-covered eastern end of the county. Not only will the R.C.M.P. 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), but town officers will investigate traffic matters out of town when the R.C.M.P. is unavailable or under-staffed.

At the enforcement level, there is some sharing of information and practical assistance rendered in both directions, for example, at the Valley Investigator's Meetings which involve municipal and R.C.M.P. members. In a specific example, an R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P. officer to the man's house where they located him. In this case, local knowledge possessed by the town officer was shared with his R.C.M.P. counter-part.

Several members of Valley departments commented that the difference between R.C.M.P. and municipal policing had narrowed considerably over the last decade. One constable commented that, years ago, the town would hire the biggest man on the block as the town enforcement officer and give him no formal training. The R.C.M.P., on the other hand, had a well established training depot. Over the years, however, the two forces have converged. The R.C.M.P. have come closer to municipal style policing while municipal policing has come closer to the R.C.M.P.. The former meant that the R.C.M.P. 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. The R.C.M.P. was coming to practice a style of policing which resembled, more and more, town policing. In addition, one Valley officer remarked, municipal policing has also changed a great deal also over the last 15 years, particularly with respect to recruitment and training. The training cadets receive in the Police Academy, he said, is as good as the Regina depot, and municipal police were now as professional as their federal counterparts.

According to another Municipal Police officer, one of the main differences between the R.C.M.P. and municipal forces was that, for the R.C.M.P., policy was dictated from above while, for a municipal police force, policy was determined by the Department. He recalled a breathalyser course offered by the R.C.M.P. at Debert which he attended. The instructor kept referring to "the policy", by which he meant R.C.M.P. 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 R.C.M.P., 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 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 complete 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.

## COMMUNITY POLICING

The appropriate style for policing a community is shaped to a considerable extent by the characteristics of that community. In so far as "community-based-policing" emerged in Britain and the United States as a new, reformed model of policing, it reflected the desires of communities which felt excluded from the mainstream, unrepresented by the apparent political consensus, and subject to inappropriate and excessive police control. In increasingly multicultural societies, urban neighbourhoods consisting of a variety of ethnic and minority groups, reflect an increasingly heterogeneous population and function to maintain social and cultural diversity. From many such conglomerates a "community consciousness" has emerged, articulated in demands for control over language rights, schooling and social services.

The issue of policing has been paramount in this emerging consciousness. To the extent the police represent cultural values at variance with community standards and do not reflect minority composition or sensitivity, socially conscious groups have emerged demanding greater police accountability to the community. The most prominent case

occurs where the divergence between the minority and national culture is most at variance -- in Canada, in aboriginal communities. The extent to which actual "urban communities" of a relatively stable ethnic and cultural character exist is unclear empirically. Nevertheless, vocal minority groups do have legitimate claims to make on the police, and police must, in part, be accountable to legitimate community concerns.

This contemporary sense of divergent communities -- subcultures within the Canadian mosaic -- does not adequately reflect many parts of rural and small town Canada, particularly in the Atlantic region. The primary exceptions are First Nations communities and, outside Halifax County, small pockets of African-Canadians. While rural police (the R.C.M.P.) represent national law and national cultural standards and, consequently, still negotiate these standards in communities with divergent norms, what is distinctive about rural life in the region is becoming more difficult to specify. Certainly there are still some social norms among some groups in the Annapolis Valley which are at variance with national policing. As in many more culturally isolated small rural communities, domestic violence is relatively common. Over time, victims become victimizers in an underground system of authority maintenance and control. Disputes between neighbours have sometimes been handled informally by the disputants -- including the burning of property, a technique for generating fear in the community -- rather than formally, through the criminal justice system. Rather than seek police assistance following an assault, for example, victims may retaliate privately. These standards reflect a time when formal policing was absent and community control was handled among people who knew each other well. Fundamentally, however, as national cultural symbols and norms intrude on small rural communities, as students are bussed out to larger, consolidated schools, rural cultural standards are being transformed. This process has been well developed in the Annapolis Valley and, particularly, in Kings County.

Small towns in the region still tend to be culturally homogeneous and community policing does not connote demands for accountability in pluralistic neighbourhood settings. Small town policing, then, still reflects elements of the specific model, identified, for example, by Murphy (1986). According to this model -- which Murphy's analysis demonstrates is currently undergoing change -- small town policing is integrated into community life; policemen are recruited from the town on a more personal than professional basis, police a community in which they have matured into adulthood, and work informally, under the scrutiny of local elites and intrusive neighbours. Much of this model remains applicable. However, two decades of community change and professionalization of policing have altered the relationship. Just as the police force was severed from direct manipulation by town elites, so too has policing been separated from community norms. That is what is meant by the development of a more legalistic policing style.

In this situation, the same assumptions about policing cannot be made, or they

cannot be made to the extent proposed in the model. Rather than it being the case that in small towns communities are struggling to have policing become more representative of community norms and values -- as is the case in urban neighbourhoods concerned about the representativeness of policing -- community-based policing initiatives in small towns are, at least in part, an attempt to re-create a community within which policing is an integrated component. This is most clearly seen in crime prevention initiatives which elicit community support to help alter the conditions which create certain kinds of law breaking. In this process the "community" comes to mean, in practice, the "business community"; community norms are taken, by default, to mean generally applicable "middle class" values; and community involvement in policing is defined within the terms of a professional and legalistic police force.

The argument about changed community and the narrow focus of community-based policing emerges more clearly in rural policing. More recently, with the advent of Community-Based policing and the adoption of this form of policing nationally by the R.C.M.P., the traditional image has been somewhat modified in the direction of a service model. This development, however, is not adequately conceptualized using Wilson's typology, in which the service model is described as a policy according to which police "intervene frequently but not formally" and "there is a high level of apparent agreement among citizens on the need for and definition of public order but in which there is no administrative demand for a legalistic style". This style incorporates "informal, non-arrest sanctions" (Wilson, 1970, p. 200). With the R.C.M.P., the givens of legalistic policing, bureaucratic management and organizational control shape what community-based initiatives are undertaken. Within the community-oriented initiatives of the federal force, the imperatives of the R.C.M.P. are paramount. Community contributions to crime prevention and the advisory role assigned to the community are considerably circumscribed. The initiate, organizational impetus and definition of what is appropriate arises from a centralized policy. Community Associations, for example, have arisen through police initiative; members are hand-picked and representative of community groups or interests in only the most tenuous fashion; and the general guidelines are formalized by force policies. The major qualification to this assertion is that, once formed, it is possible that such Committees may develop into a forum for debates about policing styles and practices. They could become a channel for complaints and grievances in a situation where there are no other channels, given the autonomous functioning of R.C.M.P. detachments, from the community or local politics. This is only likely, however, in situations where there is an identifiable "community" with a clear group interest which is affected by policing. Such a development, at least in the rural areas with which we are familiar, seems unlikely.

Not all towns in the Valley, and certainly not in Nova Scotia, fit this notion of changed or lost "community", professional policing, and restricted community-based policing. The Marshall Commission report on policing argued that the small town model

was still applicable. This is especially true if the focus of attention is the difference between small town and urban forces. Within a focus on rural and small town policing, however, the exceptions, disparities and particularisms assume increased significance. Towns vary considerably along most of the key dimensions.

It is difficult to categorize this model in terms of one of Wilson's three ideal types. Rather, small town policing consists of a mixture of characteristics from these styles, with a more recent development towards a somewhat more legalistic policing style. In Berwick, for example, the present Chief declared his aim to be the construction of "a department which will provide a basic, preventative type of policing" for the town. This entailed both high visibility and "low key preventative policing", emphasizing the protection of public property, civil rights, and the citizens' right to come to the police for advice. It was to be a "community involved" style. (Berwick Police Department, Annual Report, 1982). Policing was to be pro-active, visible, and accountable to the community. Given the more confined style of policing a small area and the mutual knowledge of citizens and police, the public and private lives of small town policemen come under close scrutiny. Observation also suggests that this familiarity is often associated with lack of respect. Males in the towns, for example, are more likely to physically challenge town police officers than members of the R.C.M.P. detachment.<sup>2</sup>

Town police officers are generally expected to have close relations with the majority of the people in the town. This is one of the benefits of municipal policing in a small town that has both negative and positive aspects. In addition to the close scrutiny of their daily lives, police officers face the problem of dealing with the same offending population over an extended time and the difficulties this causes them even off-hours. In theory, close contacts lead to quick information being supplied by the public on offences in the town. 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. However, it is difficult for a policeman to live a private life in a small town. "People in the town are always watching you, one officer said, which is why it is better to live outside of town."

Similarly, the Kentville department employs a service-oriented style of policing. Shortly after an Inquiry by the Nova Scotia Police Commission into the Kentville department led to the dismissal of the then-Chief McRae, the style of policing became increasingly service-oriented. Annual department reports prior to this time reflect an order-maintenance and enforcement emphasis. As town policing became more professionalized in the 1970s, Chiefs tended to be hired externally. Equipment was up-

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<sup>2</sup> In this connection, however, it should be noted in some small R.C.M.P. detachments in Nova Scotia, recruits out of depot are also expected to establish their reputations with the local male culture.

graded, and a more intrusive style of policing was adopted. In Berwick for example, a Chief hired from Ontario had the police shot-gun mounted in the cruiser, visible above the dash. The present service-style reflects a partial return to the "community" model, re-emphasizing community contacts, and service. The Chief in Kentville, for example, wishes to change the title of the Police Department to the Police Service, a symbol for the marriage of professional and community policing.

With the hiring of Chief Innes, and the current Chief, the Kentville department embarked on a more proactive, community-based policing style which greatly increased the number of hours of community service work and led to the introduction of crime prevention programmes (Kentville Police Department, Annual Report, 1986, p. 2). In 1989, Chief Crowell wrote:

All reports indicate to date that there is a greater community involvement in policing by the residents of the Town of Kentville. Community participation has become a necessary ingredient for modern-day policing to be effective and I thank the residents of the Town of Kentville for their cooperation and support throughout the year. (Annual Report, 1989, p. 1)

According to Chief Crowell the priority of the Kentville police department is community-based policing. Manning (1989) defines community based policing in terms of a four-level model, namely ideological, programmatic, pragmatic and organizational. Community-based policing (C.B.P.) as an ideological system is consistent with the traditional small town policing model. Manning asserts that "communities in previous times were more unitary, the police were a more legitimate and accepted part of communities" (1989, p. 396). How much of this ideology is based on wishful thinking, a return to simpler times, or a utopian rationalization as Manning notes, is unclear.

On a second level C.B.P. embraces a programmatic facet which serves to bridge the gulf between ideology and reality in the sense that it furnishes the vehicles that "restore police "closeness" to the community" (Ibid.). Analogous procedures are evident in Kentville, for example, the accent on foot patrol and the bicycle patrol which was inaugurated in 1991.

In a pragmatic sense C.B.P. endeavours are, in part, responses to community discontent and expectations traceable to events which generated the Kentville Inquiry (1983 - 1984) and its aftermath. Lastly, C.B.P. means the development of organizational structures to facilitate specific community programs. In Kentville the manifestation of C.B.P. in terms of an organizational structure has been the development of a community relations coordinator to systematize various crime prevention programs and departmental activity.

Clearly in Kentville the adoption of a community-based policing model is reflected in the language and dialogue of the department, especially as it relates to the Police Commission and Town Council. Further, most members of the department appear

comfortable with this style of policing and view its implementation as an advancement. This is truer of the younger members, recruited in part according to criteria which reflect a more community-oriented style, than it is true of the veterans of the police department.

Policing in Kentville accentuates a "proactive" strategy, "maximizing observations of and interventions in the community" (Sims, 1988, p. 98). Necessarily, proactive policing must incorporate a reactive component; nevertheless, proactive policing exceeds the response-orientation of a reactive style. One manifestation of the proactive bent of the Kentville force is the emphasis of foot patrol and germane, self-generated duties in the central, downtown core of the town. According to Sims (1988), U.S. studies indicate that there is little correlation between foot patrol and decreased crime; however, foot patrol was preferred by citizens and local business people. In Kentville foot patrol is an indication of the department's commitment to highly visible, service-oriented policing and is well received by local business and political interests.

Research in Canadian and American police departments indicate the definition of C.B.P. is obfuscated by the numerous interpretations, the broad ideological basis and the variant number of programs defined as "community-based". In Kentville the Department's C.B.P. style is "embedded in current political sentiments" and reflects public expectations, concerns and priorities. Without doubt, however, the public relations aspect of community-based policing is a crucial component of the model.

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, police forces as otherwise distinct as the R.C.M.P., 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 R.C.M.P.

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