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Community Emergent

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by

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I am convinced that communal life can flourish only if it exists for an aim outside of itself. Community is viable if it is the outgrowth of a deep involvement in a purpose which is other than or outside that of being a community.

Bruno Bettelheim

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Preface
**On Rationalism,
Economic, or Other, the Social Stop-Gap**

Reason is the organ of calculation, of planning; it is neutral in regard to ends,...a purposeless purposiveness which might then be attached to all ends.

Enlightenment is Totalitarianism

Adorno & Horkheimer

~

The spontaneous affections of the heart, the hatreds of the moment, the comely and honourable ways of tradition are all forbidden. Reason illuminates all being with a shadowless and clinical light before which fly poetry, faith and myth. One does not even find in the merciless light of reason the consolation of injustice: Reason is its own justification, the legitimator of its own necessities.

D.G. MacRae

(on Max Weber on Rationalism)

~

This thesis was commenced in the early part of 1991: The thought processes that led to it, and the experiences that gave birth to them began some years before then.

The motives for the work that accrued over that time, and as the thesis was underway, were principally to understand the phenomenon of community; to be able to work with it more productively; that remains the primary focus of this work. Increasingly though, over that time another agenda assumed importance: The imperative to be able to articulate 'things communitarian' more clearly to an increasingly unreceptive audience. To put it not too bluntly; to be able to talk to the enemy.

The period of the thesis' genesis embraced the ascendancy of the New Right, the decline of the Left, and allied schools of humanism as a meaningful body of thought and consequently social influence; the rise of Economic Rationalism and New Managerialism; the argued End of Ideology, the denial of the social whole and promotion of the self-interestedly rational individual: A context inimical to a discipline, and an industry, whose historical validation lies in a cycle of ideology, aspiration and action, all fundamentally premised on social gregariousness and altruism, the informal and the personal.

The broad political environment growing out of the humanist strand in conservative and social democratic philosophies, favourable to, or manipulable by, loosely but

forcefully expressed communitarian sentiments, had changed. With that change the common language of community organisations and governments which supported them was lost. The new language dealt with the concretely measurable, the specific, the planned and predictable, the linear transaction, the pre-defined package; those things which Community was not. It was increasingly however, the only language of currency and it, and the forms and practices it referred to, were adopted by Community Organisations in the interests of their own survival. The adoption was, of course, a subterfuge - for a while.

Social welfare service provision had always been part of the agenda of the Community Organisation, an important part, and was the most measurable aspect of their operations: It didn't appear to matter if you emphasised this in your reports, rather than the more ephemeral agendas of empowerment and consciousness raising. It seemed to be okay if you adopted some of the artifices of the new regime in doing this while you went on doing the things that really mattered in the background.

Except that language and practice of convenience become reality and intent; staff and management change but systems remain and inform the newcomers. Then it gets to the point where the only thing about you that is recognised is the tangibles, the packages, the services that you 'sell'. Then, when the system identifies you as only another vendor in the market your claims to be something else seem a little thin. The intention of going underground until it all went away seems a little vague as you enter your next competitive tender as a government sub-contractor, and consider whether it might be better to privatise after all...

In this environment, attempting to resolve the confused theoretical base of Community and Community Practice seemed to be imperative if the strength and integrity of the sector was to survive: To be able to, dare I say - rationally, articulate the parameters and purpose of our practice; to spell out clearly and in detail, the whys and wherefores; the gains, for the participating individuals and the social whole.

And the social whole does gain; Community is not just a local game or one for limited vested interests. The, ground level collective, the communal, predates the rationally ordered institution and throughout history has cyclically, formed and informed, critiqued and reformed it, and overthrown it. Periodically in western history, at times of ideological impasse, rationalism, in its varying forms assumes a dominant stance and then slips back to its more useful role, which is that of helping to do the things that need to be done, rather than itself being the supervening need. Our current need is to survive that phase intact, and to contribute to its end by denying its false claims to primacy.

I hope that this work may play a part in the better understanding of Community - the non-rational part of our social living - and that such an understanding may strengthen the claims, and willingness, of the Community Sector to stay with its roots.

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Abstract

The thesis arises from fourteen years field practice as a Community Worker and a manager of Community Based services.

It was driven primarily by dissatisfaction with the focus, contradictions, and ultimate inconclusiveness of the body of theory concerned with Community, and the consequent failure of the theoretical base to inform the models of practice. The thesis explores a way of viewing Community, in the conceptual sense, that would give a clearer means of identifying and understanding specific Communities in practice; and consequently inform the methods of working with them.

The theoretical perspective explored is that Community is a temporary psycho-sociological function: It is the convergence of like-affected individuals into a social formation; in response to a perceived hostility in the prevailing broader environment and in opposition to it. That perspective inherently holds that Community is not the primary phenomenon that it is generally regarded as in the literature, nor is it the stable and permanent social unit that it has similarly been treated. It consequently stands in the face of the majority position.

In view of that the early chapters (One & Two), in the process of introducing and establishing the theory review the current state of Community studies and delve into the history of the concept to examine biases which may have entered into the discourse to bring this about; to establish the possibility that Community is something other than has been conventionally held.

In the process of examining that possibility, two detailed case studies of geographically defined areas were conducted. These were Corowa and Chullora, which had circumstantially similar experiences leading to the rejection of proposed hazardous waste high temperature incinerators. Both cases had been cited publicly as action by the Community. The research investigated the hypothesis above in examining the individual cases, with a comparative analysis against the base of the Community - Society dichotomy. The cases demonstrably fell into those two social

categories, rather than being two instances of the one category, Community. The comparison illustrates the validity of the theory in the generation of a Community in Corowa and in identifying the elements which prevented such a formation in Chullora.

The work concludes with a consideration of the implications that such a theoretical shift would have for the professional Community Sector and suggests ways in which practice might be enhanced by its adoption.

PART ONE

The Current State of Community Studies and Indications for a New Way Forward

Whilst the conceptual ashes of community were being offered to the winds by sociologists and anthropologists... people throughout the Western World in modern industrialised states were aggressively asserting their locality and ethnicity, their membership of communities which were real enough for them if not for those who ought to be studying them.

Peter Hamilton

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This Thesis explores the concept “Community”. It seeks to locate “Community” as an epiphenomenon, that is as an emergent and dynamic phenomenon arising within and from a definable set of preconditions.

As a part time student actively engaged in the field, a substantial part of my learning, and subsequent frustrations arose as I struggled to relate the aims and claims of theory and the realities of practice. Ultimately my main frustration was what I perceived as the gulf between the social theory of Community and theory and realities of practice. That is that the former was not able to provide the models for the latter. Social theory, in fact was not even able, ultimately, to satisfactorily establish the existence, in academic terms, of its subject. To me this seemed a somewhat precarious situation on which to base an industry and its attendant occupations.

The Theoretical Problem

One of the key prescribed texts for those studying the field of community, has been that by Bell and Newby (1971). In the early chapters of that text they make the following comment “The concept of community has been the concern of sociologists for more than two hundred years, yet a satisfactory definition in sociological terms appears as remote as ever” (p2.) They note ninety seven published definitions of the construct, the only common element of which is people, and comment that the more one attempts to define the entity the more elusive it becomes. The dilemma is not exclusive to Sociologists. Anthropologists, Psychologists (Social, Community and Organisational) have also grappled with the problem, as have Urban Planners,

Theologians, Political Economists and the rest. (Stretton 1978, Schmandt and Bloomberg 1969, Cohen 1985, Kramer and Specht 1975).

The “consensus on confusion” extends across the range of perspectives, politico-ideological, in this field. Norman Dennis, sometime proponent sometimes sceptic of the persistence of community into modern society but consistently vigilant against the conservative agenda in the field noted (in Pahl 1968:74); “In the vocabulary of the social scientist and the social worker there must be few words used with either the frequency or the looseness of the word community”. George Hilery conservatively based and with a lengthy career interest in the topic identified in 1955, prior to the critical boom period of the field, ninety four recorded definitions of the term. From these he attempted to develop logical indices of commonalties that might point the way to his own and others development of a more coherent, academically useful taxonomy for the concept.(in Bell and Newby, 1971: Pp. 27 - 30, See also Fig.8, p163.) In 1968 though, in the introduction to his major work exploring continua of community principles through the Institution, Village and City he was forced to note that; “Theoretical development...has reached an impasse...the range of things called community is so broad that “Community” can mean practically anything...(the concept is) in such a state of confusion”. That things had not progressed as he had earlier hoped is further emphasised in his use of the village as his baseline indicator for that study, Communal Organisation: A Study of Local Societies. The village is used for the simple reason that, to paraphrase him, nobody said that it isn't a community (chap. 1.) The work itself did little to ease the situation. From a liberal perspective and trying to locate the term's meaning philosophically through usage Raymond Plant offered the comment in 1974 that it was “an elusive concept defying attempts at clear cut analysis.” Minar and Greer in 1970 confirmed that, “it is often a source of confusion...and when it is used with interchangeable meanings very elementary errors creep into our discourse”. In the early eighties Joseph Gusfield is quoted as saying “We cannot assume that there is a direct and clear relation between the concept and some reference point in the real world” (in Kamenka 1982, p. viii).

It was at about this period that the contention and confusion could be clearly seen to be crystallising into rejection. The trend to discard the term and community studies per se was already evident with Bell and Newby's 1971 study (Pp 48-53) citing work from the sixties. Lyons (1980, p.8) references the move as early as 1952 with Morris and Rein. Bell and Newby's work is ironically interesting in that it is framed within a section on future directions for the field. That future projection, on the academic level at least, was fairly accurate. Revised concepts, such as Stacey's "local social systems", Warrens "vertical and horizontal" (national and local) social axes were proposed. Both of these though according to Bell and Newby remained firmly "community sociologists" while rejecting the terminology of that field. Others, impressionistically it seems en masse, sought refuge in urban sociology, a field that has since proven to be only slightly less contentious than the one they left.

The Problem for the Field

The publication of Bryson and Mowbray's "Community: The Spray on Solution" (1981, see also Mowbray 1983.) provided a nexus for academic and field based discontent with the term in Australia. Its recommendations that community work practitioners strike the term and many of its peripherals was to a substantial degree taken up, whether in direct response to the widely circulated article or, more likely as a reflection of the same forces which produced the article. The manner in which this call was taken in the field though was more at a nominal-academic level, at times taking the form of semantic pedantry rather than radical re evaluation of practitioner values. While difficult to assess it is unlikely that many physically or ethically disassociated themselves from the field because of these. The effect of the call and the general mood which led to it though had an effect on teaching institutions where a more critical strand of community work education was introduced, in some cases avoiding wherever possible usage of the term. This, though had no perceptible impact on the growth of the Community Sector in which graduates of such institutions were employed.

The situation above is consonant with the perspective offered by Peter Hamilton (Cohen 1985) in the editors foreword to an anthropological work on the symbolic

construction of community that, “whilst the conceptual ashes of community were being offered to the winds by sociologists and anthropologists... people throughout the Western World in modern industrialised states were aggressively asserting their locality and ethnicity, their membership of communities which were real enough for them if not for those who ought to be studying them”. That people in the “real world” continued to use the term and hold the values associated with it should come as no surprise, the public are not dependant on the academic world for their habits. This was the conclusion that Lyons & Schofield came to in their analysis. The burgeoning of professional field practice and the growth of government support in philosophical, policy and monetary forms and from both conservative and social democrat parties, under the name of Community though appears to present a paradox. Ironically the solution to that paradox lies with the same elements that comprised the academic uncertainty over the term. It occurs on two levels.

With the propensity for virtually anything to be called community the positive overtones of the term came to be used as rallying cry, exhortation or legitimation across a wide range of activities and politico ideological positions. Conservative governments have used terms and supported activities around it to foster the spirit of mutual help and self reliance, themes close to their ideological heart. It has been suggested that parties both to the right and left of centre have fostered the grass-roots participatory form to address social needs as a legitimation of (failing) democratic principles in pluralist states (Mowbray, 1983, Thorpe 1985, Kotze, 1987.). Social democratic governments using essentially the same devices as their opposite number change the rhetoric to advocate empowerment of the powerless and the right of the people to influence the state. The extraordinary capacity of the form to traverse even violently antagonistic camps is canvassed by Kamenka (1982) who looks at its adoption across the spectrum from fascism to communism. As works such as that show, the concept is an ideological chameleon. As with that creature its ability to blend with its background is not only an intriguing curiosity but a vital defence. In this context its capacity to survive political change and academic challenge.

What is true of formal political groupings and their use of the construct is also true of those adherents at non government level engaged with organisations and practices

invoking or being seen to comply with the principles of community and philosophies reflect a broad and complex range of belief systems as do the people involved with them in both professional and voluntary capacities.

This strata forms a receptive and comprehensive mesh with government support programmes. A mutual interlocking of forms that share the same broad descriptor of practice but may on close examination be seen to be inimical in principle. Either way, if you have an ideological ally or opponent who is available to assist in meeting your (perceived) agenda the relationship is assured. In this manner the growth of Community Organisation, Programmes, Services (of government departments) of great diversity (see Lyons 1985) has persisted regardless of concerns from the guardians of theory, and no doubt adding to them.

The second level of the solution to our paradox is that the links between academic theory and field practice evident in other areas are largely, in any direct sense, non-existent in pursuits conducted under the “community” banner. Inevitably in any occupation which denotes itself Community, there are two distinct realms of activity. Debate on the base social theory is held and field practice is pursued, without the latter necessarily waiting on the resolution of the former and certainly not growing out of it. While this raises significant problems, to be addressed, it also, in this instance, promotes the continuation of practice with an independent vigour even when the theoretical base has become moribund. That does not mean that the field of practice is atheoretical, more that these theories are associated with types and philosophical strands of practice that are divorced from base theory. Largely they are derived from practice itself or borrowed from other disciplines.

Case Study As Method

A particular curiosity is the substitution of case study for method, what Kramer and Specht refer to as, “Isolated cases published with operational details providing some reference point for others serendipitously in similar situations” (1975:3)

Their use of the term “isolated” should not be mistaken as indicating sparseness, there is no shortage of attempts to fill the void between theory and practice by the use of exemplary models. The person who to many has been the guru of urban

community organising, Saul Alinsky, provides an interesting illustration of this. Alinsky, a trained sociologist, taught and mentored in his initial community work by Louis Wirth, one of the seminars of the Chicago School along with Park, was the first publicly recognised and foremost community organiser in the United States, spanning a period over four decades between the thirties and sixties. His practices and those of his protégés have become benchmarks for students of community work within and beyond the US. Therein lies the crux. Despite his thorough disciplinary grounding and long and diverse field experience Alinsky was not able to fuse the theoretical and practical. His published works, interviews and biographer (Fink, 1984) emphasise concrete practical examples framed within a rhetorical-aspirational context. Though some of the goals and strategies, education, empowerment, have their own discrete philosophical and theoretical bases the field of practice itself is not so supplied. Effectively what is on offer as contribution to the practitioners knowledge base is an extended case study of one other practitioner's situationally determined method. The generalisability of this method of course is limited to the extent to which these circumstances are replicated elsewhere and to the degree that another shares the ideology and style of the initial activist. Alinsky is particularly significant in this "case study as method" but others abound. Field experience is offered as quasi-theory in Si Kahn's "How People Get Power; Organising Oppressed Communities for Action" (1970). Interestingly Kahn expresses in his preface something that is conveyed in other ways in other works, "...if I have learned anything...there are no rules for organisers, only experience". Other than the fact that Kahn then proceeded to offer his experience in a form very close to that of rules for others to follow I have no great problem accepting that statement. The problem is that experience is a subjective phenomenon, one that both contributes to and evokes a particular repertoire of responses organised with subjectively acquired schema. Ultimately there needs to be a base level upon which this hierarchy of experiential learning is built, either a personal experiential baseline or something approaching an objective, external reference point, ie. a theory. Case studies based on other people's experience, while they may contribute significantly to already established personal repertoires cannot substitute for either the personal or

the theoretical. The first of these is self evident, the second lies with the particularity of case studies.

To an extent this substitution of cases for theories is replicated, albeit at a higher level of theoretical abstraction, by Raymond Plant already mentioned in relation to attempts to find a way out of the “definitional promiscuity” of the field researchers and academics. His politico-philosophical approach consists of determining how practitioners and others use the term in the field. From the application of the term in practice, its meanings; descriptive, evaluative and aspirational, to its users are derived. It is these meanings according to Plant and also Clarke (in Taksa 1989:13), that should become both the premise and object of study in conjunction with the circumstances that evoke the usages and give them their contextual meaning. The approach offers resolution of academic conflicts but as Plant acknowledges (1974, p.3), it does not solve outstanding practical problems for field practitioners.

The Questions

It is the purpose of this Thesis to re assess the concept of community from both a theoretical and practitioners perspective. Its aim is to develop a more useful; systematic conceptual tool for community work practice.

Is Community Necessary or Will Other Constructs Do?

We are back to the question that has been asked for two hundred years but often seems to be simply assumed in this field.

What is Community, does it exist, if so what are its features, what separates it from other forms of social organisation, what makes it special? Perhaps the most pertinent question to arise, sometimes stated, at other times politely left unasked but I would venture usually in the minds of those workers involved in such speculation is: If we don't know, ie., those who lay claim to some expertise in this field, how do we legitimise our continued involvement in the field which draws its name and validity from that very concept.

If the concept of Community is empirically unproven where are we and what is the future of the ideal that we espouse?

If the substance of the term is so elusive why bother at all to attempt to describe its occasions of assertion. Why not substitute a less contentious term that can be generally agreed upon such as locality or society. Simply because it can't be done. While both terms are clearly defined and have some common elements with our will-o-the-wisp community they are not similes. Each by definition excludes itself from substitution on some grounds or another, both do on the basis of (Romantically put) soul or will. Locality is purely that. The term implies no consciousness, no solidarity., no common purpose it does not even imply people. Society is of a different order, it has people, it is cited as having a will but according to classical definition of organic solidarity, and usual contemporary usage it does not have a consciousness collaboratively expressed in relation to a particular goal or cause. It's "will" and "values" are detached phenomena usually legally defined arising out of its broader maintenance needs and expressed through and according to legal and economic structures. It is not discrete within any particular geographic or ethnic boundary, that is a piece of society cannot exist as an entity, with its base in the means of production, transcending not only local but national and global regional boundaries. Society may in certain bounded areas manifest and promote as its own features that are not common to the whole of (Western, Capitalist, 20th Century) society eg., availability, type and level of social security benefits, the death penalty, however these are within the realm of the maintenance function noted above, an accommodatory response to interest groups.

Society is a structural entity, an organic model of the inter-relatedness of people in their manufacture and commerce, their class, culture and legal system, a broad based constellation of structurally linked parts. As such it is not suitable for application to the model of practise that we are engaged in. In many cases its manifestation; unemployment, poverty, oppression, are those against which we are opposed.

So other options are excluded and the question remains. Only community, with its subjective consciousness will do. If it cannot be satisfactorily directly defined then how do we find a way to identify it and understand it?

What is a community? Social structure, state of mind (consciousness) an organisation without formal constitution? Whatever it is, it is seen as distinct; from family, group, club, formal association, society, class or nation. Perhaps in the paradox (that such a nebulous term should hold identity and meaning to its user that can be conveyed in a useful indicative manner to others) and in its mode of expression that the key can be found.

That the concept not only persists but periodically undergoes revival indicates reality. Hamilton (in his preface to Cohen, 1985.) phrases it this way “for whilst the conceptual ashes of community were being offered to the wind by sociologists and anthropologists...people throughout the Western world in modern industrialised states were aggressively asserting their locality and ethnicity, their membership of communities which were real enough for them if not for those who sought to be studying them”. As the sociologist W.I. Thomas, cited by the author of that book stipulates, if people believe a thing to be real then it is real in its consequences for them. But is it real in the fixed state, structural sense that has been the focus of sociological investigation ie. an existent, bounded group of people and their institutions interacting by virtue of traditional ties, proximity, parochial identity or friendship, or is it of another order?

The Theory: Community As a Dynamic Purposive Formation.

My first theoretical break through came in the form of a question;

What if “Community” is not a noun but a verb? Though I would be hard pressed to keep that device going with any sort of grammatical accuracy I think it still serves as a good summary of my position.

My thinking was influenced by work related observation of the ebb and flow of popular participation in “Community” initiatives and published work on the historical fluctuation of the popularity of intentional communities (communes). This work identified links between the strength of movements to form lifestyle communities and broader prevailing social forces; dislocation and personal disorientation caused by political or military upheaval and the incursion of a new dominant philosophies. Effectively people seeking a safe harbour, actual or

aspirational, in the face of unpleasantness or uncertainty (Abrams, P. and McCulloch, A. 1976. See also; McKnight, J.,1990: p.12 & passim, for more contemporary expression of this in the Australian context.) My questioning gradually shifted from whether Community does or does not exist to when and why it may exist.

The Answers Proposed.

Community is dynamic and transitory.

That above shift in my thinking necessitated a lateral break with the work that has centred on fixed and stable forms of “Community”, and their internal structures as being explanatory or illustrative of them. (It also required that some explanation be sought for the origin and persistence of the prevailing approach in order to justify that break.)

Further, the implication of a “now you see it, now you don’t” perspective was of transitory process and dynamic form. Motive and purpose became elements in looking for explanation of the origin and maintenance of communal forms and the question of decline needed to be addressed. Logically a form cannot pre-exist itself so causes for assertion must lie outside any extant, visible manifestation of it.

Influenced again by the work on intentional communities and apparent external factors leading to expression of community action, in my own and others reported experience, and the nature of those actions, essentially oppositional or remedial, led me to define the position that;

Community is emergent and responsive, personal and social.

Community is both product of and response to the broader prevailing environment, it does not exist of or by itself but for itself in oppositional reference to its causal stimuli.

Implicit in the above is that the genesis of the social form is in the individual’s state, a tension between the individual and the (physical or social) environment, transformed, in concert with others so affected, by mediating circumstances to a recognisable social state. This state, and principally its support structures, having been the focal point of sociological and much of the anthropological work. The

community, the collective which both subjugates and represents the needs of the individual people of which it is comprised.

Community emerges and recedes in response to perceived threat

A further development of that is that the community will persist for as long as it is effective in addressing those originating factors and for as long as those factors continue or are perceived to continue with sufficient strength to warrant this response. As a purposive formation it must continue to engage with its reference point. This may be actively through efforts to change or otherwise negate it or passively, through closure, excluding those influences and providing refuge to its members. If it is no longer engaged, that is if it wins, if it loses, or if the problem just goes away, the motive will be lost and the community will decline.

From this perspective the elements offered in conventional analysis as explanatory component parts of a permanent, stable, unit become the methods, maintenance structures and logistic supports, physical and relational, of a popular response. The nature, the shape of this response being dependent primarily on the circumstances which gave rise to it.

Historically, if the cause of the response was a physical environment which was inhospitable to unaligned individuals community in the form of the primordial “primitive communism” or the rural village might evolve. The internal structures, institutions and mores of such a community being developed to sustain and enhance its integrity and effectiveness as a response. Given that the cause of such a community are long enduring the community would be similarly of prolonged duration and its internal systems well established. Of long enough duration, centuries, and sufficiently sophisticated in its institutions to give the impression of the permanent internally stable form that is has been treated as. The village, in my analysis, is an illustration of a community which remained engaged in opposition to its environment for an extended period, ultimately neither winning nor losing.

That is that eventually the affective power of its causes were mitigated by technological developments. Improvement in mechanisation generally, transport and communication for example would have effects on two levels. It would give

both an objectively increased measure of control over the environment and would lessen community members' perception of it as individually threatening. That is that there were now other options for physical survival personal fulfilment etc. opened up, and the communal formation and its supports, physical and psycho-social become less significant. Such analysis gives the perspective of a particular form of community within a particular concrete configuration dispersing as it is no longer required. Not the disappearance of community per se.

The rural community above, the ethnic community, the neighbourhood child minding network, the freeway opposition group, the gay community the communal bonds formed, around preserving urban bushland, the working class housing settlement in the industrial town can all be viewed from this perspective of oppositionally framed origin, maintenance and decline. So too can the middle class area banding to resist the establishment of a group home, habourside residents organising against moves to open up beaches to the public.

Community is not a primary phenomenon.

In 1989, about a year after I had arrived at this position I came across a short article by Anthony Panzetta (In Kramer and Specht 1974:28-38) echoing much of what I have just outlined. Panzetta's term for it was "community as epiphenomena" explaining that "An epiphenomenon is a phenomenon which occurs as a result of pre-existing phenomena or set of conditions. An epiphenomenon is nothing unless the pre-existing events occur...community...does not exist unless certain conditions exist.(It is not a primary phenomenon)". Panzetta cited, similar to my example of the rural village, the feudal gemeinschaft community, the history of the Jewish people and Blacks in America as well as other similar to those I have already mentioned. He also offered the comment that "most so called communities are so time bound that they come and go like evanescent clouds".

Apart from the general reinforcement that his article offered me there were two statements that he made, bringing my own feelings on the matter into perspective. The first was the position statement that: "This concept of community as epiphenomena is exceedingly important for anyone who is working in "community

orientated work”. The second is his comment on this that, “It is extraordinary to witness the degree to which (this concept) is ignored by ‘community oriented’ workers”.

Panzetta’s lamentation was made some twenty years ago at the time of writing. “Community orientated work” as he tags it has boomed in the intervening period and nothing in my experience, be it field work, formal studies, literature search or discussion of the perspective with others similarly involved indicates that anything has changed. This approach, and I obviously agree with Panzetta that it is “exceedingly important” simply does not appear to be known.

The Structure of the Thesis

The structure of the thesis firstly sets out, in this chapter, the current inconclusive state of affairs in the community studies field and the inadequacy of these in providing any meaningful base for practice, effectively the need for this work.

The second chapter goes on to trace the historical development of the community studies field. There are three purposes in this. Firstly to establish through the pan historic and cross cultural appeal of the theme, that Community, does, on the weight of evidence, in fact exist, a not unnecessary step in this field of enquiry. Secondly it seeks to encapsulate the environment in which the theoretical legacy which was inherited by later authors was first amassed, arguing the historic transfer of bias. Related to both of these is the move over time from a dynamic and relational perspective to one regarding community as a static and enduring structure.

In a sense both of these chapters are necessary preliminaries; establishing the need (and validity) for further work in this area and raising some doubts about the conventional discourse, to a fuller exploration of the psycho-social perspective adopted here.

Chapter three introduces the methodology used for the empirical analysis of two examples of what appear to be community in action. The following chapters explore in detail the events around ‘community’ response, to the proposed

introduction of high temperature waste incineration in Corowa (chapter four) and Chullora (chapter five). This empirical study represents a deliberate attempt to contrast what might be dichotomised as “Rational” and “Non-Rational” forms of association. A theoretical analysis, contrasting and comparing. These two cases, is provided in chapter six.

The final conclusions, explorations and implications appear in chapter seven.

CHAPTER TWO

The Historical Contribution

Our problem is to abstract the values of Community from the historical patterns that have entered it, then translate those patterns into the structure of an expanding metropolitan world.

Minar and Greer (1970)

Looking back to Community

In looking to get a meaningful grasp on the way Community is treated; theoretically rather than in the phenomenology of everyday use or political application; for an understanding of how Community came to be used, and abused as grist to the academic mill, and then abandoned, I found that the only sensible course of action was to bail out of the contemporary debate altogether.

The search for a better understanding of Community (and the treatment it has received) inevitably led backwards in time. Firstly because, as is reflected in most works on the subject there is a recurrent perspective if not a general consensus, whether empirically established or as an article of faith, that Community once existed, in a previous age, in a prior era of social organisation, or for that matter in the writer's youth. Secondly, perhaps self evidently but no less importantly, the place of Community in the social sciences was itself historically determined

Consequently the early part of this chapter is concerned with illustration of the pan-historic and trans-cultural popularity of the theme of Community. As is noted in the introduction the purpose of this is, to establish its legitimacy on the basis of its continuing currency, and with extracting the historical biases that may have limited later treatments of Community. The aim of the section is, in effect to present an illustration of the persistence of the topic in history and the effect of history on the topic. To look at what happened when an accepted public domain concept was taken out everyday life and put on the lab table.

The first aim is sought through a shotgun approach, fleeting glimpses of the way that Community has attracted some of the best, and lesser known, thinkers of history and the commonalties; of their thoughts or the influences that generated them.

The single strongest focus in the chapter is on the academic moods, primarily of the nineteenth century, that have generated lasting influences on the treatment of Community. That review is based on the general portrayal in the literature of the themes and intent of the founding theorists and therefore the legacy on which later

work was built. In general the approach in this is still that of a broad scan rather than close scrutiny of specific aspects of the work of particular theorists. With that broader perspective the commonalities that bound the work of those authors is brought into focus rather than obscured as is the more common outcome in conventional comparative treatment.

Looking Back to Community :- Always!

The theme of Community in a prior 'Golden Age' or in other, more practically framed historical parameters, is so strong that it not only attracts attention to those ages, and to the forms of Community that it harks back to, but also inevitably prompts the question; Why? Why is the consensus there on the bygone existence and precious little on the contemporary? There are possibly two not unrelated reasons, the subjective nostalgic appeal of the topic and historical academic prescription. That is the two historical articles, the existence of Community, and its academic categorisation are linked, as are these in turn linked to more contemporary treatments of Community as a static.

There is a third, and important, likely explanation of this backward looking trend; the selective recollection of personal experiences of Community and their necessary placement in the past. As a highly subjective article that could only be verified by the individuals concerned this third possibility is not canvassed here in a section reliant on secondary sources. The idea though is an important one, which as Taksa (1989; pp. 15, 16) notes has conventionally been under-rated, and bears mention when considering Community as a thing of the past. (See also Knapp 1989.) The theme recurs later in this work in the Corowa and Chullora case studies and in the Conclusion (chaps. 4, 5 & 7.). It has significant implications when looking at Community as a temporary phenomenon.

It is interesting that this great emphasis is given to past forms (and inherently their passage) in the study of Community per se, and that these retrospectives continue historically; so that later authors are in fact reviewing past forms that post date earlier similar retrospective-nostalgic reviews. While this pattern would tend to imply (if

the time were taken to consider it) that the phenomenon under review is a dynamic and adaptive one the attempts to extract defining characteristics for contemporaneous communities continue largely to focus on the static-institutional end: That is it is seen that there are somehow block periods of permanent, stable and enduring communities that are then somehow no longer extant (despite these characteristics) but which lend themselves as time-frozen cases for structural analysis and application to the current milieu to either prove or disprove the continuance of these types.

For the most part this chapter follows a general chronological pattern from early to later perspectives on Community. What follows immediately though breaks with this pattern to give some condensed illustration of this tendency.

Community; the Perennially Passing?

As I argue further into this chapter the groundwork for viewing Community as a (sur) passed form appears to have been laid down with earlier social theorists, particularly those of the Nineteenth Century. A curious variant of this theme, though, also persists in the literature, perhaps, in some instances, as a continuation of that perspective but more likely as an ahistorical parallel to it: The theme that Community, regardless of the period in which the author is writing, has only recently declined or become redundant. The tendency is apparent in both the academic and general literature and anecdotally. The inclusion here, apart from what I see as a pressing need for somebody to make comment on this obvious anomaly is because of its connectedness to some of the central themes of the thesis, the temporary nature of Community and its many outward appearances.

The observation arises out of my search for general trends in the Community literature rather than as a specific intent. I had a gradual awareness, that this perspective was adopted in a number of the works I was reviewing and that no comment on the phenomena was offered by authors, or the editors of collected works, in which they appeared. Four of the following references for example are drawn from Raymond Plant's Community and Ideology (1974), all appeared within the space of a few pages, together with other similar references, some appearing consecutively, with no comment on the irony of the position.

In 1922 within a few years of the deaths of Ferdinand Tonnies and Emille Durkheim, who had both recorded the decline or demise of Community in their lifetime (and prior), T.S.Eliot felt constrained to write the Waste Land decrying the loss of Community and affective ties through World War 1. In 1930 Denys Thompson in Culture and Environment (P.87) noted “but at the moment what we have to recognise is that organic Community has gone...its destruction in the West is the most important fact of recent history”. Still in the thirties F.R. Leavis offered that; “...we are at present witnessing a breach of continuity and the uprooting of life, of immemorial ways of life rooted in the soil.” (Each of the preceding in Plant, op cit: 27-29). Utilising secondary material spanning the twenties and thirties Stein (1964) drew the tone and title of his work The Eclipse of Community from similar observations (in Bell and Newby, 1971:38). In 1956 Warren (in French, 1969:39), lamenting the inadequacy of Community theory to account for adaptation noted, “...development in recent decades...the transition from Gemeinschaft to Gessellschaft, from sacred to secular, from folkculture to mass culture etc.”. In the sixties Norman Denis (in Pahl 1968:75-91) contended that where the neighbourhood Community was not dead in British working class housing estates it soon would be. On the later sixties Plant (op cit.) quotes from Community Work and Social Change (1968) concerning the need to re-create Community because; “The intensified growth in economic, social and geographic mobility accentuated by the Second World War and its aftermath...the kind of Community life which traditionally was based on the neighbourhood is rare”. In 1970 Minar and Greer (xi) continued the theme with “...the superior energy resources and power of the urban technological societies everywhere...indicate the obsolescence of the older form”.

So, in the selection above compiled from fairly scant research the loss of Community is reported from most decades of this century as having been of recent occurrence. It seems reasonable to speculate that this reportage extends beyond these sources and their times of publication. If so it conjures up an image of a Dr.Who repeatedly stepping out of his Tardis, up and down the ages to be greeted on each occasion by a figure of the time exclaiming “Oh! you’ve just missed it, if only you’d been here...”.

Before the Nineteenth Century.

Plant, in the early part of his work (op. cit.: p.2) somewhat gingerly introduces the proposition that what we think of Community today can be traced to what others thought of it at the end of the eighteenth century. I have no doubt that this is true and that it could both be put somewhat more forcibly than in his work and that in fact the links can be traced back much further. There is a particular pointedness about the volume and later academic significance of the nineteenth century work, however the credentials of Community as an object of study, and doubtless; through the more romantic treatments that it received, as an item of subjective appeal, were laid down before this.

From Classical To Medieval and Later Times

This earlier history consisted of both fairly objective social analysis of actual communitarian formations, and of aspirational manifestos. Both of these are mentioned here and are seen to be equally important. This is firstly because of their influence on later writers but also on the basis that they are to me, differing manifestations of the same social forces. For example, what Karl Mannheim says of Utopian thought, which is that it, “reflects the struggle of oppressed groups to seek change”(in Swingewood 1984: 305) , I consider to be equally true of the most mundane actual communitarian formation: - Both the substantive and the hypothetical reflect a broader milieu, the effects of which the Communal seeks to change; mollify, resist, or overcome.

That issue of change is one which runs central to the themes of the various communitarian treatise, and to their broader social context.

A number of authors on general sociology and in specific works on Community, both by way of illustrating the persistence of the theme Community and sketching the development of sociology, have identified Community as a concern of intellectuals since antiquity. Some have gone further and have traced the links between early and

later commentators. Something of the historical and geographic span which these cover may be seen from the following;

The experience of, or the desire for Community, and the fascination with it which impels documentation demands its acknowledgment as a social reality. For example, Kamenka (1982:4) locates Community as one of the concern of social philosophers from “at least” the fifth century BC, while Swingewood (1984) opens it up to a speculative “as long as human history”. Pitirim Sorokin in his forward to Tonnie’s seminal Gemeinschaft und Gessellschaft (1955.V-Vii) picks up the trail of attempts to describe, or prescribe Community in China with Confucius in the fifth century BC. J.H. Abraham (1973:21-43) locates the emergence of interest a little later, and a continent removed from Confucius; with Plato, in Greece in the fourth century BC. Both of those authors focus in on Ibn Khaldun’s Africa in the thirteenth century (See below).

Sorokin’s ‘family tree’ of Community is more complete and closes the gaps between classical, medieval, and modern times. His list of those concerned with the same central themes that later occupied Tonnie’s includes Cicero (106-43 BC.) and Augustine (604/5), and along with Aquinas, other medieval figures such as Joachim de Flore, Albertus Magnus and Nicholas Cusanus. He extends the line from that era to Tonnie’s time with the inclusion of Savigney, Puchta and Hegel. An extended stream of reportage, concern and speculation on the topic of Community.

And so the list goes on; Kamenka (op cit.: vii) refers to the recurrent significance of Community in movements and credos, the early Christian Community, European Humanism, The Renaissance and the Enlightenment. Thomas More (1478-1535) appears in most in relation to the utopian vision and his initiation of the term.

These authors represent a geographically, culturally and philosophically diverse group, spread over most of the globe and throughout recorded history - such is the strength and persistence of the Community theme.

Some of the diversity - and commonalties - may be seen by a rudimentary examination of three of these; Confucius, Augustine and Khaldun. Each is noted by

Sorokin (op cit.) to have outlined either as an analytical adjunct to their work, such as Confucius, or centrally within the text, the principles that Tonnies portrayed as the polarised ideal types of *gemeinschaft* and *gessellschaft*. That is, in essence, the distinction between relational traits in social organisation on the basis of natural, or non-contractual ties in the former instance, and those based on reasoned, quasi-contractual ties on the other¹. Confucius' work fits within a social blueprint model, one that obtained strong adherence with the assistance of dynastic rulers who his analysis favoured. Augustine is theologically aspirational, with a millennial model reliant on supernatural agency. Khaldun's work, referred to by Abraham (op cit.: 29) as "the most brilliant and original theory of change ever conceived by a writer" most closely corresponds to modern sociology. Khaldun's retrospective analysis traces the decline of the North African society, the Magreb. His work, isolated from the European tradition, in some regards inverts the later European perspective. Whereas from the eighteenth century onwards those theorists noted the inevitability of the loss of *gemeinschaft* as part of the price of progress Khaldun's analysis cites the loss of "asabieh", the Arabic equivalent of the term Community, as the cause of decline. Effectively he utilises the Community - Society dichotomy several centuries before its emergence in the European tradition: From a traditionally solidary, culturally and religiously homogenous nomadic group with a history of military conquest against superior forces, the Magreb fell rapidly into decline once their dominance was established and the traditional bonds necessary to adversarial survival were relinquished. The context of that "degeneration of power within a few generations" is *gessellschaft*, a cash nexus economy in which cultural exchange runs parallel with trade, economic advancement and luxury. This, in his analysis, leading to atomisation and cultural dissipation, leaving them "weak and ready to prey to

¹These Types are highly simplified here and the reader should refer to both Tonnies' own works and the various commentaries on them for a fuller grasp of what have proven to be elusive concepts with multiple interpretations. A tabular summary appears in Tonnies (1955:270 -1). For the purposes of this work Tonnies' *gemeinschaft* and *gessellschaft* are adopted as they are summarised above, with the emphasis on them being relational traits, as appears to be that author's intention, rather than the social states which some later structuralists have interpreted them as. On varying levels from the individual to the macro-structural, these Types are kindred to Weber's concepts of natural and rational will, his traditional versus rational-legal forms of authority, and Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity. The terms "rational" and "non-rational" are in accepted usage as generic substitutes for composite reference to these themes and are used as such at times in this thesis. The distinctions are more fully illustrated in Figure 1, p 34. See also Weber's 'irrational' (in Eisenstadt, 1968 and Albrow, 1990.)

other more solidary groups” (p.31). Khaldun’s analysis though was not the only one of these linked to change, opposition, conflict, and the affects of mechanical solidarity as against other forms of human relationship, exchange, and social formation. The other two’s theses both resulted from, and advocated, social change, as did others in the list above. Confucius wrote in the context of widespread civil turmoil resulting from the rebellion of provincial warlords and his philosophy sought to establish the perceived harmony of traditional authority, from the personal and family through to state level. Augustine, similarly, wrote in reference to the political, social and consequent personal disassociation that followed the fall of the Roman Empire, its political and cultural institutions. Community as the alternative, as the defensive response and remedy; change to redress change, recurs.

Later European History

As noted by Sorokin the theme of Community, and extraction of its elements, persists into the later European context. The general consensus that sociology did not exist prior to the nineteenth century whether that determination rests on Comte’s coining of the term or Durkheim’s prescriptive systematising of it as science is probably true. But its foundations in the social and political philosophies of the preceding two centuries, notably in France and Scotland bear a close similarity to it. Within that period and those fields, as in the discourse of the earlier thinkers, the theme of harmonious traditional forms, counterpointed to the contemporary period - seen as something other than and in comparison to the traditional form - recurs.

These philosophers debated many common sociological issues; the atomistic (Hobbes) and the socially gregarious (Locke), nature versus culture (Rousseau), and in most the Theistic versus the Secular, the feudal versus the civil, statics opposed to dynamics were debated. These were in the context of attempting to define the individual human condition, and from it the social condition. The social contract theory of this period was the attempt to link the individual into cohesive collective form. The social as distinct from the mass of the individuals was not yet established,

consequently the personal and the dynamics of relationship rather than structural social statics were pre-eminent.

With Vico and Montesquieu the perspective of society as an organic whole was first projected in the second quarter of the eighteenth century. These principles could be applied to the social whole. Within these new parameters the tendency to optimistically embrace the globally new while regretting and attempting to synthesise some of the specifics of the old, as a bulwark against social and moral disorientation, persisted, albeit increasingly in the context of fixed frames.

Eighteenth Century work by such thinkers as Edmund Burke, Louis Bonald and Joseph De Maistre critiqued Enlightenment rationalism in search of social bonds. While society (as a whole) rather than specifically identified Community was their object, the elements which these thinkers sought to draw back into debate are those which later have come to be associated specifically with Community. The role of non-rational, traditional forms and morés in binding society as an organic whole, and previously thought inimical to the realisation of rational individual humanity, were drawn back onto the agenda. Bonald's perspective was that "The school of modern philosophy...have produced the philosophy of modern man, the philosophy of I...I want to produce the philosophy of we." (in Swingewood 1984:34). The flaws which manifested themselves in arguments of the ilk produced by these three were there essentially reactionary genesis and idealised retrospection. Attempting to introduce arguments on the need for an explanation of social cohesion contemporaneous with a revolutionary climate of violent and bloody social dislocation leant themselves to idealistic revision of previous forms. Taking Burke as a case in point; the exercise took him from the position of a liberal reformer to conservative. He recognised that religion, family and traditional authority had a stabilising and integrating effect on the whole. The error of this push lay in seeking to replicate the appearance of these older forms in new guise. Hierarchically structured corporations, seen to emulate the feudal authority system, stable and nurturing, in the manner of noblesse oblige were proposed as the new integrating social form. The "social religious" and attendant morality that were to find full and florid articulation with Comte,

anthropological refinement with Smith and later sociological categorisation with Durkheim were brought into the agenda.

With these theorists and the line that succeeded them a central core that ran through nineteenth century sociology was established, the analytical comparison of the old and the new.

Community and the Nineteenth Century.

What follows might in some regards be seen simply as the continuation of what I have previously noted; that Community as a concept and an active social form has attracted the attention of scholars down the ages. The body of academic work accrued in that time was an attempt by commentators and theorists to record and account for the observed contemporary social events of their age. The work of the nineteenth century was just that, but it was also substantially more. It laid the foundation for later theory. Both the academics of that age and since have regarded the intellectual products of that time as forming the basis of the modern social sciences (Aron, 1965, 1967., Barnes, 1966., Plant, 1974., Giddens and Held, 1982. Plamenatz, 1992., among others.). Within that genesis of the social sciences was the birth of the discipline of sociology and deeper within that, Community was firmly and formally embedded. Most works on Community since then display a well beaten path back to that source period. As Plant notes specifically and others convey clearly in content and by implication, what we think about Community now, in an academic sense was largely predetermined between the ends of the eighteenth and nineteenth century.

Context, Not Content

The actual content of particular nineteenth century theories on the nature and construction of Community, and by comparison the counter point Society, have been the major source of influence within particular later works on the concepts. That is that particular devices and themes developed by nineteenth century theorists, Ferdinand Tonnies and Emille Durkheim being pre-eminent in this, have been taken intact (or claimed to be so, as I will note later) and placed within later theoretical

construction or used as yardsticks for empirical observation. The emphasis has been on the particular, and the linear and the systemic connections within this academic tradition, tracing development over time, or exchanges - confirmatory or contradictory - between theories, or both.

Both in debates on the possible persistence of Community into modern society and in attempts to set new, more immediately applicable principles of what actually comprises the essentials of Community (and where and how they do persist) the debates instituted by the founding theorists have been continued on their behalf by later scholars. These scholars have then either upheld the winner of these proxy contests as the advocate of their own position or have attempted to win a broader support base from historical academia by revising and synthesising the observation or speculation, analysis and conclusion of a range of earlier theorists.

These piecemeal approaches to rediscover the 'true' meaning of Community as it was laid down by the founders appears both to have been sufficiently heavily trafficked and ultimately inconclusive. These travels back to the last century (or more accurately to the last revision of the last century) whether by way of pilgrimage, siege or peace making expedition have resulted in the acquisition of the nuts and bolts to provide the internal cohesion of a range of often comparatively dissonant works (noted previously).

I have no qualms at all about these provisioning forays. The length and depth of debate of that formative period of the social sciences and the liveliness with which it was conducted resulted in distinctive and diverse observations and postulations that continue to contribute to, or moreso act as basis for, a broad range of contemporary perspectives on the social world. I do not intend to attempt to discredit or devalue the results of their consideration or subsequent degrees of reliance of them. What I would like to do though, if I can re-engage with the nuts and bolts metaphor, is to look at the foundry that produced them, and the purpose that they were initially meant to serve.

The particular way in which I want to address this here is to look at not so much specific theoretical content as broad derivative context. My purpose in this is the

contention that in importing the particular content of historical work into contemporary theory that later scholars have also transposed significant biases and assumptions that either premise or influence the application of Community theory. Effectively that these peripheral influences, intrinsically parameters and products peculiar to the academic discourse of founding theorists are unintentionally or unquestioningly brought into later consideration. In a way these incidentals have had a more profound effect on the field than the intentionally co-opted minutiae that has been the main focus of debate. While that focus continues to be face to face dialogue, or head to head confrontation, the circularity and inconclusiveness noted previously will continue. By widening the scope to bring into view these other elements, allegorically investigating the countryside surrounding the paths that led to the maze depicted in the preceding chapter, we may be able to prevent them having undue influence over our investigations of the field. Effectively taking out some of the walls in that maze.

The sources used in compiling this broader picture were many and varied and included general as well as the academic literature (including, Bilton, 1981., Giddens and Held, 1982., Hill, 1988., Matthews, 1989., Plamenatz, 1992.) however the main sources of summaries of schools and theorists are Barnes (1966), Abraham, (1977) Swingewood (1984) and Aron (1988), the evolutionary critique is influenced by Giddens (1984: chap 5.). The value based progressive theme is evident in each of these as well as other sources, notably Andreski (1965), Coser (1977) and Lee and Newby (1984).

Perhaps the strongest overall impression that I have gained of the age is one of movement, of political, scientific and philosophical thought, of people, of machines. As it is treated in the literature, inexorable movement on a massive scale. The next most noticeable feature is the attempt to explain that movement, in a sense to control it by bringing conceptual order to it. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with the consequences of this categorisation for us

What I want to portray here are trends; beliefs, practices, assumption, that have arisen as part of the nineteenth century discourse. In looking in this way it may be seen that there were influences strong and persuasive enough to act as predispositional and parametric forces able to bind into relative commonalty even those theories which, in direct comparative analysis, are seen to be antithetical. From this perspective it can be shown that this commonalty is intrinsically and particularly the product and property of that age rather than necessarily central or integral to the analysis or theories which carry them. In doing so I hope to illustrate some of the constraints that affected later Community studies.

Movement and Order, Loss and Gain

When looking at the nineteenth century overall, particularly Europe, though its influence also extended to most parts of the world, the most significant impression is one of change. While this is so even when taking a detailed look at the demographic, technological, social and political changes recorded for that era from the safe distance of the late twentieth century, first hand commentaries of the period magnify and intensify that impression. To those participant observers the period was one of rapid, inexorable movement on a massive scale.

Marx, Durkheim Tonnies and Weber ,(Aaron 1986/87) while each writing from a differing perspective all shared a common perception, that society as a whole (and all in it) was moving from one order to another (mechanical, traditional, hereditary, feudal) of social organisation to another (organic, modern-scientific, capitalist, cash nexus) and were viewing Community as the outgoing order being supplanted by society². Had the perspective been not so much on universal shift but continuing relevance of forms of association of particular groups, in relation to the impact of wider changes, different findings may have resulted. To illustrate; did a dominant social construction of myriad rural settlements, identified as Communities collapse en mass in deference to an incoming new order; Or was it that, because of the effect on the causal factors necessitating these types of associations - broad physical and

² Here again I use the terms 'mechanical' and 'organic' as applied by Durkheim, though they appear contra-intuitive in the contemporary idiom.

social isolation, which required a collective response - of certain elements associated with this 'new order' - improved communication, transport, methods of production, which acted on the environment in such a way that it no longer required a collective response - that members of the Community no longer, or to a lessened degree, perceived its appropriateness. That is, they individually emerged from the communal body, leading to its demise. Demise in that particular situation that is but with the facility remaining, vested individually as a (social) psychological construct rather than the sociological whole that was under examination, to merge once again into that form of self defensive organisation as other needs arose. In this way it would be seen that a prevalent category of physical, spatially and categorically defined, communities were rendered redundant, by the choice of their members as other options arose, but that it could not be extrapolated from that Community per se ceased to exist. From the perspective of this paper, there was no 'superorganic adaptation', no game of historical leap frogging of the social whole. Community did not suddenly cease to be because it was naturally superseded. The construct was untouched and would re-emerge where, when, in the format and with the purpose required of it according to prevailing circumstances; as the dynamic force that it is, not the spatial or cultural forms that it infused and was equated with.

What Comte saw as the "great political and moral crisis" and "the initial condition in which most civilised nations are now living" (in Swingewood, 1984:34) set the scene early on and is reflected in his contemporaries and later authority. Durkheim, Marx and Engels and Tonnies amongst others depicted on the grand scale and in vignettes of daily life the outgoing of one order and the forward march of another. In most commentaries there was an ambivalence concerning these changes. Comte's political and moral crisis formed part of the consideration of most major theorists but so also did praise for, and pride in, the achievements of the age. This is witnessed in Marx and Engels depiction of the era as rescue from the "idiocy of rural life" and graphic, heart wrenching illustrations of the poverty and oppression of the masses enslaved to machines. For most authors the balance of favour was within the progressive theme, elements of concern needed to be addressed but in most instances these were secondary to the impression of progress.

Concurrently with and perhaps because of the changes which marks this period, in both a material and philosophical sense, this time as already noted was the boom era of the developing social science. That is that the developments that led to social change also provided the wherewithal; physical mobility, improved communication and so on, and substance; cultural exchange, political, legal and economic change to promote and perhaps necessitate growth in the field of social analysis. Given the presence of these two factors, seemingly chaotic social change and the growth of an intellectual tradition, given over to the explanation of the social the next step was to attempt to explain that movement, in a sense to control it by bringing conceptual order to it.

Science, Values, and Categorisation.

There were two key principles prevalent in the age which were brought into action to achieve this. Both are to do with “Science”. The first is the positivist perspective, an approach and value system that holds that like the physical sciences, the social sciences deal with and explain social facts and seek to uncover underlying objective, universal laws governing the behaviour of these social facts. In its earlier uses (from Comte) the term also implied optimism in the progress of society, a perspective adopted by many commentators as noted above, and it is with that denotation that I use the word here. Positivism was linked reflexively with another major scientific theme of the period. The evolution of the natural world was entwined with the evaluation of the social. The major exponents of these themes in the social and natural, Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin, cross referred concepts and each sought both popular and academic gain from the regard with which the other was held. Arguably it was Spencer, not Darwin (Lee and Newby, 1983:73) who introduced the theories of evolution into the broad sciences, but in a climate wherein the physical sciences has established primacy in “objective” principles and concrete method, which the social sciences sought to emulate to establish their own credentials, the distinction is and was easily lost.(see above cited primary references, *passim*.) Basic theory and terminology were not the only exchanges, the use of biological metaphor abounded in the social sciences as is evident in the broad literature, eg., Giddens, (1984), Aron (1965).

Concurrent with these two themes was a third, already noted in relation to positivism but seen to constitute in its own way a movement or attitude widespread in the period, that of progressivism, that is that society was not only moving but that the movement had a value component, innate and unfolding. Society was, and it was subsequently determined had always been, purposively moving towards a higher state.

In each of these, the quest for universal laws, the affinity with Darwinist evolution and the progressive theme it was not merely the cumulatively amassed techno-scientific change or refinement of government and law that was the subject. Almost all theorists of the time incorporated a treatise on moral development subject to explanation by and arising from the same principles.

Chadwick (1990;231) in considering the religious secular - debate notes the need for the scientists to free morality from theology and explain its necessary continuation from their own base. In doing so he touches on these interrelated themes, “but the nineteenth century did not believe that all was chaos...The general trend of science appeared to be more and more organisation; not moral organisation indeed, but obedience to physical laws which in their totality appeared to be purposive or might be said to be”. The comment contained in the religious secular context carries implications for another tendency identified in various otherwise dissimilar theories; the appearance of quasi mystical binding or motive forces from Adam Smith to Karl Marx . Devices which in some regards, appear to be a legacy from theology which lend, if not the absoluteness, of the earlier form then a moral authority which is missing from the sciences. United with the “Universal Laws” perspectives, an air of unassailability of the forward march is given.

Lee and Newby (1984:69) note the efforts of the period to construct a scientific theory of progress and the “enormous hold that it exercises over peoples minds” bringing with it the assumption that social change is synonymous with inevitable historical processes and that the industrial society of that era was the high point of that process. The theme is a recurrent one and is found in Montesquieu, Comte, Spencer, Mill, Durkheim, Marx and Tonnies among others and covering the

spectrum of conservative, progressive, liberal and socialist thought. As the authors note, the residues of such evolutionary theories still occur as basic assumption in popular thought though they lack creditability in academic circles. The observation is continued by Swingewood (1984:46:47) on Comte's "dynamic laws of social development...invariable laws which synthesise order and progress".

The broad social and academic context in which these theories, (at worst belief systems), arose is aptly described in this quote from Abraham:

"In general whether one considers the works of English writers in pure sociology like those of Buckle, Bagehat or Spencer, or the works of the social anthropologists like Tylor and Frazer, one can discover a common strand of thought underlying all of them. It could be defined simply as a confident and unbounded optimism in the prospects of society. Triumphant science and abundant wealth were an infallible index of a progress that was guaranteed to endure indefinitely. (1977:201)."

The scientific, the moral, the material and the philosophical were perceived as comprising a unity; purposive, unassailable, and good. Good to the extent that visible manifestations of loss due to these changes were theoretically negated or mitigated by projection that the future would inevitably bring the ideal state.

Together with this belief in the present and future was the refinement of the distinction between the archaic and the modern, often expressed in the comparative use of extant European and primitive cultures linking material developments and moral values to demonstrate the superiority of the modern (European). These illustrated or incorporated commentaries to illustrate successive "Ages of Man" (sic) "Stages of Society" etc. leading inevitably to the then apical industrialised European world and at times beyond it eg., see Montesquieu, Comte (in Aron 1965). As surpassed stages, as well as illustrating historical progress, these conceptualisations

were readily accessible for comparative purpose to understand, but also as much as for any other reason to demonstrate, the advanced and desirable stage of the nineteenth century and its inhabitants.

Evolutionary Demarcation; the New and Old Orders

Discussing this period specifically in relation to Community, Cohen (1985:22) notes “Their (nineteenth century social theorists) speculations were frequently based on the contract between two, apparently historically disjunctive, types of society. For example, Maine juxtaposes the society in which relationships are essentially ascriptive and founded, through blood based rank order, on largely immutable hierarchies, with a “later” evolved social form in which they are made with a degree of freedom and founded on contract” (status-contract dichotomy.) Cohen then goes on to review the recurrence of this comparative approach in the two most significant theorists of the Community-Society dichotomy; Tonnies and Durkheim.

In and arising from Tonnies, the comparison is between *Gemeinschaft* - the trait of intimacy and stability, and *Gessellschaft* - ego focused, highly specific and possibly discontinuous relationships. From Durkheim come the conceptions of mechanical solidarity (physically interactive) and organic solidarity (functional and possibly remotely articulated.) (see Gardener in Austin-Broos 1987: chap. 5, Aron 1967: chap. 1) Those earlier traits, based upon likeness, stability and proximity were seen as being ill equipped to tolerate specialisation, change and mobility, the hallmarks of industrial society. Consequently, these values, forms, and behaviours, were seen as the previously dominant (epochal) standard being made redundant as part of the evolutionary cycle. *Gessellschaft* and organic solidarity conversely were seen as the emergent, dominant and (at least by Durkheim) higher forms of social organisation arising parallel with technological advancement. Based on the rational tenets of specialisation, integration and organic mutual interdependence, these meshed with the emergent industrial era and consequently would bring social harmony within it, on a rational, scientifically explicable basis replacing the superstitious binding forces of mythology and religion which served this purpose in the older order. This

harmony, a continuance of the moral theme would arise from the ability of organic society to utilise ego, in specialisation, as a uniting rather than divisive force.

Weber's traditional and rational types and similar constructs from most prominent intellectuals of the time continued the theme. Where Community-Society was not the central focus of the work, it or some variant was a backdrop to it, explaining the present or future with reference to past features. Those features increasingly represented an ideal type of the past form, in illustrating its passage through typification the values or behaviours being surpassed consequently became idealised and in some aspects more desirable. Those whose concerns over the binding forces of morality and social stability were not satisfied by scientific analyses such as those by Durkheim turned with some nostalgia to the features associated with the earlier communal forms. This though was still within the context of regarding the current form as the epitome of civilisation. Even Tonnies who most readers regard as being singular in his lamentations of the passing of the old order in the substance of his work; according to Abraham 'an uncompromising stand against the incoming order' (1977:205), felt constrained to deny that this was so (Tonnies, 1955: Translator's Introduction *p. xi - xiii* and *passim*.).

What Cohen calls juxtaposed types Robert Nisbet refers to as "linked antitheses" in his investigation of what he regards as this (Community) most fundamental and far reaching unit idea of sociology (in Lyons 1985:5). Those comparative-analytical pairs identified by Nisbet (1966) together with others taken from the literature can be arranged in the following manner:

(see table over)

PREVIOUS ORDER	CURRENT & FUTURE ORDER.
<i>Lower</i>	<i>Higher</i>
Community	Society *
Authority	Power *
Status	Class *
Sacred	Secular
Alienation	progress *
Agrarian	Industrial
<i>(Rural)</i>	<i>(Urban)</i>
Simple	Complex
Concord	Contract
Traditional	Rational
mechanical **	organic **
Superstition	Science
<i>(Magic, Mythology, Religion)</i>	<i>(Social morality)</i>
Feudal	Capitalist
Holism	Specialism
* Nisbet's Antitheses ** Used in the Durkheimian sense.	

Figure 1. Linked Antitheses

Again, these were viewed as reference points and analytical categories by which to identify wholesale shifts and to illustrate progress. They depict forms and orders of succession and are viewed as separated in time and evolutionary status.

There were concrete forms associated with these thematic ones, some of which are shown above in parentheses. The concrete form most often identified with Community was that of the village, or in other cultures the nomadic band. Within the village, those themes listed below "Community" were also to be found and to a large extent the two became synonymous. This was no doubt helped along by Tonnies (rural village) reference group in depicting gemeinschaft relationships, which also contributed to the development of the urban-rural dichotomy (Tonnies, 1955).

While initially concerned with relational social cohesion and integration brought about by traditional forms of authority, association and social dynamics, the

conceptualisation, of the form Community as historically superseded (fixed in the past), and spatially defined (fixed in the country, in the village) led increasingly to its perception as static form. The perspective, often nostalgically viewed as stability and harmony, again is a representation of a fixed and enduring form. As Taksa notes (1989:13-15) the dynamic-comparative element was quickly lost. The spatial location and forms; the physical, conceptually subsumed the dynamic. The orientation became, to paraphrase Taksa, the static formation in which people with common concerns and interests, because they happen to live in the same area (and historically at a particular time) are united and distinguished from others; “a fixed social entity coinciding with a specific geographical location” (op cit. P14).

Effectively Community became ‘people in a place’: Though the affective connotations were retained, no real or general explanation of why this might be so is offered.

The fixed, spatial and institutional elements, some of which at times are complemented by or substituted with ‘ethnic’ ascriptors have become the predominant focus to the extent that it may not be necessary to cite examples here. However the following selection provides ample opportunity to confirm this; Hillery (1955, 1968), Kuenstler (1961), Vidich, Bensman and Stein, (1964) Bell and Newby (1971), Sarason (1974), Wild (1974, 1981), Blakely (1979), Cox et al (1984), Schug and Beery (1984), Ford Foundation (1992), Robert and Peitsch (1993, 1994) These, along with most of the other Community works cited in this thesis (unless otherwise specified) illustrate the degree to which this has become the norm.

It is significant for later analysis that if Community, fixed in time and imbued with physically identifiable features, was identified as the dominant base unit being supplanted, then its re-emergence as a dynamic in other situations would not be sought. That initial perspective of a dynamic had now been lost. The debate would consequently be centred on whether that object identified, that is Community as village life has or is to become totally extinct or is able as a remnant of an earlier form to co-exist with the new rational form. Remember that Hillery in 1968, almost a century after many of these considerations, in a totally different age, adopted the

village as his benchmark because nobody had said that it wasn't a Community. That might also be rephrased in the form that somebody, quite a number of them, did say that it was a Community. This was on the basis of its predominance as a physical pattern of social aggregation in pre-industrialised times, rather than for any specific criteria pertinent to the study of Community.

It has been put (Nisbet in Plant 1971:16) that the preoccupation with Community of many nineteenth intellectuals was an attempt to rediscover a lost form. While this may be true on one level I suspect that it is a little more complex and, on the premise that I have put forward, that the quest of rediscovery was a self defeating one. The loss which necessitated the search was one which had been prescribed by the very academics which now either mourned its passing, sought to relocate it in rural locations or extant "primitive" cultures or projected the re-emergence of the ideal in a future natural or socialist utopia. It was necessary to their beliefs.

In adhering to the progressive-evolutionary themes which permeated the era and set the epistemological base for these academics, and particularly in uniting the concepts of scientific, moral, and social progress within these themes, the fate of Community, identified as a previously, dominant social feature, was sealed. In a progressive thesis based on orders of succession it would be anathema to theoretical integrity, to posit the continuity of a form that has been surpassed in accordance with inviolable laws of progress.

I believe that these patterns set in the last century have undergone little real change to date. The context in which they wrote, as well as what they wrote, have had significant continuing effect on later analysis both by advocates and opponents of the utility of the concept Community.

My contention is that had the emphasis remained on the dynamic, if it could be divorced from the now generally discredited evolutionary theme a much clearer picture of Community could be arrived at. The following chapters pursue that line of enquiry.

The Separation of Sociology and Psychology.

Further to those points already noted the era under consideration (preceding) was also marked by a general separation between two emerging fields of the human sciences, sociology and psychology. This is both from one perspective surprising and from another predictable.

Surprising in that most of the leading and significant lesser lights of early sociology were by no means disciplinary purists. Most embraced and alternatively fused together or over a period dealt separately with numerous strands of the broad social sciences at times influenced by interests in the physical sciences. Some of the ranges of interests so represented were; Spencer; mechanics, economics, psychology, Simmel; law, history, the fine arts and literature, Le Play; geology and engineering, Marx; history, law, economics, philosophy, Mill; philosophy, political economy, psychology.

The absence for most of this era, in sociology particularly, of clear disciplinary boundaries, would be expected to lend itself to both free and productive cross fertilisation and to work against parochial insularity. To highlight this, of the preceding group and their contemporaries up until the early twentieth century only one, Durkheim, held a chair in Sociology (Paris 1913) Whilst most of the others had academic careers of long standing and while clearly, from our perspective at least, these were taken up with and gave rise to their pre-eminence in this particular discipline the field at that time was insufficiently distinct from its derivative or parallel areas of study to warrant such treatment. The one exception to this rule gives the clue, in part at least to my position that while the separation is surprising it was also predictable.

It is little exaggeration to say that Emille Durkheim viewed psychology as the arch-enemy in his quest to establish his own field as the primary explanator of society. With the atomistic emphasis of the Enlightenment carried through this period in utilitarian philosophy and fused into coherent socio-political form via devices such as social contract and quasi mystical “hidden hands”, psychology, as the science of the individual was a threat. That is that if society was nothing more than the sum of its

individual human parts, give or take a summary full stop such as those just noted, then the discipline given over to the study of those individuals, psychology, is in the best position to explain the social world. Durkheim's response, and it is the one that has had the most general adherence to date, was to eliminate psychology and subjective consciousness from sociological analysis. "The social was irreducible, a 'suis generis', and thus the psychological element was irrelevant." (Swingewood 1984:106). More than any other of his era Durkheim was the politician of academe, and virtually single handedly forced the acceptance of sociology as a scientific discipline, setting its substantive and methodological principles on the way. While much of the content of Durkheim's work was debated from the outset and according to the fashion of later periods variously discredited or reconstructed, the operational parameters that he had set have largely prevailed (Abraham 1973:95). The clear separation, often competitive, of sociology and psychology has for general purposes been one of the most persistent tenets. Without going further into detail cause and effect arguments here, and noting that there were deviations to this separatist position then and there are now, there was a schism between the two fields in the nineteenth century and there is a clear polarity between them now. Again referring back to Durkheim, the seminal position that explanation of a social fact can only be sought in its relation to another social fact, extrapolated into disciplinary form means that likes look to like, current to former, sociology to understand itself and re-examine its subject. Kuhn's "normal science" (in Skinner, 1985: Pp. 10 -12.) ensures that linear retrospection determines current position and future direction. Separated fields now, viewing separated fields then, are unlikely to seek a synthesis of the two.

Community is essentially the property of sociology and while it is visited, borrowed or partitioned by other disciplines this is done so with the epistemological base and academic discourse of the property holder. While the acquisition from that foray may then be taken into the context of the other disciplines and mutual exchange occur in that new location the source itself is little changed. A case in point is the emergence of Community psychology as a sub-branch of the disciplines that Durkheim initially distanced from sociology. Following the Swampscott conference of the sixties and the formal determination to develop this new branch it was to

sociology (however critically), not to their own discipline that the advocates of change turned for their base object, reserving the formulation of codes and methods of practice to their own ranks (Rappaport, 1977., Mann, 1978., Heller, 1984.) This is not surprising and is a pattern repeated in other applied fields that have sought Community as a new arena or orientation. This is generally followed at some point by comment on the inadequacy and inconclusiveness of this body of knowledge similar to that noted previously. There may then be intra disciplinary critique and revision of the models for the purposes of application but these incline to be specific to the field for which the body of sociological theory was imported. These incline also to be directly related to practice either at the level of practitioner instruction or in individual field practice. These variants increasingly become adaptations to fit the pre-existing disciplinary, professional or occupational orientation rather than an academic reconsideration of the construct of Community itself. Given the ephemeral nature of the concept there are few barriers to limit this. As a result of this practical specificity there is little by way of coherent reconsideration of the concept to re-export to the source. Rather the selective appropriation and pragmatic reformulation contributes to the looseness of the term, adding another section to the maze. This pattern is evidenced in fields as diverse as Urban Planning (Stretton 1978. Kilmartin et al 1985) and local government (Latham 1990). Health (Kramer and Specht 1975) , History (Taksa, 1989) Law Enforcement; in the philosophy of Community Policing, Neighbourhood Watch, etc. Librarianship, and Social Work as well as the cited Community Psychology. It is understandable, perhaps goes without saying that such a range of disciplines would not each seek to reconstruct an entire body of theory where one already exists in another and logical that each of these diverse groups should go to that one primary source.

It is in the particular instance of Community Psychology seeking its source material in the traditionally antithetical sociology that I find an irony. Not on the basis of inter nicene rivalry but in the initial contribution that its own field had made to the early construction of Community theory. A contribution which I believe could have, had the Durkheimian principle not been so effective, led to a different and clearer analysis of the field.

The position that I am proposing in this thesis recognises Community as fit meat for sociology while the community is in its extant form; in the study of its internal institutions and the way that its members relate to those, its relationship to the structures and institutions of organic society, *but*, sees the origins, meaning, and persistence of Community vested primarily in the subjective conscious person, the realm of the psychologist.

Attempting to explain the social with the personal may appear heretical but is not new. Within the ranks of early social theorists there were also psychologists, notably Wilhelm Wundt and within the groupings of sociologists there were also those who incorporated psychological principles into analysis of the social. This is predominantly seen within the German tradition, though by no means exclusively. Herbert Spencer, one of the more fundamentalist of the positivist-evolutionary schools discussed previously, carried the significance of a psychological approach into this individualistic social analysis; that life is “an adjustment of inner relations to outer relations”(in Jones 1989. p. 798). Mill particularly advocated the essential importance of the psychological in studying the social. Mill’s thesis, couched in the positivist vein, was that “all social phenomena were structured in the laws governing the drives and motives of human nature”. (Swingewood 1984:52).

It was the German tradition though that, as a block, contained and integrated psychological principles into its sociology. Developing later than the French tradition though, it was that (French) school’s conventions that prevailed overall. As Abraham (1973:207) notes, had it been Weber’s rather than Durkheim’s parameters that gained broad acceptance the course of sociology would have been different. His comment is framed in the context of the inclusion of psychology as an integral part of the stream of history, philosophy, economics and law that fed into sociology, an inclusion that extended beyond Weber to most of the German tradition. The Durkheimian position held though, and its norms were applied as a general rule in treatment of the German theorists of this period as with others.

As a result while the role of the individual actor, themes such as meaning, will, volition, are maintained within theories they are not suitable for cross-comparative

purposes with other theorems under this regime. The personal within Weber is subsumed and marginalised under the tag of existential sociology. Tonnies *gemeinschaft* and *gessellschaft* became social states rather than relational traits and so on. Less central figures such as Wundt, whose folk psychology and sociology (in Barnes 170:216:226), each of which emphasise the close inter relatedness of the psychological and the social and which strongly influenced Tonnies as well as others have largely disappeared from the agenda in considering Community as a dynamic psycho-social form. The dynamic - relational traits have been replaced with the static - institutional state.

Community and the Domestic Sector: A New World or a Patriarchal Splitting of the Old ?

Reflecting on the content of the preceding section it occurs that there is another theme here. It is the socio-cultural construction of gender and consequent ascription as female and male of certain aspects and forms of society. The theme is one that is not central to my thesis but one that is significant in a general sense and strongly relevant to the topic of Community. It can be seen most clearly at this stage of my analysis to be parallel and conceptually in some regards synonymous with the development of my thesis.

Looking back to the table of “linked antitheses” it would take little to re-label the columns designated Previous (Lower) and Current/Future (Higher) to the Levi-Straussian “Raw - Cooked”, to “Nature - Culture”, to “Domestic-Public” or to “Female-Male”. The “Lower-Higher” value indicators, would of course remain in place. From this starting point a number of points not covered in the preceding section (or indeed in the era that was discussed there), can be located in relation to the age, the division that the industrialisation and bureaucratisation of the age affected between the private-public spheres, the extent to which most social theorists ignored this, the exclusive emphasis on the male , cultural, domain in progressive-evolutionary theories and relegation of the female-domestic to the archaic category.

In the first point I am not contending that these divisions did not exist prior to the advent of industrial capitalism and related forms. Extensive cross-cultural work (de Beauvoir, Firestone, Levi-Strauss, Rosaldo, Ortner) identifies gender based division of labour and, reflexively, societal norms ascribing innate qualities, behaviours and spheres of activity appropriate to male and female on a universal basis. However where production, consumption and reproduction are conducted within the one unit, where “public policy is decided on the threshold”, there is little conception of or need for the conceptual distinction between the private and public domain, unpaid and paid labour, economic dominance and dependence divided along gender lines. As Connell notes with reference to Elizabeth Janeway (1987:156) the notion of the home as a “distinct sphere of life, the stronghold of family and leisure did not exist before the eighteenth century”. Janeway is further cited by Connell (op cit.) and in further detail by Eisenstein (1984:19) tracing the “recent history” of this division, the increasing economic dependence of women, “something that would have seemed absurd in the context of the reciprocities of village agriculture and commercial towns”, and the lessening status of “women’s work” (domestic and public) as the nineteenth century wore on. Leading to Rosaldo’s position (in Eisenstein ; 20) that while the domestic-public division is not unique to Western industrialised society, it is extreme in it.

The creation of this distinction, its implications for women and conversely the designation of this domestic sector as “female” went virtually unnoticed in the male academic world. Le Play was one notable though only partial exception insofar as he recognised and attempted to categorise the types of changes happening on the domestic level as a result of industrialisation (Abraham, 1973:92). His was a conservative perspective and was oriented towards “moral breakdown” in the same vein as the broader “social moral breakdown” that was the subject of many contemporary works.

The lack of attention that this major development received is perhaps best dealt with summarily by citing “Adrienne Roch’s perspective on a broad prevailing tendency.

.. began to sense a fundamental perceptual difficulty among male scholars (and some female ones) for which “sexism” is too facile a term. It really is an intellectual deficit, which might be named “patrivincialism” or “patriochialism” the assumption that women are a sub-group, that “mans world” is the “real” world, that patriarchy is equivalent to culture and culture to patriarchy.

(in Eisenstein op cit.: 74)

It is a fundamental error which both reflects and perpetuates its social genesis and clearly is the context of the observations and prognoses of the theorists referred to in the preceding section. There was an unconscious literality in their often cited “progress of mankind”.

The emergent industrial and bureaucratic forms in a patriarchal capitalist system were the forum of what Connell (op cit.) refers to as calculative and combative masculinity, the “Rational” and “Power” elements in the right hand “Higher” column of the earlier table. They were also the arena, dominantly male from the outset and almost exclusively male by the mid nineteenth century, of social organisation and the way of the future.

The universally applicable laws of progress it seems were not only selective when it came to class structures (Comte op. cit.) but exclusive when considering gender division. Though nothing of this was contained in the treatises reviewed previously it comprises a strong residual theme drawing from both idealist and materialist bases. That is the preoccupation with male cultural-commercial pursuits in the public sector by academics, politicians and others with hegemonic influence who belonged to that same social and gender division; and the lived reality of the increasing division of the private-public sectors, within one of which, the private, the indications of progress (science, rationalism, contract etc.) did not occur, would lead to a discounting of the domestic as a part of that same society. To do otherwise, apart from breaking with the belief in a progressive-evolutionary plan, would be to invite a perpetual state of dissonance between one lived reality, the public sphere and its technological and associational change, reinforced by hegemonic consciousness and another, the

private. Such a discounting of the domestic as a part of “true” society is synonymous with the Nature-Culture distinction of de Beauvoir, Ortner and others.

We are left then with two conceptual categories, Community and Domestic, both sharing the same thematic features. Both excluded on various grounds from consideration as typical of modern society. Both also persisting connotatively in relation to moral support, nurturing, stability etc.

The similarity of the two constructs raises some interesting questions. Did Community, as the amalgam of the traits ascribed to it, persist, again on the basis of the repository of these traits, within the domestic sphere? The alienation of that sector from mainstream society, its conceptualisation as refuge, safe harbour might allow for its consideration as such from the perspective pursued in this work. Alternatively (and presuming societally ascribed gender values) the question might simply be put as : is Community Female?

PART TWO

Corowa, Chullora & Further:

The Research, Results and Recommendations

CHAPTER THREE:

The Methodology.

An Overview of the Research and Its Purpose

The key to identifying and understanding Community in this thesis lies in analysis of the interplay of two elements, the environment and the individual, and the result of this interplay. Qualitative methods were employed to seek out this relationship (between the external factors and internal affect); relying on the exploratory strengths of the ethnographic approach to shed light on the principles of Community causation, maintenance and decline as outlined earlier.

The hypothesis is that where the impact of the (external environmental) stimulus on the individual is subjectively significant, where individual response is inadequate and where the number of subjectively affected individuals is sufficient, a collective response - Community - is formed in the defence and promotion of its constituents.

It is therefore necessary to use a methodology appropriate to the testing of the “hypothesis” as defined. While the term ‘hypothesis’ is used in relation to the testing and development of the thesis and principles noted above it is not meant to imply the direct, one way, ‘If - Then’, stand or fail, method of the experiment. The use of the theory in the research is more usefully understood as Marshall and Rossman’s “Guiding Hypothesis” (1989: 41.) That is, as a subject in a further stage of refinement having been partially developed from hunch to rough hypothesis in field practice and against a review of prevailing trends in the literature. Its purpose is exploratory, of itself as much as the cases under examination, and interactive; according to these authors a general, adaptive and if needs be disposable construct. The establishment or rejection of the of the hypothesis rests as much on its interactive progress through the field as on its comparison to amassed data.

Marshall and Rossman’s work was the single most significant in developing an overall approach to the case, both in the development of the methodology and as an overall influence on conduct in the field. Other sources of ideas, encouragement, strategies and safeguards in conducting this type of open ended exploratory work included Sjoberg and Nett (1968) Geertz (1973), Watts (1978), Hughes (1980), Casanova (1981), Ellen (1984), and Mishler (1986), among others.

The intent was to select set of paired cases of superficially similar social phenomena to be cross -compared with the intention of illustrating variations in social responses that might be dichotomised along the lines of the polarised 'non-rational' and 'rational' types as previously discussed.

The procedure proposed for both of these 'types' was a dialectic between the thesis and the reported case experience; Community as a dynamic, purposive, temporary form dependent on causal externals, subjective need and environmental mediation, counterpointed to the related social actuality of the respondents and the actions they took. The comparative approach was adopted to test and refine the thesis and its investigative capacities within the Communal type and to similarly investigate its discriminatory capacities in the Societal type. This process entailed the interactive use of archives material, focussed interviews, and published materials contemporary to or providing background for the social phenomena under examination

The orientation was, of necessity, historical, to trace the development of the selected cases and their after-effects (if any.)

The fieldwork was carried out in the areas of Corowa and Chullora in NSW. It was conducted primarily in 1992-93 with some extension of the Chullora research into 1994. Both cases were purposively chosen for their potential for exploration and comparison. Both had been the subject of plans to establish a high temperature incineration plant to dispose of dangerous waste materials. The response that followed in both cases was publicly cited as action by and victory for 'The Community'. Corowa initially presented itself as an accidental discovery and Chullora was chosen for its close comparability.

In both instances the approach was to first review the public record of the period; Press and Council archive materials (though in Corowa Council kept very few records). A chronology and outline sketch were compiled and potential interview subjects chosen from these sources. (Later interview subjects were snowballed from these selections.)

Focussed interviews utilising a broad based interview schedule were the tool in both cases (see Appendix 1) Though the interview schedule was used and specific probe questions included (in the event that the subject did not touch on points important to the work) all efforts were made to keep the interviews closely tied to the respondent's experience rather than the researcher's agenda.

Corowa entailed a large number of interviews because of the diffuseness of the case (and in part to compensate for the lack of formal records). In all 64 persons were interviewed.

In Chullora an extremely high degree of corroboration was found after a small number of interviews (7). This, coupled with a similarly extreme high degree of consonance between these interviews and the detailed Council records kept, led to a suspension of interviewing at this point.

The Research and Issues Arising in the Field

Sources of Information

The research was conducted in an exploratory manner using the guiding hypothesis to locate and review the significance of the issues of self identified individual need, and collective response formation (the parameters of which were derivative from the identified need), degrees of solidarity, and closure bounded by these parameters.

While the subjects identified were the immediate focus of the research there was a strongly lateral and outward ranging agenda during interviews and in compiling results, eg. the key to the formation of an organisation may lie in the subjective states of the individuals involved, the cause of which may lie in the contemporaneous environment.

Focused interviews were designed to touch on and consequently determine the significance to the respondent of the issues under investigation. Beyond this a general oral history of the case was sought.

The interviews were contextually framed and supplemented by the use of archives and published materials. Where interview subjects were not available greater emphasis was placed on these sources.

In each instance source material (interview or documentary) was counterpointed to environmental factors, (constituting either possible stimuli to or mediation of response), from which further explanation or clarification of the source material was be sought.

Interviews were focused to range across three primary areas;

The formation and agenda setting of any organisation, movement or associational pattern, examining both procedural and strategic elements.

The personal, subjectively viewed, individual and collective experience - the perception of what was happening and why - the significance of the personal and collective experience. The primacy given to ' ego-syntonic' (values, feelings, ideas, consistent with the ego, that 'feel real' and are acceptable to consciousness), rather than to calculatively rational considerations consistent with socially prevalent perspectives.

The environmental; the subjects' perception of contemporary external stimuli, mediating or obstructive factors. This dealt with their interaction with people and organisations involved in the issue and the synthesis of this experience.

Sampling

Case Selection

Case selection was purposive. The choice of cases was designed to illustrate the effect of a number of particular variables operating concurrently; Corowa and Chullora were thought to give scope for this.

Attempts to select a representative sample would have been inappropriate to the aims of the research. Further, a standard measure on which representativeness of a sample (Community) might be based did not exist. While it is intended that this work might contribute to the development of such a standard it is sequentially illogical for this work to attempt to claim representative validity. That is, if a firm verifiable codex of what constitutes 'Community' already existed there would be little impetus to conduct this work.

The Cases Selected; Corowa, N.S.W and Chullora N.S.W..

Corowa was an accidental discovery through an enforced stopover for car repairs in late 1990. The border town located on the Murray River was the site selected by the N.S.W. Government for the establishment of a High Temperature (Toxic Waste) Incinerator. At the time of my stopover there was an apparent high degree of solidarity and popular mobilisation aimed at overturning this decision.

The selection of Chullora was guided by the selection of Corowa. Partly overlapping with the timeframe to establish the High Temperature Incinerator (HTI) at Corowa a like proposal to set up HTI at Chullora was commenced. The function of that facility was to dispose of what appeared to be a higher volume of lower grade dangerous waste. It appeared that the opposition that this generated was of a different order to the Corowa experience. Despite the similarity of issue and shared negative reaction to it the Chullora incident appeared to draw little popular attention. Legal and Parliamentary channels seem to have been the main focus for challenge with elected representatives to local and state government and local government officers the main opponents to the proposal .

A Brief Description of the Subject Areas

Corowa is a NSW border town located on the Murray River some sixty kilometres west of Albury. Due to the (initial) receptivity of Local Government there the site was chosen as the location for a High Temperature Incinerator to dispose of intractable waste products from the major Australian industrial cities. The popular response which followed the area's nomination is the focus of the study.

The town has a population of 4,500 with a total shire population of seven thousand two hundred, the balance being distributed over the shire area of 2,200 sq. km. Population makeup is almost exclusively Anglo-Australian. The distinction is made locally between a pre-1976 grouping (long established farming families and similarly established townfolk who have traditionally serviced the needs of the rural population) and later settlers, a mix of retirees and the management and workers of the food manufacturing industries established at that time. Principal industries are agriculture, food and wine producing and tourism.

Chullora is a suburb of the Bankstown local government area in the south west of the Sydney Metropolitan Area. It was the subject of a proposal from a private waste management company to establish a complex entailing initially two and then three high temperature incinerators to dispose of medical, quarantine and food wastes.

The local government area was principally developed in the post war years being effectively built-out by the seventies. The population at the time of the 1991 Census was a little under one hundred and fifty four thousand (ABS, 1993; p.1.), reflecting the continuance of gradual net population loss since the seventies (BCC, 1988; p.4., Burnley, 1989.). Railways workshops and other transport and warehousing industries have been the principal industries of the area.

Interview Subjects

Again the selection was purposive. Subjects were sought on the basis of their involvement in some aspect of the issue which effected their area and who therefore had the capacity to offer comment on the issue, its impact on them, on the actions that ensued, and to make observations on the apparent broad effects of the issue. Given the nature of the work this meant primarily selecting those who had registered their opposition to the incinerator proposal in their area (See exceptions below).

Initial selection of subjects was planned to obtain as broad a spread as possible (of those categorised above) of first contacts. This was done by identifying people from the public record; newspapers and council files. Using those records (and particularly newspaper records) provided some background of the individuals, their motives and any specifically pertinent organisational affiliations. Over-concentration in any of these areas with attendant biases could then be guarded against. This safeguard could not be guaranteed with the only other practical options which were to network from information provided by or seek the sponsorship of readily identifiable public figures or through cold contacts. The cold contacts option, through doorknocking, street approaches or mail-out, presented the additional problem that locating subjects with the desired experience could not be assured without largescale canvassing beyond the scope of available resources.

It was allowed that, following the initial identification of subjects it might be profitable to snowball further contacts from them though with the same intention of avoiding obvious cliques.

There was no ideal sample size pre-determined. With the emphasis on exploration the intent was simply to start and follow on from the initial selection until the degree of corroboration of subjects responses rendered, firstly particular areas of enquiry, and ultimately, the further pursuit of the whole research agenda, redundant.

The exceptions to this in Corowa were necessary due to two developments which made it advisable to extend interviews beyond those purposively selected for their oppositional stance. Firstly responses in those interviews consistently indicated that the opposition (and related features) was near universal. Consequently opportunities to develop incidental contacts into impromptu interviews were taken to test this claim and to check for consistency between the experiences of those who were known to have proclaimed their commitment to the opposition and those who were not so known. Secondly issues arose during the course of the research which were contentious and required specific attention. Concerned with allegations of the use of professional agitators and of pressure tactics against minority groups these needed to be viewed from 'both sides' to arrive at a clear picture. In view of this a small number of interviews were arranged with people who had been in favour of the incinerator or opposed to the protest. Additionally and for both of these purposes local gatekeepers, whose positions on the issue were unknown were interviewed. The Shire President, a local police officer, a regional journalist who had been prominent in the coverage of the matter, and the majority of the town's clergy were interviewed, the latter as a group.

Interviews were conducted in a wide range of settings, mostly face to face but with some telephone interviews where it was not possible for the informant to schedule time for such a meeting or where they felt that the extent of their contribution did not warrant such an arrangement. All 'formal', that is pre-arranged, interviews were conducted on the respondent's home ground, in their homes or workplace. The impromptu Corowa interviews were either at that persons place of work or in public

places such as a supermarket. All but three of the pre-arranged interviews were tape recorded and in those instances no tape was made at the interview subject's request. The use of tapes was primarily to flesh out notes taken during the interview, to verify the accuracy of the verbatim quotes used in this thesis and to revise the context of a person's statements; voice inflection, denotative intent and so on.

The mechanics of entry and the actual selection of participants, which entailed some adjustment to the original intent are interdependent and evolved as follows.

Entry and Procedures of Enquiry

The first two sources of information about the cases identified above, the press and local government, also provided the initial points, and means, of entry to both cases, conceptually and through the people encountered in this exercise. This was more pronounced in Corowa where physical entry and the acquisition of some degree of personal familiarity with the town, its history, geography and institutions was an integral part of this early stage. This was not necessary in Chullora which area was already well known to me..

The initially hoped for balance between the two types of record (official and media) and consistency in this between the cases faded early into the research. In the first telephone contact with the Corowa Shire Council, the officer that I was transferred to offered the comment (in response to a request for access to records) "I don't know if they kept any, you know, they lost that one." A later in-person approach, preceded by letters of introduction from the University and a senior officer of Bankstown City Council, resulted in a lengthy discussion with the Shire Health Surveyor, the responsible officer, but scant written record, some ten pages in all incorporating the sum of council reports and minutes on the matter and the submission for the incinerator's location in Corowa. It appears that no correspondence files, petitions, detailed reports or such like had been retained (where they originally existed).

Conversely Bankstown City Council had compiled and retained voluminous and meticulously detailed records in several files accounting for thousands of pages. These ran the gamut from staff notes concerning phone calls to detailed technical, legal and social reports and included all registrations of objection from both private

and commercial interests. The detail of these reports and their content also presented an ethical dilemma: It was possible to prepare a list of all private and corporate formal objectors to the HTI but it did not seem permissible to directly approach people identified in this manner. Breaches of trust may well have been involved in such an action; the individuals concerned had communicated privately with Council rather than going on the public record and my access to these records was on the understanding that this confidentiality would be respected.

Consequently, while I took note of these people I also resolved to make no approach to them until or unless the names recurred in other contexts which would justify an approach on the basis of personal reference or public circulation of their position.

The reverse applied to the press record. The Corowa experience dominated both the local and regional papers, giving a detailed picture of the material events as they unfolded, the positions adopted and changed by the main players, and the perspectives of numerous residents in street interviews and letters to the editor. The Bankstown local papers which covered the Chullora area carried frequent articles, apparently based on press releases, featuring the positions of, particularly two, local politicians but with only four items over the lengthy duration of the issue from residents. There was very little coverage in the metropolitan press.

Consequently the primary sources for the preparation of outline sketches and the selection of initial interview subjects was of necessity weighted towards the media record in Corowa and the official record in Chullora. Both were later supplemented from private and organisational files kept on the issue.

The end result of this aspect of the research was that sources for information initially summarised in the working sketch and ultimately resulting in the Chronologies and Events sections as they appear in this thesis at the commencement of each of the case studies following are:

- Corowa; Press articles, Council minutes and reports, files of the Corowa District Concerned Citizens Group, Corowa Library portfolio on the period and various materials from the Corowa Historical Society.

- Chullora; Press articles, Council minutes, Reports to Council, reports on Council files from the proponent, letters, petitions and submissions from private and corporate objectors, legal and environmental consultants, submissions from government and quasi-government third part bodies commenting on the issue and Council's correspondence files; Bankstown City Library portfolio on the issue, personal file maintained by the State Member; Files and minutes of the South West Resident Action Group.

Subjects identified as having adopted a public stance in this archives section of the research, were then approached individually. The nature of approach varied between the cases. Corowa is several hundred kilometres from my home base and required a higher degree of co-ordination for effective time usage and cost saving.

Consequently a mailout was done to those initially selected some weeks before the planned field trip and where no response was received a follow-up phone call was made. Later interviews were the result of a mix of phone approaches, introductions and spontaneous personal approaches. The result of these approaches was that thirty-eight people were interviewed using the pre-arranged approach, twelve of these (first round interviews) were drawn directly from the public record with the remainder being identified from the first round interviews. Twenty-six other interviews were developed from incidental contact.

In Chullora all subjects but one were identified from records and approached by phone. There were no spontaneous interviews conducted in Chullora of the nature of those in Corowa. I did however approach a number of additional personal or professional contacts (some ten to twelve persons) who were residents or Community Work professionals active in the area. These approaches yielded no 'active' information, that is they were either unaware or only dimly aware of the case and provided no further avenues of enquiry. This vacuum was itself of interest and informed me of something of the background to the case: The discussions had the effect of corroborating the picture of limited public participation, and the low level of significance the matter assumed in peoples' lives, that emerged from the interviews. The brevity and outcome of these contacts did not warrant their listing among

interviews conducted, but in practice broadened the scope of the ultimately small sample selected.

In Chullora six people were approached from the public record in the first round, there were no spin-off interviews from these. One other was a significant intermediary contact, which itself developed into an informal interview. Those few people identified by respondents as likely sources of further information had already been selected from the public record. Again, this was indicative of a contained response and, together with the replication of information received and the ethical problem noted above, contributed to the decision to curtail interviewing.

Some Factors Affecting the Research

It was significant in the research and rates mention here in the body of the work that the Bankstown local government area is my 'home turf' both residentially and occupationally. Consequently many of the high profile figures and some of the bit players are known to me and I to them. This led to a mixed bag of opportunities, constraints and biases in conducting the research. Some doors were opened wider than might have been the case with another researcher but were then partially sealed with requests for confidentiality, both of source and in some cases content.

Information acquired in this way inevitably informed the direction taken in enquiries and played its part in the evaluation of other data and forming conclusions but cannot always be fully acknowledged here. Adhering to principles of confidentiality has meant that where there was an absence of other openly sourced information some gaps or speculatively framed comments appear in lieu of sourced statements. These are not, in context, significant omissions being compensated for by the remainder of the content in which they are embedded.

The Appeal and Limitations of the Cases.

The strength of both cases lay in the clarity of the central issues. Regardless of perceptual permutations that might ensue, the development proposals had an unambiguous physical core concerned with the destruction of contaminants. In an era of high publicity and popular concerns over the environment and public health related to environmental issues, the incinerators would not be likely to go unnoticed

or to be viewed with neutrality. A review of broad overseas documentation of responses to such proposals is provided in 'Backyards, NIMBYs, and Incinerator Sitings: Implications for Social Movement Theory' (Walsh, Warland and Smith, 1993.) Some indication of the likelihood of active response may be drawn from their reference to "the Cerrel indicators", (Cerrell Associates Inc., 1984 in Social Problems, 1993.) which report, prepared for the waste management industry, codifies (US) demographic indicators of likely strength of response to such proposals.

Developed as a tool to assist the industry overcome local opposition, its existence is itself an indicator of the regard with which the industry viewed this probability. The Greenpeace video Rush to Burn (1988) similarly provides a graphic montage of the types of response which may follow such a proposal.

The cases had a clear beginning and end within a relatively short time. This (firstly) made them manageable for a part-time researcher operating alone and on personal resources. The timeframe made it possible, even with those constraints, to undertake a comprehensive review of all known written records pertaining to the incidents, both those on the public record and from private sources, and from these to prepare detailed chronological summaries. The distinct periods with particular benchmark events, together with the chronologies prepared, served to focus the interview subjects' memories and to prompt personal recollections through collaborative (me and they) oral reconstruction of the time. In most cases two years or more had elapsed since the events and this type of reconstruction was invaluable. Finally the discrete period allowed not only for observation of the period but also of the 'before and after' state of the areas and their populace.

The limitations of the cases essentially arise from the main factors given as strengths above. Investigation of the Corowa case resulted in an extreme illustration of the themes pursued in this thesis. Consequently there is a danger of seeing it as unique and of dismissing the case's value in illustrating what is proposed as general theme. There was undoubtedly an unusual conjunction of a high number of variables which gave rise to the response there. The layout of the section following allows for separate identification of the main strands in this and, particularly taken in

comparison with the Chullora case, to dismiss the ‘magic’ element that some have ascribed to the case.

The initial impetus in both cases is a visible, tangible object. Would a less tangible stimulus provide comparable ground for investigation? As may be seen later, subjects in both areas appeared to be saying yes to this question. Perceptions and subjective interpretation of events, not concrete facts were the issue.

Selecting discrete time-limited cases put it beyond the scope of the research to explore the longer term sustainability of Community as it is argued in this thesis.

CHAPTER FOUR:

**An Illustration of the Principles of Community
Formation; Corowa 1990**

'Everyone fell in together, even those who didn't like each other.'

Corowa Resident

Preface

For a brief period of ten weeks from September to December 1990 the New South Wales country town of Corowa and surrounding areas was subjected to the type of externally arising forces dealt with in the preceding sections.

An overwhelming majority of its residents came to see plans by the New South Wales, Victorian and Commonwealth Governments to establish a central facility for the disposal of the nation's intractable wastes in the area as a personal betrayal by the state, a denial of democratic process, a direct threat to lifestyle and, for some to livelihood.

The intensity with which this was perceived resulted in an extreme illustration of the principles of Community formation as outlined previously.

The events in Corowa involved a whole town and then some; individuals, families, personal and occupational networks, as much as their organisations or representatives, and a number of external players, individual, representative and organisational. Such an interplay inevitably generates many thousands of actions, interactions and meshing of strata, mostly publicly unknown and defying full description. Each of these minutiae constituting an active cell of the whole.

The approach that I have opted for here to encapsulate these and to enable the reader to plot the patterns of stimulus and response, in their proper context, and leaving scope for personal analysis, is to lead off with an introductory summary of publicly known events, leaving those at face value. The second part of this section gives a sketch of the area, its people and the influences on them. It is given to provide a locus for the first stage of understanding those events. The third part begins a movement from the public to personal with expansion of some of the key events listed, bringing those public events into the arena of human experience with the aid of interview materials to provide background to the straight historical actions. Neither the introductory list or the discussion of elements of it here or to follow is exhaustive, nor is any attempt made for it to be so, the magnitude of the

case preventing that. Rather the approach is to draw from the original summary selectively to provide windows of magnification, insights into why what happened did. In doing so there will be a shift from the public record to personal experiences as the psycho-social themes of the paper are explored through participants' experiences. The fourth part completes this transition, the weighting being on human perceptions, relations, individual and collective actions, leading from the personal back to the social.

Corowa and the High Temperature Incinerator: The Events

A Summary of the Events

PRELUDE

April 1990

Corowa Shire Council addressed by Joint Taskforce on Intractable Waste on the need to find a suitable area in NSW to operate a central, national, High Temperature Incinerator.

This process of 'Community consultation' was repeated in every NSW council area.

August 1990

Corowa Council lodges submission of support for location of HTI in shire with favourable local press reportage.

25th. September 1990 : Corowa selected as site.

WEEK ONE

Tim Moore announces Corowa as the chosen location from an interim favourable report from the Joint Taskforce.

NSW Waste Management Authority (WMA) opens local office, blanket letterboxing of town with plans for HTI.

NSW Government buys site of 170 hectares.

Favourable reports in local press, mixed positions in regional and metropolitan press.

Greenpeace (anti) and Australian Conservation Foundation (pro) divided on issue. Greenpeace vows support to Corowa residents.

Shire Health Surveyor of neighbouring Rutherglen publicly opposes HTI.

Resident networking commences with information seeking focus.

Public meeting one day after announcement, organised through resident networking, attracts 400. Meeting criticises lack of consultation, claims council overstepped mandate, some angry scenes. Resident action group, Corowa and Districts Concerned Citizens Group (CDCC) formed.

CDCC begins immediately to organise as clearing house, steering committee for information and activities.

CDCC information office established in mainstreet.

Local tourism body calls for referendum.

Council convenes special meeting to ratify involvement, discuss stages to follow. WMA representatives on hand to speak to enquiries, reported 150 'placard waving' residents in gallery.

State member mobbed by crowd of 200.

First appearance of anti-HTI graffiti on buildings

WEEK TWO

CDCC organises second public meeting, hall capacity of 3,500 taken up plus 'hundreds' outside. Position of meeting shifts from information seeking to total opposition to HTI.

Parallel meeting in Rutherglen attracts 1,500. Resolves to similar position as Corowa meeting.

Letters to Editor of Corowa and Albury papers opposing HTI grow in volume, occupy at least one full page each edition.

Rutherglen and Berrigan Shire and Albury City Councils oppose HTI, criticise lack of consultation.

Real estate agents warn of property collapse.

Chamber of Commerce warns of loss of food industries.

WEEK THREE

Special meeting of Council reverses decision to seek HTI

State member appeals in (NSW) parliament for stop to EIS for Corowa.

Letters to editor increasing.

Corowa branch lobbies NSW Liberal Party, State Conference

calls for a stop.

CDCC technical experts start public critique of Taskforce,

Governments' intention to site HTI at Corowa unchanged.

WMA's fallback options close off as alternative NSW areas seek to withdraw from consideration.

WMA calls tenders for management services for the facility.

WEEK FOUR

First public reports of death threats, other forms of harassment and negative sanctions against pro-HTI persons.

Council meets again, confirms its resolve to oppose HTI, formal and informal approaches to state government to withdraw from consideration.

CDCC steps up campaign; weekly full page ad in local paper begins,

numerous small scale meetings and workshops, speakers, marches and activities organised and promoted, bumper stickers etc. produced. Mass rally for 18th November announced.

Major local food producers come out publicly in organised opposition.

WMA continues with plans, pre-empting positive outcome of EIS.

Protest by three hundred, independent of CDCC, outside WMA office.

State and federal local members intensify opposition

WEEK FIVE

Renewed reports of death threats.

Police numbers boosted, phones monitored and calls traced, protection of targeted individuals.

Local Members, state and federal, Victorian and NSW form Joint Parliamentarians' Committee to lobby Ministers.

Local industry heavyweights group lobbies Victorian Government and Opposition.

Grass roots resident activity intensifies.

WEEK SIX

Rutherglen Shire lobbies Victorian Government.

NSW Tourism Commission condemns plans.

More death threats reported.

NSW Environment Minister writes to local member, public opinion not the issue.

WEEK SEVEN

School students march.

Teachers Federation joins opposition.

Joint interests group of residents, farmers, council, big business, successfully lobbies Victorian government, assurances of support.

ACF agrees Corowa not suitable site in view of opposition, criticises lack of consultation.

Murray-Darling Basin Commission joins opposition.

Property market reported as 'dead'.

Symbolic heavy vehicle blockade of disused rail line by farmers, volunteer fire brigade, other parties. Light truck burnt on line. Reported intent to show vulnerability of proposed transport route both to accidents and to guerrilla tactics in future, threatened formation of 'commando unit'.

WEEK EIGHT

Local medical practitioners unanimously publicly oppose HTI.

Federal Member (Tim Fischer) claims tide is turning.

Letters to Editor now occupying over three pages of local paper.

Preparation of EIS taken out of hands of WMA, independent consultants engaged.

WEEK NINE

Rally organised by CDCC attracts attendance variously estimated to over 6000 people.

Organisation of activities by CDCC and independent groups and individuals continues.

Victorian (Coalition) Opposition comes out against HTI in Corowa.

Tim Fischer reports Murray-Darling Basin Commission about to release report, use reserve powers to quash proposal.

NSW Deputy Premier, Wal Murray, visits Corowa, says proposal 'silly', wouldn't go ahead.

NSW government maintains that standard evaluative procedures will prevail, outcome to be determined on the basis of an environmental impact study but, indicates that public submission will be included in considerations.

WEEK TEN

Corowa excluded from further considerations; joint Ministerial statement issued that Corowa was no longer being considered because of technical problems with the site identified in the draft report of the independent consultants. Deny any political motives in announcement, blame Taskforce for siting.

The Town

Location, Population and Neighbours

Corowa is a New South Wales border town located on the Murray River some sixty kilometres west of Albury. Its closest neighbour, by proximity, historic and contemporary interaction and identification is the Victorian shire and town of Rutherglen which is immediately accessible by a road bridge across the river. Wahgunyah, a village on the Rutherglen side is within a few hundred metres of the Corowa Town Centre and while regulated from Victoria functions largely as an annexe of the NSW town. These three closely grouped settlements are the only significant population centres within a thirty kilometre radius. Mulwala, at the western extremity of Corowa shire is the only other closely populated area within that local government division. It exists in a symbiotic relationship with the Victorian centre of Yarrawonga as Wahgunyah does with Corowa and is largely separated from happenings at the other, main, end of the Shire.

The town of Corowa has a population of 4,500 and is the largest of the service centres within the two Shires, being approximately twice the size of Rutherglen, the next largest. Wahgunyah is a hamlet of several hundred people. The total Corowa Shire population is seven thousand two hundred, the balance being distributed over the local government area of 2,200 square kilometres. Population makeup is almost exclusively Anglo-Australian.

Two distinct population groups are identified by locals. The first is the long established farming families and the similarly long established townfolk who have traditionally serviced the needs of that rural population. Some families within this group have local roots extending well back into the nineteenth century. The second group is by no means homogenous and the description of it as one sector by people on the ground stem purely from a negative referent, that is they do not belong to the first group. These later settlers evidence the economic and population growth related to the leisure and food industries noted above. This influx has dramatically changed the makeup and size of the area's population since the 1976 Census, with growth in the town of Corowa at almost sixty percent over those fifteen years (ABS in Corowa Shire Council, n.d.). While consisting principally of a mix of retirees and

the management and workers of the industries established since that time, this sector also includes small business people and service professionals attracted by that growth. Though employment and other economic factors underlay the establishment of the latter two groups in Corowa, the country lifestyle also reportedly played a large part in their relocation or has since become for them a dominant feature in remaining in the area.

Though not offered as a distinct group by sources in the area I will also make mention of a third group, the 'repatriates'. Numerically small, this group of locally born 'baby boomers' have returned to the area following education, work and life experience in the capital cities. In the field, members of this group expressed a sense of identification with both and neither of the two major population groups. Their presence represents a link between the two other groups, one that was strongly in play during the mobilisation that followed the selection of Corowa for the incinerator.

Local Economy

The principal industries of the area are agriculture, food and wine production and tourism. The Rutherglen side of the river is a well known wine producing area and is the home base for one of Australia's leading food brand-names 'Uncle Toby's'. In the Corowa shire itself the major land usage is for mixed farming and grazing and it is also the (Australian) home of a leading food manufacturer, Bunge Meats. An international market force in pigmeats they operate the largest piggery in the southern hemisphere a few kilometres from town. Tourism and recreation is the other significant industry. The Murray river and local lakes systems support skiing, fishing and other aquatic recreation. Hot air ballooning, skydiving and gliding are other major attractions. Like many New South Wales border towns Corowa's licensed clubs have capitalised on that state's comparatively liberal gaming laws. Tourists attracted to the poker machines have provided revenue to develop facilities, particularly for lawn bowls and golfing, which have in turn attracted further visitors. Many of those holiday-makers, attracted by the lifestyle have decided to stay, in full

or semi-retirement alongside the workforce of the food processors and the traditional rural population.

What kind of Town?

The population shifts and changing economy noted above and competing ethos of progress and preservation have had their effect on the social typology of the town and the expectations of its people. There is strongly pervasive sense of the town's historical identity, particularly its role in the Federation Movement, and colonial buildings survive but it is not a heritage town. It has substantial tourism but is not a 'tourist town', in fact local leaders prefer to talk about recreation and holiday-makers rather than tourists. It has a large industry employing about a quarter of the town's workforce but it is not a company town. The growth of new industries, the expanded population and the spin-off boosts to the local economy mean that Corowa unlike many country towns has been relatively unaffected by the rural recession. There is virtually no unemployment in the area.

The population shift with its resultant loss of homogeneity and disruption to traditional local social systems in recent decades might render it a questionable subject in conventional Community analyses, except perhaps as a Community in decline. Residents reinforced this evaluation: It is no longer a typically quiet country town, though it is fair to say that many of those living there want it to be that, probably moreso the newcomers who chose it for that reason than those old hands who are interested in seeing 'progress'. It is no longer, as a whole, bound in the classic mechanical solidarity conventionally associated with rural settlements. More recent arrivals reported that they had not experienced the closure often associated with rural communities, as one put it "You don't have to be here for thirty years before you're considered to be vaguely local, there are a lot of new people and its easy to mix". Native borns inevitably reverted to the past to talk about a people closely knit, before contrasting this with their current experience. A number of times this was phrased along the lines of "I used to come into town and know everyone I saw in Sanger St.(the main street), but now they're mostly strangers".

My own experience indicates a town where people no longer know everyone but perhaps in some ways feel that they should. This is conveyed in the above comment and in other ways. As an example, by my third field trip in a year some shopkeepers knew my face but not how I fitted in. Those that tried to make the fit began by saying “Your a local aren’t you?”, or similar, rather than with an enquiry as to where I was from, how long I was in town, what my business was or so on.

Despite the population shifts voting patterns at federal, state, and local elections indicate that the shire remains a politically conservative area and this appearance was repeatedly confirmed by locals, self styled conservatives as well as others, offering it as a characteristic of the area that extended beyond formal politics. The perspectives were offered by a range of locals from raw newcomers to members of families whose roots go well back into the eighteen hundreds and who held a variety of personal political positions.

Corowa is located within the seat held by the leader of the Federal Parliamentary National Party and the State seats are safe National Party ones. While there are no party held positions on council informants reported a strong affinity between most councillors and the ethos and membership of the National Party. A general conservatism is also indicated in the manner in which local government elections have been held which could best be described, advisedly, as apolitical. That is a traditional approach to civic leadership prevailed. Well known local figures stood and were elected without the formal public platforms, debate of issues or production and distribution of the campaign materials commonly associated with a political process. The past tense is used here as the HTI issue did lead to at least the partial politicisation of these elections.

The Issue and the Approach

On the ground conspiracy theories abounded as to why Corowa was selected as the site for Australia’s central disposal facility. While these might be interesting to pursue at another time and are briefly treated with as an indication of the psychological dynamics operating in the town (see p.96), the officially proffered explanations seem sufficient here. There are a number of known reasons for the

area's choice. Among these are Corowa's relative centrality to Sydney and Melbourne the major source and storage sites of intractables, a plentiful water supply and satisfactory transport facilities. A workforce was available in Albury. Politically, the receptivity of Corowa Council was unquestionably a decisive factor and it is likely that the blue ribbon conservative status of the area contributed to the selection as well.³

In 1990 Corowa, as with most other NSW local government areas, had been the subject of a 'Community Consultation' (later roundly criticised from widespread sources) on plans to establish a centralised high temperature incinerator for the disposal of Australia's intractable waste. These consultations were conducted under the auspices of the Joint Taskforce on Intractable Wastes. This was an independent body formed by the Australian Commonwealth Government and the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria to investigate and implement options for the management and destruction of chemical wastes. A fuller understanding of the background and purpose of this body and the consultations may be gained from documentary materials produced by them and their successors in New south Wales, the waste Management Authority (JTOIW, 1988, i, ii, iii & iv, 1989,1990. WMA 1990). In brief though, these wide ranging talks were intended to inform areas of the need for active measures to reduce Australia's stockpile of intractables, to provide information on the measures planned to do this and to give reassurances as to their safety. There were two aims in this, to advise and reassure areas indirectly affected, as source or transit points, and, within prescribed limits to seek the active, willing, participation of residents in the eventually selected area. These prescribed limits stipulated in part that such a willingness was the desirable outcome but that regardless, the governments had an obligation to implement their disposal strategies.(JTOIW 1989; Pp. 14-15.)

³ It was suggested by a number of respondents that these, coupled with an image of the shire as a quiet country backwater far removed from the political risks of urban populations grown restive over pollution issues made Corowa a shoo-in for selection. Additional weighting might be given to these latter speculated motives when it is considered that, while Corowa met a number of the positive indicators for siting it was also known from the outset to hold a number of negative indicators. Most prominent among these was the Taskforce's criteria that there be no significant stream or body of water within the vicinity of the site. The flood plain of the Murray reached up to the selected site and the area sits above an artesian basin.

In effect this meant the Joint Taskforce's staff in that area seeking speaking opportunities at meetings of local bodies and council. There was later heated debate over the scope of this canvassing, with the Taskforce saying it had approached some twenty local groups while only two such groups recalled an approach. It did however address council, at a meeting which while open to the public was held on a weekday afternoon, a time which precluded many from attending. It is believed that only three persons who were not formally associated with Council were present. They had responded to personal informal invitations to attend. With one exception all those that I have spoken to who were at that meeting, regardless of their later positions on HTI, advised that the Taskforce representative was selling, rather than talking about, HTI for Corowa. No contrary positions were put to council and incentives were offered such as a natural gas pipeline, the reopening of the rail link, jobs, a boost to the local economy and council ownership of the incinerator after ten years at which time it might want to use the facility to dispose of the town's garbage. One of these respondents, who was active in the local environment group, reported leaving the meeting with a 'positive glow', so convinced had he been by the speaker that there was an opportunity to both help the environment and the town.

There was no representative of the local paper at the meeting, a common situation as the paper had usually relied on council handouts for their civic stories and the issue was not reported until a month later. At that time the Corowa Free Press favourably reported the address and the opportunities it offered in an article which appeared to rely on Taskforce material for much of its content.

It is clear that the Taskforce had failed to establish genuine broad consultation with the general population and interest groups in Corowa prior to the decision being taken. Whose responsibility that failure was cannot be definitively stated, though the failure of the Taskforce to fully apply either the letter or spirit of their written consultative policy in the field means that it must attract a substantial proportion of the blame:

There was a strong tendency noted during my fieldwork in Corowa for people to lay this proportion of the blame almost exclusively on the shoulders of the person who

was the Taskforce's, and later the WMA's, principal field officer. It is also apparent though that this person, in the heat of the contest that followed the announcement, was popularly ascribed most of the characteristics of the Antichrist. Consequently his election as the flawed element in the process is not surprising.

From another perspective it may be seen that there was a contradiction within the consultative strategies themselves. From the Taskforce's own material's it is clear that there was a strong dissonance between documentation laying out the principles and the description of the consultation process required and other documentation setting the criteria for selection of the person to carry out this task. The duties statement for this person also appears to be in conflict with the policy document. The differences essentially come down to those between a participatory, educative and iterative working towards presumed desirable but flexibly framed outcomes on the one hand and setting out, regardless, to sell and implement set goals on the other. The latter innately inclines towards a minimalist process of consultation and a tendency to draw on the coercive aspects of the Waste Management Strategies. Those aspects, read in context, appear as reserve powers rather than preferred practice. The separation and tension between the 'theory' and 'practice' elements of the one plan tend to suggest that the primary error rests with the policy makers and administrators rather than the ground staff. Faults by the active party to the consultation then, doubtless contributed most to the voiding of an intended participatory process and ultimately to the creation of another unforeseen one.

At the same time it cannot be argued, as some sources have claimed to me, that there was no means at all by which residents or business interests could know of, seek further information about, or comment on the proposed incinerator and its desirability or otherwise for the town. Some groups other than Council were approached and some information, however slanted, was published locally. Additionally some of my informants reported word of mouth knowledge from people within the shire and from sources outside. In an area where, despite recent demographic movement, an apparent high proportion of the people are related or work together or at least know each other it would seem unusual if at least the basics

of the proposal had not spread through the grapevine at the local club or church or elsewhere; and this was reported to have happened⁴.

Respondents varied in their assessment of the degree to which anybody knew anything of the proposal or how accurate that knowledge might be. Four levels of residents' general awareness were reported: The proposal was completely unknown; people were dimly aware of it but did not understand what it was; they were aware and understood what the facility was but denied to themselves and others that it could go ahead in Corowa; they were aware and understood what it was but were able to dismiss it to the extent that they took no further action but retained some concerns.

People that I spoke to later about this period said generally that they had known nothing about it, some said they had a vague awareness but dismissed it as an issue because, as one said "No-one in their right mind is going to put something like that on the banks of the Murray." Still others thought that the proposal was to burn rubbish as the local tip was nearing the end of its life.

Generally though it can be said with confidence that, ostensibly at the end of a consultation process, very few actually knew what was proposed.

There was still little local awareness when, in August, Council lodged a submission in favour of HTI in Corowa. The paper again ran a favourable piece which was followed a couple of editions later by another solitary letter of protest.

This situation rapidly changed when, in late September the NSW Environment Minister, Tim Moore, flew to Corowa to personally announce its selection as the site for Australia's HTI. According to a number of sources Moore's direct involvement was not limited to the announcement and later political defences. There were allegations that he had personally elected to go ahead with Corowa at this time on the basis of an interim report, substantially short-cutting the Taskforce's own process and timeframe.

⁴ Questions of why the opportunity to participate was firstly ignored and then vehemently insisted on are not fully explored in this thesis, intriguing though they are. Taskforce materials cited here detail strategies of inclusion which did not attain their goal. Some of the sources which note and comment on this phenomenon more generally are Bellush and Hausknecht (1967), Edwards (in Dyer and Young 1989:197-218) and Sabburg et al (1993)

The Response

The announcement had been reported favourably in the local press with a headline that Corowa had 'won' the incinerator and the tone of victory over other competitors continued in the article itself which borrowed heavily from Taskforce materials.

This enthusiasm was not shared by the great majority of the residents though initially there was little outright opposition. The perspectives of most residents moved rapidly early in the period from ignorance or indifference to an ambivalent curiosity to resolute opposition. This trend was then followed, rather than prompted by the media. (Border Mail, CFP. 26/08/1990.& fwd.) Two main factors contributed to this mass movement, the manner of approach of the pro-incinerator parties (or the popular perception of it) and the effective networking of the initially small numbers of those seeking a joint appraisal of the situation by residents.

Within days, according to some within hours, it seems that everyone in Corowa knew about HTI. The speed with which the selection became known locally appeared to be proportionate to, and in no small way because of, the speed with which events moved from higher up. The Minister had announced its selection., Media releases from the joint Ministers had been distributed and broadcast on regional radio concurrent with his trip. Council was advised of their selection by phone one or two hours prior to the Minister's arrival and the same phone call conveyed the news that the New South Wales Waste Management Authority, who would be taking over the Taskforce's role in this implementation phase, were then in town concluding negotiations for the purchase of the site for the facility. The effect of a rapid shift from informational void to apparent and concrete fait accompli galvanised interest.

Most interview subjects reported this as being the crucial point for them in various ways. Council had had no word since lodging their submission, or as they increasingly referred to it later 'the expression of interest', which they had anticipated would be the subject of lengthy follow up in (what they felt was) the unlikely event that Corowa was to receive consideration.

While still supporting HTI the manner in which these events unfolded obviously bothered people in council. For others who had had some prior knowledge but no

particularly strong interest the announcement, and particularly the speed and sense of finality which accompanied it, provided a strong incentive to find out more. Some of these who were later to become the core of the opposition movement identified the news of the announcement, provided over the local radio station and by personal networks, as the point at which they felt personally engaged, resolving to find out more, though not necessarily moving to opposition to the incinerator at this stage.

This period appears to have been a time when a large number of individuals acting independently took whatever action they could to find out more. This included (perhaps predictable) approaches to council, the WMA and friends and neighbours. Some contacted relatives interstate or overseas who they felt might have some information to offer. More surprising was the apparently large number of, self or otherwise defined, conservative residents who went beyond their normal circles to seek assistance from what they might normally have thought of unapproachable or undesirable sources. People who had never done so before approached the media, members of parliament and environmental management authorities, such as the Murray-Darling Basin Commission. Reportedly large numbers overcame personal biases to contact Greenpeace simply because they knew the name and what they did.

To some the manner in which the Minister delivered the announcement was the catalyst of their position. One source had previously decided not to get involved but through a succession of coincidences attended the announcement conference. In his words; "My strongest lasting impression of the meeting was of my own anger.

Anger at Moore's arrogance, his insistence that Corowa would have the incinerator, the way he dismissed any objections." This person became one of the leading figures in the anti-HTI Campaign and his experience is reflective of the way in which the handling of the incinerator proposal, as much as the proposal itself, was a key issue.

More than one observer commented to me that the two greatest assets that the opposition campaign had were Tim Moore and 'John Smith' (the WMA spokesperson).

Individuals React

These issues of subjective engagement, personal offence and in some instances bewilderment and fear, and the sense of invasion, sparking individual commitment moving to collective solidarity and action recurred throughout my research, in documentary and oral sources.

The day of the announcement and those following it largely set the stage for the weeks ahead. For this reason heavy emphasis and detailed description is given here to this period rather than to later developments. This was the time when roles were adopted, or seen to have been adopted, positions taken and patterns of movement both within and between the contending parties established. The perspectives of most residents, for example, moved rapidly during this period from ignorance or indifference to an ambivalent curiosity to resolute opposition. Two main factors contributed to this mass movement, the manner of approach of the pro-incinerator parties (or the popular perception of it) and the effective networking of the initially small numbers of those seeking a joint appraisal of the situation by residents.

If the Taskforce had been remiss in the scope of its consultation prior to the decision the WMA was not going to be caught short in its coverage. The day after the announcement they conducted a blanket letterboxing of the town distributing two items, a pamphlet and covering letter, announcing the plans for HTI and inviting Community participation in establishing the facility and monitoring its operations afterwards. As with the Taskforce the information provided was exclusively pro-incineration. The terms of participation offered were pre-set. Neither item mentioned Corowa specifically and gave a Sydney contact address which may have added to the sense of an impersonal invasion reported in interviews. In the days following the WMA established a local information office and took out ads in and released media statements to the papers which replicated and expanded on the information contained in the letterbox drop. These efficiently pre-ordered and implemented actions by a rational-legal instrumentality contrasted sharply with the evolutionary process required to provide the popular counterbalance.

Networking Commences

On the resident level a group of six residents who had been present at Council for the announcement began to compare notes on the experience. All were there either directly or indirectly because of the radio announcement that came out prior to the official announcement. Each had known about the proposal previously, two had been at the initial consultation and had felt positive at that stage. It is known that three of the others had some prior knowledge and had made some attempt to find out more about HTI, though this had been fairly minimal as none believed that Corowa would be chosen. Surprise, curiosity, and a sense of obligation (for two of them who were involved in the local environment group) were the factors behind their presence rather than any strong feelings one way or the other.

Following the meeting their feelings were mixed, a couple being provoked to immediate and angry rejection because of the manner of the announcement, others reserved judgement but expressed concern. They were in general agreement though that they needed to find out more, both about the proposal and about how others in the town felt. Most were concerned about the process but undecided about the issue itself. Those of them who had already come down personally against the incinerator had resolved to listen to the majority voice. One of them expressed this as “The aim was discussion and I had committed myself to go with the majority...if the general opinion was in favour, then I would have had a problem to work through.”

This group of six agreed to contact friends and get together for further discussion the following night. Their thought was to get thirty or forty people together to share what information they had and to consider what, if anything to do next. Two of the group were mainstays of the Corowa and Border Environment Group, at least two others had a looser association with it and for this reason the meeting was to be convened under the auspices of that group. Each of them spent most of the remainder of that day on the phone notifying people within their personal or occupational networks of their concerns and intent. The group had both new and old established residents within it and included three of the ‘repatriates’ noted earlier. Between them they had immediate access to networks based on farming, teaching, health, environment interests, small business, the arts, and churches. There was

some overlap of family networks through blood and marriage but this association was with one of the oldest families in the area and consequently provided entry to other similarly established traditional residents. Their places of residence and consequently neighbourly associations had a reasonable spread. The activity of the six on this first day snowballed and by as early as five the next morning their roles reversed and they became the recipients of enquiring calls which kept them engaged for most of that day. Later in the day the loop closed for some of them when they got calls advising them of the meeting. Other media were also used, with two of the group taking advantage of a talkback radio program to promote the issue and the meeting, some hastily written signs were also displayed.

Four hundred, rather than the forty anticipated, turned up at that first meeting. All sources indicate that the gathering was a good cross section of the population. The initial organisers immediately recognised that the response indicated something well outside the parameters of the meeting with friends and others with general environmental concerns that they had anticipated and acted accordingly. Sensing a foretaste of things to come and wanting to remove any 'Green' tag that could be an obstacle to broad participation in a conservative area the Corowa and Border Environment Group relinquished their directing role in the meeting.

Mass Mobilisation Commences

Hostility and Reason

In what was described by various sources as diplomacy, a commitment to democratic principles and just plain smart politics the chairperson of the environment group stood aside. The assembly became its own meeting and their nominee, a well known local farmer with no prior environmental or other activist involvement chaired the proceedings.

The tone of the meeting was strongly hostile, to the HTI proposal which they wanted to reject out of hand, but more particularly to Council who they saw as having betrayed the people's interests. In the words of one of those present; "they wanted to lynch them" The chair and some of the original organisers worked actively to turn the meeting away from the mob atmosphere that was developing and to redirect

energy into more constructive actions. The meeting formed itself into the Corowa and District Concerned Citizens Group (CDCC) with a rough agenda of information seeking and dissemination and the provision of a forum for discussion. The chairperson was confirmed as the president of the new association and two others, including the manager of the company which was the area's largest employer, were elected as his deputies. The size and nature of the meeting prevented a formal election process for the balance of the committee but representational and task oriented categories were developed for committee members and general helpers. Sheets were distributed for those present to nominate themselves or others for further involvement under these categories. Authority to determine the final makeup of the steering committee from these nominations was vested with the panel of three. As a note in passing, one thousand five hundred dollars was donated to the cause at this first meeting and much larger amounts were given subsequently. Together with donations in kind the campaign that ensued was never financially stressed.

The size and mood of the turnout at such short notice persuaded the meeting that there was a need for a further public meeting, more broadly publicised and with informed speakers for and against the proposal. This was formally moved as was a call for a moratorium on the issue pending full Community Consultation. The moratorium motion went unheard by the authorities but the call for debate was overwhelmingly taken up by the people.

New Alliances and Bonding as Numbers Swell

That next meeting, a week later, attracted an attendance of four thousand in a town whose total population was four thousand five hundred. Speakers from both sides had been organised as promised and an impartial chair, the mayor of Albury, conducted proceedings. The crowd far exceeded the hall's capacity but organisers had prepared for this, on the strength of the turnout at the first meeting, and as part of their intensive activities in the intervening week had organised the use of a public address system and video monitors outside the venue to cater for the overflow. The effect of this physical separation of a group otherwise increasingly united provided an interesting vignette of elements associated with the mobilisation that was

developing. On the inside the audience was active and largely angry, with individuals aggressively pressing questions and concerns onto the pro-HTI representatives to the applause of the crowd. The responses to these questions generally being greeted with derision and hostility. Those speakers against HTI or against its establishment in Corowa received equally strong applause. Eye witnesses, still and video pictures depicted a different scene among those outside, denied direct participation and the stimulus of attack and counter. In the arcade, alley and car park an intensive, stilled solidarity prevailed that was likened to a religious gathering with, as a number of sources reported a very strong sense of communal bonding. By the end of the meeting the people had overwhelmingly rejected high temperature incineration and had resolved to stop it, not only in Corowa but in Australia. They moved for a (local) referendum, that state and federal local members oppose it and for the taking of legal action against Council. The adjoining shire of Rutherglen held a complementary meeting the following night with proportionately similar attendance, two thousand, in a town of two thousand two hundred, and similar outcome. Even allowing for a substantial overlap of attendance at both meetings and for some of the audience to have come from outside either shire it was clear that a majority of the area's adult population were resolutely opposed to the proposal. The lasting nature of that resolve was frequently demonstrated in the intensity of activity and the turnouts at meetings, rallies and demonstrations in the nine weeks that lay ahead. The steering committee of the CDCC for example met several times a week at various stages and committee members interviewed spoke of twelve and sixteen hour days spent on the issue. Their occupational and domestic responsibilities were shelved or passed over to others who were equally though differently committed to the cause.

One substantial difference between the Corowa and Rutherglen meetings was that the latter was convened as a special meeting of Rutherglen Council, they having already publicly expressed concerns over the proposal and the complete absence of consultation with them about it. They were the first of a number of surrounding local government bodies to raise concerns about or reject the proposal outright.

Corowa Council shifts to be with the People

Corowa Council had yet to shift their position. The day after the first public meeting at the hospital that Shire called their own Special Meeting, the intent of this though was to formally receive the HTI announcement and to consider the next steps towards developing the facility. One Councillor who had not been present to vote on the original motion concerning the submission spoke against it but was effectively gagged. Local papers reported a gallery of one hundred and fifty to two hundred “placard waving” residents. WMA representatives were on hand to answer queries but the content or manner of their responses reportedly only drew further outrage from the crowd. A journalist noted in the Albury-Wodonga Border Mail (28.9.90: p. 1) “Although the public outcry is showing no signs of fading, any back-down by council would be a major embarrassment after its application was favoured over five other submissions.” If this was so it appears that a week after the second public meeting council was prepared to accept that embarrassment and called another meeting at which they reversed their support for HTI in Corowa.

In the interim period Council and Councillors had been subjected to heavy public criticism, deputations and individual approaches, Councillors were socially ostracised, some had received harassing phone calls and there were reports of “jostling” in the streets. Some Councillors found opposition to their position within their own families. Given these elements and the comments of interview subjects it appears that the reversal decision was based on four factors, the manner in which the matter was handled by higher tiers of government, new information, political expediency, and not insignificantly the need to regain entry into their own personal reference groups.

Following that reversal Council called upon the governments involved to stop consideration of Corowa as the site. While many locals at the time understood this to be the end of the matter the States and Federal Ministers did not take up the Council’s call. Plans to establish the incinerator were actively pursued by the WMA and supported by the joint Environment Ministers.

While Council's change had no immediate effect on the proposition itself it was significant in a number of other ways. With the exception of a very small minority who sought neutrality or remained in favour of the incinerator the people and their Local Government now presented a united oppositional front, it was possible to say unambiguously that 'Corowa' did not want the facility. The move by Council also gave a leading edge of legitimacy to the popular movement and a nexus for those interests who would choose not to align with or otherwise have dealings with a resident action group.

Faltering and Renewal

Sources report that the intensity of mood and level of activity in the Community faltered at this time, about two and a half weeks into the mobilisation, partly as a natural consequence of sustaining high levels of physical activity and emotional states, but mainly because of a mistaken belief that council's reversal would mean an end to the issue. It soon became apparent that the latter was not the case and there was a resurgence of determination. With Council now formally on side what was seen as a major alien element within was removed and efforts to either expel it or incorporate it could cease. Consciousness, energy and activity were now directed exclusively to the external 'enemy', the WMA, the politicians, the chemical industries, the major population centres that harboured them and to maintaining solidarity. At this point, the third week following the announcement, the sides were clearly drawn up. Corowa actively and constantly opposing the facility through all available channels, the state seeking to implement its agenda through prescribed process and despite opposition, on the basis of the precedence of its powers and the need for the National Good to prevail over local wishes.

The CDCC, conscious of the lapse that had followed Council's reversal and mindful that it may be a long hard struggle, revised their agenda to include short term achievable goals requiring high public participation. Poster competitions, colouring contests, more meetings and rallies were organised. Beyond this period there are no indications that commitment or sense of purpose faltered, rather the people adopted a new way of life based on preserving their old lifestyle.

According to all sources, that new way of life accessed and changed the components of the normal day to day life. People's roles and social persona changed, broadening, becoming more self disclosing and challenging of self and others. Social and personal rifts were healed or suspended for the duration. Networks that linked and formed people in personal and professional association became more active and interlinked, with their functions modified as information seeking, news and rumour about HTI and those for and against it flooded through them.

There was also a new morality. Where you shopped and who you associated with became a moral choice depending on their attitude, to HTI, or towards those in favour of it. Advice on correct behaviour and association was offered. It became permissible for conservative people to organise a chain of others to make nuisance, according to the recipients of them, threatening, phone calls. Defacing public and private property with anti-HTI was allowable. Many understandably denied or sheeted home to a 'ratbag element' the death threats, physical harassment, petty destruction of property and threatened large scale destruction reported by the media and the police. Others though, conservative, respected people, acknowledged that they knew of and either endorsed or at least understood these actions. Of most prominence though was the morality that bound people together through mutual support and solidarity for the cause. All of those spoken to who were aligned with the opposition enthused about and lamented the passing of "The camaraderie.", "The caring", "The great Community spirit.", "The bonding" and so on.

The Role of Greenpeace

Greenpeace presented very early in the research as a necessary subject of enquiry. That it was a point of contact for individual residents in the very early stages and its role as an external facilitator made it of natural interest to the case study and this thesis. Further, there were allegations that Greenpeace had 'manufactured' the crisis or manipulated events, organisations and individuals to their own ends which also warranted investigation.

Such an allegation was made by the first significant formal contact made in my preliminary field trip. A senior local government employee, he was resolute that

'bus-loads of greenies' had been brought into town (by Greenpeace) and that the organisation had hijacked the issue. That source also provided me with a copy of an unpublished article by a research student from an unknown university. That paper, which I later learned to have had reasonably wide circulation in the town, was unequivocal in its position that Greenpeace had orchestrated the popular responses by engendering unreasonable fears in the residents and manipulating significant organisations including the CDCC and a union with large local membership. While the paper provided no clear evidence to support its arguments, and portrayed a general strong bias against Greenpeace, it came to me as the only known previous research into the case and was offered as corroboration of a viewpoint put by a prominent figure. As such its position needed to be looked at. A further early discovery was a newspaper account on the day of the announcement (Sydney Morning Herald, 26/09/90) which spoke of Greenpeace's resolve to support the people of Corowa in their opposition - before any significant opposition was apparent. This appeared to lend support to the other claims.

As a result of these a question concerning the nature and extent of Greenpeace's involvement was included in the interview schedule and was regularly applied during the first round of interviews conducted (after which it was abandoned due to the high degree of redundancy experienced.) Particular attention was also paid to any written reference to the group.

It should be remembered that the majority of those that I spoke to, and consequently those asked about the Greenpeace role, were those who had opposed the incinerator. Having acknowledged that, it should also be said that having an anti-HTI position did not necessarily mean a pro-environment, or pro-Greenpeace position prior to the campaign. Some offered that they had previously been prejudiced against environmentalists in general and against Greenpeace in particular. Almost all noted a negative reaction when the possibility of bringing Greenpeace in was first raised. This was either on the basis of their own bias or their presumption of the response from others in the area. In the words of one; "we all shuddered".

This extract from field notes taken in one early interview summarises a perspective reinforced in the majority of later interviews:

‘The involvement of Greenpeace... was restricted to an information base and tactical consultant, with no official status or public function. Their job was providing a research facility and facilitating workshops. ‘June’ said also that despite reports of Greenpeace manipulating the issue and setting the agenda for the town their role, while valuable, was limited and always in response to local requests. There were never more than two Greenpeace representatives in town at one time.

Within the anti-incineration grouping all dismissed the reports of ‘bus-loads of Greenies’ or of manipulation of the campaign and were universal in their praise of the two Greenpeace fieldworkers’ unobtrusive participation. Other than local residents who were also Greenpeace members (two to three possible such persons were identified in interviews) this appears to have been the extent of the physical Greenpeace presence in Corowa.

Those who were involved in the initial exchanges with Greenpeace reported that the group were “up front” and “honest” about their strongly negative position on HTI. They (Greenpeace) had acknowledged that this position was not shared by all environmental groups and identified some, such as the ACF, that would be able to provide alternative perspectives and information. Those who were close to the organising hub all reported that Greenpeace provided information, came into the area, and took particular actions only in response to requests from the Corowa people, particularly the CDCC. According to them both parties were in agreement that these actions should consist only of information provision, the holding of workshops - on HTI and protest strategies - and ‘train the trainer’ groups to enable the Corowa people to conduct these workshops. All said that the Greenpeace representatives did not organise or take part in the marches, rallies etc.

Where the interview situation allowed for it I probed to determine whether it might have been possible that Greenpeace had affected the alleged manipulation through selective information release. In response all of these (six respondents) cited the

openness about opposing viewpoints but further, related the development of their own research and resourcing base which grew to overshadow and replace the supports initially provided by Greenpeace.

All of this was in sharp contradiction to the early reports of an 'invasive force'.⁵

Only one of the people interviewed, (who did not declare a personal position on the HTI issue because of the public office which he held) repeated the type of perspective that was put by the early sources. He believed that Greenpeace pursued an active policy of instilling fear and hatred towards the incinerator and its proponents. He also reported that this position was held by a senior Police Officer in the town who had, from the outset anticipated the worst from Greenpeace. The respondent was not able to illustrate through any particular instances why he held that perspective; it was a belief based on the group's reputation and on his interpretation of some events that took place in the town. All others interviewed described the Greenpeace role as invaluable, particularly in the early stages, but passive.

On the weight of these reports then it would seem that the role that Greenpeace took in Corowa was a textbook depiction of facilitation rather than the hijack that some minority sources held. The group was biased but acknowledged this bias from the outset. The populace that had called on their support subsequently adopted the same position, though not only on the basis of the materials provided by Greenpeace. This resulted in a compatibility of goals that enabled Greenpeace to make their resources available to the Corowa people as they developed their own capacities while retaining ownership of the issue and the solution throughout.⁶

⁵ Allegations had also been made that paid agitators were employed and that Greenpeace sought to gain financially from their involvement. These appear to be at least partially refuted by the CDCC's accounts for that period which note a donation of \$500 which was in line with other account entries of that time for reimbursement of costs to various parties (CDCC Inc. Financial Report 27/09/90 - 08/01/91). There can be no guarantee that Greenpeace did not 'pass the bucket' at some of the rallies though there is no record of this and it would seem out of place with the otherwise low profile adopted by them.

⁶Other peripheral positives were noted in this stage of interviews and rate mention as illustration of the whole HTI experience and of the interface of external organisers and a conservative resident group. Most respondents had anecdotes about their own or others' fears of Greenpeace and how these were overcome through incidental interaction or working together. Those who had noted an earlier prejudice against environmentalism (as primary producers, shooters etc.) explained that the necessity to talk to someone who epitomised their fears had caused a re-evaluation. One such farmer for example, at the conclusion of the interview, was apologetic that he had not been able to reduce the quantities of chemicals he used on the property to the extent that he would like. This

The Head and Heart of the Mobilisation; goal attainment and its incidental product - Community.

A period of frenetic activity and lengthy argument ensued from the initial period of the mobilisation, the Community holistically engaged in and won its encounter with the state. That victory and the after effects to which it contributed are significant. The holism of the effort and the transcendence; of the individual and the collective, the private and the public, the planned and the spontaneous, the linear and the global, are perhaps moreso.

The level of activity and feeling that this scenario prompted in the following seven weeks was intensive. The networking alluded to earlier in relation to the first public meeting and the seeking and exchange of information by individuals continued, extended and consolidated. The organisational frameworks established in the early stages were refined and constantly exercised in concert with this informal networking. Within this environment, to be the subject of analysis in the following section, a multiplicity of spontaneous and planned occurrences unfolded from the townspeople, met with reaction from the HTI proponents and were regenerated by this.

The range of events within that period went from the conduct and publicising of technical and medical research by the CDCC to undermine the claims of the WMA to the organising by the same group of colouring competitions for local children. Numerous bodies, from the local bowling club to the NSW State Branch of the Liberal Party and the Victorian Coalition in Opposition were persuaded to come out against the HTI in Corowa. Locals met formally and around the kitchen table to exchange information, and workshopped ideas for action. The WMA and Ministers worked through the media, in parliament, through correspondence and in person attempting to variously win support, overrule the objections of the protestors on the

type of change experience, though certainly not universal appeared to be fairly widespread, not only in relation to environmental issues but to new ideas and people with different backgrounds and viewpoints. One often repeated story concerning a meeting between a local and a Greenpeace organiser appeared to typify this type of interface. An elderly woman from one of the longest established families in the area was introduced, started talking to and found that she got on well with one of the Greenpeace fieldworkers. A press photo of the two chatting, she in her bowls outfit, he looking like an archetype of a greenie was shown to me or referred to by a number of people as an icon of the types of bridges that were built.

bases of rational process and broader need or to deny the extent of the opposition. The CDCC organised high profile activities with multiple intent, to voice opposition and to make its extent visible, to attract media attention and to provide both ongoing motivation and interim emotional release to the large numbers of residents involved. Others conducted their own campaign activities, some overstepping the bounds of legality. Some, later in the campaign, aimed their protests at the CDCC, which they perceived as having become elitist and 'safe', as much as at the incinerator's advocates.

Communication Media

Within the town and further afield the mobilised populace generated and controlled their own means of communication, from graffiti and posters to handbills and newsletters and on a large scale used correspondence, phone and fax to organise, to seek and to convey information. The public media was also extensively used.

For the majority of the period most of the Media, print and electronic, from local to national levels, was supportive of the Corowa case. It was won over early, initially supporting the residents against the Council as well as against the other tiers of government. It continued to be on-side until the final days when headlines on death threats and mob rule began to take over. This support ensured that the emotionally expressed fears and hopes of individuals as well as the public actions in Corowa were frequently put before the Australian public and its political leaders while those same leaders were targeted behind the scenes by resident, political, and industry groups.

There were three forms of media used to consolidate the Community and to press its cause, the public media, materials produced by the people and member networks. The three overlapped and the latter were integral to the successful uses of the previous two but it is convenient to at least partially separate them here for comment.

Public Media

The issue attracted high levels of print and electronic media coverage from local to national levels for most of its duration. Competing, incidentally, against the Gulf Crisis for space. The two concepts within the issue, environmentalism and big government versus small town were both newsworthy. Disagreement over the

merits of high temperature incineration between the country's two major environment groups, Greenpeace and the Australian Conservation Foundation added spice. The strong human interest stories provided by street interviews and the highly visual nature of meetings, marches and demonstrations were appealing to all sectors of the media. The technical arguments later developed through the CDCC were meat for the more serious journalists. Cold approaches and media contacts within Community members' networks were both used to keep the media's attention on Corowa.

The People's Media

From the outset the people, as individuals, cells, and under the auspices of the CDCC produced and controlled their own forms of communication. Original and photocopied signs, notices and posters appeared from day one, to state concern, give information and rally people together. From a handful of notices prior to the first public meeting these grew to a point where most public areas, workplaces, shop windows and private homes displayed some form of anti-HTI statement. Graffiti proclaiming the way to 'Toxic Town' was overwritten on highway signposts to the town and the same tag was prominently displayed on the walls of buildings on the outskirts of town. Traffic signs were altered to read No HTI rather than their original directives. Information sheets, initially eclectic and at times self contradictory but increasingly containing well informed technical, medical, social and economic argument, were researched, prepared and distributed throughout the town and wider. A weekly Campaign Update was prepared and published by the CDCC. It appeared as a full page paid ad in the Corowa Free Press and was also posted on bulletin boards. The Update provided news of developments on political and bureaucratic levels, who was doing what locally, upcoming events and meetings, motivational prose and poetry. It featured a poster of the week award and details of competitions and social events as well as lobbying advice and technical data. People wrote letters, to relatives, friends, acquaintances and strangers who they thought might be able to help in some way. Floods of letters were sent to politicians and to the local papers. The letters to the editor section of the Corowa Free Press expanded

from its usual half page to up to three pages, almost exclusively concerned with and opposed to the incinerator.

The People as the Media

As seen in part above, in relation to the organisation of the first meeting, networking was the key component to the mobilisation, for identity, information and direction. It seems that no-one in the town was not plugged into some branch of the grapevine that provided information, support, encouragement or opportunity to act.

The futility of attempting to accurately follow down and plot interlocking and overlapping webs extending to diverse groups and individuals soon became apparent in the field. However, allowing for incidental contact, exchange and synthesis between people living, working and socialising in a defined area distinct types of networks can be seen to have been operating in different arenas with identifiably different focuses. The nature of the operation of these networks varied from the rationally planned and stimulated to naturally operating egocentric models. I have nominated six different areas below for purposes of illustration. Given time and resources I do not doubt that six hundred could have been identified.

Networking

Some Identifiable Networks

Industry Elite

At what could be called the most rarefied level was a small group of industry heavyweights with reportedly strong political pull. Interview subjects knew little or nothing about this group's behind the scene activities or demurred from detailed discussion (Some members of the group were reportedly fearful of the market implications of their public association with a resident action group; their activities were consequently little publicised. Additionally, these people were the employers of those who may have been able to, but declined to, comment). They appear to have been effective in addressing goals which coincided with the goals of the Community and in that sense contributed to the collective effort but as far as can be determined did so, for the most part, in a detached and exclusive fashion.

Corporate Science

The next level was a formal one geared specifically to technical research. An international meat producing concern with a heavy local investment and an additional reported interest in consolidating its social profile in the area allocated its head of research and its local and international data bases and staff time to the issue.

Though with a lower public profile another major food processing concern in the area lent its research facilities to this action. The results were fed to other levels of the mobilisation.

Techno - Professional

Closely related to the preceding, overlapping in some areas but with broader inclusion and less fixed resource base was a techno-professional web. Of particular note is a clustering of people holding higher degrees in the fields of organic and inorganic chemistry practicing as technologists, researchers and technical and research managers in the food and wine industries of the area. Various sources indicate that an informal sanction was given to at least some of these to spend work time and resources on investigation. Self employed professionals or those in partnership, a group which included legal, planning and medical people gave themselves release from normal duties to concentrate on the campaign, commandeering work resources along with them. In and outside work hours these people accessed and exchanged information held by themselves or by people known to them within and outside Australia. Some within this local network had, coincidentally, previous experience of HTI. Significantly, whereas the previous corporately bounded network had a direct and contained request-response flavour, this group received 'unsolicited' approaches. That is enquiries from this group to friends and colleagues were subsequently relayed to others 'out of sight' and the information was ultimately received from an end point at unknown stages of remove from the starting point. Pertinent phone calls, letters and faxes were all reported as coming from previously unknown sources. Participants in interviews two years after these events still registered amazement at walking into the office in the morning to find valuable information on the fax machine from somebody they'd never heard of

but who had somehow heard of them. Again the results of this effort were fed into the general effort.

Trade and Workplace

Workplace and other occupational webs including trade union contacts but not formal union participation, constituted an information dispersal, attitude formation and motivational network. No survey of workplaces was conducted but informants regarded it as common knowledge that the two major employers in the area allowed or encouraged workplace exchanges on the issue. At least one of these facilitated the opposition movement through workplace meetings and direct encouragement from management. Incidental contact with a small number of smaller businesses and individual workers indicated that these trends were widespread and that, as with domestic and interest-associational sectors, existing informal relationship channels were heavily loaded with news and opinion on HTI and its effect on jobs.

Retail

Retailers in the main street while meshing strongly with other levels on the HTI issue appeared also to have channelled distinct information through their own network. For example reports of boycotts (covered later in this paper) were far more forthcoming in this sector than with other people approached. This may indicate either a higher concentration of this type of information in this field and, or, a differing attitude towards it simply because it hit closer to home. This difference may also in part have been due to my predominantly (though not exclusively) informal manner of approach in these circles.

The Popular

Encompassing and encouraging the above levels but extending well beyond any of them in numerical strength and pervasiveness into everyday life and psyche was what, for want of a better term, I will call the popular level.

In some regards I would prefer to refer to this sphere of activity as the domestic sector, as it is clear that much of its operation was dependent on women at home and retired men, their family roles, usual associational patterns, and extramural voluntarist initiatives, for cohesion, attitude formation and information dispersal. It

seems certain that without their established networks and the influential capacities, roles and availability of those who comprise them the broadscale mobilisation and particularly its fusion into daily life would not have eventuated. A number of respondents though, who themselves would be covered by that 'domestic' category, presented arguments against such definition. While acknowledging the strong role that they, others in their situation, and the circles that joined them played, they maintained (in different words) that boundaries had been changed, different groups mixed, normal roles were exchanged and new ones created to the extent that distinctions that might normally have been made no longer applied.

This popular level then, relied on multiple, well established, natural, personal, networks based on localities, churches, families, interests, clubs and so on, and interlinked by member crossover formed a matrix which appears to have covered the whole area and extended well beyond it. In a more detailed analysis the particular groups mentioned here might be held up for individual attention. Church congregations, schools, Community service clubs and the like were reported to have acted as venues for exchange of information, personal support and some impromptu planning of activities as well as more defined direct action, so too were shopping arcades, doctors waiting rooms and milk bars. Each of these had their significance in providing opportunity for contact and exchange between people involved in cells of activity in the town. In these groups first mentioned, clergy gave support and encouragement to their congregation's members and intra-organisational links were useful at particular stages. Each of these microcosms would constitute a valid and interesting area for investigation, at the same time though there is nothing so distinctive in most of these exchanges as to mark them apart for separate consideration here. As one contact noted even the largest of the licensed clubs and the activity that took place around it looked so small in comparison to the whole mobilisation that their particular contribution seemed almost insignificant.

Specific-Purposive Organisation

Providing links between and extending into each of these spheres, was the CDCC. They received, at times processed, and relayed developments, encouraging consolidation, activity and direction back through these webs, through the public

media, their own materials and discrete activities and natural and contrived, proactive and reactive, direct contact with the people.

So intensive and overlapping was the activity of the general population at the time that it is doubtful, given the limitations of the research (retrospective and unfunded), if there are any further really useful parameters that can be drawn here except to say that the whole Community communicated, and through this often acted, as one⁷.

Mood and Morality

Subjective Engagement of the Individual; Perception and Personalisation.

Fear and Fervour, Plots and Conspiracies.

When the NSW Environment Minister, Tim Moore, flew to Corowa to personally announce its selection as the site he was unwittingly contributing to one of the key features of the mobilisation; the essential one - personalisation. According to a number of sources Moore's direct involvement was not limited to the announcement and later political defences. There were allegations that he had personally elected to go ahead with Corowa at this time on the basis of an interim report, substantially short-cutting the Taskforce's own process and timeframe. Regardless of the sustainability of this line of thought (for which there is well sourced anecdotal evidence) it was widely believed and gave added validation to its adherent's decision to oppose the placement of the incinerator.

Perceptions were of critical importance throughout this case and the perception of people that they were opposing the personal bias of a powerful human figure rather than the rational product of protracted techno-bureaucratic investigation was appealing to many. Similarly the conspiracy theories which abounded about the decision to site the incinerator there. These were offered to me by people of all educational levels and walks of life, and representing a broad sweep of the political spectrum. The theories entailed plots by the Left against the Right, the Right against

⁷ Several attempts were made to identify, trace back and plot the relations between networks at the grass roots level, both through key people and peers. These were unsuccessful due to the time elapsed in the interim, the loss of records, the numbers of people involved, their movements at the time outside their normal patterns of association and subsequent loss of contact with them by informants.

the (further) Right, the Left and the Right (alternatively and jointly) against the People, the people of the Cities against the People of the Country and Big Business and the Right or, alternatively the Left, against the Left or the Right and the People (of Corowa). Not all, if any of these propositions could be accurate but all had the effect of personalising the conflict, that is conspiracies are contrived by individuals and consortiums for personal or sectoral gain. They are not the dispassionate product of objective process and are consequently more readily engaged with from a passionate base.

Many other developments were perceived as provocative. Both stealth and haste were sited as features that brought about personal engagement on a broad scale. The arrangements surrounding the official announcement reportedly disconcerted or angered many. That advice was given by phone to Council only an hour or two before the Minister's arrival and that the advice was delivered concurrently with the news that the WMA were in town concluding the land purchase puzzled and concerned many, including some from Council. Clearly, it was thought, selection of the site for the facility had been at an advanced stage for some time yet there had been no progress reports to Council on the matter. The blanket letter-boxing the following day again implied that a high degree of organisation had focussed on Corowa while the town had been unawares. Similarly the rapid establishment of an information office. An eyewitness also informed me of another incident prior to the public acknowledgment of Corowa's selection which to him and others conveyed a secretive air. The incident concerned a track inspection of the disused rail line which it was planned to re-open to service the HTI. Acknowledging that such an inspection would be a routine step in assessing the suitability of the location he held that other features about it were less than routine: The inspection had been carried out after work hours, in the twilight, and the crew of the inspection car appeared to be executive staff, that is they were dressed in business suits rather than as railway workers. Whether there actually was any of the clandestine intent that was read into this event is not of singular importance, it was perceived as such and entered into the repertoire of 'offences' of this order in the public mind.

The explication of the personal from the impersonal as a source of emotional engagement was noted by many respondents. In many cases there was a degree of abstraction in this, that is the issue became feared consequences in a future time that would affect those held dear now. The most typical example of this was the widely reported concern of older citizens for their grandchildren's health. Though it was likely that they themselves would be dead when this occurred the relationship between them was the impetus for concern. Often this was a more figurative relationship involving yet unborn children who may or may not be blood relations. To others the personal-health connection was less abstract, though still premised on speculated future consequences, with concern for children, self or friends paramount. Particularly in the early stages of events uninformed perception was the sole basis of these concerns and consequent engagement. The role of perception and health was taken up by one interview subject, a local general practitioner who took some pains to relate its effect on those he came into professional contact with and who also provided me with published materials supporting his observations on the effect on the physical and psychological health of his patients. More bizarre manifestations of this general dread were reports of rumours of the likelihood of the births of two headed babies which circulated the area.

In some instances the personal engagement was at a much more immediate and immediately emotional point. A number of respondents volunteered that "(in effect) Tim Moore and 'John Smith' were the greatest strength that we had". They were referring to an apparent capacity that each of these men had in this situation to abrade others and provoke negative responses from them that persisted well beyond the actual exchange. As well as the early effect that they had (noted previously) their comments throughout the campaign fuelled the fires.

In addition to the move to action, the types of action which people were prepared to or found themselves able to undertake, was conditioned by this personalisation of the issue. More is said of this below in relation to collective mood and changed morality.

These issues of subjective engagement, personal offence and in some instances bewilderment and fear, and the sense of invasion, sparking individual commitment moving to collective solidarity and action recurred throughout my research, in documentary and oral sources.

The Suspension and Formation of Moral Norms in the New Social Context

People said that they wanted to shoot other people and blow things up. They instituted boycotts aimed at people's livelihoods and their social and physical capacity to stay in the town. They slashed car tyres and smashed windows. They spied on each other and then made suggestions about correcting inappropriate behaviour. They made phone calls and wrote messages that were directly or by implication threatening. They defaced buildings and obscured road safety signs. And they patched up longstanding feuds and bridged the gaps between class, status and other social divisions. They formed close bonds and shared intimacies with people they hadn't known before. They found personal resources and encouraged each other to do things they would not have considered themselves capable of before. People found themselves fearful and exhilarated and consoled. They neglected their own jobs and families and they did other people's jobs and cared for their kids. People talked to strangers in the streets and others found themselves strangers in their home town. They opened a public rally with an ecumenical prayer service and then hanged Tim Moore in effigy.

Morality had not been a theme that I had intended to investigate when I approached this case. Neither had it been in my thinking when developing the theoretical position outlined earlier in this paper, retrospectively a serious omission and one that requires further attention. Within two days of beginning my first fieldwork in Corowa and hearing the first of many reports of the behaviours noted above the concept started niggling at me and by the end of that first week I was convinced of its significant place in the Corowa case and elsewhere in the Community studies field. This is hardly new. Morality versus legality was one of the dominant distinguishing features used in the nineteenth century Community - society debates and morality, in a benign, benevolent sense, is a general assumption associated with Community, one of the 'warm fuzzies' which surround it.

The reports of 'warm fuzzies' were strongly forthcoming in Corowa, but so too were tales of 'sharp nasties', something that doesn't gel with contemporary rhetorical conceptions of Community but abounds in historical accounts of it (Wilson, 1969. Thompson, 1968., Kaplan, 1969., Gusfield, 1975., Taksa, 1990.). As mentioned earlier the area is a conservative one, reserve and obedience to authority are the norm. Taken together the litany of behaviours listed above points to a general change in the environment of the town in which atypical social behaviours were sanctioned. Heightened emotional states offer partial explanation but there was so broad a deviation from normal codes of conduct, personal and legal, that full explanation can only be arrived at by accepting the existence of a morality which, when it came into conflict with generally dominant standards, supervened. I would make it clear here that reports of positive communality far outweighed reports of assault or threats in Corowa and it seems certain that this was the actuality of it. There is a tendency though to (a positively biased) selective recollection of human interactions in Community (Taksa, 1990.), however it is significant that this other side existed, as did the lesser acts of civil disobedience and needs to be acknowledged. In addition to corroboration of these incidents from general interview subjects and the media, council representatives, clergy and police (representing civic, moral and legal gatekeepers) confirmed these incidents either unprompted or at request.

Acknowledgement and Denial of the Conventionally Unacceptable

While many sheeted the more (normally) unacceptable incidents to a 'ratbag element' others named themselves and others, all 'respectable' people, as having made and encouraged others to make nuisance phone calls (which were taken by the recipients to be personally threatening), of shunning those who were seen to be supporting the incinerator, boycotting shops that had served WMA representatives, and of threatening to dynamite facilities should the HTI go ahead. In the latter case a respected resident was identified by three sources and the threats were considered, with some reservation, to have been genuine by those who reported them. Two who acknowledged their own actions and those of others close to them reported no qualms at all at the time and no real regrets afterwards. While acknowledging that it was out

of character for them they considered it to be justified at the time. The married couple related this to advice of a family member resident in Holland during the German occupation. - it doesn't matter whether the enemy is in uniform or not. If they are hurting you as a person then you hurt them as a person (the rules don't count.) While these informants gave information concerning only a few incidents it appears reasonable to say that other incidents were not necessarily carried out by a 'lunatic fringe' as some had maintained, but that many had adopted this same approach.

A brief selection of comments from residents may serve to indicate something of the environment which gave rise to both the affirmative and negative actions of the time.

“(There was) a great sense of camaraderie, without regard to status.”; “Everyone fell in together, even those who didn't like each other.”; “(We felt) we are a family... we won't let them tell us what to do.”; “(You were) ready to believe that everyone is against you...everyone out there is opposed to you...everyone here was galvanised.”; “It was the first time that the people felt apart from Council, they had to act for themselves”; “People were fearful until they realised that they were not alone”; “There was something about it that reminded me of the old films of the Hitler rallies, a united front of all age groups, all social classes.”; “ A great Community spirit that spurred everyone on.”; “ A terrific feeling...a mood of secession.”; “I felt strong, I was able to pass that on and have a say.”; “There was an envelopment and attachment (of the people)”; “A spiritual bonding”; “Flowers arrived the next day (after the woman had organised an impromptu rally)”; “People were more chatty and open to each other, they supported each other, it was more like the town used to be before it expanded.”

Where discussion leant itself to it I introduced this possibility of a new moral order in explanation of diverse actions to interview participants. Most embraced the concept and elaborated. This paraphrase from one such interview summarises much of what was said in others; - In relation to the HTI particular moral codes bound a solidarity that was based on the democratic rights of the Community. While there were some

complaints of individuals' democratic rights being trampled on this was uncommon. Generally there was a voluntary surrender of individuality to the common purpose.

The person stressed though that this was only in relation to the HTI. In other areas of people's lives where there was no implication for the campaign other ways of behaving and relating applied. This applied to legal and informal rules.

My extrapolation from this is that people did incontestably break the law in defacing public and private property and in other ways but the populace did not become a town of indiscriminate lawbreakers. (As implied in some later media articles and in statements from politicians). There had to be due cause and assumed validation to suspend normally operating rules.

While reports of specific actions were numerous the following give some indication of how these extended across a range of instances. The town's local paper is the obvious venue to advertise anything of local import and is obviously reliant on this revenue for its existence. It is a natural follow on then that the WMA would seek to advertise both its mission and its need for staff in this paper, and that the paper would accept the ads, a normal commercial transaction. From a newspaper staff member's comments though it appears that this was seen by some to be giving "aid and comfort to the enemy". As a local institution the paper was subject to pressure to remain totally loyal. The staff member was on the receiving end of a number of phone calls whenever the WMA representative was seen to go into the office. The intent being that, firstly she should report on his movements and secondly that she should have refused to have anything to do with him. The editor was similarly subjected to pressure to refuse advertising. The WMA staff vacancy was filled through the advertising and the new employee was the victim of probably the harshest treatment in the campaign. She and her family were socially isolated, received abusive phone calls and had car tyres slashed. When the proposal ultimately failed and the WMA packed its bags and left town the ostracism continued and she and her family were forced to leave soon afterwards.

The WMA office itself was of course the primary target for anti-HTI graffiti and vandalism and its staff most particularly subject to exclusion, isolation and in

something more than just a metaphorical sense attempts to immobilise them and starve them out. The latter particular points refer to a refusal by local food stores to sell to WMA people and less successful attempts to coerce a local motor dealer into adopting a similar policy where their vehicles were concerned. The WMA's permanent staff were subject to death threats as also were some local supporters or significant waverers.

The Outcome; goal attainment and dissipation of extant Community

On the 26th of November, ten weeks after their initial choice, the joint Ministers issued an announcement that Corowa was no longer under consideration for the high temperature incinerator. The Ministers stressed that this was not a political decision but one based on problems identified in a draft report of an environmental impact study. They explained that they were making the announcement prior to a final report "to avoid further disharmony in the town". For reasons that can only be guessed at they added that "the people of Corowa should understand that their area... was recommended by the Taskforce, not by any government."(Border Mail, 27/11/90: P1)

After Effects

The first part of this thesis has argued the temporality of communities and this second section to this point has put up the workings of the Corowa mobilisation as one illustration of this. The other issue of interest is the longer term effects of a community's actions as happened in Corowa. Where these issues were not raised by the respondent in open ended discussion a series of questions were addressed to them covering a range of issues that might give a picture of the after effects of the mobilisation. These questions dealt with observations on the populace collectively and civic structures, and with people's perceptions of change within themselves, others known to them and to their relationships.

The Loss and Continuity of Community; the active manifestation becomes a latency and a belief.

From the results of these interviews it appears that almost all of the states depicted in the immediately preceding sub-section and the general social state outlined previously went overnight, though residues remained.

Looking at the public aftermath, the communality, close interaction and mutual support emphasised by all formal interview subjects was recalled by these same people to have dissipated almost immediately after the Ministers announcement of withdrawal. This was echoed by all other residents to whom I spoke.

While there was universal agreement on this there was some divergence as to the degree to which this happened. Some were almost brutal in describing a “return to apathy” and a “scurrying back to safe and familiar roles”. It should be noted that these questions were posed towards the end of lengthy interviews in which most subjects became emotionally engaged. For some describing this stage of loss of solidarity, disappointment was evoked in relation to aspirations that they had held for the future as a close knit Community. Others believed that there was still some (lessened) degree of unity and common concern for each other.

An Immediate and Complete Reversion?

The majority spoke of a total reversion to type. This position saw that the town for all intents and purpose had returned to its conservatism and that individuals, groups and their networks resumed their pre-mobilisation segmented roles. A number reported a re-orientation period, in which no-one wanted to be publicly drawn on the preceding events and asserted their ‘return to normality’. For the key players particularly this was the result of exhaustion and the need to compensate for a neglect of work and family during the mobilisation. Others less involved though were simply questioning what had happened in the town and their contribution to it. Some illustrations are offered; two hundred attended an impromptu celebratory function the day after but other functions planned further ahead failed to attract much enthusiasm. Some months after my last field trip I received a phone call from a (previously unknown) Corowa resident who wanted to contribute to the work. This person had been close to the hub of the CDCC and amongst other things reported that

even this successful celebration had been difficult to organise; solidarity was being lost within the organisers, there were divisions over where or whether the barbeque should be held, interest was waning outside the group. By the Australia Day parade in the following January the inclusion of a float celebrating the mobilisation with a mock-up incinerator used in rallies was the source of bitter contention. A planned oral history of the period by the local historical society failed to get off the ground. This was reported by different sources to be due both to public resistance and to opposition to it within the organisation.

Active Demobilisation

These tendencies to dissipation appear to have happened spontaneously but there was also active encouragement by some civic leaders. While it does not appear that this encouragement was at all necessary its possible connotations of attempted active disassembly for ulterior motives merit some brief mention. The case in point concerns political figures sending out messages through the media, personally addressed letters, and otherwise which conveyed a congratulatory tone but went on at greater length to urge a return to normality, a preparation for Christmas with families and a returning to the task of making Corowa a good place to be in the New Year (eg., Fischer, 27/11/90). The message had something of the flavour of a disarming and dismissal of the troops lest they should...?

Persisting Institutional Effects

Constituted Groups

There are few institutional remnants of the period. The public's experiences from the mobilisation, together with the CDCC's organisational ability introduced some changes to council in the next local government elections. The CDCC canvassed candidates' perspectives on various aspects of open government procedures and likely responsiveness to the people. They then publicly endorsed those candidates whose responses were in line with these principles. Seven endorsed candidates were elected but this should not be taken as meaning that these are CDCC representatives in the sense of political party members. If, in any notional sense, the group has such representatives these would be limited to two or three. The broader effect of this

approach to the elections was to politicise, in a positive sense, a process that had previously been conducted behind the scenes in what some residents called ‘an old boys club’. For the first time there were prepared statements of policy and public electioneering on these. It should be noted though that a number of people spoken to believe that net effect of these moves are negligible, that the population still has little involvement in the doings of council and that with some minor exceptions council still operates as it has always done.

The CDCC, which incorporated during the campaign, still exists as viable organisation though with much reduced support and a lowered public profile. While retaining a broad agenda of participatory democracy its current primary focus appears to be on environmental issues. Ironically it appears that the organisation (at the time of the research) carries more weight outside of Corowa, where its reputation, described by one interview subject as “those magicians who can mobilise a town”, still holds.

Social Divisions

There were other broad issues raised by a number of those spoken to. One was a lasting lessening of the distinction between traditional residents and the later arrivals. They had had a chance to know each other personally and to appreciate both their commonalities and differences. Many made the purposeful observation or conveyed in conversation that there was a much greater awareness of environmental issues, awareness rather than action being the issue. Along with this the comment was often made that people are no longer afraid of ‘Greenies’. Through the campaign many local residents who acknowledged or were known to have prejudices against environmental activists had contact with the two Greenpeace fieldworkers who had been invited in by the CDCC to provide technical information and to advise on tactics. This cooperative contact acted, apparently very broadly, to remove stereotyped fears.

Politics

Heightened political awareness was also noted as a general development. A critical attitude was said to prevail, which while not changing voting patterns significantly has changed the reasons why people vote the way they do.

Persisting Personal Effects

Personal Growth

When questioned on changes to self almost all interview subjects reported a personal growth experience in, or arising from, the mobilisation and said that they had observed the same in others around them. This was most pronounced in women at home. Those who did not report this experience were from higher-socio economic groups who presented with an apparent high degree of self assurance though it should also be noted that others in similar positions did believe that they had personally benefited.

Positive change was most commonly expressed as having grown strong or discovered strengths and capacities during the campaign because they felt they had to do things that they normally would not have done, and did them. One described it from a negative starting point, as having discovered inadequacies that limited her ability to contribute to the cause and of having resolved to correct this, and then embarking on a course of self improvement. Close personal sharing and multiple examples of other 'ordinary' people doing 'extraordinary' things were sources of encouragement. It was reported from interviews with a number of women that they and numbers of other women motivated through the campaign have since sought further challenge through continuing education.

Self esteem grew from both personal accomplishments and collective ones. A working class woman who described herself as having lived like a hermit (but came out through the campaign) and a successful male medical practitioner used almost identical terms to describe the personal boost through this collective success; (in effect) 'I feel like I have done something with my life'.

The Interpersonal and the Social

All reported a continuing heightened belief in the ability of people collectively to change things that they do not believe are just. Related to this was an increased faith in other people.

With a few significant exceptions what were reported as firm friendships during the campaign have lapsed or been relegated to the category of acquaintances. Some reported periodic revival of closeness and others expressed a desire for reunion, in both instances around the banner of the campaign. Most though expressed a belief that (in effect) 'I know where they are and that I can count on them if I need to'. If this belief is true and replicated generally beyond my sources it would add up to a considerable potential for mutual support.

There was a strong general belief that given significant cause, though it would probably not need to be as great as the HTI, the majority of the people would again band together and fight.

CHAPTER FIVE:

**The Introduction of Substitutive Rational-Legal
Process Into the Potential for Community Formation :
Chullora 1990**

'It would have happened if... (the system hadn't been so effective)'

Chullora Resident

Preface

Overlapping the period of the Corowa formation, commencing in 1989 and concluding in 1991, a facility for high temperature incineration was proposed for Chullora, in the City of Bankstown. As in the previous case it was opposed locally and rejected.

Though put forward by private interests rather than by the state and to be concerned with the destruction of medical and quarantine wastes rather than intractables, the Chullora proposition, for initially two and subsequently three incinerators, was of a comparable order to the Corowa proposal. The technical, political and social discourse concerning HTI, individual health and the environment was consistent for the two cases, with the proviso that the intense public and political debate surrounding Corowa had a flow on effect for the Chullora case. It was because of the considerable similarities of the material issues and outcomes between Corowa and Chullora that this case was selected for further examination of the proffered principles of Community.

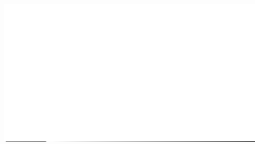
The purpose in the choice though was not to seek replication but contrast. Indications held that while on the surface the two cases followed the same patterns around the same type of issue, the processes and consequently the broader effects in the two were substantially different, polarised, at least to an extent, on the basis of the rational, non-rational dichotomy discussed earlier (chap. 2).

Media coverage of the Chullora case and superficial discussion with those centrally involved would suggest a repeat of the Corowa experience. The media spoke of 'the People's fight', of 'community outrage' and after the event congratulated 'Bankstown' and 'the residents' on their stand and victory. The local member validated his opposition to it, in the media and in parliament through reference to the Community's response as did Council, through both its elected and salaried officers, explain its position on the issue. Other constituted bodies; commercial, statutory and trades union, added the concerns of, or their concern for the Community to their

own personal agenda for wanting the incinerator proposal defeated. Appeals to the rights and power of 'The Community' appeared throughout the protracted issue.

While the symbolism and rhetorical use of Community loomed large, with the a priori assumption of an extant, self conscious and active entity, closer examination shows little sign of a substantive popular body which by any criteria would justify the claims made on its behalf.

This section, following the format of the preceding one, reviews the events of the Chullora case. An analysis of that case follows on immediately and is in turn followed by a comparative analysis of the two cases.



A Summary of the Events

PRELUDE

August 1989

Simsmetal lodges application to develop high temperature incineration facility to dispose of medical wastes, Council rejects application on grounds of insufficient setback and environmental concerns.

3rd. August 1990

Simsmetal lodges new development application for two parallel incinerators

WEEK ONE

'The Torch', leading local newspaper opposes HTI in built up area of Greenacre, residents urged to fight.

WEEK TWO

State (Opposition) Member Doug Shedden on front page of Torch, opposes development citing proximity to Potts Hill Reservoir.

WEEK FOUR

Council plans to rezone site area (a move unfavourable to the developer) publicised.

WEEK FIVE

Council advertises DA, notifies potentially interested parties. Objections to close 5th. October.

Local Member appears in 'Daily Mirror', concerned for safety of Sydney's water supply if proposal goes ahead. Cites plans for disposal of "hundreds of tonnes of toxins", quarantined goods, contaminated human tissue, swabs, syringes. Also appears in both local papers with Labor colleague, Ian Stromborg, Mayor of Bankstown. Express

"horror" and "concern" respectively. Food warehousing in area cited as concern additional to water supply. Expert opinion quoted that proposed technology is being phased out overseas. Member states that "the people" will reject it.

Married couple, resident near site, first Council file record of letter of objection; health problems, transport risks environmental devastation, being phased out overseas.

WEEK SEVEN

Seven letters from residents citing objections as above received by Council.

Chullora railway union organisers call for stop to proposal. Will take "whatever necessary" industrial and political action.

WEEK EIGHT

Three letters from residents received, one enclosing petition bearing nine signatures. repeating concerns above.

Letter of concern from local school.

Department of Health advises no objection.

State Rail Authority, major local landholder and owner of site for which facility is planned writes to Council, states preliminary concerns.

Sate Member in local press restating concerns, urges residents to object through his office.

WEEK NINE

Two letters and one petition bearing thirty two signatures sent by residents to Council, one letter from commercial property holder..

SRA lodges submission of total objection. Petition signed by two hundred SRA workers attached.

Clinical Waste Australia claims DA substantially flawed, denies any

current or future foreseeable need for the facility.

Local Member, speech to Parliament repeats earlier reported concerns, stresses Community's concern.

WEEK TEN

(Last week for objections to Council.)

Council receives petition from Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator in adjoining Yagoona, one hundred signatories. Four other items from the public, two petitions bearing a total of twenty three signatures and two letters from individuals.

Six corporate submissions also received stating objection. Objections on grounds previously noted and decline in property value, loss of income.

Consultative body attached to Department of Planning cites lack of Community consultation and absence of policy on regulation of HTI as reasons to withhold approval.

Two 'Letters to Editor' appear in Torch opposing proposal.

WEEK ELEVEN

Water Board again contacts Council specifying areas needing rectification, reminds Council that it has power to veto if Council should approve development without these changes.

Waste Management Authority (WMA) advises Council that; with some adjustments and the lodgement of a bank guarantee to make good any environmental damage, it supports the proposal.

One letter from resident objecting.

WEEK TWELVE

State Pollution Control Commission (SPCC) advises Council it has no objections.

WEEK THIRTEEN

Simsmetal lodges revised proposal.

State Member appears in local press, calls on residents to approach and write letters to aldermen. Says

residents can win if they stick together. Indicates large numbers have signed petitions.

WEEK FOURTEEN

NSW Labor Council, supporting Chullora Workshops unions writes to Council stating their position, requesting progress report.

Local Member writes to Council, forwarding petition signed by eighteen persons and received by him, restates his position.

WEEK SIXTEEN

Local Member, in Express, raises doubts whether Council can stop the proposal as only the SPCC can rule on pollution matters (and they have no objections).

WEEK SEVENTEEN

Member again publicly warns (in Torch) that Council does not have absolute authority in such matters. Proponent could win at Land and Environment Court. Forecasts that people will have to leave the area if it goes ahead.

Department of Planning advises Council that it is their (Council's) decision.

WEEK EIGHTEEN

'Sun-Herald' article likens issue to Corowa. Photo features some thirty people gathered at site. Combined Pensioners Association, Neighbourhood Watch, Local Member, Labor Council cited as being united against proposal.

WEEK TWENTY ONE

SRA advises proponent they will not allow the development to go ahead on their land.

Proponent pursues application despite SRA's position and lodges further application for a third HTI as part of a food waste processing operation.

Officers advise Council that SRA have not withdrawn their formal consent as the owners, the application must proceed.

Council forms working party to investigate proposals.

WEEK TWENTY TWO

Issue reportedly becoming personalised for Councillors; Express reports that “lodgement of second development application has outraged aldermen”.

WEEK TWENTY THREE

One letter of opposition from a resident received by Council.

WEEK TWENTY FOUR

Mayor and Local Member jointly appear in the Torch, repeating their concerns detailing feared effects of the proposals.

WEEK TWENTY FIVE

Mayor and Local Member jointly in Torch article captioned ‘Incinerator Looks Doomed’, focussing on the SRA’s position, talks of “constant source of worry to the whole Community (if it were to proceed)”.

Council receives twelve form letters and one original letter from addresses in Riga Av., Greenacre and nearby streets, near to proposed site.

WEEK THIRTY

Council Officers present interim report to Council; beyond the scope of Council’s resources to adequately resolve, recommend that Council calls on the Minister for Planning to institute a Commission of Enquiry into the case with a view to developing broader guidelines. Council refers recommendation to the Working Party which continues investigating the matter.

WEEK THIRTY ONE

Nine more form letters as noted above received at Council from residents near site.

WEEK THIRTY TWO

Water Board writes to Council again to repeat their objections.

WEEK THIRTY THREE

South West Resident Action Group formed to oppose incinerator.

WEEK THIRTY FIVE

Express carries story on above group and their plans to hold rally at the site on the nineteenth of May. Group talks about fear of L & E Court overturning a local decision, the broader nature of the problem of HTI and the need for national legislation.

WEEK THIRTY SIX

An early objector, McWilliams Wines, writes to Council again urging rejection. Indicates legal action possible if plan goes ahead.

Labor Council speaks out again in Torch article. Labor Council Officers to constantly monitor proceedings, a public campaign to be mounted if necessary.

WEEK THIRTY SEVEN

Six (new) form letters from residents received by Council.

Labor Council writes to Bankstown City Council renewing objections.

WEEK THIRTY EIGHT

South West Resident Action Group writes to Council objecting to development “on behalf of residents of Greenacre”.

Council receives letter from Greenacre address signed by one person, “on behalf of thirty five town house residents”.

MAIN HTI PROPOSAL REJECTED BY COUNCIL

Councillors urge residents to be prepared to be heard at the Land and Environment Court in the event that Simsmetal appeals.

Local papers greet announcement with recap of “uproar in the district” and “howls of protest from residents”, decision hailed as victory by the People.

WEEK FORTY ONE

Torch carries article on meeting planned by SWRAG for nineteenth of May. The meeting to focus on policy governing future proliferation, and monitoring of existing HTIs.

WEEK FORTY THREE

Express and **Torch** report on success of rally organised by SWRAG outside

Simsmetal site. **Torch** reports attendance at two hundred.

Council considers and rejects outstanding Simsmetal proposal for food waste treatment and incineration. **Torch** speaks of Councillors rejoicing in yet another victory over Sims

The Chullora / Greenacre Area

Location, Population and Neighbours.

Chullora is a suburb in the north eastern corner of the City of Bankstown, which is itself within the South Western sector of the Sydney Metropolitan Area. The local government area population at the time was approximately one hundred and fifty seven thousand. (Bankstown City Council, 1989., ABS, 1993.)

The local government area was principally developed in the post war years being effectively built-out by the seventies. The population at the time of the 1991 Census was a little under one hundred and fifty four thousand (ABS, 1993; p.1.), reflecting the continuance of gradual net population loss since the seventies (BCC, 1988; p.4., Burnley, 1989.), a trend which has only recently been reversed. Chullora-Greenacre has gone against this general trend with net population gains since the seventies. A significant feature of the population movement is substantial growth of overseas born residents, predominantly of a non-English speaking background.(BCC, 1988;p.13)

Chullora itself borders on three other local government areas, Canterbury, Strathfield and Auburn. Along with Bankstown these are long established residential areas, with commercial and industrial pockets. The areas are experiencing varying degrees of urban consolidation. Within the immediate vicinity redevelopment is towards medium density housing with townhouses, villa homes and dual occupancies predominating.

This settlement pattern is broken by Chullora itself and adjacent other 'special use' areas to its west and north containing a water reservoir and necropolis respectively. Chullora's special use zoning stems from its history as a major railways workshop and marshalling yards.

Local Economy

The major landholder is the NSW State Government through the State Rail Authority. Other usage of the area has traditionally been directly or indirectly linked to this. Transport industries and warehousing facilities being other major establishments. Latter-day asset realisation and other rationalisation programs by

the state Government have meant the release, through sale or lease, of railways property for further industrial-commercial redevelopment. Local Government zoning, at the time of the issue, was yet to fully reflect this change.

Residents generally do not work in the immediate area and conversely most of the workforce employed locally are not resident in the immediate area. Consequently the conception of a people linked to a local economy is not as neatly contained as in the Corowa case.

The People.

Identifying what constitutes the 'local population' in this type of conurbation presents difficulties not found in the preceding, geographically clearly defined, Corowa study. Compounding this is a lack of distinction both in local perception and other measures as to where Chullora stops and the suburb of Greenacre starts. The two share the same postcode and the two names are often used interchangeably for a middle area within them. Often the two names are simply used jointly to refer to the area. Another tendency is to use 'Chullora' to refer to the non-residential area while the tag 'Greenacre' is reserved for the populated section. During the issue local media used both place names to refer to the locality.

Published Council estimates for Chullora (BCC, 1988; p.6.) give a population of only three hundred and twenty to that named locality. The actual site of the proposed incinerators though, was at the point of conjunction of the non-residential area of Chullora and the residential areas of Chullora, Greenacre and Bankstown, and two kilometres from the CBD. Two other substantially residential suburbs, Yagoona and Birrong touch within a kilometre of the site. The combined populations of these suburbs total around fifty thousand persons (BCC 1988, est., p.6.). An earlier Bankstown City Council publication (1985; p.1.) put the "trade area population" of Greenacre shopping centre at twenty two thousand people, that estimate including parts of the suburb of Punchbowl. It appears reasonable then to put the likely 'local area' population figure at somewhere between these latter two points, that is between 22,000 and 50,000.

The people of the area conventionally vote Labour at State and Federal elections, a feature which has carried on through population changes. Local Government elections usually result in at least one Labour Councillor, with independents prevailing over Liberal in the remaining two positions.

The Issue and Approach.

Medical , Quarantine and Food Wastes

The events in Chullora again centred primarily on a proposal to establish a facility for High Temperature Incineration for the disposal of dangerous materials. In this case the products for disposal were not ‘intractables’ per se, though it may be noted that the facility would have had that potential and indeed one of its technical critics reported that its design appeared more suited for this use. The plant was primarily intended to dispose of medical wastes and quarantined goods; human body parts, infectious tissue and materials, dressings, hypodermics, radioactive medical isotopes, plant and animal products, with reportedly some security document destruction. There was a later entry of another incinerator proposal by the same company and on the same site, for the disposal of food waste products. While legally this proposal was a separate issue it is treated here, as I believe it was in practice, as a compounding factor to the main medical waste proposal.

The Uncertainties

As with Corowa there was a certain vagueness over the exact nature of the proposed incineration technology, the design of which was varied twice during considerations. Similar to the earlier case, questions of lack of control over the waste mix and consequently of the levels of toxicity of materials and varying ‘safe’ destruction temperatures emerged. Additionally there was a cloud over the proponent’s capacity to ensure continuous safe operation. The matters of safe transit, emergency spill procedures, secure storage and disposal of residues were similar in both cases. So too were the issues of feared contamination of locally based food processing and water storage facilities.

The volume of wastes to be disposed of were also indeterminate. One public estimate (D. Shedden, Daily Mirror 31/08/90) mentioned “hundreds of tonnes”,

thought to be an annual figure, from nine thousand locations across Sydney. At the time the management of a comparable, operational, facility at Silverwater rated their own capacity at 12,000 tonnes per annum but pointed out that the actual volume of waste for disposal produced annually in the Sydney area sat at about only 5,000 tonnes (BCC 16/04/91;p.5865.) While it appears that ‘toxicity’ is likely to have been of a significantly lower level than in Corowa (though hard figures were also unavailable for that case) the wide variation in guesstimates of volume makes it impossible to give an accurate comparison. Conversely there was no operational lifespan even nominally fixed for these incinerators as there was in Corowa, rather it seems that the facility was planned for growing and ongoing future need. From this perspective the volumes of waste and consequent attendant problems, over time, may have been comparable. From a practical perspective, given that three incinerators were ultimately proposed, the law of averages would seem to indicate a greater likelihood of operating difficulties. The proponent’s lack of prior experience in such operations and was a factor in the formal considerations as well as public debate. Informed comment that this inexperience showed in their proposal has also been sighted. While these alone do not constitute an argument that accidents were likely to happen they could understandably give rise to fears of this nature.

The Timing

The timing of the Chullora incident was significantly the same as Corowa. Though it began some months earlier and concluded some months later the techno-political discourse concerning incineration as BAT (Best Available Technology) for dangerous waste disposal was the same. Some organisational and individual players were also constant for the two cases ; Tim Moore was concerned as Minister, the same Greenpeace and ACF personnel were sought as advisers on the matter and the WMA was involved as a regulatory body. Given other variables noted below the type of roles played by these parties in the two instances varied. ‘Corowa’ itself was a player, largely as a passive backdrop, model and rallying cry, though there were some exchanges of information between the areas.

Private Developers

One significant variation is that the Chullora proposal came from the private sector. The Corowa proposal originated with the state. It was promoted by government and would have been operated by it as well as being regulated by it. In the Chullora case, apart from its pro-incineration contribution to the discourse noted above, the role of the state was limited to its regulatory functions. Also as a private concern there were no plans for the type of Community Monitoring Committee proposed at Corowa

As noted earlier the Chullora case actually entailed two incineration proposals by the one company, for the one site and in an overlapping timeframe. The first plant was primarily intended to dispose of medical wastes and quarantined goods; human body parts, infectious tissue and materials, dressings, hypodermics, radioactive medical isotopes, plant and animal products, with reportedly some security document destruction. The later entry was technically similar but for the disposal of food waste products. While legally this second proposal was a separate issue it is treated here, as all sources indicate it was in practice, as a compounding factor to the main medical waste proposal. The second proposal is singled out for separate mention only where it appears to have contributed to a changed dynamic to overall developments in the field.

The Response⁸

The State

In contrast to the earlier case the role of the State per se was limited, for the most part, to a passive backdrop to the events. While essentially parametric rather than participatory its contribution was still significant.

Some of its instrumentalities were active players. The State Rail Authority, though more in its guise as corporate entity rather than a State body was heavily

⁸ The Chullora case study was inherently concerned more with the parts played by gatekeepers, institutions and corporations than was the case in Corowa. For this reason the layout of this section varies in some details from that used in the preceding chapter. In the immediately following in particular it is necessary to adopt a more segmental approach depicting the nature and mapping the moves of these players.

See also Appendix 2, for further detail on variations necessitated by these substantive differences.

involved. The Water Board, acting as a public instrumentality, was a ‘reserve player’, indicating that it might act to stop the development.

The Local State Parliamentary Representative was a pivotal figure in the issue.

Ministerial Powers and Intra-Party Politics

Tim Moore who was an active player in the Corowa case, remained the pro-incineration Minister, but all but stayed out of the Chullora matter.

The Environment Minister’s favourable position on incineration has been made clear in the Corowa case. As the Minister responsible he was the target for Parliamentary approaches in relation to the Chullora case; by Local Members and petitions from the public. He made only minimal required responses to these. There was only the one instance (recorded in the preceding case summary) in which he was publicly quoted on this case. There, as in Corowa he was heavily critical of the anti-incineration lobby.

Compared to the internal party and coalition wrangling on the Corowa case the state level politics surrounding Chullora were limited and conventional. These consisted primarily of local Labor Members in Opposition and trades unions, jointly and separately, calling on the Coalition government to act on the question of HTI (see below).

State Government Bodies

The State Rail Authority

This body was a key player, with three distinct persona. It owned the land on which the incinerator was to be sited, it was the employer of a substantial workforce which objected to the facility, and it was the ‘landlord’ to a number of other commercial enterprises.

State rail had a role in the affair that can only be described as ambiguous, publicly, in their dealings with Sims and with Council and they had a strong behind the scenes role in the outcome. They made the proposal possible, in endorsing their tenant’s development application and according to both interview and documentary sources they provided the ‘moral support’ that allowed Council to go ahead with the rejection

The duality of their position(s) was evident in reviewing the Council files (BCC File P. 11/ 36/ 75/ 4 - EAST WARD), where formal consents to the developments are interspersed and then followed with documents and file notes indicating an increasingly firmer resolve to stop the development. Their first reserved comment in September 1990 (item undated) said simply that Council should not think that they support it just because they have endorsed it, that some of their other tenants have raised objection and they (SRA) are conducting investigations. They followed this later in the same month (25/9/90) with a submission of total objection because of possible particle and gas emissions, radioactivity and the proximity of a large workforce. A petition signed by two hundred workers was attached in support of the management's position. In December (20/12/90) records show that the SRA had approached Sims and told them that they would not allow the development on their land. (see also BCC Co-ordination Committee Reports; 22/1/91: p.2183., 19/2/91:p.5564., 16/4/91:p.5862.)

Paradoxically they did not take the one action which would have brought the matter to a halt; the withdrawal of consent. Council officers approached the applicant to see if they wished to withdraw the proposal, they did not and soon after lodged their second (food waste) proposal. This was a source of some confusion and irritation in Council and elsewhere, the apparent absolute objection by the SRA gave rise to the hope if not the belief that the matter was resolved. This was evidenced by the Torch's article of the sixteenth of January proclaiming "Incinerator Doomed". The refusal to withdraw consent and the applicant's renewed persistence is reported to have led to heightened emotional engagement with the issue by Councillors and annoyance with the SRA.

The Express sought to resolve the public confusion resulting, with its article of the twenty ninth of January. The article definitively stated that the issue was not over, but it is unlikely that any further clarification was forthcoming from the comments of the SRA spokesperson: In summary his position was that the property branch had acted properly in endorsing the application and could not then withdraw it. The management of SRA had, in turn, acted properly in opposing it because of concerns from staff (concerns of other tenants were not noted). It was not the SRA's decision

to make, council would have to do that, but if Council did approve it they (the SRA) would stop it. They would be able to do this, he said, because the proposed use was not allowed under Sims' lease with them.

The SRA's comment appears to raise more questions than it answers but the bottom line, and the one picked up on by the State Member and Councillors, was that ultimately the development would not go ahead. The impact of this, together with other developments, is dealt with further below.

The Waste Management Authority, State Pollution Control Commission and Department of Health (Public Health)

Each of these bodies played a largely passive but nonetheless contributory role in the issue. The absence of regulatory policy on High Temperature Incineration contributed to the prolongation of the matter and developed as a separate issue.

Each of the above bodies found the proposal acceptable, with the former two adding some qualifications best described as 'soft' recommendations and technicalities. (BCC File, BCC Co-ordination Committee 19/2/91: Pp. 5561, 5562., 16/4/9: Pp. 5859, 5860.) All of them accepted uncritically the Environmental Impact Statement about which the Department of Planning, among others, had expressed considerable concerns and the technical details criticised elsewhere went unchallenged.

The WMA went beyond neutral acceptability to add its vote of confidence in HTI as the best available technology for disposal of dangerous wastes. It underscored this by noting the dangers of landfill as a disposal strategy and the limited availability of landfill space in Sydney. It indicated the likelihood that it would licence the facility as a waste disposal depot. The WMA clearly was still pro-HTI and apparently supporting their further establishment as a matter of course.

The Health Department offered the comment that the proposal "complies generally with its policies for the destruction of contagious and cytotoxic wastes." The Sydney Area Health Service was at that time calling for expressions of interest for its own HTI at Homebush Bay (BCC Co-ordination Committee Report 16/4/91; p. 5865.)

indicating that it was also an active adherent to the WMA's line on medical waste disposal.

It would appear that none of these bodies, the principal custodians of the environment, waste management and the public health were concerned with the general misgivings on HTI that were current at the time. It was that discourse and this attitude which ensured that the Chullora case, as with Corowa, blew out to become illustrations of a general need as well as discrete issues themselves.

The Water Board.

This instrumentality actively participated only as one of many (conditional) objectors to the development. As a reserve player however they flexed their muscle behind the scenes, reminding council that they could veto the operation of the facility if it were approved against their wishes and that, as the proposal stood, it would definitely be against their wishes.

The Water Board's reservations stemmed from their assessment of the possibilities of waste discharge to the sewer, stormwater run-off and particularly long term airborne deposits into the reservoir. The pattern of their correspondence with council was similar to that of the SRA, initially flagging that they may have reservations, later stating those (conditional) reservations and later still taking a stronger stand as it became apparent that these conditions would not be met. (BCC File; 27/9/90, 3/10/90, 8/10/90, 5/3/91. BCC Co-ordination Committee Reports; 19/2/91: Pp. 5562, 5563. 16/4/91: Pp. 5860-5862.). The Water Board was critical of the proponent's EIS and of both Council's consultant's and the SPCC's acceptance of it with the shortcomings that they identified.

Again similarly to the SRA their later communication spoke of action that they would take to stop the facility if Council approved it. That letter (BCC File; 5/3/91) cited an article featuring Doug Shedden in the Telegraph-Mirror (21/2/91) and conveyed dissatisfaction with both the proposal and the length of time that it was taking Council to resolve the matter. They requested an update and reminded Council that if it was approved against their wishes they could veto it.

The Water Board's prod was not the only one received by Council in these later stages as other earlier objectors renewed their approaches, requested information on developments and new ones entered the picture. The 'carrot' that came along with this 'stick' was the intimation that the Water Board would stop it if Council would not or could not.

The Department of Planning

Critical of the lack of Community consultation and of the proliferation of High Temperature Incinerators but with no power to act, this body at one stage seemed to offer a possible way out of the maze (of conflicting information amassed, but with no policy against which to assess it) to Bankstown Council Officers. Bankstown Councillors declined to take this option.

The Department and its ancillary Botany Bay Region Community Consultative Committee expressed concerns over the technical aspects of the proposal, lack of demonstrated need for the facility (and relatedly the unregulated proliferation of HTI's) and the lack of community consultation on the proposal. (BCC File, BCC Co-ordination Committee Reports 19/2/91: Pp. 5559, 5560., 16/4/91: Pp. 5858, 5859.)

The department expressed "considerable concern" over the proposal and identified five separate areas that it believed Council should closely consider. In advising that it was an appropriate matter for Council to determine they were also in effect recommending caution, and perhaps rejection. This latter point is conveyed in their comment, cited by Council Officers in the above two reports, that "Council may decide that it has sufficient grounds to reject the application on the information available to date". Council Officers cited that comment verbatim in their final summary of reasons for rejection.

The Department was obviously concerned not only about this particular proposal but the unregulated growth of HTI facilities generally. In the absence of such regulatory policy it was not able to prevent the development but suggested ways in which Council might do this. It cannot be definitively stated that a recommendation by Council Officers that the whole matter be handed to a Commission of Enquiry, to be

established by the Minister for Planning , came out of the Officer's exchanges with this Department. It seems reasonable to make this assertion though in view of the opportunity that this would provide to both parties to resolve mutual concerns.

The State Member for Bankstown

Doug Shedden, a Labor Member in Opposition, was the State Parliamentary Representative of the area for which the facility was proposed. Shedden's early and vigorously continuing opposition to the incinerator was an integral, if not primary cause in its rejection. His long history as a Local Government Representative was a key factor.

The Roles of the Area's Parliamentary Representatives

This section is concerned almost exclusively with the motives and actions of the Member for Bankstown, the seat within which the incinerator was to be sited. While it is acknowledged that three (Labor Party Opposition) State Members of Parliament took some action in relation to the Chullora incinerator case, two of these played only a minimal role. The Member in the nearby Granville electorate assisted the Bankstown Member's initiative to produce, promote, and present petitions to Parliament. It is understood that he spoke to these in parliament but there is no record of any other input. The Member for the now defunct seat of Bass Hill which adjoined the incinerator location was also a Councillor at the time. His only reported comments on the issue appeared in his capacity of Councillor. There is no record of any other involvement from him. Conversely all sources consulted, interviews, file materials and media reports clearly identify Doug Shedden, the member for Bankstown, as the pacesetter in opposing the development. Interviews, with Shedden and others, and reflection on the consonance between the content of Council archive materials and Shedden's own knowledge and perspective on the matter, also show very close and purposive collaboration between him and Council Officers throughout the issue. While ultimately it was the elected body of Council that rejected the proposal it was this collaboration more than any other single factor that led to that decision being taken.

Links With Bankstown Council

The MP first heard about the HTI proposal when it was still the subject of lengthy preliminary and informal negotiations with Council Officers, prior to the lodgement of a formal application. He had been kept abreast of these. In his words “ (he had been).. alerted that Sims was moving in this direction...it was a lucrative field that they wanted to get into.”. His early notification was partly because of his position as State Member but more importantly because of his history of ten years as a Bankstown Council Alderman. While a formal notification to him as the Member would have been in order at the time of the actual application it was Shedden’s other earlier role and his historically established and well maintained networks, in both the political and administrative spheres of Council, that ensured his early notification, and a continuing fluid and candid exchange of views and information on the matter at all stages.

Personal and Political Networks; Formation of Attitudes and Influencing of Formal Processes.

That (Council) network is one with which he interacts daily, both in relation to his State role and in a less formally prescribed manner. He described how, as a matter of course, he is on the phone to Council Officers two or three times a day either at their or his instigation. In periods of significance this intensifies. His contacts and friendships extend from the Mayor and General Manager to junior office staff, many of whom he noted still refer to him as Alderman Shedden. These ties are such that it appears that he is still considered a member of the Council group rather than an outside contact. Resultantly, in the normal course of events, he not only became aware of and engaged in the formal levels of the incinerator issue but was also well placed both to be privy to and to influence the manner in which Council viewed and consequently handled the matter.

The Parliamentarian described himself as pre-emptive as well as responsive in pursuing the interests of the people and acknowledged that it was his own concerns over HTI that he acted on rather than a demonstrated objection from his constituents; “I have an obligation to look after this place...I had heartfelt concerns.” He said that his first reactions were; “ ‘Shock-Horror’... a medical waste incinerator in the

middle of a high density residential area.” These fears were previously instilled from exposure to the Corowa case in parliament, from other general sources, were reinforced in discussions with Council Officers and (he believed) validated by the research that he did for the Chullora issue. He saw his responsibilities as conveying those concerns and gathering the information to support them.

Even before the matter came to Council he took the initiative to actively involve himself and others in discussions on the application, strongly voicing his objections and attempting to sway others from the outset. The MP described early discussions that he convened on the issue. (He related that his clear intent in this was to stop the development rather than discuss it). He observed that he felt he was regarded as “...a bit of a joke” and as “playing local politics” by others at these meetings. The general opinion at these meetings, which included the developers, their environmental consultants, the SPCC, Council Officers and Councillors, was that the development could not be stopped. They were dismissive of his attempts to do this, given that there were no guidelines that would enable it. He explained that at that stage the SPCC acknowledged that it had no policy on HTI and were using an American text as a reference in lieu of any resident expertise. He also said that the SPCC believed that they would have a policy in place before the matter came to Council, though this is not mentioned in any other sources, including the SPCC’s submission to Council, and certainly did not eventuate. While these meetings did not achieve Shedden’s desired outcome he continued to oppose the matter with council, in other ways behind the scenes, and publicly.

Much of the behind the scenes work was done with Council Officers. Commenting on the position that these officers took on the proposal he said that, from the outset, they were concerned by the proposal but there were no clear grounds on which to reject it. In his words; “Initially they thought they would have a real problem building up grounds for rejection.” (He also acknowledged at this point that had the SRA been happy with the development these problems may well have been insurmountable). He encouraged the Officers to keep looking for grounds and this entailed making non-routine enquiries and generally taking steps that they would not normally do. At one stage he described this as them taking a range of actions to

clutch on to something that would allow them to reject it. His liaison with Council staff continued in this manner throughout consideration of the development.

His relationship with elected members of Council parallels and in some instances exceeds the relationship with staff. Apart from his party and factional colleagues Shedden has close friendships with others on Council and used these relationships as much or more than his Parliamentary position to draw them into the debate.

He was involved in the discussions with Council Officers before any Councillors had shown an interest. The fact that they did become involved, and engaged with the medical waste issue as strongly as they did appears to be very largely the result of work that the MP did; to bring them into the picture and to keep them informed through the issue. (This was confirmed by the Member, the Mayor and one other Councillor in interviews.) He acknowledged with some mild criticisms that they were slow to get off the mark, that he had had to work to get them involved, and that to an extent they became reliant on the background work that he had done. One of his early and most important steps in this was to bring the then Mayor into the issue. Recruiting him, a friend and party-factional colleague, as with most of the Member's activities on the issue had more than one purpose. It certainly had the effect of activating an influential voice in Council but more important was the public effect of the Local Member and the Mayor standing in solidarity against the proposal. In the Member's words - "I needed the extra weight, the extra political thrust into the community, to alert people, to create greater concern." As with the professional sector of Council, the Member continued to assert his influence with Councillors throughout the issue, drawing them in, keeping them moving.

This close relationship with Council was one side of a multi faceted ability to influence the progress of the matter. With his broader public and parliamentary roles he was also able to convey developments within Council to, and influence the formation of opinion within, these wider sectors. These in turn he could relay back to council in both his formal and informal capacities. That is he could directly influence Council under his own initiative and could also assert himself as the representative of a concerned public, having done his part to generate this concern..

He was well positioned to mold opinion inside and out of Council and he noted that in this he “played very hard on the very, very, toxic waste that was to be treated and (the difficulties of ensuring safe operating procedures in the void of legislative control)”.

Organisational Networking

His first broader approaches were made at or about the time the matter went to Council, when he approached nearby commercial property holders with his concerns. He specifically mentioned the wine and food distribution operations of McWilliam’s Wines and Franklin’s Foods which he noted “...were within two hundred yards of the site.” He described how he got their support and that at his instigation they lodged submissions of objection with Council.

He also promoted his concerns through various other local venues with mixed results. He raised the issue at branch meetings of the ALP and he believed that it was subsequently discussed at eight or ten branches in the area. Despite this and while it is understood that petitions initiated by Shedden were circulated at meetings and signed by branch members there is no evidence of any other action by the branches or their members. Similarly he promoted opposition at speaking engagements with local clubs and associations. Again though, with the exception of the Combined Pensioners Association’s Greenacre Branch, which he is known to have spoken to, and a Yagoona Neighbourhood Watch Area Group, which he is thought to have addressed, there is no evidence to suggest that local groups then became actively involved with the issue, though again it is reasonable to expect that their members would also have signed petitions. Shedden identified one of these groups, the Greenacre Combined Pensioners and its forty to fifty members, as his strongest support base arising out of this exercise. The same group was later similarly identified by resident organisor ‘Meg Brown’ .

The petitions noted above were also distributed by him and Peter Nagle to various licensed clubs in the area. Coupled with their promotion through the media the placement of the petitions was effective. Shedden estimated that over several months thousands of signatures were collected and presented to parliament (in a

press report at the time he mentioned ten thousand signatures). He noted that he knew that the petitions would have no effect of themselves but stressed that they were valuable tactically to keep the issue before the Members of Parliament and the Press.

The Member also strongly acknowledged the role of the unions in promoting the issue and in its eventual rejection. He spoke about meetings and other contact that he had with, firstly the Chullora Railways Unions and later, the NSW Labour Council. He noted that the union's involvement was spontaneous. Though he met with them collaboratively it was their initiative to pick up on the issue, not his. He observed that both Beryl Ashe, the Labour Council's Executive Officer and Peter Sams, its Assistant Secretary were local residents and he felt that this may have contributed added incentive to their involvement.

Using the Media

In both personal and media approaches Shedden acknowledged a dual purpose in his initiatives on the matter; to inform and to alert. That is his intent was not simply to convey to his constituents that he was taking action on a matter of concern to them, but to advise them of the 'dangers' and to provoke a response from them. The volume and nature of the media coverage that he generated in carrying this out is fairly evident from the preceding sections. Here, to place these in the context of the man's thinking and broader developments I will draw on only some few of these public statements for comment.

His emphasis on the 'horror' that he felt at the possibility of contamination to Potts Hill Water Reservoir for example was genuinely felt but also strategic. It was an issue that might not be immediately apparent to residents. They might be concerned with the proximate, visible, and otherwise tangible consequences of incineration near their homes but not think of indirect and long term effects. His other intent here, and this is shown in his use of the metropolitan media, was to spread the concern, and generate a response, outside the immediate area. The pollution of Sydney's water supply had sinister implications for millions. Rather than being a localised problem of (arguably) unsubstantiated health risks, and environmental problems that

might have no more than nuisance value in an already fully developed and largely industrialised area, the problem could be seen as having monumental proportions. There is no evidence that this theme was taken up, let alone acted on, by the population at large and the metropolitan media gave it only sporadic attention, the Water Board however, did take the risk seriously as is noted elsewhere.

His very early warning that Bankstown Council might not be able to stop the development similarly was an accurate assessment of the situation and an honest statement his own concerns, it too though was a tactical device with strategic ends, aimed at discouraging complacency and towards mobilising a population that at that time had made no discernible move at all to oppose the development.

In the Torch reporting of his speech to parliament, (03/0/90) the paper's editorial position on the matter and his own perspective and intent were combined in the one aim. The manner in which the degree and nature of objections to the proposal were conveyed to Parliament and to the article's readers as a broadscale groundswell were greatly exaggerated. At this stage little more than a trickle of resident objections had been received by Council and there had been no other public protest. Nevertheless the Torch started off the piece with the comment that "a storm of protest has surrounded the controversial move" and the Member's address to parliament builds on that theme with the dual intent of convincing parliament of local opposition and of generating that opposition. Shedden refers to "(unspecified) tremendous response from the Community through my office...concerned residents signing petitions...expressing concern at health risks" and later in the speech; "The level of concern in the general Community of Bankstown (is such that) people are calling for public meetings to further highlight those (health and environmental) matters." "I totally endorse the concerns shown by my constituents and the Community at large." "I make it quite clear to Parliament...I will do all in my power as the parliamentary representative...to see that this totally unacceptable proposal does not go ahead." Clearly the image is one of a dutiful Representative responding to the voice of the people. The empiric reality, disclosed in interviews by the member and others and in the sequence of events as they appear in archives materials was the reverse of this. That is ,the Member took a position of resolve against the proposal before

constituents were aware of it, the Member initiated and actively promoted the petitions he mentions through all available channels, the Member is the only person on record up to this point mentioning the need for a public meeting and the only one organising any type of meeting on the issue.

His use of the media, like his personal speaking engagements, had mixed results but was largely successful. It undoubtedly ensured that the people of Bankstown were aware of the issue and the alleged dangers it posed and it identifiably sparked responses from some of these. His approach in these articles, speaking as the representative of a concerned constituency whom he often portrayed as being on the verge of taking some form of direct action, would have assisted in the double pincer movement identified above in his efforts to get Council to reject the proposal. In at least one identifiable instance (concerning the Water Board) it moved a concerned statutory body to act, and may have influenced others. There is scant evidence though that it worked in any way as a broadscale consciousness raising exercise, or goad to action by the general public.

A Comment on The Member's Approach to the Community

There was a duality if not an ambiguity noticeable in the Member's intention to raise concerns and generate a response from the public. He stressed a number of times that while his actions had stemmed from his own concerns he firmly believed that there was widespread and genuine concern within the area, that while his actions were pre-emptive the community opposed the incinerator and was behind him. He was attempting to both encourage and to tap into this pool and to bring out a more tangible demonstration, a clear groundswell. We discussed some aspects of the Corowa case (with which he was familiar) and he acknowledged some hope of a similar popular mobilisation over the Chullora matter, in fact that such a mobilisation was an aim that he had. He appeared though to have clearly delineated thoughts on how far this should go. He spoke of the difficulties of provoking, and then managing responses, the need to do 'constructive' things, to keep the impatient ones 'muzzled'. Other key words that he used were tactical management, constraint, reserve and containment. He stressed the need for the practical rather than the

emotive to emerge and the need to work against unregulated spontaneous, in his words “explosive”, action.

Aspects of this are apparent in his media statements of the time, they aim at channelling responses through particular sanctioned and formal routes. There is no encouragement to get together, other than in a hypothetical future public meeting, at which “concerns would be highlighted”. While he speaks of the Community in a collective sense he appears to speak to people about intrinsically individual actions, or where there is an element of collectivity, there is a corollary element of individuation, such as the signing of petitions, where there may be a show of unity of opinion but where the individuals party to this display need not have contact. There is a linear (at times circular), constrained, and directive quality about his approach even though it may be encased in seemingly holistic-emotive rhetoric. Starting from himself, in the relatively elevated position of parliamentarian, his fears, with supportive information, go down a set path to the people, along with a set of instructions on the type of actions that they should take. These people are then to convey their concerns, or perhaps more accurately put their imprimatur on his concerns and relay them back up to the appropriate authority, either council or himself, as identified by him. While the call, or the intent as stated by him, was for the people, in a collective sense, to act on their concerns, his manner acted against this, with prior identification of the problem and the means of solution. There is almost a conventional managerial quality about the approach, with delegation of minimal responsibilities within defined areas, along prescribed paths. If the intent was to generate a groundswell, albeit without spontaneous action, it worked against itself structurally because the personal responsibility for the issue never left the hands of the one who identified it. With delimited responsibilities there was little for people to do and no reason for them to get their heads together to work out how to do it.

There was a sense of both removedness and truncation in his media appeals to, and in our interview discussion on, Community mobilisation. While the problem was identified as being in the heart of the people, the solution was seen to be removed and through procedural channels. The possibility of the people bringing that solution

into their midst, ie through massed mobilisation and direct participation, was always seen and portrayed by the Member (and others) as a potential, a possible course for the future, not an immediate need or right or even an advisable option. In the end the means that were pursued were adequate, the course that Shedden embarked on was shown to be sufficient but whether it would have been conducive to the actualisation of that potential, had that been necessary, is debatable. This is discussed further in comparison with the Corowa case in the chapter following.

Local Government

Bankstown City Council was the administrative and political hub of the proposal both as the adjudicator and as a centre of opposition against it. These conflicting roles appear to have been evident in both the professional and elected spheres. Most of the public objection to it was channelled through Council's formal process.

Council Officers

Most sources consulted in the research, both oral and documentary, either implied or stated outright that the approach of Council's professional staff to the matter started with the position that the development was not desirable and that their investigations consisted more of seeking grounds for rejection than in evaluation.

From my first review of Council's files on this issue it seemed that greater than usual measures had been taken to seek widespread comment; technical, environmental, legal and health related, on the incinerator proposal. Taking the scope, direction and use made of the results from these enquiries it appeared that the intent behind this degree of meticulousness was to find grounds for rejection, not for evaluation.

This assessment was later confirmed by each of the interview subjects who had contact with the officers on this issue including the State Member, the Mayor and one other Councillor. There was also a degree of circumspect validation of this from one senior Council officer.

The contention that Council Officers pursued a line of action aimed at a particular outcome is obviously a sensitive area. It would be easy to draw conclusions of indiscriminate bias or political game-playing by the Officers from comments here.

For that reason I would make the following note. There was no indication at any stage of my enquiries of any unreasoning personal or political bias in the conduct of the officers. Any bias that may have been observed was professional and contextually apt. That is, the incineration debate was raging in various disciplinary circles, notably in Urban and Environmental Planning and in Public Health. The overseas literature was generally finding against HTI and this was being reflected in practice - though this was not a universally accepted position (vis. JTOIW and Corowa). There was no regulatory policy on HTI. In the absence of a clear cut professional body of knowledge and guidelines the 'bias' noted was the only option. That is a position was adopted on the basis of professional opinion and of local knowledge that the proposal was unsuitable. As existing regulation did not take account of this particular type of facility it would, as a routine matter be permissible. Consequently, arising from the deficiency of general legislation a case against the particular proposal needed to be developed, to mesh with what regulations were in place that could prevent an undesirable development.

Confirmation from the political sources that such a course was pursued was openly forthcoming but wording was understandably guarded and respondents eager to avoid misunderstanding. The Local Member, for example used the wording "... (an Officer) was worried that Council would not be able to reject it" on a number of occasions. The Mayor of that time used similar wording and noted that it would fair to say that nobody wanted it and that the Reports coming to Council from officers were weighted towards rejection, not appraisal.

A resident organisor also interviewed was more forthright. Her perspective was that it was clear to any person approaching Town Planning on the issue at the time that they were working to reject the proposal. She said that this was evident to the degree that people contacting them with concerns would have been reassured by the efforts being made. Further she said that while officers were helpful in providing her with information that she would use to oppose the facility she was also quite sure that other information was being withheld from her. This, she believed, comprised a reserve pool of contra arguments which officers did not want disclosed prematurely in the event of a court challenge. It is not known whether this was actually the case,

however an incident during the interview with her reinforced this belief in her. In that incident I had cause to refer to a chronology I had compiled from, among other sources, Council files to which she had not had access. In this there were several lines of enquiry conducted fairly early in the progress of the matter in Council, and of which she was unaware. Her reaction was one of surprise at the scope of the enquiries and that people in Town Planning who had otherwise been very helpful had not told her of these, she immediately offered this as confirmation of her speculations on reserved information to fight an appeal.

Typical of these types of enquiries were undated file notes inserted in the council records around August indicating that Council was seeking information and opinion further afield, noting phone calls to the South Australian Waste Management Authority and the South Australian Environment Protection Council. Other notes later in the year record approaches to Greenpeace and the ACF, the Total Environment Centre and the Victorian EPA. The tone of all of these was that of casting the net wide in the hope of pulling in something; any existing guidelines from anywhere, details of overseas experience, and particularly the hope of finding an acknowledged expert who could be called on. Such notes also plotted the informal phone and fax exchanges with parties in other bodies which gave direction to the formal avenues that council pursued, comments such that the application proposed inappropriate technology and that there was a gross underestimate by the proponent of the costs to make the facility safe. Taken together with formally submitted objections, such as those from Clinical Waste Australia (BCC Medical Waste Incineration File) which contended that the design was more suited to the destruction of intractables than medical waste, such background information cast doubt on the proponent's capacities to fully understand what it was that they were proposing, let alone their ability to offer guarantees of secure and safe operation. This, it is thought, would have added further impetus to the Officers' search for grounds for rejection.

The Officers' earlier cited report to Council on the nineteenth of February 1991 which ended with the recommendation that a Commission of Enquiry be sought was

further evidence of the type of thinking that lay behind the officers approach to this case.

Taken point by point the report listed several informed reasons why the development could or should be approved. Council's own environmental consultants could find no fundamental objection and commented that the site was well suited to this type of facility. State regulatory bodies on waste management, the environment and public health as has been seen either endorsed it , or at worst could find no objection to it (BCC Co-ordination Committee Report 19/2/91; Pp. 5557-5568.).

The concerns or outright objections registered with Council, while in some instances detailed were intrinsically speculative and largely based on the perceived effects on the interests of the objectors; market impact, labor force discontent and disputed health and environment risks. Given this these negative arguments could be seen as less objective than the supportive arguments and given the lack of clear regulatory yardsticks against which to evaluate the speculatively catalogued risks these appear somewhat amorphous against endorsements of the various public agencies. On this latter point, while the dangers from in-transit spills and airborne contaminants may be real, concretely based objections, without an established codex against which the risk element could be evaluated and translated through policy into standard accepted practice it could be held that no valid cause for objection had been argued. Rather that causes for concern had been listed. It could be further held that at this stage the balance was in favour of approval.

The Officers then brought into contention 'possible futures' that might influence the legitimacy of the development. Changes to the zoning of the area would, in future, put the site in a category for which the proposal could be seen to be unsuitable. As these plans were underway it was possible, even obligatory, to make the determination on the basis of the future zoning. (Sims soon after lodged an objection to this rezoning; BCC MWI File 5/3/91.) If it could be determined that the waste management facility was part of a 'hazardous and offensive' industry it could be disallowed under the proposed new zoning and consequently should perhaps not be approved in anticipation of it. This would still require a quantification of risk but

unlike the preceding objections this would be done on the basis of the past history of the industry as a whole rather than on speculation on the future likelihood of spills or emissions. The industry, rather than the particular proposal, would be constituted an unsuitable development. Effectively this measure would take the issue out of a regulatory void and place it into a context where empirical precedent and law could be applied to make the decision.

The officers also raised the question of relative future benefits to the public versus the future risks in weighting the question of whether such an industry was necessarily or unnecessarily introducing a risk into the area. They cited opinion that medical waste disposal was currently more than adequately catered for in Sydney. Consequently it could be said that the facility was unnecessary, though whether it was a risk was yet to be established.

Having extended the argument to this point and tipping the scales in favour of rejection the Officers had to acknowledge that they did not have the resources to take these lines of enquiry to full resolution, and that to reject the application without doing so would leave Council open to a successful appeal to the Land and Environment Court. The alternative proposed, offering this as test case for a Commission of Enquiry, would mean that the resources needed could be made available, a solution to the Chullora case found and guidelines be established to provide the objective measures that were lacking in, and complicating this case.

Councillors rejected this seemingly Solomon-like recommendation. By all accounts this was for the one point of reservation noted in the Report - Council would be relinquishing control of the matter and would be bound by the Commission's decision if they approved it. It appears that at this stage parochialism and the personalisation of the immediate matter for Councillors had won out over the opportunity to have general guidelines set that would benefit them and others in future.

Elected Council and Councillors

Initially slow to engage with the issue most Bankstown Councillors, led by the Mayor, became personally involved in opposing the development, in the Chamber and outside of it.

The local press bears out the Member's statement that councillors were slow to pick up on the incinerator issue and along with the comments of two councillors in interviews (Ashton, Stromborg) supports the position that, politically, the Chullora issue was largely Doug Shedden's race.

While Ian Stromborg enters the public picture relatively early (Express 04/09/1990) and is frequently featured in both papers throughout the issue he was alone among the councillors to be so featured until the latter stages. Stromborg's appearances were always in conjunction with Doug Shedden. Shedden's comments on this are already noted and his sentiments, that Ian Stromborg, as friend, party colleague and Mayor of the day, joined him on the issue at his instigation were corroborated by Stromborg; Shedden was the mover, he brought it to Council's attention, he made the running, others joined in.

The manner in which Stromborg related this to me was itself of considerable interest for this thesis. At the outset of the interview Stromborg immediately and unselfconsciously started talking in terms of a largescale Community response and of how Shedden had been instrumental in bringing this to his and Council's attention. This interview was conducted in the later stages of the research, by which time it was evident to me that there was little mobilisation at any time during the Chullora issue and none at all in the early stages to which Stromborg was directing his remarks. This type of initial statement had been offered to me by some other respondents including the State Member, though with less emphasis than Stromborg was giving it. When I pointed out to the Councillor that archives materials and other interview sources simply did not support that contention he just as readily agreed that this was true. His original statement was put with sincerity and with a sense of enthusiastic recollection. The second acknowledgment was made, upon reflection with the same degree of sincerity, though without the enthusiasm. To a lesser degree the same

wavering was evident as the interview continued. This was a perplexing phenomenon with at least two possible interpretations: It is not inconceivable that a person, particularly a political figure, being interviewed by a Community worker known to them, for research on the workings of Community, would presume what the desirable responses were when asked about local social issues (God knows I've done similar things to them often enough). It is also possible that, given the time elapsed since the actual events and the research being conducted that the symbol which these people had combined to evoke at the time had become the immediate subjective reality when recalled at a later date. The popularity of Community and the broad desire of people to be part of a Community is sufficiently documented, and cited in the earlier part of this work to allow this contention. This is particularly so in conjunction with the apparent strength of conviction that they had brought to the issue "on behalf of 'The Community'". Ian Stromborg was quoted during the issue as saying that it was the single most important issue facing council and residents at that time. In an interview with me, two years later, he changed from this wording only slightly to say that it was the most political single issue of his mayoral term and probably of his time on Council. It is worth noting that at the same time the southern area of the city was in the throws of what was probably a more substantive 'Community uproar' over plans for a major high-rise residential and commercial development. The strength of the imprint that the issue left was evident, as was the desire for it to have been a victory for the people, with he and Doug Shedden at the head of it.

The latter is my preferred interpretation of the reason for Stromborg and others referring to a popular response simply because he and other respondents continued to want it to be so (that the Community rejected the proposal). Even as they described the very limited results of their attempts to generate a broad response from the public both Stromborg and Shedden clearly believed that the potential was there and that their tactical and rhetorical references to the Community were valid. Hitting on the core of the dilemma Stromborg said that it was only because of the degree of action which he, Shedden, 'Meg Brown' and Council Officers took and the level of reassurance that the people drew from this that the majority opinion (which he clearly

believed was there), did not become a more tangible groundswell. He said that he believed that disaffection with the development was broad and that if Doug Shedden had not pursued as he had that this would have mobilised into direct action.

It seems that the opposition to the issue of other Councillors began to mount from the early stages but only crystallised and became publicly apparent with developments in the later stages: The likely eventuality that Sims would have to withdraw after the SRA's decision being dismissed by Sims' and the introduction by them of a new contentious development application appeared to harden the resolve of councillors against the proposal and energise them to further action and comment. It was at this time that the first public comment on the personalisation of the issue for Councillors emerged

The Express's front page reporting (26/12/90) of "outraged Aldermen", was the first of a number of captions which both local papers ran describing personal, emotionally expressed, involvement from the elected body of Council and led into the first public expression of the thoughts of individual Councillors, other than Stromborg, on the matter. Kevin Hill and David Blake, both Ward Alderman for the area, commented negatively ,not only on the applications, but on the 'tactic' of introducing a further, closely related, development application at this stage. Blake simply maintained that it would be impossible to consider separately, Hill saw the move as "questionable" and demanded that Sims "reveal all of its future plans for the use of the 1.2 ha. site". Bill Lovelee, a representative from the adjoining North Ward questioned the credibility of the EIS.

The sixteenth of April report to Council (Co-ordination Committee; Pp. 5854-5871) which came out of the considerations of the Working Party was largely repetition of the previously outlined summary report which recommended the request for a Commission of Enquiry. On this occasion however the Working Party; Councillors and Officers, focussed almost exclusively on arguments for rejection, firming up and expanding on those previously raised.. They detailed negative indicators for the proposal under six categories ranging from the broad socio-economic effects to a critique of the proponent's technical expertise. From this analysis and conventional

codes governing building construction they recommended for rejection on each of eight grounds. Given that there was no new information to hand for this report it may be seen that Council simply decided to 'bite the bullet' at this stage.

Technically and legally little had changed since the meeting at which the officers had recommended referring the matter to a Commission of enquiry. On the informal level though Council had greatly increased reasons to believe that their decision would not be challenged. The apparent confused position of the SRA had been clarified as their resolve had been made clear. The Unions had stated clearly and loudly that they would not see this or any similar proposal go ahead pending regulation. The Water Board had strongly and impatiently renewed their objections, had expressed their desire for a timely resolution, and had obliquely but firmly foreshadowed a veto if Council should approve the incinerator. While the risk that a legal challenge to a negative Council decision would be successful was still, in isolation, as much of a possibility as previously, the likelihood that such a challenge would actually take place was greatly diminished. The reality was now that the proponent would need to embark on a succession of litigations with Council, the SRA and the Water Board and then, if successful in each of these, contend with widespread industrial action to build and operate the facility. Such a situation created an environment in which Council no longer needed to be unduly concerned with the complexities of legal and technical arguments, already acknowledged by the Officers to be beyond their scope. They could simply, with reasonable justification, express their feelings in a vote.

It appears that while Councillors felt sufficiently confident to take this step there were some lingering anxieties, though these rapidly dissipated. It is known from oral and press reports that, in debate and afterwards in the Chamber, Councillors called on residents to support their decision if a challenge was forthcoming. The Express reflected this when the edition which covered the decision came out the following Tuesday (23/04/91). They saw the rejection as a "declaration of war' by Council on Simsmetal", as drawing "the lines for a battle in the land and environment court" and noted the call for residents to join in this battle. The next edition of the Torch came out the following day. The possibility of a court

challenge rated scant mention and was diminished further by the confident comments of the State Member and Councillors who specifically cited the SRA's attitude as proof against this possibility. Neither the press nor any public figure raised the question of a court challenge after this date.

The final 'loose end', the food waste proposal, was still on the books. All reports indicate that by this stage, while the matter was dealt with according to due process, any Sims incineration proposal was a highly personalised issue for most councillors. On similar bases to the medical waste proposition and with addition of unacceptable odour emissions, Council rejected the application on the 23rd of July 1991. The mood prompted the Torch (31/07/91) to report that "(Aldermen) rejoice in yet another victory over Simsmetal." Discussion with local political figures confirmed that that was, in fact, the way in which the Councillors viewed their vote.

Communication Channels

In Chullora the primary means of communication were the public media and prescribed local government and parliamentary procedures. Routine speaking engagements were used by the local member to promote the issue. There is no evidence of anything but briefly contained resident or organisational networking and resident generated communication materials appear to have been largely unilinear.

The Media

Local papers continuously and prominently covered the issue. Talk-back radio and the metropolitan press occasionally featured, either of their own accord or as a venue for the stakeholders.

Whereas in the Corowa case the media's role was largely one of reporting, events and public opinion, a review of the Chullora case gives strong indication that the media, particularly the Torch, had the role of forming public opinion and encouraging action. There were variations in both instances but as a generalisation it may be said the Bankstown paper led, rather than followed developments on the issue. In some instances this was clearly as a vehicle for the positions of others; The Member, Mayor and Councillors for example, in other cases there was a clear editorial position.

The Position of the Local Press

The appearance of an editorial on the issue in the Torch (5/8/90;p2) two days after the receipt of the Sims development application at Council was indicative of the approach they were to take throughout. It was the first local media coverage on the issue and was adamant that the development could not be allowed to proceed. Their emotive rhetoric that; “the people will have to fight for their right to live without fear of contamination.” drove home the point.

The paper is seen locally as a conservative one and generally pro development. Its rapid adoption of a fixed negative position on the issue is notable. The fact that the editorial was the only news that it carried on the proposal that day emphasises its proactivity on the issue, that is it was not just commenting on a story, it was generating a social and political issue. The position and the editorial’s appearance in a vacuum also imply that the paper may have been advised by informed sources of both of the proposal and unsuitability of the development. This perspective is reinforced by the speed with which it released news of a document just lodged with Council. The rapid adoption of the oppositional position in a conservative publication may, alternatively to the above speculation or additionally, indicate that the general mood concerning incineration was such that conventional thought anticipated unfavourable reception to the proposal.

The only other substantial local publication, the Express, conveyed much the same slant in its news coverage of the issue over the period. It did not adopt the same editorial stance though. On the one occasion that it made an editorial statement it was a conciliatory and slightly pro-incineration comment on the difference of opinion between the local member and the Minister and some environmental groups (13/11/90:p.2).

As has been seen above and from the preceding section both papers embraced the perspective that a grass-roots mobilisation was underway and echoed this in their concluding stories as the development proposals were rejected; “uproar in the Bankstown district”, “howls of protest from residents supported by most aldermen and Doug Shedden”, “...residents appear to have won their battle”, (Torch 17/4/91)

and the Express's "Chullora and Greenacre rang out with cheers and applause" (23/4/91).

Industry; Owners, Managers, Workers and the Unions

As with the Corowa case the union movement and local industry supported each other's position on the incinerator, separately and collaboratively. Each and both had a role in its rejection.

It is clear from Council file records and interview sources that industry in the vicinity was opposed to the HTI development. In the words of a Council Report (16/4/91; p.5862); "...there were significant objections from large industrial users." The number of objections lodged was not large (five submissions) but by virtue of the size of the operations and the inclusion of property investment companies leasing to other local commercial concerns their weight was, to use Council's wording again 'significant'. Not surprisingly, given their resources, these corporate submissions were far more substantial than those tendered by private members of the public and included analysis and comment from legal and environmental experts. Taken together with the SRA's dual interests in the area there would have been few local commercial interests not directly or indirectly represented in these objections. Collectively these constituted very substantial documentation which formed a significant proportion of Council's files on the matter. Their grounds for objection were based on both the acceptance of the environmental and health arguments that were put up against HTI (exacerbated by design flaws) and on the issue of perception (that these dangers were real). The arguments were similar to those raised in Corowa and were concerned with product contamination and loss of market share, labor force risks, declining property values (capital and rental) and on the companies' obligations as "good citizens" to express their concerns on behalf of the Community. With the exception of the SRA and its more public profile noted earlier and a legal threat noted below, local industries contained their opposition to the formal channels provided by Council's invitation to comment on the proposal during the public display period.

The majority of submissions came in at about the final week for objections. The most significant of these were the three industry heavyweights located in the area concerned directly or indirectly with food and beverage handling; Australian Paper Manufacturers, McWilliams Wines and Franklins Foods (via Clayton Utz, Attorneys.). These were responses to Council notices received, though as noted previously two of them are known to have also been responding to the prompt from Doug Shedden. They largely repeated general environmental concerns already expressed but also conveyed the particular effect that these would have on their operations, their labour force and their market share. APM, itself the cause of numerous prior environmental debates, broadened the agenda, stressing that “...the potential consequences for Sydney (would be) far too great.” The tone of social concern was echoed by McWilliams Wines addressing the social impact on the immediate area. McWilliams also later renewed their objection when no immediate decision was reached. On the third of April they wrote to Council again with the (senior executive) author talking of legal action if Council approved the application, “...so totally opposed (were they)”. The wording of the letter was ambiguous but from its phrasing the implication was drawn that the action would be against Council and appeared to be of the order of litigation considered by food companies in Corowa and Rutherglen for loss of market share.

A competitor of Simsmetal based outside the area, Clinical Waste Australia, tendered a submission attacking the proposal on both technical and social bases. It considered the Application to be substantially flawed, with the design more suited to the disposal of intractables than medical waste. Further, it claimed, their own existing facilities had excess capacity and they were themselves capable of disposing of Sydney’s medical wastes now and into the foreseeable future. In essence the submission said that Sims did not know what they were doing and that there was really no need to do it anyway. Allowing that the submitting party had a commercially competitive bias against the proponent, the information they provided as an expert commentator was valuable to Council officers in framing their comments as seen previously, and their submission also contributed to and was

quoted by the Department of Planning's adoption of the issue of social need for the incinerator as a factor for consideration.

Union involvement provided interactive reinforcement to the corporate objections and extended beyond them. The first Union comment predated the industry submissions and it is thought likely to have provoked the first of these (from the SRA). That first known union opposition to the proposal began with the Chullora Railways Unions' letter to Council and Doug Shedden (11/09/90). That body's next appearance on the scene comes as an addendum to their employers submission of total objection (25/9/90), within which submission the SRA's concern for the safety of the labor force ranks highly. Certainly there is a mutuality and collaboration evident in this, and given the unions' previously stated preparedness to take "whatever necessary industrial and political action" it is reasonable to assume that approaches from the unions to their employers in part contributed to the position which they adopted. The NSW Labor Council later, among other actions also approached the SRA for rejection of the incinerator on its land.

The involvement of the unions grew when, at the end of October, the NSW Labor Council wrote to Council, restating the concerns previously expressed by the Combined Unions Shop Committee and requesting a status report on the development. The date of their entry into the issue was after the deadline for objections and as such their letter did not add another formal objection to the proposal, as had the Chullora Unions' objections. Consequently the Council's concerns, which grew into complete and vociferous objection (pending the introduction of legislation) did not rate any formal mention in Bankstown Council's consideration of the matter.

Both of these union approaches though, regardless of their compliance with set procedures, held other levels of authority. The potential use of industrial force was one of these and had been made clear in the Railways Unions' approach though it was not mentioned at this stage by the Labor Council. To the extent that the two can be separated their approach at this stage might be seen as more with their political, rather than industrial, face to the fore, requesting (in addition to details of the

proposal) a statement of position from another political body (Bankstown Council), a substantial part of whose makeup was drawn from the Australian Labour Party, a political affiliate of the Labor Council .

The Labor Council request was signed by its Executive Officer, Beryl Ashe, who is a local resident, as was Peter Sams (the Council's Assistant Secretary). This factor was noted speculatively in relation to the Labor Council's involvement by three interview subjects involved in local Labor politics. None said that the Labor Council's involvement was influenced by this but all spontaneously raised the prospect that it may have been. As is evidenced by the 'Sun-Herald' article of the 25th of November (the rally at the site) the Labor Council maintained its involvement in the issue. At that stage it is reported that they had contacted Simsmetal, the Health Department and the SPCC to press their opposition.

They heightened their public profile in Bankstown as the issue was close to coming back to Council (after the formation of the Working Party). In the Torch of the third of April Beryl Ashe reported that arising from a meeting at the Labor Council some days earlier they were unanimously resolved that the development would be stopped. Quoted in the article, Ms. Ashe broadened the agenda to speak mainly about the need for a State Strategic Plan to regulate incinerator development before refocussing on the Chullora issue. Returning to that specific issue she called on the SRA and Bankstown Council to support the Labor Council's position by rejecting the Sims development. She added that Labor Council Officers were continually monitoring the situation and that they would, if required, mount a public campaign against it. This would include massed meetings of unionists and Community representatives at Chullora. (The Unions formalised that media statement with a letter to Council on the tenth of April conveying the same position).

Of interest is that again the Labor Council is speaking outside of any industrial brief, adopting a socially regulatory stance, while still clearly supported by its industrial muscle. There was no mention of the Chullora Railways or any other local unionists' concern for health and safety (though this may be implied). The health and safety arguments contained in the article are global, as exemplified by Ms. Ashe's

comment; “Frankly, a lot of people are worried about...the general health of the Community, if such incinerators are allowed to be built in the greater metropolitan area.” The Chullora proposal itself, while significant as a focus, appears almost to be incidental, a case study, to the broader need for regulation of HTI. There is no effort to prompt or to pressure Council to reject the Chullora proposal for its own sake. Rather there is a call for Bankstown Council to join the Labor Council in its position on HTI and, as a demonstration of this solidarity, to support the rejection of the Chullora proposal (pending the implementation of a stateside strategic plan). There is a sense of a larger, more powerful political entity coming in to reset the agenda and inviting the previous primary power to join the new game. As noted above the role of objections of the Labor Council did not rate a mention in the Reports to (Bankstown) Council in its reasons for rejection but interview sources indicate that it was very much a factor in that rejection.

The People and Their Organisations

While sources indicated widespread popular disapproval of the proposal there is only evidence of limited individual or collective action. This was predominantly directed through ‘correct’ institutional channels. In the latter stages a resident action group with limited membership was formed. Pre-existing Community groups took little part in the issue and most of this was demonstrably at the personal behest of the local member.

All sources indicate there was very little ‘physical’ action by residents, such as the convening of or attendance at meetings or rallies on the issue or personal lobbying. The limited personal approaches known to have been made to the State member and councillors appear to have come only from political party members or from representatives other affiliates. It was reported that some residents attended Council meetings to follow the proceedings but Councillors informed me that there was no ‘stacking of the gallery’, or similar display of strength.

There was only one small rally held during the consideration of the medical waste incineration issue and interview materials indicate that this was tantamount to an invitation only photo opportunity for a metropolitan paper. It is known that some

residents attended. The Sun-Herald article (25/11/90) which covered the story was headed up by the caption 'Chullora Fights Another Burner' and featured a photograph of some twenty five to thirty people outside the site. Associations with the Corowa case which was then heavily featured in the metropolitan press were evident, the caption, the (incorrect) opening paragraph which stated that "opposition is mounting to another State Government incinerator project" and direct reference was made to Corowa in the body of the story. The text was concerned mainly with the arguments that Doug Shedden had been putting previously and he was quoted in the article, stressing the alleged Sydney-wide effects. He was also reported saying that "I have a petition from 10,000 local residents". Beryl Ashe of the Labor Council was also quoted and that Council's position given. Neighbourhood Watch was cited as one local organisation against the development along with the Combined Pensioners Association. On that latter group, the CPA was mentioned by both Doug Shedden and the convenor of a later formed resident action group opposing the incinerator as being their strongest resident base.

The photograph accompanying this article was the first, and an isolated, indication of (physical) resident mobilisation on the issue and contact was made with one of the residents quoted in the story to explore events leading to it. The woman has been known to me for some years as a person actively involved in local and broader social issues and it was thought likely that if any undercurrent of resident action was present that had escaped media attention she would be a likely source of disclosure. In attempting to make contact with her I was obliged to go through another local resident known to me, a social work academic and practitioner also involved in local issues and took the opportunity to explore the issue with him also. Neither were able to say that there had been any mobilisation or that the issue had assumed any great significance in their thoughts or in conversation with other locals at the time. Both recalled the media coverage and their consequent awareness of the proposal, both felt concerns about it but neither actively pursued any course of opposition to it. The woman who had appeared in the Sun-Herald article had done so as the result of a direct request to be there for the media from someone within the circles she moves in, it may have been the local member but she was not sure. She was sure that she

had not taken any other action, had not written to council or the papers, and was not aware of any other residents that had done so.

Letter writing and petitioning was not constant throughout the issue, nor did it appear to follow on naturally from actual developments on the proposal, which are the patterns that might be expected from the 'concerned', 'outraged', and 'fighting' Community depicted in the papers. Interestingly there was virtually no use made of the Letters to the Editor sections of the local papers. Despite the high level of attention which those papers gave to the issue only two letters were noted in reviewing the editions for that period. For the most part there appeared to be a timing and targeting which could be better explained by means other than assuming that these protests were the spontaneous expression of the natural will of the people.

The pattern generally reflected two factors. The first was the public airing of the issue and urgings to oppose it from the local member and the mayor, the second was compliance with the legally prescribed period for objection. At times these two factors merged into one. This appears to have been the case with the first batch of resident objections to Council. Objections began arriving in early September, following closely on from the expressions of "horror" and urgings to fight from the press and politicians, and after the formal advertising of the matter by council. These mounted in that month and peaked in the period immediately before the closing date for objections. During the month both the politician's statements and the Public Notice appeared again in the press (19/9/90). Some of these correspondents cited the press articles featuring the Member and Mayor or referred to the Public Notice. A number of others included details specifically contained in the articles. This correspondence to Council stopped abruptly the day after the closing date for objections.

In all nineteen items were received from the public at this time. The names and addresses on correspondence in council files shows a mix of individual and collective responses from the public and a strong (multiple) neighbourhood clustering. Taking all forms of correspondence, individual and co-signed letters, and petitions, into account there was a total of one hundred and eighty-three instances where residents

registered an objection, though there was a significant repetition of signatures across various items.

Collective efforts outnumbered the individual in the number of items received as well as the number of signatures indicating a predisposition for people to get together and act in concert on the issue. Only seven letters were received from unsupported individuals, that is the items showed no association, either by address or content, with each other or the collaborative responses. The most predominant trend was for family members to co-author (or co-sign) one item or for (substantially) the one item to be replicated by a husband or wife. In some instances this family action spilled out into the immediate neighbourhood. In two cases this consisted of neighbouring families sending the same letter separately with the respective family's signing them. In four other cases it appears that one family's response had grown. In these cases a letter preceded one family's signatures which were then followed by the signatures of the members of families living adjacent. These took on the form of a petition, usually with a page containing only signatures attached. There were two other items which were clearly petitions from the outset. One, as with these last items, was largely confined to an immediate neighbourhood and contained thirty two signatures. The other originated from an address less than a kilometer from the first and was submitted under the name of a Neighbourhood Watch Area Group. Indicative of the organisational scope the signatories covered a wider area than the first. Interestingly one of the 'letters cum petition' originated from a point roughly midway between these two. This meant that three separate collective efforts were mounted with no more than four to five hundred metres distancing any two of them but with no indication of any collaboration on them.

There were indications from the pattern of protest at this time, both in the collaborative nature of the protests and the geographic clustering of them that something along the lines of what happened at Corowa may have reached an embryonic stage but that these did not go any further, either geographically or over time. While a limited and sporadic flow of objections continued there was nothing further forthcoming from these neighbourhoods and no indication that later resident objections were in any way directly linked with the actions of these people. Rather

than being self-generative or linked to other resident action these further protests appeared to be related to actions by Council and the Member of Parliament.

After this period there were then no further submissions from the public to Council for twelve weeks except one small petition which the local member passed on to Council after first receiving it himself. The petition was compiled within a week of Shedden appealing to the public to sign petitions to the State government, and to write or approach Aldermen on the matter. The timing and the recipient indicate that this was a response to the Member rather than directly to the issue and that the petition organisers had simply, partially, misunderstood his request.

A second wave of public objections began again three months after the first closing date. These followed several weeks of renewed and varied attention in the media; from local politicians calling for people to gear up for a fight, the well publicised public entry of the unions into the matter, the seeming ambiguity of the SRA's position, the lodgement of the proposal for a third incinerator, councillor's reported anger over this and council's failure to end the matter. At this time the media, members of parliament, most councillors and the unions were both claiming a mandate from 'The Community' and calling on it to act.

The next batch of objections from residents consisted of (six) copies of a new form letter. The letters were distinctive in their misspelling of the Mayor's name and apparent poor instruction to those who sent them, half bore no address and one was unsigned. These came from Roberts Road, Greenacre, from a street in Bankstown bordering on Greenacre and from Chester Hill A letter signed by only one person but claimed to be "on behalf of 35 townhouse residents (in Chiswick Road, Greenacre)" was also received.

The possible emergence of organised resident protest appeared when a new body calling itself the South West Resident Action Group (SWRAG) also first wrote to Council at this time giving their objections, "on behalf of the residents of Greenacre".

From mid-February to the first week in March the majority of the form letters originating from Riga Avenue arrived at council. Twenty four of them were

received in all along with one other original letter from Riga Avenue. Eighteen of the form letters showed Riga Avenue addresses, three of them were from adjoining streets in Greenacre, two from other suburbs within the local government area and one from a location near Campbelltown. The content of the letters replicated the general concerns expressed previously.

The resident action group foreshadowed in the letter writing activity from Riga Avenue also had their first public mention at this time. A release to the Torch (13/03/91) announces the formation of SWRAG. The article refers to and briefly quotes from a pamphlet produced and distributed by the group. The pamphlet, apparently well researched and well presented combines local details of contradictions for the incinerators' establishment with broader examples of environmental disasters and resident opposition. These included the Corowa mobilisation which had now been successfully concluded. Residents were urged in both the pamphlet and the Torch to voice their disapproval to aldermen, the Local Member, the Ministers for Planning and for the Environment or to seek further information from the group. Another item concerning the group and these same concerns appeared in the following edition also. A woman who was SWRAG's spokesperson on this occasion, gave slightly less weighting to this local aspect and the article went on to talk about the need for regulation state-wide and urged attendance at their upcoming May 19th. meeting. On the first of May both the above woman and another who was also a member of the group had items in the 'Letters' section of the Torch pursuing the same line, reserved congratulations on the local issue and concerns for the broader picture and the need for action. The next week's Torch (08/05/91) carried an article from the group promoting the meeting. That item made no reference to local issues, except as conveyed in the location for the meeting, the Sims site, and a passing comment that, in effect, one decision by one council was not enough. The rally was successful (Express; 21/05/91, Torch; 22/05/91). Oddly, given its timing relative to the major local issues, this resident controlled move succeeded in drawing a larger public display of opposition to incineration than had any of the exhortations by state or local politicians or unions

during the critical period of debate. The Torch estimated an attendance of two hundred.

The South West Resident Action Group remains something of an enigma. It was the only indication of higher level commitment and organisation coming from residents of the Chullora-Greenacre area but at the same time; was formed very late in the piece, failed to attract any significant local following, shifted very rapidly from local concerns to a broader environmental agenda and held its main protest meeting after the resolution of the local issue. Its convenor could not offer any concrete explanation of these points. We jointly speculated on them during the interview.

We agreed that the late start may have been because the protracted issue was beginning to break through people's passivity and spark a need to do something. If this was the case this point of breakthrough for the sixteen people which formed the group did not appear to be shared by others. That failure of others to swell the ranks of SWRAG does not appear to be due to any strategic fault from the group. The group was well organised and apart from the press releases and promotional materials noted above I was shown a number of form letters and petitions organised by the group and sent out to prospective objectors, such as workplace groups, but which did not appear (endorsed) on any of the records to which I had access. Additionally they sought to lift the profile of the issue and the group by accessing talkback radio, setting up an information office(though principally a telephonic one) and lobbying relevant politicians.. It appeared to the convenor that there was a general reluctance of others to get involved, a reluctance which was based on the reliance of concerned residents on conventional structures to deal with the matter.

It was possible also, as had happened with the CDCC in Corowa, that the exercise of advancing a local cause inevitably led to awareness of and engagement with the same issue in the broader arena. In Corowa though this broadening out was based on demonstrable successes, the CDCC's ensuing reputation and it's ability to lend assistance from its experience and research base without detriment to its primary focus. These did not apply in the Chullora case where the group simply appeared to slew away from its original purpose. The groups convenor was surprised when in

one of my question I made reference to the public meeting being held after Council's rejection of the main HTI proposal. At the time of the interview at least she was not aware that this had been the case and could not recall whether she knew of it at the time of the meeting. The success of the meeting, she believed was based on the widespread environmental concerns of people and attracted many from outside the area including members of established environmental groups

SWRAG still exists with a core of five members, though many of the original members are still on tap. They have intermittently addressed other local issues, such as hospital closures in the Western suburbs.

The persistence of this group is the only known remnant of resident involvement in the Chullora HTI issue. Since that period three other related matters have arisen in the Bankstown lga. In the past two years a medical waste depot at Milperra, some nine kilometres from the heart of the incinerator proposal, and a waste transfer station again at Chullora were proposed. Both had been heavily covered by local media and were rejected at council. This year (1994) the Collex company (Sim's successor) has (apparently, at the time of writing) won Council approval for a waste processing plant on the site for which the HTI was proposed. None of these has drawn much comment from residents. The waste transfer station is known to attracted a petition of 260 opposing it (Torch, 20/7/94, p.4.) but there has been no known public opposition to the Collex proposal. There has been no known linkage with the previous "Victory for the Community" which might be thought likely if the sense of accomplishment in this previous battle was actually vested with the people of the area.

CHAPTER SIX:

The Cases Compared

A Summary Recap.

In both cases there was a proposal to establish High Temperature Incineration plants to dispose of large amounts of toxic wastes. In Corowa it was the State - in the guise of the Commonwealth, Victorian and NSW Governments - wishing to dispose of stockpiles of intractable wastes. In Chullora a large (private enterprise) waste processing concern intended to set up a facility to dispose of medical and quarantine wastes.

Fears of spillage in transit, incomplete destruction of toxins and the formation of new toxic compounds in the incineration process and their release to atmosphere, despoliation of the environment through fly ash, and storage and disposal problems with residues were the main elements of debate in both cases. Also in both instances the particular themes with which these were linked were the immediate and long term effects on the health of locals and contamination of major water supplies and food producing and processing facilities nearby.

In public reports of the period both cases were claimed as a victory for 'The Community'. That is, in both cases local opposition ensued and the proposals were defeated.

With little variation though the similarities substantially end at that point. I will argue that in fact one case (Corowa) represents an illustration of the workings of Community and that the other (Chullora) shows the effective workings of rationally ordered Society (albeit with some manipulation of prescribed process by local gatekeepers). Apart from this contrast the comparison also provides further illustration of the hypothesis and sets some of its limits.

Comparable Aspects of the Cases in Contrast

The following sections bring into closer perspective the ways in which certain specific aspects of the two cases developed differently according to variations in the arena in which they were played out, and consequently of affect on the people involved in the cases. The argument is that the two cases were not simply different, they were categorically different.

Despite the significant similarities of the main issue in each case and of many of the secondary ones, of contamination of water, food and so on there were critical differences in avenues of recourse and from there to the effect on individuals and ultimately the resultant social environment. Corowa, seemingly unable to rely on the social structures it had previously trusted implicitly turned inwards; to the subjective self and to the unconstituted mass of the people to form its own new social type capable in their perceptions of meeting the needs of the time, a Community. In Chullora where the conventional structures raised the alarm and led the opposition people reacted differently. While personal concern appeared to be fairly widespread and the incinerators were seen as undesirables which needed to be prevented, they turned to those conventional (representative and arbitative) structures which they believed would achieve the desired outcomes on their behalf. Not only was there not the spontaneous move towards mutual support and action as there was in Corowa, there was an apparent resistance to this move even when local gatekeepers, fearing that rational-bureaucratic means would fail, called on the power of Community to prevent the developments.

The quantitative and qualitative differences that emerged throughout the cases bring the distinctions into focus.

Popular Participation In Protest

Note: The tables presented in this chapter are intended as a device to condense, convey and compare large amounts of qualitative data. While in some instances they are concerned with quantifiable trends they are not presented as having statistical validity.

Fig. 1

Participation Indicators	COROWA Iga pop 7,200 Issue duration 10 weeks	CHULLORA Iga pop 158,000 Issue Duration 43 weeks
Petitions	19,037 *	10,400 **
Meetings, Rallies, etc.	12,650	230
Letters to Editor Columns	194	4
Letters to Council, MPs	500 #	57 ##

Note
 * = Verifiable figure, interview sources cited figures of up to 70,000.
 ** = Composite figure of Council records and MP estimate of signatures.
 # = Press reports at about mid-point of issue no formal records kept.
 ## = From Council records only, no press estimates, no MP records kept.

The above provides an immediate impression of the significant variation in the degree of responses of the people of the two areas. This is particularly the case given the disparity between population sizes and the duration of the individual issues, with Chullora being by far the greater on both of these scales.

There is also some significance in the variation between the types of actions taken in the two cases. For example the Chullora case shows that some general mood of opposition to the incinerator existed in the willingness of a relatively large number of people to sign petitions. This is a ‘low commitment’ type of protest though and it does not appear to carry through to the other forms of action noted which required a higher level of activity. This reflects remarks made in interviews that people knew about the proposal, were opposed to it but generally did not act on it.

To a significant degree also the means of protest in Chullora were provided from ‘outside’ the people. That is the bulk of petitioners signed an instrument provided by the local Member of Parliament, the majority of letters were in response to the formal provision of channels of objection by Council. Only one of the significant means of objection came from ‘within the people’, that is the public meeting which was held after the rejection and attracted some two hundred people. Conversely all

of the measures of objection noted above in the Corowa case came from the body of the people, either through resident organising or spontaneous actions by individuals.

Generally though these indicators of participation above convey only a difference in degree and not of type of response. With further exploration other variations emerge indicating that a difference of type of response also applied.

The Status of Participant Groups

Fig. 2

	COROWA	CHULLORA
The State	Active protagonist (for HTI)	Passive supporter (of HTI)
State Bodies	Active protagonist / antagonist	Passive supporter Passive critic
Local Members	Shifting; active supporter to active opponent	Active opponent
Council	Shifting; active supporter to active opponent	Active opponent
Industry	Universally active opponent (Capital and Labor)	Protagonist (Proponent) Active opponent (All others, Capital and Labor)
The People	Near universal active, antagonistic opponent	Majority passive opponent Minority active opponent

The above table shows further dissimilarities between the cases. While in both cases similar sectoral interests were involved, encouraging the use of the three broad categories of State, Industry and the People, the roles they played varied across, and at times within the cases. Some of these variations constitute significant indicators towards the popular responses that developed.

Of first significance is the role of The State (per se), State Bodies, and in the early stages the State Members and Council in Corowa. This was heavily reported to have led to a sense of betrayal within the overwhelming majority of the population which quickly came to oppose the HTI. This ‘betrayal’ led to a mistrust of the representative structures which this strongly conservative area had previously relied

on, largely unquestioningly. Effectively this stripped away institutional buffers, leaving people exposed and individually vulnerable to the almost universally viewed threat to health and the environment. This individual vulnerability was rapidly converted to collective resistance. Local Members and Council shifted their positions as this happened and in response to the Peoples tactics (see Fig. 5).

In both cases Industry, which included both management and labor (including Unions), opposed the development (with the obvious exception of the proponent in the Chullora case). This lent support to the opposition side in both instances but, as will be seen further below, meant different things in each case.

In Chullora a quite different dynamic developed in relation in to institutional systems and within The People as sector. While the State (per se) remained in favour of HTI and the Environment Minister made some pointed public comments about the nature of local protest it (The State) was largely passive, not engaging directly with the people. Similarly the State Bodies involved; Health and Environmental Agencies were in favour of the development but remained behind the scenes rather than adopting the confrontational roles seen in Corowa. One State Body, the SRA was publicly outspoken in its opposition, others took this role behind the scenes. The State Member and Council both shared (perhaps to a degree engendered) the People's position and championed it. The net perceptual effect of this was that, while some image of tension within the system emerged, the representative structures were doing their job. Consequently the direct subjectively felt threat to the individual frequently reported in Corowa did not emerge in Chullora, the experience remained more remote.

Active Networking: Spread, Density and Type

This difference in the way in which residents perceived themselves to be able to depend on the conventional supports provided by society and (directly related) the question of how and by whom this threat would be opposed resulted in a number of marked differences in response.

The first, and later the most highly evident, action that the Corowa people took was to seek the support and advice of others. After turning to traditional institutional

structures and finding no solace they sought this support from others, particularly in the first instance from friends and relatives, locally and further afield. What started as limited, individual and one-way attempts to find help grew into an extensive, complex, multi-strata network meshing across geographic and sectorial areas involving mainly individuals but organisations as well. This system and the moods and messages that it conveyed blanketed Corowa and surrounding districts, and in conjunction with usage of the public media, sent out feelers which were readily responded to from throughout NSW and Victoria, the rest of the country and overseas to Europe and the U.K., North and South America.

While I do not intend going into detail here on the humanist elements of the Corowa case it is worth noting that the density and emotional quality of this network was such that a number of respondents, quite familiar with the concept of networks noted that it was more than this (a network). To them it formed them into a synchronous body, nurturing, bonding and informing them, as one put it - "...through the ether".

(Fig. 3.i Corowa: see insert over.)

The Chullora story was quite different. For some residents the issue impacted heavily enough for them to get together with immediate family and close neighbours to write letters or start petitions. This was quite limited though with fewer than a dozen instances of neighbourhood networking evident through archive materials and interviews, most within two kilometres of the proposed site of the incinerator. As significant as the comparatively limited number of these sparks of collectivity was the limit to their geographic scope.

This was typified by a series of three items noted in Council files; containing over one hundred and fifty signatures in all, these items were generated and sent within the space of two weeks of each other and from points with less than five hundred metres between them. There was no evidence of cross-awareness between the organisers and nothing further eventuated from this area for the (prolonged)

Figure 3.i

Networking: Spread, Density, and Type
(A Figurative Representation)

COROWA

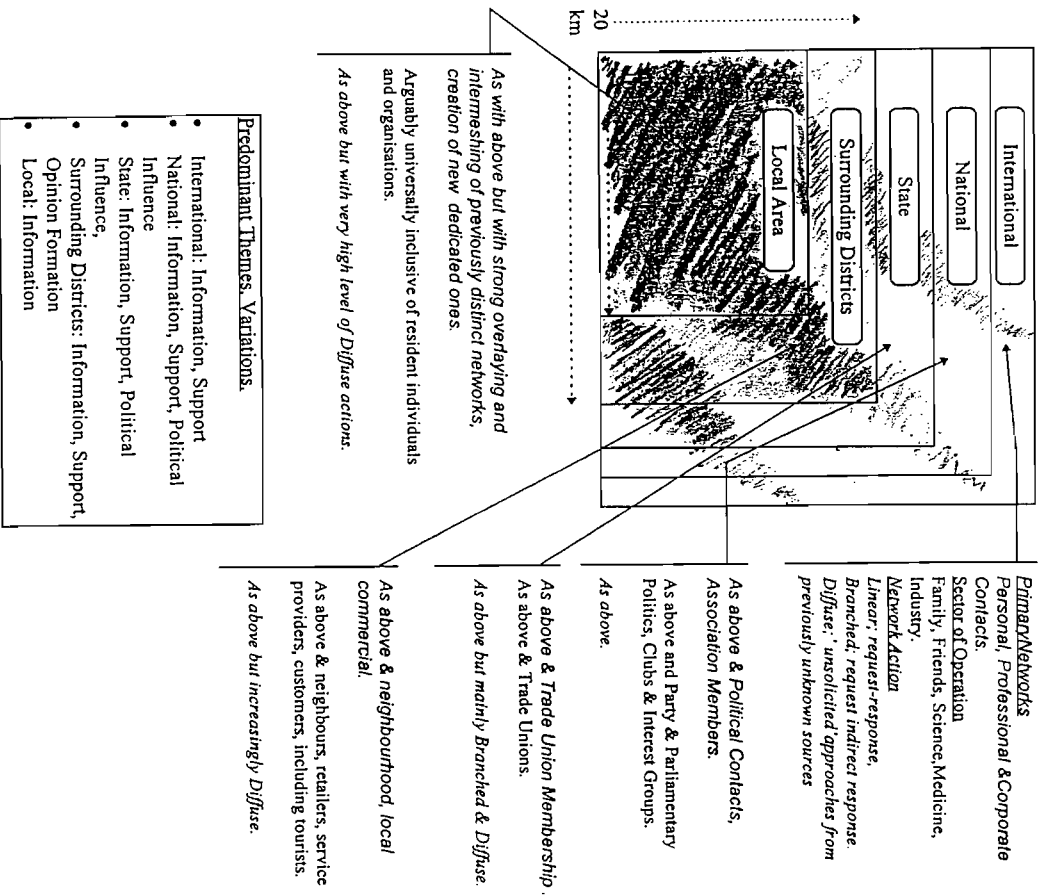
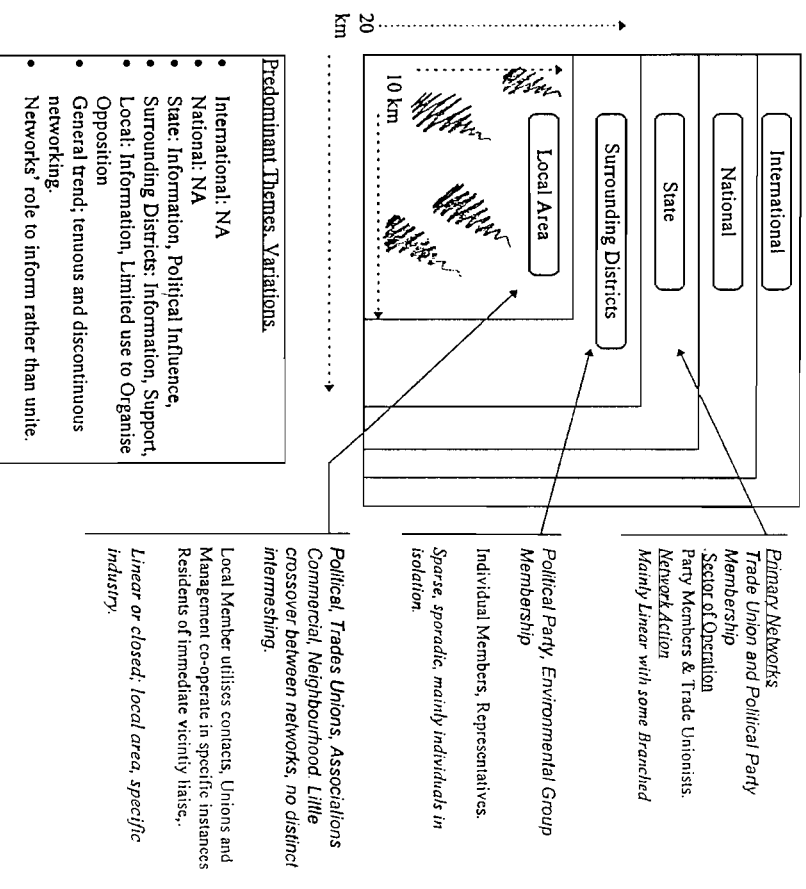


Figure 3.ii

Networking: Spread, Density, and Type
(A Figurative Representation)

CHULLORA



remainder of the duration. If Corowa consisted of 'wildfire Community' this part of Greenacre appeared to put up 'spotfires' that rapidly extinguished.

The South West Resident Action Group which formed around the issue late in the day purposively addressed known networks but with no demonstrable success during the issue. Its own membership did not exceed sixteen persons. A public meeting organised by them and held after the conclusion of the matter did attract an audience of some two hundred drawn from a combination of immediately local residents and organisations from the local and metropolitan area. This was indicative of the group's organising ability, as was the publicity materials which they produced and distributed in the area, but this again reinforces the image of a populace reluctant to act, even when prompted from within.

The most effective networking on the Chullora issue, though again limited in numeric scope was that carried out by the Local Member. His placement as a prominent public figure and party politician ensured his prior inclusion or easy access to the personal as well as the organisational sides of party branches, unions, council, businesses and social organisations where he introduced the anti-incinerator message. In less spectacular form than in Corowa the loop was completed in most of these instances, with support in the form of information and formal lodgements of objection being returned back to him.

(Fig. 3.ii Chullora see insert previous page.)

Types of Sectoral Relationships Formed

These precedent factors, the Status of the various players and particularly the issue of what type of response was necessary (according to the majority view) influenced the arrangement and nature of relationships in quite diverse ways between the two cases.

Fig. 4: Sectoral Relationships Formed.

	COROWA						CHULLORA					
	The People	The State	State Bodies	Local Members	Council	Industry	The People	The State	State Bodies	Local Members	Council	Industry
The People	S	A	A	A~C	A~C	S/C	M/C	N	N/M	M/C	M/C	M/A
The State			C	M~A	M~A	A			M/D	A	D	N
State Bodies				C/D	C/D	A				D/M	D/C	N/M
Local Members					M~C	C					S	C/A
Council						A/C						M/A
Industry												

KEY:

- "S" = Solidarity; strong co-operation with interpersonal bonding.
- "A" = Antagonistic.
- "C" = Co-operative; shared position entailing exchanges.
- "M" = Mutuality; shared position, no active co-operation.
- "N" = Neutrality.
- "D" = Divergent positions; no active antagonism.

N.B.

"X~Y" = Variation in relationship over time.
 "
 "X/Y" = Significantly varied within one sector at one time, first position signifies dominant trend.

The most prominent feature as is displayed above was the strength and lack of ambiguity in the relations that The People in the Corowa case established. Some relations changed over time as Local Members and Council were won over to the cause but there was very little ambivalence at any given time. Such as there was seemed to be largely contained to this political sector; views were expressed by a number of interview subjects that Local Members and Councillors did not fully lose the 'taint' of their early pro-incineration stance and doubts remained over their full commitment. Consequently I have categorised them here as being Co-operative rather than Solidary with the People

This clarity of relations is explained in the degree and in the depth of emotion and resolve vested in both individuals and the collective. Only a tiny minority were not

actively opposed to the development and in view of the factors at work on personal and interpersonal levels an extreme degree of internal solidarity quickly emerged. This unity of purpose in turn conveyed itself as clear cut, strong and personalised relations with the other parties which, for the most part, were either loved or hated. There was very intense interaction and common purpose with Industry as a sector, though a small 'elite' group of business leaders preferred to operate as a detached entity, cooperating with but operating independently of the main Community.

In Chullora, while it appears that a significant proportion of the population (some informants said most, some said all), were against the proposal, and in this were conceptually aligned with a number of other players, interactive relationships were very limited. Primarily these consisted of very localised neighbourhood groups or of formalised interaction with Council or the Member. There is evidence of only very limited interaction with Industry, State Bodies and with The State other than as it was represented by the Local Member. Each of these latter interactions occurred through the South West Resident Action Group. The body of the people then, remained concerned and observant but did not mobilise, act in unity or otherwise change its patterns of association.

The strongest affective relationships in Chullora centred on the Local Member. He activated his already close ties with Council to influence it against the proposal, attempted to get the proponent to withdraw its plans, contacted local Industry to encourage its opposition, liaised with the Unions and engaged with The State in an attempt to force its intervention.

Predominant Tactics and Behaviours

The divergence between the cases becomes more apparent as the players actions are viewed up close. Two quite different social types emerge.

Fig. 5. Tactics & Behaviours

(See Over)

	COROWA	CHULLORA
The State	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insistence on the common good and the right of the State to determine this. • Derogation of protest as narrow self interest by fringe groups. • Insistence on due process. • Circumvention of due process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insistence on common good. • No direct intervention. • Dismissal of legitimacy of local opposition. • Insistence on due process (Council matter)
State Bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stealth • Speed • Propaganda • Belligerent bureaucracy. • Pre-empting due process; steamrolling. 	Diverse: i. Non-interventionist. ii. Call for policy change. iii. Threats of veto.
Local Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation • Diplomacy • Consensus seeking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education of self and others. • Initiator • Leadership • Networking • Publicising • Confronting Government • Promote Political, Bureaucratic and Industry opposition. • Appeals to 'community' for support.
Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paternalism: damage control • Diplomacy Consensus seeking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sought legal grounds to reject • Publicising • Appeals to 'community' for support.
Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing and encouraging protest. • Demonstrating solidarity with The People. • Lobbying with and independent of The People. • Threat of legal action. • Direct action by some unionists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objections through formal channels. • Threat of legal action. • Threat of industrial action by unions.
The People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Education of self and others • Lobbying • Mobilisation • Propaganda • Massed demonstration and confrontation • Multi-strata broad scale networking • Formation of symbiotic / syncretic alliances. • Mutual aid and assistance; nurturing. • Creation and management of open communication systems. • Closure and exclusion. • Group integrity through moral compliance: Mutual monitoring and regulation. • Sanctions against out-group. • Civil disobedience; harassment, vandalism. • Voluntary and implicitly coercive subjugation of individualism (me-ism), rise of individuality (holism). 	Main Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerned observation Secondary Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objection through formal channels Minority Group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Education of self and others. • Neighbourhood networking. • Attempt to mobilise others. • Lobbying. • Public meeting.

Corowa was emotion laden, hinged on personalisation of the issue en masse (on both sides), and the rules were largely made up as the game progressed. It was a direct expression of 'natural will' by the mobilised Community, a participatory (often combative) response that sought to and succeeded in operating outside 'the system'.

In Chullora while the Local Member and Councillors were personally and emotively engaged, their attempts to extend this to the populace generally failed. Council Officers, Elected Council and the State Member believed that the proposal was an unacceptable one but existing regulations were not thought to allow for summary rejection. The appeals to 'the Community' were an attempt to modify the agenda, to particularise the issue and bring pressure to bear at higher levels of government both legislative and executive, as well as gaining support and validation for their own actions. Their fears that they would not be able to reject the proposal and the need for support were strongly conveyed to the people through the media. These local agents of the system attempted throughout and eventually succeeded in making the rules fit the game but did not change them, it was played out within that system.

The role of The People of the area as noted previously was largely confined to individual or small collective actions performed in isolation from each other. For the most part these came as direct responses to those calls from The Member and Council and went through formal representative-legal channels, in an expression of 'rational will' rather than as direct protest or participation.

Corowa and Chullora Against Some Models From The Community Literature

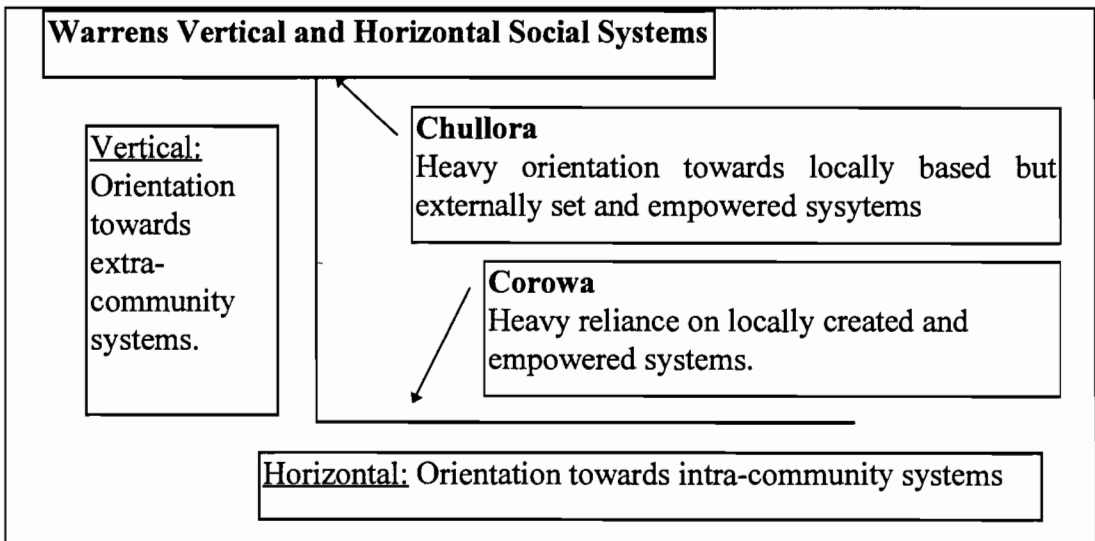
A sequence of divergent patterns emerges from the research that appear to support the thesis and illustrate contrasting forms of social typology (Community/Society) rather than just a variation in degrees of social action. Some further reinforcement of this may be found in comparison with the following themes against the behaviours and expectations of The People of both areas.

Warren's Vertical and Horizontal Social Systems

Warren's measures depict the coexistence and intersection of the modern, articulated and broadly prevailing societal systems with those peculiarly local institutions conventionally associated with community; with each other, and in their influence on the affairs of people within a given area.

In Corowa the people did not only relate to institutions on the horizontal plane, they created them for their current purposes as a counter to those institutions on the vertical axis. In Chullora the pattern was one of individuals or small collectives relating to and relying on institutional forms on the vertical axis.

Fig. 6



Parsons' Continua

Parsons depiction of thematic distinctions between Community and Society are not dissimilar to the 'Linked Antitheses' of nineteenth century theorists contained in

Chapter Two with the difference that they are seen as the two ends of a continuum . The degree to which the two cases polarised towards either end of this scale was high.

Fig. 7.: Parson’s Continua

Community	Most Features In	Society	Most Features In
Particularism	Corowa	Universalism	Chullora
Quality	Corowa	Performance	Chullora
Diffuseness	Corowa	Specificity	Chullora
Affectivity	Corowa	Neutrality	Chullora

Hillery’s Definitions Of Community

A Classification of Selected Definitions of Community

as revised by Bell and Newby 1971, P.28

Hillery’s codex is one of the outcomes of his 1955 review of the then published definitions of Community, his intent being to find some mean agreement on the concept through the aggregation of features associated with those definitions. When viewed against this abstraction the contrast between the Corowa and Chullora cases is again clear. Bearing in mind that many of the themes recorded by Hillery are taken from and imply a static view of Community while here they are applied to a situationally specific dynamic, Corowa still consistently provides a closer match with these ‘criteria’ for Community than does Chullora.

Retaining the integrity of Hillery’s categorisation means that some themes occur more than once (in different sub-categories), my rankings remain constant across these. This is a consequence of my approach in this thesis extending beyond the scope of conventional categorisations of Community which would require an ‘either, or’ choice between sub-categories. My one major deviation from his original classifications is noted immediately below.

NB. The table relates to 89 of Hillery’s 94 definitions as a result of the exclusion of the concept of ‘Rural Community’ as a separate type from ‘Generic Community’. That separate type is regarded by both Hillery and Bell and Newby as an illogical categorisation other than as a reflection on trends in the Community Studies field. This thesis does not

adhere to the position of 'Rural Communities' as a distinct type and at this stage is not re-addressing the peculiarities of the field's history

Fig. 8. Hillery's Definitions

	Distinguishing Ideas or Elements Mentioned in the Definitions	Features in 'n' Definitions	Corowa	Chullora
A.	Social Interaction			
1.	Geographic Area			
a.	Self Sufficiency	8	High	Low
b.	Common life, Kinship	9 2	High Medium	No Medium
c.	Consciousness of Kind	7	High	Low
d.	Possession of common ends, norms, means	20	High	Low
e.	Collection of Institutions	2	High	Low
f.	Locality Groups	5	High	Low
g.	Individuality	2	High	Low
2.	Presence of some common characteristic other than area			
a.	Self sufficiency	1	High	No
b.	Common life	3	High	No
c.	Consciousness of kind	5	High	Low
d.	Possession of common ends, norms, means	5	High	Low
3.	Social System	1	High	No
4.	Individuality	3	High	Low
5.	Totality of Attitudes	1	High	Medium
6.	Process	2	High	High
B.	Ecological Relationship	3	Low	High

Some Concluding Notes on ‘Community’ From Corowa and Chullora

If the contrasts above and the preceding analyses can be taken as indicators of the Community - Society dichotomy (or continua), then in Corowa the Community took over from perceptually failed institutional social systems and directed the representatives of that system. In Chullora the representatives of that Societal order sought to introduce Community into their equation and direct it to work towards their ends. ‘Their ends’ being those pursued by the representatives on the (correct) assumption that they were those sought by the majority populace. Paradoxically though, in my analysis and based on the comments of respondents, that pursuit prevented the potential for massed support which they sought from materialising.

While ‘Community’ in Corowa was clear and concrete it was abstract in Chullora. The main function of Community there, as opposed to the individual rationally articulated responses (above) was in its symbolic-rhetorical and aspirational uses by local politicians (and the media). Strong references were made by them to a unified and self-conscious mass, both assuming its existence and referring to its potential. This symbolic and evocative use was applied to encourage a response from the people, as legitimisation of the Member’s and Councillors’ positions and as a banner that the Member could wave in Parliament, the more effectively because of the overlapping Corowa mobilisation and which had been a running sore within the government parties. The use of the symbol to mobilise the population failed, but combined with expert knowledge of the rational-legal system and other strong alliances played an effective part in the rejection.

Experience tells me that this latter (symbolic-rhetorical) “form of Community”, and I use the phrase most advisedly, is the one most commonly brought into play in the Community Sector rather than the substantive one. The symbolic is treated as the substantive and this, in instances where its intent conforms with what would otherwise be the genesis of the substantive, prevents its realisation. As most respondents in the Chullora case said, ‘it’ would (or may) have happened if ‘they’ had not been on the ball. To take this a little further - the call for Community

support (from a competent body operating in its own domain) prevented a self supporting Community .

This appears to pose a significant number of questions for Community participation in the management of established and effective organisations, some of which are addressed in the following chapter.

Chapter Seven:

The Conclusion

What Has the Work Shown?

Perhaps the first thing that I want to say here is that Community exists and that it arises as predicted in the hypothesis. Corowa demonstrated that to me, and I hope to the reader, unmistakably. That it may not exist in any permanent tangible sense was also made clear.

It took an outside force and the emotions and actions of a range of individuals effected by that force to bring it to the fore, to define it, to set it aside from the other social structures which preceded or ran concurrent with it, and within the boundaries of that definition, provide a new lived experience of the personal and the social for those people. It then subsided.

That subsidence though, while meaning an immediate loss of actuality did not mean the end of Community in any final sense.

It was clear at the time of the research that the experience of the past was still alive in the present for those who had been a part of it. Its constituent parts were clear to them; the emotional and practical elements and how they had come together to give a social experience which most had not previously known. The origins of this special state, in the roles and movements and associations of their prior day to day lives, and the metamorphosis that they had undergone to contribute to the formation of the community were equally clear. They knew also that together with and beyond those translated patterns was that amorphous yet tangible, somewhat indefinable 'something new' that was variously referred to as the spirit, the soul, the consciousness, the camaraderie and so on which defined, enveloped and empowered both the body as a whole and the individuals who comprised it. The sense of Community.

While all of this was based in the memory of respondents, and nostalgia played its part, this past experience vested in those who had been part of it was more than just recollection. It remained a current reality.

People, often quite articulate ones, had difficulty expressing this. One such said (in effect) in the same breath that Community had gone overnight and that it was still there. This was not intended as either as a retraction or a qualification. It simply reflected the enigma that he saw about him. In discussion he agreed that words such as latency, dormancy, potential, each conveyed something of what he meant but that the duality that he saw was more immanent, more concurrent than this. He was talking about two dimensions of existence, one the active and overt living out of daily life, a separateness, and on the other, and here his wording became clumsy as he grappled with what he observed, “an understanding,...a unity that has lost its objective and therefore isn’t united, unity but...diffuseness.” What was, prior to the mobilisation an unknown, unconsidered, potential was now evident; latent but clear. The overt value and appearance of things was no longer the sum total of its import. The links between people, though not active and consequently, arguably, non-existent, were still meaningful.

Each of these elements refer back to themes canvassed in the early chapters of this work, placing them in the context of particular episodes of community; placing identifiable people and recent events in the spaces occupied by theoretical statement (Ch 1.) and abstracted historical review (chaps. 1, 2) in those opening chapters. The abstracted issues of individual subjectivity, oppositional force and collective response, the growth of infused ties, the bonds of ownership and belonging based on mechanical solidarity, the emotional and moral values the forces that drove them, their products, the institutions and structures developed for the purposes of the community and outside the purview of the societal system that it grew out of, and its passage back into time. Even the mythology had started to assert itself as the research was conducted; the superficial collective memory that there was only good in the purpose and conduct of the community; that the people of Corowa, transcending a century, had a special role in the fight for democracy, from its part in the federation movement in the late 1800s to its rejection of centralist imposition of HTI towards the end of the twentieth century. Each of these sits comfortably within

the conventions associated with Community, its popular connotations as well as its formal study.

That case study dramatically brings out the salient points of the hypothesis, clearly demonstrating its role in understanding Community and a particular community. Taken with the contrasting Chullora case the finer points of the thesis, the factors which limit its operation, are seen and consequently illustrate a discriminatory value in the application of the thesis, the separation of the Communal and the Societal and their substitutive values in differing contexts.

Areas For Further Enquiry

In the Field and In the Library

Corowa though is still only one case study. The comparison between it and Chullora and consequently the community - society dichotomy strengthens and gives some greater claims for generalisation of the principle elements of this thesis. The comparison, more clearly than the just first case alone, portrays the creation of a particular social form from the experience of individuals in tension with a broader threat, when both isolated individualism and rational - institutional systems provide no recourse. These studies, and this work, though can only be one part in promoting this perspective and in establishing what I see as the clarifying benefits it holds for the fields of Community Work and Community Management.

Fieldworkers' acceptance of the importance of these principles; of affective press, of temporality, of oppositional orientation, if even at a tacit-experimental level, is perhaps the most critical result that could come out of this work. That is, their consideration of the possibility that Community may not be what we have been conditioned to expect, and to run with that, even if only for a short distance to see what happens. To some extent this has already happened during the course of this work. The exposure and subsequent reception of the theory to date, while limited

has been generally positive, with indications on a number of occasions that it was being, or would be, trialed by workers in a number of different fields. The feedback to date, while similarly limited has also been encouraging. As one commented, “(in the midst of meaningless or contradictory categorisations and debate on community) It gives me something useful to put in the box.”

Broader acceptance of this theory will rely on both the adoption of the principles in professional practice and in further research. It will require both of these avenues for a fuller picture of the factors leading to instances of Community to be developed, for the usefulness of viewing Community as an epiphenomenon, as a tool in the field to be evaluated, and for its theoretical implications and limitations to be more fully understood. I hope, for example, that it might be applied across multiple case studies with a view to more closely evaluating the critical variables which influence the formation of Community, both those which facilitate it and those which impede. I mean here, for example, the relationship of particular population groups with particular stimuli, the significance (if any) of class or status and gender in the formation, the relative value of differing types of networks utilised, the influence of time, space and discontinuity (over both time and space), and so on. Formalised, such a study might lead to the development of detailed and generally applicable codices of the elemental factors entailed in the dynamic, and their consequences. As is noted below the research need not necessarily be entirely original work but a revisiting and revision, from a new slant, of some that has gone before. There is a vast library of past studies and fieldwork narratives which could be productively engaged with in this, and ample theoretical works to encourage it.

Support for Further Investigation of the Theory.

I noted in the opening chapter of this thesis that, to use Panzetta’s term community as epiphenomenon, has been largely ignored, dismissed or simply not considered in both the literature and in the fields of practice which are associated with it. There has not been a complete lack of attention to it (either in part or whole) in the literature, these have simply not been taken up on a broad level. In part this may

explained by the tendency to make mention of it in passing; on the author's way to somewhere that he or she thought more important at the time. Georg Simmel, for example, observed that Community was 'a relatively small circle firmly closed against neighbouring, strange or in some way antagonistic circles.' (in Wolff. 1950:409 - 24.); a brief side comment in a broader attempt to unravel the psycho-social fit of the individual and the city. Max Weber himself proposed a closely related dynamic as way of understanding Community. Oddly, while Bell and Newby cite him on a number of occasion in Community Studies nowhere is it done in relation to his own theory of Community. Again, metaphorically, Weber was on his way somewhere else, in this instance to include it as one element in his broader work on status groups and dominance. The unavailability in English of the principle works in which he covered the topic Wirtschaft und Gessellschaft (1956) and 'Ueber einige Kategorien der verstehenden Soziologie' (in Winckelman, 1951) (each in Neuwirth, op cit) may also have contributed to its loss (though he mentions it in passing in others.) Gertrude Neuworth (in British Journal of Sociology, 1969.) utilises Weber's work, to examine American black communities in her article 'A Weberian outline of a theory of community: its application to the 'Dark Ghetto'' With access to Weber's translator she gives a fuller account of this perspective than available elsewhere, though still within a relatively brief article. Her opening summary depicts Weber's "little known" theory of community as follows; 'The competition for economic, political, or social interests is viewed as the source of community formation and communal relationships.' Though without the direct Weberian allusions Howard Kaplan provides another similar depiction of black communities in the same edition of the BJS. Cohen (1985: chap. 4.) presumes and defends much of what I have written about here. Once more though this was not his principle aim, that being the importance of cultural symbolism in the construction of community, and is consequently easily overlooked. Hayden Roberts is more direct in his 'systemic linkages' (1979). Schmalenbach, the author who was, to cite Gray (1991), responsible for Ron Wild's shift from the predominant static perspective on Community evident in his earlier works to the dynamic approach which is evident in his work Heathcote, is another contributor to this line of thought. It is unfortunate

that Wild in his work on Heathcote, very close in numerous regards to the Corowa case study, chose to focus on changing power relations only, in the face of the attempts to establish a toxic waste dump, rather than the broader question of its role in forming the community within which he sets these changing relations. He appears still to presume Community to some degree without extracting it from the institutional-societal systems with which it is linked.

Each of these and other sources provide ample impetus to give further consideration to Community as a temporary response mechanism and many of the classic community studies provide scope for re-examination outside the presumptions of permanence and stability which first informed them.

A Contemporary Case in Point.

Midway between those areas of practice and more formal research, recent published work by Roberts and Peitch, offers scope for the reader to explore the principles that I have argued for in work in which I have had no hand. A further virtue of the case is that its demographics and settlement patterns are almost the antithesis of Corowa. Among these are its urban location, the predominance of public tenants in high-rise and its high non-English speaking background population. These serve to break any lingering belief that Community is somehow more likely in a rural environment. Their works (1993, 1994.) on the Richmond area of Melbourne offer, over more prolonged period than the case that I have concentrated on here, the opportunity to consider various points arising from the thesis. Their two studies provide the opportunity to consider the significance of definitional boundaries based on the class and status differences as an affective press and the internal effect of this on the people which it geographically and socially isolates and defines. Viewed from that starting point the relationships within this stigmatised group, the “close”, “durable”, “rich” and “stable” networks which the authors identify, take on a different meaning. So too does the population’s ownership of the Community Organisation that is the focus of the work, and its relationship with the policy makers which exercise power over them.

The work is perhaps of particular interest as the authors and I are in disagreement as to the significance of various aspects of their work. They categorically deny the temporary nature of community which I espouse and while focussing on the conflict elements of the relationship with the outside world, notably the policy makers, give this no particular significance in the development of the bonds which make the people of this area into a Community. Make it a Community, and cause it to rally to the organisation which is the focal point of these papers. Their work, important as a longitudinal study of both a community and the interaction of it and an organisation based on the principles of Community management inescapably presumes the permanence of Community. They and their work are embedded in an extant community and have been for some years. This coupled with the conventional perspectives on community would give no reason to consider it as otherwise. This consequently circumvents any need to explain its origins with reference to the world outside, the factors that maintain it, or what would happen if some or all of the elements acting on it and which consequently spark actions within it, are removed. Without these the work presumes a lot. That the area is naturally a community, permanent and stable, that a Community, given the opportunity will own, support, act within and give necessary changes in direction to a Community Based organisation. In their works and in debate with them it is the strategies of inclusion and systems for participation that they hold are important (with which I agree), that it is these which make community management in organisations viable, and that these strategies and systems, faithfully transposed to another locale will replicate the experience of the Richmond Community Care, with which I do not agree, unless the other elements which they have ignored in their work are also present.

That is, if you're assuming permanency and looking at something that is currently there you won't question that assumption. If what you are doing with that community works, and particularly if you are broadcasting that together with your assumptions, the same expectation for the same strategies is created elsewhere. That 'elsewhere' though, may not have the same predispositional interplay of factors as

the first case. Consequently, the same strategies will not work. The Richmond situation, and the success of its community oriented initiatives and particular strategies, is predictable under my theory without the nostalgic assumptions about Community being something which simply is and will continue to be present. The theory also avoids a danger inherent in the conventional assumption: That the engine which drives the community will be obscured and the fact that the engine will one day stop running is ignored. Acknowledgement of Community as temporary accepts that it will one day come to an end. Consequently the pointless but painful self blaming exercises that inevitably follow when a Community Development exercise 'fails' are avoided.

This returns us to the questions, the dilemmas, the frustrations that were canvassed in the opening of the thesis...

Community Development and Community Management; Can they Work In Light of the Thesis?

Possibly the most notable feature about Community Development in practice, and its seemingly natural corollary, Community Based Management⁹ of the organisations that give focus and formal articulation to the wishes of the subject community, is that sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. As I observed in the opening chapter, it's a pretty hit and miss affair, though most practitioners would be loath to say that too loudly in case someone of note heard them. Veils have been drawn over the field to mask the weak points and this has obscured both the successes and failures.

The most commonly encountered illustrations of this would be, on an ongoing basis; the ubiquitous 'Community Based' organisation whose management body is comprised of practitioners together with selected non-professionals, residents of the

⁹ I am in agreement with much of the work that has been done recently to separate out the various elements of these two fields of practice,(eg; Hunter, 1993.) though in some of this I think it would be preferable to delete the word 'Community' from the inclusive-representational management strategies proposed. Historically though, and I think, in some form or other, in perpetuity, the two are and will continue to be linked, if not from the Organisation out, then certainly from the Community Development side.

area or members of the target group, actively recruited to provide a semblance of a representative base and, episodically, the quasi coercive turnout of people of this same mixed grouping together with the clients of a service in orchestrated 'community outrage' at proposed funding cutbacks. Each of these arise from and are generally concerned with the needs of the organisation within its context of survival and the maintenance of the facility of its staff to implement its agenda.

A fairly predictable mediocrity has become the norm when what might be expected, both from the historical origins in social movements and resident action groups and in the themes pursued in this thesis, to be a volatile and often extreme expression of solidarity and purpose. At the least it might be anticipated that a strength, of belonging and ownership might be evident from the people who comprise the community upon which an organisation is founded or in which the Community Development has been practiced. This indisputably happens, sometimes. The norm though, would appear to be an organisation that sits in strained bewilderment between the funding body which supports it - amongst myriad other regulatory forms and institutions - the philosophy which informs it, and the pragmatics which surround it.

Without a firm theoretical basis to explain the variations in outcomes the tendency has been to project success, or at least aptness of the community based approach as the prevailing norm; failures have invariably been blamed on inadequate resourcing. Admissions of selective applicability of the model - acknowledging that Community Development and meaningfully Community Based undertakings have their limitations - in the absence of any reliable instrument to discriminate between likely areas of success and failure, is tantamount to an admission of general weakness in the model. As a model whose origins lie in politics and ideology and whose defence lies in successful practice there could be no partial admission of ineffectiveness.

What follows draws on the principles illustrated in this thesis to provide direction for approaching fieldwork from this perspective. In doing so, in 'unpacking the

answers', the above dilemma is also addressed: It is quite possible and acceptable, once the elements entailed are understood, for instances of community based endeavours to 'fail' without the model itself being harmed in any way. To the contrary, it can be strengthened by the further understanding that these experiences give.

A Concluding Statement of Principles for Practitioners

The thesis and its progress through the field, coupled with the professional experiences which led to the work, would indicate certain directions and expectations for those engaged in or who feel their professional practice should embrace the conventions of Community Work practice and ideology, both in direct community development and in the construction and management of Community Based Organisations. If generally valid some long cherished beliefs and practices would have to go, though some remain equally valid under this model: What follows are pointers in the direction that this would take.

Approaching the field

- **Don't assume that you have a Community:**

You may and you may not. If you do you need to be able to identify it and say why it is something different to the broader context that it is located within.

- **Don't assume that you must have one:**

The word and its symbolism are almost a sacred, and unfortunately now often a legal, requirement to operate in the welfare and social service provision fields outside of government or the large historical institutions. Effective servicing and management though are not inextricably dependent on an organisation being embedded in a community. To use the oft-quoted phrase - You don't have to be on the Board of Telecom to be able to use a phone.

- **Don't call it a Community if it's not:**

The appeal of and belief in Community, as much as any conditions of funding or manipulative political intent have encouraged the ubiquity of the term. Its indiscriminate use by 'true believers' to describe a range of situations and functions which can be better described with other terminology weakens the legitimacy of the Community base.

- **Don't fake it:**

One step further down the track from believing that everything is a community is the recognition that it isn't, while thinking that there should be one and that the next best thing is to create the appearance and swear blind that it is real. The

approach may have its own mixed successes (such as in the Chullora case) but generally results only in a shell to contain and conceal conventional professionally determined practice. A further step in the erosion of the legitimacy of the base

- **Don't think to create it from scratch:**

Basket weaving classes may result in some friendships but they won't manufacture community.

Drawing unrelated, or tenuously related individuals together for a social, recreational or educational purpose may create closed small-group networks but that doesn't make it a Community. Circularising neighbourhoods about your Centre or program or holding an open day may let them know about services you provide but it won't magically fuse them into a Community any more than the opening sale of a new Kmart.

Some of the people drawn together in these ways may become volunteers, or service users or management committee members, but does this make them anything but individuals acting out of isolated self-will?

The expectation that people whose experience of life and exchange is within an atomistic social system will, on the simple bases of proximity, interaction and education contrived by a third party, necessarily fuse into an energised self-conscious unity accepting responsibility for social reorganisation is a naive one.

Each of these steps can be important in laying the groundwork, in contributing to an environment which will facilitate the formation of a community, when and if that formation is required. They may ultimately make the difference between a Community forming or not, but they may equally well never amount to anything more than their overt appearance. No degree of sophisticated professional practice will change that in the absence of a substantive cause.

With the knowledge, however, that substantive causes do arise, these standard 'Community Development' practices can, with some refocussing of intent, be very productive under this model. That is, the simple acknowledgement is made that you are not creating, or developing, a community but you are preparing for it. The development being done in this instance, is of the ground on which a community may be formed - preparing an enriched environment for things yet unfertilised to grow in.

- **Don't expect it to last:**

Conventional Community Work practices are geared towards working within and/or building communities that will last and the establishment of structures to optimise, utilise, and represent the workings and aspirations of the community in an ongoing manner. More than expectations, they are presumptions, particularly in the case of funded organisations and the conditions which govern them.

When they don't achieve this the inevitable questions are; what went wrong, where did I / we fail, and how can we rectify it, get back to where we were or to where we intended to be. Much of this I believe is linked to biases discussed early in this work - the subjective appeal of the image of the simple, nurturing, permanent, historical archetype and attempts to recreate this - what I can only see as an illusion.

A community that you work with may continue for some considerable time, depending on its causes and the necessity of and effectiveness in continuing to address those causes. It may consequently meet or appear to meet the expectations we have conventionally held.

Equally it may begin to dissipate the moment you appear on the scene. Having attracted the attention of someone who appears to hold the answers to the problem that caused it, the members of the community may begin to withdraw. It is more likely that events will fall somewhere in between those extremes.

Moving Towards a Community

- **Look for the clash:**

In some instances the type of juxtapositions necessary for the formation of Community will be quite evident as they first come together, Corowa would have

been hard to miss. Simply waiting for these though is both a singularly opportunistic exercise and one which will miss most of the “evanescent clouds” that Panzetta refers to. A more pro-active and vigilant approach may still miss many occasions of the formation and decline of communities but many of these may neither need nor want the participation of a professional. An approach suggests itself from the hypothesis itself and the research.

This entails two distinct exercises. The first is preparatory, anticipatory and a largely passive exercise of social planning skills. Coming to know an area or population grouping, its key demographic characteristics and changes within these, and monitoring the broad scene around this to identify issues that already exist or are developing which are likely to impact on this group or sectors within it. This could consist of a relatively routine exercise based on ABS data and other secondary research materials, media scans, clippings services, professional networks and so on.

The second is a dynamic role that needs to move with or ahead of the formation of the community. Through the monitoring above, situations may be observed which speculatively suggest the likelihood of personalised impact and popular response. You will anticipate on the basis of your prior knowledge that a community may be formed in response to the issues identified and roughly who is likely to constitute that community. Then the fieldwork begins.

You will need to test your assumptions. Sample your suspected population. Doorknock, talk to shopkeepers in grass-roots consultation without a firm pre-set agenda or fixed parameters, they haven't told you yet what these are.

At this stage you're just looking, talking, thinking. Is a response building as you anticipated, if not, why not? Could it be a lack of information, is it too early (or too late), do people feel too isolated or powerless, is there no-one to compare feelings with and build a better idea of what's happening? Or have you simply misjudged?

Don't attempt to generate feeling and rally opposition around it, or contrive a campaign if the response simply is not there. Support, inform, resource but don't try to manufacture. Be prepared to accept that your personal or professionally

informed bias may not match with those of the population group you expected to be affected. Pursue it through other means if you need to.

If on the other hand it starts to be evident that people are reacting and wanting to do something start defining the parameters and refining the questions, what are the issues and who is affected how, and possible answers, what is likely to follow?.

- **Look for the boundaries:**

If your sampling strikes a response try to find where it stops, and consequently what makes the positively sampled group a potential community. The cut-off point may be purely geographic, it may be ethnically or gender based, it may be an age group or a sectarian thing, political or ideological, it may be that only parents with young children are affected. Find the defining feature(s) and you will better understand the defence that is or could be building, its aims, internal values and features and where to limit your activities.

This need not be a precise and formal measure (though it could be). If people are becoming personally and emotionally engaged with a problem that they could be preparing to act on, they will be voluble about why. Under these circumstances an informed, if partly intuitive, profile could be readily distilled from brief informal contacts (remembering that time may well be critical).

- **Look for the pathways:**

How can these people come together, will they regardless of you and could you get in the way at this point, through redirection away from 'natural' channels or by impeding the development of a sense of ownership, autonomy. What are the existing networks or looser associations that might be activated to bring people together? Are there formal channels which might unite their protest, if not themselves. Are people aware of these options for unity and exchange? Do you, and how do you, work to see these used?

How could these pathways influence the body being formed and what if anything

should you do to advise its members of this. Participation in a formal consultative process, the use of the facilities, expertise and contacts of social welfare agencies, a fundamentalist religious group, a pub or club or local government body used to facilitate the formation would each, if they predominated, have a significant effect on the constitution of the community in its final membership, methods and aims.

Will the means for coming together be the vehicle for action and what are the implications of this?

- **Look for the mesh:**

Look for the utilisation of those pathways; the use of extant networks and the activation of potential ones to join the individuals, pool their concerns and confirm their unity. Particularly look for the cross-linking of otherwise disparate associational patterns and institutions and the usurpation or sharing of their usual agenda by or with the theme that is bringing these people together.

- **Look for the purpose:**

At its most basic and generic there is only one purpose, this is to change the situation which has led to the response. This will be either to remove the stimulus or to defend against it, which in effect is to change the subjective affect of living with it.

If Communities are about change, finding out what specific type of change and how this is to be effected is the next step towards understanding the particular community and your role in it.

- **Find the consciousness:**

Look for the common strand of consciousness that links the issue and the purpose that guides the community. An awareness of its presence is both a further, perhaps the, indicator of Community and is necessary to move in concert with the community. Then look the various levels of consciousness that bind, sustain and motivate the members in and while achieving their purpose: Why and how people have surrendered their safe and segmented anonymity and are able to continue to do so. This is helpful in a professional sense, giving a firmer grasp of the nitty gritty and identifying who might be able to do what given the opportunity. Just

as importantly for someone who is attracted to work with communities is that this is the heart of the matter. The self disclosure, mutual affirmation, practical support and consequent personal growth that gives rise to the Utopian aura that has surrounded Community lies at this level.

Moving in a Community

- **What do they want?** What are the goals that the community wishes to achieve, and equally important, the means that the people of the Community want to use? What do they want from you in moving towards these?

- **Do you agree with it?**

Their goals, in essence need to become or be incorporated into your goals. To attempt to re-educate or redirect to too great a degree could lose your synchronicity with the community and consequently your role in it. Or, if you are successful in promoting your agenda, it could lose the community.

Hitler's rise in pre-war Germany was borne on waves of communality. Earlier this year (1994) I viewed materials from and heard reports of a strong build-up of Community by middle class residents in Surry Hills, Sydney. Their cause and purpose was to stop the expansion of and expel already existing facilities for homeless people, and to 'evict' the street people; the alcoholics, the psychiatrically ill and so on from the area. Could you align with and support communities with such a focus?

Can you accept and assist them with the means that they look likely to use? This could cover a wide range of possibilities, but the likely polar extremes are; anarchic, law breaking activities and, passive withdrawal, an attempt to weather the storm in mutual support. How do you and your management body feel about what's happening? How would your funding body react, if they knew?

- **Can you provide it?**

What do you have to offer, what and how much of this is it appropriate to give? What do they already know they can do? What else can they do? How much of your role is education and affirmation and how much direct action? What are the biases that you're likely to introduce and how valid are these in the context?

- **Do they want you?**

Perhaps the most critical question to ask. You may have a bag full of whizzbang professional tricks and be in complete concert with their mission but what if the people of the community don't really want you. What if they only want part of what you think you have to offer? How far can you go to convince them of your value before you start damaging the thing you want to assist?

Moving Out, Moving On?

- **Is it still there?**

At some point the contest, conflict, isolation, deprivation or whatever the issues were that formed the affective press will end or the engagement with it will be seen to be fruitless. There will be changes within the group and perhaps outside it, certainly the mesh between the two will have changed. The community will begin to decline; in its cohesion, ethos, purpose, membership. The nature of any organisation which may have been founded during the community's life will also necessarily change. The spontaneous symbiotic relationship with the population base which gave rise to it will go, the supporting, informing and directing functions which came with it will be likewise lost.

To what extent and over what period this will happen will vary and likely be different according to the interests of different stakeholders. Vanguard groups, prime organisers, those most affected by the issues that caused the community and the support that it afforded, may continue in a form of solidarity that reflects and to degree, in microcosm, perpetuates the values and ambitions of the community long after that broader body has itself subsided. A common and problematic example of this is the remnant group of an organisation's founders directing a management committee along the 'one true path' of the organisations mission ten or fifteen years after the conditions which set that mission have changed.

At some point though, both from the Community Development and Organisational perspective it will be evident that the original phase, that of active Community is over.

To refer back to the trends to separate out the fields of Community Development and Community Management, yes there does need to be a separation but perhaps that needs to be between Community Management, during the vital stage of a community's life cycle, and the management of Community Initiated Organisations during the latter stages of a community's solidarity and as it declines further. The designation of an organisation as Community Initiated rather than Community Managed or Community Based would innately convey the heritage and base legitimacy of the organisation while allowing it to move through its inevitable stages of change, free of the obligation to attempt periodic artificial reconstruction of its origins, but retaining the predisposition, encouraged by its history, designation and consequently culture, to return to these roots under the right circumstances.

- **What were the results?**

Was the community partially or fully successful in achieving its aims? Could some distinct sector(s) of the community be unsatisfied with the outcome, could they, perhaps with assistance, regroup without the main body.

If it is finished, for the sake of future activity with the same body or elsewhere, and for self congratulation, evaluate what the outcomes were. What was actually achieved, not only relation to the initial goal but along the way. What were the interim achievements, whether intentional and in line with the overall goals or incidental. How far reaching were the effects of the formation of the community and its actions. What does it say for the future?

- **Who owns what?**

Did the community or its remnants, or ex-members walk away with all the goodies, the enhanced skills, the bolstered self esteem, faith in each other and the renewed confidence to co-operatively address the issues affecting their lives. Did they also take the organisational means to do this? If so, great! At that point your job with that community ends.

If they didn't take away the personal and social elements it's too late to do anything about it with that community. Maybe you could have done better and need to work on it for the next time. Maybe the circumstances simply didn't allow for this outcome. Either way that community has gone and your job with it ends there.

If on the other hand the community has, or is in the process of dissipating while leaving the means to address their needs with you, (most commonly direct service provision) the options are less clear, the long term implications more significant

- **What are my primary obligations?**

If you are left with a Community Initiated Organisation on your hands, whether from your direct Community Development participation or inherited from someone else's in the past what do you do with it?

You could simply let it flounder; adopt the position that it's not yours to worry about, that it belongs to the people that founded it and walk away. Such an approach could possibly work, a rescue mission may be mounted, perhaps some re-formation of the community could take place with previous or new members. It could survive in a manner related to the second option below, through the actions of surviving community members and any staff which may have been engaged.

Or it may simply collapse, bringing hardship to those whom it services and to any staff employed by it.

The second option is the standard prevailing one. You can actively seek to have the body continue independently, reflecting in some degree its origins in the community. This will entail recruiting selected people to create some form of representative management structure; from service users, from other interested

members of the population group which it services and from its staff. This also means staying with the group to ensure that necessary skills and training are available to them, to advise on responsibilities, procedures and so on, to aim for ongoing viability.

In the process you inevitably accept a degree of responsibility for the body, inject your own ideas of what is necessary and good for a service, and assume a role that is at least partly directive rather than simply facilitory. Effectively, a process of professionalisation, of fitting into the institutional world has started. The participatory agenda can be kept alive, together with the process of empowerment of individuals, so too can the potential to re-engage with Community if the occasion arises. The precedent, however, for closer dependence on skills and energy outside a 'pure' Community model has been set. Beyond this stage there are two basic directions that the organisation can go in. There is a possibility that this group recruited to provide a 'correct' management base will then generate a life force of its own, reconstituting its membership and renewing its objectives. There is also a chance that it will simply become an appendage to the needs of the organisation, its staff, or an abstract community participation agenda set and maintained by others.

The third option is simply that of attaching the organisation to a larger organisation or local government body. This may or may not entail all of the elements of the second option above. The service type and its circumstances may not allow for, or even warrant the construction and maintenance of the type of management committee outlined above. Its single purpose may be to provide the service it was created for. Periodic consultation along the lines of market research rather than community development may be all that is required to keep it in touch with its consumers. The lower maintenance needs of this approach free you, and the erstwhile committee who may not want to be there, to do other things. There are any number of variants on how large organisations view and relate to the services within them and this would need to be carefully considered

at the time. Two general comments can be made though: The move will, to a greater or lesser degree entail a loss of autonomy, and it will most likely provide a much higher degree of security for the future of the service.

Where To Now?

So ends the phase, from the first individuals showing concern to the establishment of a long term servicing commitment. The question now is what to do next?

Much of the above is framed in the context of a relatively fixed approach to Community Work. While it is something that I feel we need to move away from, it is also that which informs my thinking and it is the current reality. It reflects the status quo of both field practice and the static perspective on Community which has informed it. The majority of mainstream Australian non-government, not for profit organisations that are conventionally tagged Community Based or Managed are tied by constitution, funding agreements, service provision arrangements and physical reach to a particular limited geographic location, ascriptively pre-defined target group, or specific servicing arena (these fields being presumed to be or to contain a community.) They have a specific consumer group and expectations are that they will monitor and meet the needs of that pre-defined group. Movement across fields of activity over time, or expansion which leads into multiple and differing fields simultaneously, bring changes to focus or appearance, but do not change the basic premise. That is, of an organisation anchored in place to relatively static sets of obligations and bound by infrastructures geared to these. Such an organisation does not lend itself well to chasing ever changing groups of individuals forming, resolving, exchanging and reforming into communities as they and the environment around them changes on a broader canvas. They are in effect static structures, well suited to a static model of community and even better suited to service delivery, something which appears to be borne out by experience.

This context very significantly effects the answers to any questions about what you do at the end of the active phase of a community; but should not be allowed to completely dictate those answers. There are perhaps three main options: Forget the 'Community' agenda and get on with being a good service providing organisation; aware of its origins and sensitive to its consumers. Secondly, pack up and move on: Find another community about to happen. Finally, pull out elements of the first two; get on with being a good service provider and move on (over time) and find another community.

The first of these options is, simply: If you don't have a community under you, don't pretend that isn't the case. To put it bluntly; If your resources and objectives are there to provide tangible services, your success and legitimacy should be derived from this, not on a defence of your existence built on sham community.

This option fits very well with the dominant structures and the practical, day to day, realities of most organisations. To implement it overtly though, requires a pragmatic declaration that will conflict with conventional professional beliefs and often, requirements of funding. Given that many services - probably most - currently operate this way under the surface, it would seem worthwhile to endure that conflict for the sake of the integrity and efficiency of the organisation.

The second option, of packing up and moving on, requires a more complete break from the current immobile model :- from anchored institutions to a travelling roadshow. Allowing for the significant difficulties in doing that, it has to be considered that other structures might be better suited to assist in the birthing of Communities and; That such a break is necessary if the role of the professional in facilitating Community is to be seriously, and single-mindedly pursued.

Illustrations of the success of this model are available and the Corowa case is the obvious one to consider first. In Corowa it was simply a happy coincidence that the cause of the community was an environmental one, and that Greenpeace, with an

environmental brief, was based on a highly mobile structure. Greenpeace was consequently physically there in the field to provide the embryonic mobilisation with validation, encouragement and an initial resource base in its critical period.

Overseas Aid Associations with a Community Development orientation are similarly structured to go on the road to work with population groups in conflict with their immediate environment. Historically, Saul Alinski's successes can be attributed as much to his organisation's structure as to his much vaunted field tactics: A central, in his case national, structure; recruiting, training, deploying and supporting itinerant community organisers throughout the country (Fink, 1984.)

The third option entails staying put, staying open, being prepared as an organisation and making preparations for developments outside. The stable, long term structure that typifies the established 'Community Based' organisation is not mobile in space, as is the 'travelling roadshow' option, it can't chase communities; but it is mobile in time, and can meet them as they are ready to emerge in that dimension.

This model requires - at a base level - the organisation to meet servicing obligations which may no longer be tied to an extant Community, and maintain a watching brief for emergent communities within the sphere for which the organisation is constituted. This is not a necessarily complementary or even comfortable duality, with the structural stability required for efficient service provision likely to act against the flexibility and mobility required of a body committed to the nurturing of a volatile and transient social phenomenon. But! An effective servicing base, and the structures that support it, will probably outlast many communities and have developed a profile within the population that it serves; It will be there when these communities emerge, and it is likely to be known by at least some of those communities' members. The organisation is then positioned to reach out to, or to receive approaches from the emergent community and to facilitate its formation and actions. If it has gone beyond the base level requirements noted, to actively seek to the prepare the enriched environment that I referred to earlier the facility of both the organisation and the people to mesh and to act in together will be further enhanced.

Consequently, the balancing act of managing integral stability, with clearly targeted servicing aims, and a preparedness to facilitate volatility, over which it can have little control, changes from a structural contradiction to a strategy for renewal; for itself, sectors of its immediate public and, dependent on the issues and outcomes, for the broader public.

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THE END

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Appendices

Appendix One

The Interview Schedule

As noted in the Methodology, (Chapter Three) the focussed interview was the tool for the primary research. The points following below then are focal points and prompts rather than rigid questions, their exact phrasing and on some occasions whether they were directly applied at all was determined by the progress of the interview ie., the irrelevance of some questions was established by early comments or responses.

In instances of spontaneous interviews, where there was no schedule in front of me , the same general direction was followed, though obviously not verbatim.

The main points were developed prior to any of the research being conducted, with the intent of an identical 'checklist' for both cases. Developments in the initial (archives) stage of the Corowa investigation persuaded me to include specific points for that case. These are italicised below.

In the Chullora interviews the absence of any general mobilisation or large-scale networking was usually evident in responses to point 5. and following questions were framed to seek explanation (where this was not fully covered in point 5.)

1. How did you first hear of the HTI proposal ?
2. Can you recall your first reactions to proposal ?
3. What was your motivation in becoming more involved ?
4. What were the steps that you took to become more involved ?
5. What happened then ? Can you tell me what your personal recollections are of your experiences around the issue, stressing whatever is most important to you ?
.....
(This was the main opening for general oral history, subjects were encouraged to go where they wanted to. Where this moved too far from the theme the research was pursuing the following [5a] probes were used.)

- 5a I Did you see it as “all business” or was there a social side to it ?
- ii Did the way that people related to each other change at all ? If so, in what way ?
- iii *What of the sanctions against the WMA and those who worked with them, provided them with goods or services ?*
- iv *Can you offer any comment on the extreme aspects of the sanctions, threats of violence, harassment etc. ?*
- v Were there many that you know of who were in favour of the HTI or who otherwise disassociated themselves from the campaign ?
- vi Why do you think they adopted these positions ? (Who could tell me more on this ?)
6. Had you had any previous experience of social action movements, seeking change through community organisation etc ?
7. Why do you think that the HTI issue brought this response when others, such as; the closure of the railway line, expansion of the explosives plant, the paper whitening and sewage discharge to the Murray? (Corowa) High-rise Development, Renewed General Industrial (Chullora) didn't.....
8. What was the relationship between groups that might normally be seen as strange bedfellow eg.; Greenpeace and the Farmers Federation, Unions and Industry Groups?(Corowa), Unions and Industry (Chullora)
9. *In your experience what was Greenpeace's role in the campaign ?*
10. What types of tasks or functions did the various local organisations, clubs, societies or groups carry out ?
11. What, if any, were the after-effects of the mobilisation /campaign;
to the town/area
- to the Council
- to relations between adversarial parties
- to people's relationships; friendships, personal affiliations, networks ?
- to individuals that you know (has it changed them in any way)

to yourself

12. How do you feel now about your involvement ? Would you do it all again ?
.....

13. What type of issue and of what magnitude would be needed to get you engaged to this degree again ?

14. Would you be more likely to get involved because of the HTI campaign ? If so, why ?

15. Can you say whether this is likely to be the case with others in the town / area ?
.....

Is there anything at all that you would like to add ?

Appendix Two

The Chullora Proposal and its Reception Detailed

The following is appended as a supplement to the Chullora case study. As noted in the body of the text the Chullora case evolved largely as a sequence of separate or only partially linked actions by individuals.

While forming part of an identifiable conceptual whole, the push to reject the incinerators, they are linked to each other and to background coincidentals in largely tangential and linear manner, often mediated through different institutional structures. They defy treatment in the global/collective manner that was applied to the Corowa response. They remain separate actions. It is a perversity of this that to meaningfully describe the fewer key actions taken by fewer people in Chullora than in that other case requires a lengthier treatment. It also demands a different style of narrative.

For both of these reasons and the interests of preserving ready comparability of the two cases in the body of the thesis this additional background is provided here.

As an expansion of the earlier presented case materials there is some repetition in this section .

After an initial flawed proposal that was rejected by Bankstown City Council in 1989, Simsmetal, a large waste processing concern, now a subsidiary of the French based Collex consortium, resubmitted for approval to establish a medical waste incineration facility in Chullora on the 3rd of August 1990.

The proposed site was to be its premises leased from the State Rail Authority (SRA) in Anzac St. The location at that time was zoned 'Special Uses - Railways', a category which, effectively, given a sympathetic council, allows for any type of development to be approved. My investigations below indicate that the reception given to Simsmetal by Bankstown Council could not be construed as in any way sympathetic. Apart from the earlier submission and withdrawal of the related Development Application, the site, and proprietors, was under the notice of Council

Officers at the time for unauthorised usage (related to medical waste disposal) and for unauthorised landfill.

Two days after the receipt of the Sims development application the first local media coverage on the issue appeared, an editorial in the 'Torch', the longest established and, relatedly, arguably, the more "respected" of the two local papers. The piece (5/8/90;p.2) was unequivocal, the development could not be allowed to proceed due to the built-up nature of the area, and proclaiming that "the people will have to fight for their right to live without fear of contamination."

Probably prior to the matter coming to open council, but at any rate very early in the piece, the local State Member, Doug Shedden, a former Bankstown Council Alderman of long standing, got wind of the matter from Council sources and immediately adopted a high profile in opposing it.

Doug Shedden's first press comment on the incinerator came in the following week's 'Torch'. Under the heading "Incinerator Proposal Angers Local Member" the article started off by inaccurately reporting that the state government was proposing the facility, it was then largely devoted to comments from Mr. Shedden on the issue, commencing with his statement that he was "totally horrified" by it, and providing details of the type of waste to be handled, noting that the proposal showed "...very little concern for the people of Bankstown". Other comments reported there included one of the pivots of the 'anti' argument both from the Member and other sources throughout considerations. In essence this was that the Potts Hill Water Reservoir, providing Sydney's water supply, is less than one kilometer from the site and that contamination was a distinct possibility.

Shedden also gave early notice at that time that Bankstown Council may not be able to have a final (negative) say in the matter as it might still meet the requirements of the State Pollution Control Board.

Council files of that time record other levels of activity bearing on the application, much of it routine and of no particular significance here, other matters bear some mention at this time.

Though not directly related to the incinerator plans there was debate in Council which appeared in the local press (Torch; 22/08/90) over Council's intention to rezone the area within which the medical waste facility would be sited. Linked to the declining use of the area by State Rail for the special purposes for which it was zoned, the plans were in the pipeline prior to the Sims debate. They came to the fore when another, unrelated, development was before Council. Amongst other factors one of the influences in rejection of that application was the ineligibility of the development under the proposed new zoning. This was a factor that council officers were advised was a legally valid point of consideration, notwithstanding the current zoning. The implications of this on the Sims development were to surface in later reports to Council and according to the Mayor of the time were probably not missed on aldermen at this stage.

A number of other file items were more directly involved with the Sims proposal. The first mention of the SRA, later a key player, appears with its approval as the property owner, of the intended use of the site. Council advises a number of agencies of the proposal inviting comment. One of these, the Water Board also developed a significant profile in relation to the Reservoir. Others included the State Pollution Control Commission (SPCC), the WMA and the NSW Department of Health (Public Health). The Development Application was advertised and the plans displayed at the same time (27/8/90). Notices were sent to the (exclusively commercial) adjoining property holders at the end of August, advising them of the period for objections closing on the 5th of October.

A note attached to the Council file of this period offers the comment that the application proposes inappropriate technology and that there is a gross underestimate by the proponent of the costs to make the facility safe.

Also at that time Doug Shedden appeared in the now defunct Sydney metropolitan paper, Daily Mirror(31/8/90), spreading to a wider audience the water contamination fears he had already voiced locally. A few days later he again appeared in the local press, this time with his party and factional colleague the Mayor of the city, Ian Stromborg (Express; 04/09/90., Torch; 05/09/90.) Both articles conveyed the earlier

concerns expressed by Shedden over the water reservoir and extended the fear of contamination to local food packaging and warehousing facilities operated by McWilliams Wines and Franklins Foodstores. Comment was also included on the technology for the first time with Garry Hart of Scholar Incinerators quoted as saying that this type of incinerator was being phased out overseas. Both the Mayor and the Member were quoted on their personal opposition to the proposal, the Express article saying that Shedden was “horrified” and reporting Stromborg’s position as being “concerned”. The State Member was quoted as saying that the “the people” should reject the proposition but with no mention of any resident action to date.

From this first week in September letters from residents expressing objection to the proposed development began to be received by Council. Starting with one letter from a married couple in that week a further six were received the following week and one more the succeeding week. A number of these bore the signatures of more than one person. Predominantly co-signatories bore the same family name. Many of the letters bore signs of collusion with near identical phrasing, some were identical. All of these letters came from Greenacre addresses with the exception of one couple’s letter from Regents Park, which partly adjoins Chullora.

Also in this period (11/09/90) trades unions voiced their opposition for the first time in a letter to both the Local Member and Council. The Chullora Electric Car Workshops Combined Unions Shop Committee, writing “on behalf of seven hundred Anzac St., Chullora employees”, stated their “total opposition” to the proposal, because of the perceived hazard to these workers. They also indicated their commitment to take “whatever necessary” industrial and political action to prevent it.

Two weeks since his previous appearance on the matter in the local papers Doug Shedden again featured in a Torch article (19/09/90), with the lead paragraph speaking of local opposition. The body of the article was concerned with a petition against the incinerator being sponsored by Mr. Shedden, his report of the response to it to date and an exhortation to people to call in to office to sign it or to have copies mailed out to them. These petitions were intended for presentation to State

Parliament rather than Council. No indications of the number of petitioners to date was given but Mr. Shedden is quoted as noting a “tremendous” response to it and numerous telephone calls. He gave assurances that he would raise resident concerns in parliament and forward them on to the Minister, Tim Moore. The remainder of the article was taken up with a repeat of his concerns and a statement that the issue was of concern to “not only the residents of Bankstown but for the community at large. He mooted the possibility of public meetings “in the very near future to highlight the serious concern.”

Council readvertised the Development Application on the same day as that article appeared.

Also at around that time, the item on the council’s file on that matter did not show a date, the first resident petition opposing the development was received by Council. The plea originated from Omega Place, again a Greenacre address, and was signed by nine residents. The street is a cul-de-sac within one and a half kilometres of the proposed site. Three Omega Place residents, identifiably including one of the petitioners, had previously expressed their opposition in letters. Also undated but placed in this position on the file was another letter from a Sefton resident living some four kilometre away. That suburb, along with its neighbours, Yagoona and Villawood, has had long standing complaints about chemical fallout from local industry and this is made mention of in the letter in addition to previously reported concerns.

A third item in this undated grouping was from the SRA. The State body, which had previously endorsed its tenants (Sims) application for the development now, in two other guises, as landlord and as occupant of adjacent sites wished to discourage any idea in council that it was in favour of the development. Rather, it said, it had received complaints from its other (commercial) tenants and may wish to make objections itself. It requested an extension of the objections deadline for a further month to allow it to complete its investigations.

On the twentieth of September a Sefton school wrote expressing concern and in the following week a number of further resident objections were received at council.

Two responded directly to the Public Notice of Proposed Development and one, a petition bearing thirty two signatures referred back to the preceding Torch article. All of these originated from the suburbs of Sefton and Yagoona with the petition originating in Yagoona. Yagoona was also the source of another, larger petition the following week. That petition bore one hundred signatures and the woman who signed the covering letter did so in her capacity as a 'Neighbourhood Watch' Area Co-ordinator indicating the first entry of an established community organisation into the debate. These two petitions came from that part of Yagoona closest to Chullora, they are less than a kilometer apart and the furthest is under two kilometres from the proposed site, there was some overlap of signatories across the two.

During the same period, which was drawing close to the end of the period for objections, a number of communications were received by council from commercial and statutory bodies concerned with the proposal. The SRA, in a council file letter dated the twenty fifth of September, hardened their earlier tentative objections with a 'total objection' to the proposal on the basis of anticipated fugitive particle and gas emissions and the risk of transporting "highly infectious waste" in an area of high workforce population. This letter from management appended a petition from workers, signed by two hundred. The petition preamble cited "resident concern" but it is not known whether any residents were signatories. Interview subjects reported an awareness of Union and other worker concerns but were not able to say that there had been interaction between these groups and residents.

At around the same time a competitor of Simsmetal, Clinical Waste Australia, tendered a submission attacking the proposal on both technical and social bases. It considered the Application to be substantially flawed, with the design more suited to the disposal of intractables than medical waste. Further, it claimed, their own existing facilities had excess capacity and they were themselves capable of disposing of Sydney's medical wastes now and into the foreseeable future. In essence their submission said that Sims did not know what they were doing and that there was really no need to do it anyway.

On the twenty seventh of that month council received a fax from the Water Board. It expressed reservations over possible waste discharge to the sewer, stormwater run-off and long term airborne residue deposits into the reservoir and requested an extension to lodge formal objections. The fax was followed up in writing a few days later, within the objections period. On the same day as the Water Board's fax, Corporate Equities Ltd., another local property holder lodged its objection in response to notification of intent by Council. It noted offensive odour, particle waste, storage on site and hours of operations as grounds.

Council files show that activity heightened into the final week for objections, with the submissions of corporate entities particularly racing to meet the deadline of the fifth of October. One company, Tenstat Pty. Ltd., who are located outside the area but a local property holder, amongst the already noted health and environmental issues, cited the economic danger of property devaluation. Three industry heavyweights located in the area and all concerned directly or indirectly with food and beverage handling, Australian Paper Manufacturers, McWilliams Wines and Franklins Foods, came in at this point with objections in response to Council notices received. These largely repeated general environmental concerns already expressed but also conveyed the particular effect that these would have on their operations, their labour force and their market share. APM broadened the agenda, stressing that "...the potential consequences for Sydney (would be) far too great." The tone of broader social concerns was echoed by McWilliams Wines.

Based purely on social bases was another submission of rejection received on the last day. From the Community Advisory Sub-Committee of the Department of Planning's Botany Bay Regional Office approval was opposed because of the lack of community consultation and the absence of (needed) policy governing the "proliferation" of High Temperature Incinerators. They, like Clinical Waste also argued that there was no demonstrable need for the facility.

On the Wednesday, two days before the closure date, another Torch article featuring Doug Shedden decrying the plans appeared. The article begins emotively with the impression conveyed of massed rejection of the Sims application; "A storm of protest

has surrounded the controversial move...” It then goes on to transcribe a speech to State Parliament by Shedden on the issue. Most of the points raised there have already been noted here but two inclusions rate mention. Firstly the report noted some behind the scenes discussions which were taking place. The article identifies the participation of Council, Sims and their environmental consultants (Blackwattle), the Waste Management Authority and the State Pollution Control Commission. In interviews, though it is not noted in the article, it was also reported there was attendance of other property holders at what Shedden referred to as “round-table conferences”. Not directly conveyed in the article either but also reported in interviews is that the intent of the meetings was to get the applicants to withdraw.

In that article Shedden again refers to “ (unspecified) tremendous response from the community through my office...concerned residents signing petitions...expressing concern at health risks” and later in the speech; “The level of concern in the general community of Bankstown (is such that) people are calling for public meetings to further highlight those (health and environmental) matters.” “I totally endorse the concerns shown by my constituents and the community at large.” “I make it quite clear to Parliament...I will do all in my power as the parliamentary representative...to see that this totally unacceptable proposal does not go ahead.”

Three more resident submissions were received by council in the final days of the period for objection. The first from one person living in Greenacre repeated the common concerns and linked it to the Villawood problems. The second was also from Greenacre and like it was from within a kilometre of the site. That one bore nine signatures from five families in the one street, it contained reference to a ‘Time’ article on the phasing out of HTI and put a strong moral and emotive argument against pollution. The third was in the form of a petition from two adjoining streets in Yagoona within the vicinity of the two earlier mentioned (Yagoona) neighbourhood petitions. The petition, signed by fourteen people representing seven families, raised most of the issues noted above but specifically mentioned the risk of fallout onto schools, nursing homes, clubs and the Lidcombe Hospital in addition to domestic residents and factory workers.

Another letter, received from a Yagoona resident on the closing date for comment, is mentioned here separately simply because it alone among the items received by Council from residents expresses reservations and requests reassurances rather than stating outright objection to the proposal.

Another standout feature of that time is the Letters to the Editor columns of the Torch (03/10/90). That week's edition carried the only such correspondence on the issue, two letters. A woman writing as an individual, a long term Bankstown resident, found it affronting to the local civic image. The other was also from a woman and signed on behalf of 'Women in the Community', a long established community based group involved in questions of social equity. This was the second public comment from a local community organisation and echoed the type of concerns expressed from other sources noted above.

After the peak period of letter writing and petitioning activity leading up to the closing date for comment there is little indication of further comment or action on the issue from the general public or local organisations for some two months. One letter from Yagoona was received a week after the closing date and on the second of November a petition was received from Panania, a suburb of Bankstown some nine kilometres from the site.

On other levels the dispute continued intensely. Following the first consideration Council advised Simsmetal of substantial flaws, in specifications and procedures, in their application and advised them that they had one week to rectify these and resubmit. On the same day (08/10/90) council received further correspondence from the Water Board saying that they would be able to support the incinerator only if their concerns over technology to be used and operational matters could be overcome. Without that though their objections as previously noted stood. They reminded Council that should Council see fit to approve the development without their own concurrence they had the power to veto the development.

Two other statutory bodies involved in the matter also wrote to Council that week. These were the primary watchdog bodies overseeing this type of proposal, the SPCC and the WMA. The tone of both of their responses was considerably softer than

either Council's to Simsmetal or the Water Board's to Council. The State Pollution Control Commission advised that it could see no objection to the development at all. The Waste Management Authority sent a letter supporting the proposal with some 'adjustments' and the lodgement of a bank guarantee to rectify any resultant environmental damage.

Simsmetal duly revised their proposal and considerations recommenced, with Council sending the new specifications off to their environmental consultants (Kinhill) almost immediately.

The day after the receipt of the new proposal Doug Shedden again came out against it in the local press (Torch; 24/10/90). Featuring a photo of himself and two others holding petitions the article was largely taken up with the objections of the Community Advisory Sub-Committee of the Department of Planning mentioned earlier. He stated his solidarity with that body on its concerns and in evocative terms urged residents to write to Council and lobby aldermen to stop the development.

At the end of October the NSW Labor Council wrote to Council, restating the concerns previously expressed by the Combined Unions Shop Committee and requesting a status report on the development. The request was signed by the Labor Council's Executive Officer, Beryl Ashe.

The following week the Express (06/11/90) carried an item giving the position of the Environment Minister, Tim Moore, on the matter. The sub-caption 'Pure Hysterics' effectively summarised the Minister's perspective. He "...slammed local debate suggesting such a proposal was in any way environmentally dangerous." He called Shedden's comments on the proposal "hysterical, irrational and irresponsible." and so on. Saying that the decision lay entirely with Bankstown Council he urged "a strong injection of rational thinking into the debate. "Then the following week the Express (13/11/90) ran an article giving Shedden's latest perspective, apparently caught between the sharp contrast of the two politician's views they also inserted an editorial calling for an even handed approach. In the report the Local Member is quoted as raising his earlier doubts over whether Council had the power to reject the

application with any finality. He points out that “only the SPCC can rule on pollution matters and they have no guidelines (on incineration)”. He raised the spectre of a likely successful appeal (by Sims) to the Land and Environment Court should Bankstown deny their application. The editorial notes and congratulates the Member on his expression of concerns but with apparent stronger weighting points out that the Minister, the WMA and the Nature Conservation Council, whom they had contacted had no concerns.

Towards the end of November the Department of Planning, responding to Council’s enquiry advised them that it was a matter for Council to decide on.

Also around that time a Sun-Herald article appeared (25/11/90). the story was headed up by the caption ‘Chullora Fights Another Burner’ and featured a photograph of some twenty five to thirty people outside the site. Associations with the Corowa case which was then heavily featured in the metropolitan press were evident, the caption, the (incorrect) opening paragraph which stated that “opposition is mounting to another State Government incinerator project” and direct reference was made to Corowa in the body of the story. The text was concerned mainly with the arguments that Doug Shedden had been putting previously and he was quoted in the article, stressing the alleged Sydney-wide effects. He was also reported saying that “I have a petition from 10,000 local residents”. Beryl Ashe of the Labor Council was also quoted and that Council’s position given. Neighbourhood Watch was cited as one local organisation against the development along with the Combined Pensioners Association.

On or about the nineteenth of December Council was informed (by the SRA) that the SRA had advised Simsmetal they would not approve the proposed use of its land. A note is appended to the Council file of that time regarding an approach to Sims to see if, in view of this decision, they wished to proceed. The answer was apparently yes and the considerations and exchanges continued.

Officers advised the next meeting of Council, the last of the year, that they were still obliged to consider the applications. Despite the SRA’s stated strong position on the matter they had not actually withdrawn their consent as the owner. The minutes

show that Council resolved to form a working party into the matter and included the intent to visit operational facilities.

Informed interview sources and the local press (Express, 26/12/90;p.1) identify this as a critical period in Councillors attitude formation: The apparent eventuality that Sims would have to withdraw after the SRA's decision being dismissed by Sims' and the introduction by them of a new and perceptually contentious development application appeared to hardened the resolve of councillors against the proposal and energise them to further action and comment. The Express quoted Kevin Hill and David Blake, both Ward Alderman for the area, commenting negatively ,not only on the applications, but on the 'tactic' of introducing a further, closely related, development application at this stage. Blake simply maintained that it would be impossible to consider separately, Hill saw the move as "questionable" and demanded that Sims "reveal all of its future plans for the use of the 1.2 ha. site". Bill Lovelee, a representative from the adjoining north ward and a State Member questioned the credibility of the EIS. Ian Stromborg was quoted as saying that it was the single most important issue facing council and residents at that time.

The New Year saw the issue continuing. A form letter received at Council in the first week from a resident of Riga Avenue, Greenacre foreshadowed a number of such letters and the formation of a resident action group based in that vicinity. The address of the letter is a cul-de-sac less than a kilometer from the site.

Ian Stromborg and Doug Shedden issued a joint release to the Torch appearing on the ninth of January, repeating their earlier concerns and again detailing the feared effects of the development. This time adding new details concerning the new food waste processing plans, stressing mainly the smell that would result but also raising the possibility of health concerns. Both again featured in an 'Express' article the following week (09/01/91) along with Bill Lovelee, the State Member for Bass Hill (a now defunct seat) who, as noted above was also an alderman at the time.

Together in the same article were aldermen Blake, Hill and Scott in whose Ward the facility was to be located. The occasion for the story was the return of the Council working party from a tour of inspection of a facility near Brisbane. The Mayor and

Ald. Blake were the most quoted in the article. Both men worked for the Water Board and both likened the odour from the plant to the smell of sewerage treatment plants they come across in their work. Both were opposed to such a facility being established in Bankstown.

The following day Shedden and Stromborg featured in the 'Torch'(16/01/91) in what appeared to be a joint press release from them. The two stressed their "total opposition" to the venture throughout and recapped on the reasons for this. The article also strongly featured the SRA's opposition to the development and Council's subsequent approach to Sims questioning the wisdom of proceeding. This content gave rise to the lead caption above the story; 'Incinerator Looks Doomed'.

In that same week (the adjoining) Strathfield Council wrote to Bankstown. The letter expressed disappointment at the lack of consultation between the two local government bodies on the issue. It contained a request for information and asked, allowing that they may be too late for formal objection, for their views to be taken into consideration.

On the twenty ninth of January, two weeks after that Torch report on the SRA's position, the Express ran their own page three piece, entitled 'SRA is on a two way track'. The item denied the implications reported in the Torch, that the proposal was now doomed. It focused on the unusual ambiguity of the SRA's position and the quandary that Council Officers found themselves in when the SRA, despite lodging the strongest of objections also declined to withdraw consent.

From mid-February to the first week in March the majority of the form letters originating from Riga Avenue arrived at council. Twenty four of them were received in all along with one other original letter from that street. Eighteen of the form letters showed Riga Avenue addresses, three of them were from adjoining streets in Greenacre, two from other suburbs within the local government area and one from a location near Cambelltown. The content of the letters replicated the general concerns expressed previously.

Within that period a Council Meeting was held at which developments to date (on the medical waste incinerators) were reviewed in summary(19/02/910). The officers' report on the Business Paper for that meeting contained mixed information and a recommendation aimed at sorting a way through that maze. Firstly Council's environmental consultants could see no real objection to the proposal; the site was "well suited to this type of development" and provided that some inadequacies in the environmental impact statement were rectified and an annual environmental audit was conducted there should be no problem. Legal advice which had the effect of strengthening Council's claims to being able to reject the application was also included. According to their QC the Council could take into consideration the actual need for such a facility, the issue questioned in the submissions from Clinical Waste and the Community Consultative Sub-Committee of the Department of Planning, in determining whether it constituted unnecessarily increased risk to the community. They were also advised that under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act the proposed rezoning to 4(m) which could prohibit the development as an offensive and hazardous industry should be taken into consideration.

The officers' summary of the Department of Planning's comment indicates that, while leaving the decision to Council, they have reservations. Additional to the question of whether the facility is actually needed and their earlier expressed concern over unregulated proliferation they point out a number of unresolved issues and urge "careful consideration" by Council. It suggests broad circulation of any further information received from the applicant to allow objectors to advise. Its final comment suggests that Council may decide that it already has sufficient grounds to reject the application. The officers' report repeats the effective endorsement by the WMA, the SPCC and the Department of Health and the objections by the Water Board, SRA and "significant number of complaints" from residents and others. The report also noted the continued illegal use of the site by Simsmetal for cleaning of medical waste bins.

The report concluded that it was beyond the scope of Council's current expertise to make determinations on a number of the unresolved issues and that it did not have the resources to develop this expertise alone. To reject the application without this

would leave the way open for a successful appeal to the Land and Environment Court. The report recommended that the Council approach the Minister of Planning to establish a Commission of Enquiry into the Simsmetal proposal, with the intent that the Commission explore these issues and establish standards for such developments. The officers listed a number of advantages to this approach, including impartiality, financial savings to council, the potential for public submissions to be part of the formal process, resolution of broader issues than the current one and the strength of such findings in any court challenge. The only disadvantage listed was that Council would relinquish control of the matter.

Council effectively voted against the recommendation by carrying an amendment that saw the question of a Commission referred to Council's Working Party on the matter. Council sources report that this was a reflection of councillors stronger negative engagement with the issue following the introduction of Sims' food waste proposal.

Council records show that on the fifth of March Sims took a step likely to be seen by Council as further provocation by lodging an objection to the proposed rezoning of the area. On the same day a letter was received by them from the Water Board in which the Board refers to a 'Telegraph-Mirror' article (21/02/91) featuring Doug Shedden stating that the matter is unresolved. In the letter the Water Board restates their earlier concerns, saying that nothing has happened to change their opinion on the matter and requesting information.

The resident action group foreshadowed in the letter writing activity from Riga Avenue also had their first public mention at this time. An apparent press release carried by the 'Torch' (13/03/91) announces the formation of the South West Sydney Resident Action Group. The article refers to and briefly quotes from a pamphlet produced and distributed by the group. The pamphlet combined alleged local contraindications for the incinerators' establishment with broader examples of environmental disasters and resident opposition. These included the Corowa mobilisation which had now been concluded. Residents were urged in both the pamphlet and the 'Torch' to voice their disapproval to aldermen, the Local Member,

the Ministers for Planning and for the Environment or to seek further information from the group.

On the Third of April two bodies who had previously lodged objections with Council strongly reinforced those objections. McWilliams Wines wrote to Council. The tone of the letter could only be described as 'heavy' and impatient, with the author, a senior executive, talking of legal action if Council approved the application, "...so totally opposed (were they)". In the 'Torch' of that date Beryl Ashe reported that arising from a meeting at the Labor Council some days earlier the Council was unanimously resolved that the development would be stopped. Quoted in the article, Ms. Ashe broadened the agenda to speak about the need for a State Strategic Plan to regulate incinerator development before refocussing on the Chullora issue. She added that Labor Council Officers were continually monitoring the situation and that they would, if required, mount a public campaign against it. The Unions formalised that media statement with a letter to Council on the tenth of April conveying the same position.

At around the same time, from the fifth to the seventeenth of April, there was a renewal of letter writing from residents to Council. Most of these consisted of (six) copies of a new form letter. These came from Roberts Road, Greenacre, from a street in Bankstown bordering on Greenacre and from Chester Hill. The South West Resident Action Group also wrote to Council giving their objections, "on behalf of the residents of Greenacre". A letter signed by only one person but claimed to be "on behalf of 35 townhouse residents (in Chiswick Road, Greenacre)" was also received.

On the sixteenth of April, a report to Council from its Officers following on from the consideration of the Working Party reviewed developments on the (medical waste incinerators) issue to date. Much of this was repetition of the previously outlined summary report which recommended the request for a Commission of Enquiry. On this occasion however the Working Party and Officers focused almost exclusively on arguments for rejection. They detailed negative indicators for the proposal under six categories ranging from the broad socio-economic effects to a critique of the

proponent's technical expertise. From this analysis and conventional codes governing building construction they recommended for rejection on each of eight grounds.

Given that there was no new information to hand for this report it may be seen that Council simply decided to 'bite the bullet' at this stage.

The vote was overwhelmingly to adopt the recommendations, with only one councillor, who did not debate the issues, voting against them.

The following day's Torch, which had gone to press before the above resolution ran an article pre-empting the decision. It carried reports of the history of the case citing "uproar in the Bankstown district" and "howls of protest from residents supported by most aldermen and Doug Shedden". The formation of a resident action group is reported and the comment is offered "Those residents now appear to have won their battle." Its next weeks edition elaborated on its now confirmed prediction, featuring a photo of Doug Shedden and Kevin Hill giving victory signs outside the site. The possibility of an appeal to the Land and Environment Court was carried but given little credence by the aldermen or the local member. This was despite advice from Sims previously that they would appeal if Council rejected the application.

Amongst those who expressed this opinion was Doug Shedden who had previously been outspoken on this possibility. It is likely that these expressions of confidence, as was stated by Kevin Hill, stemmed largely from the SRA's position as a backstop. Shedden was quoted as seeing the victory as a personal one for himself as well as for the people of Bankstown. No resident comment was featured in either article.

The Express issue which covered the decision took a different tack (23/04/91) They saw the rejection as a "declaration of war' by Council on Simsmetal" and as drawing "the lines for a battle in the land and environment court". The item also noted that councillors had, at the time of the decision being made, urged residents to make sure that their voices were heard in the Land and Environment Court if Sims appealed.

While this latter point did appear in the Torch article of the same week its significance had been overshadowed by the confidence of councillors that this was not going to happen.

The same edition of the Express carried another piece about the issue and the South West Resident Action Group. The item reported that “Chullora and Greenacre rang out with cheers and applause (following the rejection)” and resident and member of the SWRAG, ‘Jill Parson’ is quoted as thanking council for their decision and “putting the health of our people before profit”. The item went on to say though that “residents’ jubilation wasn’t unreserved; fear hung in the air that (there may be a successful appeal)”. Another item concerning the group and these same concerns appeared in the following edition also. ‘Meg Brown’, the group’s spokesperson on this occasion, gave slightly less weighting to this local aspect and the article went on to talk about the need for regulation state-wide and urged attendance at their upcoming May 19th. meeting.

On the first of May both ‘Parson’ and ‘Brown’ had items in the ‘Letters’ section of the Torch pursuing the same line, reserved congratulations on the local issue and concerns for the broader picture and the need for action. The next week’s ‘Torch’ (08/05/91) carried an article from the group promoting the meeting. That item made no reference to local issues, except as conveyed in the location for the meeting, the Sims site, and a passing comment that, in effect, one decision by one council was not enough.

The rally was successful (Express; 21/05/91, Torch; 22/05/91), with the Torch estimating an attendance of two hundred.

The final ‘loose end’, the food waste proposal, was still on the books. All reports indicate that while the matter was dealt with according to due process, any Sims incineration proposal was at this stage a highly personalised issue for most councillors. On similar bases to the medical waste proposition and with addition of unacceptable odour emissions, Council rejected the application on the 23rd. of July 1991. The Torch (31/07/91) reported the rejection as “(Aldermen) rejoice in yet another victory over Simsmetal.”

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