

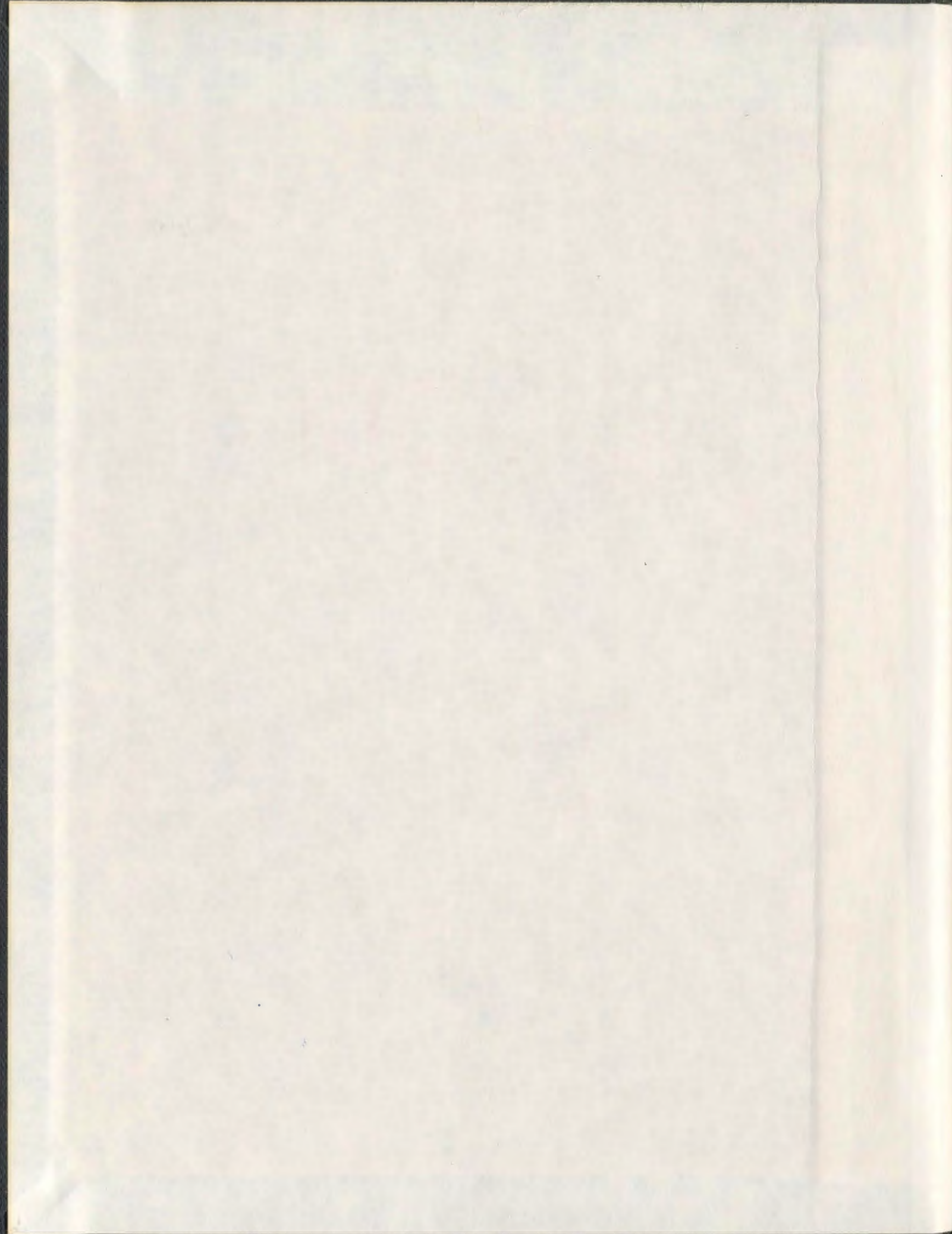
**BUNKHOUSES, BLACK FLIES, AND SEASONAL
UNEMPLOYMENT: THE INDUSTRIAL CONSTRUCTION
INDUSTRY IN NEWFOUNDLAND, 1960s-1990s**

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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Bunkhouses, Black Flies, and Seasonal Unemployment: the Industrial
Construction Industry in Newfoundland, 1960s-1990s

by Michelle McBride

A thesis submitted to the
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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore the interrelationship between economic development and the impact of industrialization on Newfoundland's construction workers. My starting assumption was that the economic and political had a strong impact on the social. A qualitative case study methodology was used wherein three mega-projects were subjected to examinations to determine what impact the quest for economic development and its resulting industrialization had on workers. A combination of archival research, newspaper and other documentary research was backed up by interviews of key informants, particularly in the third case study.

The empirical work focused on explaining the structure of Newfoundland's economy and the impact of the complex intertwinings of the social, political and economic environment on Newfoundland workers. The key structural dynamics to understanding the impacts of economic development were found to be the degree and effectiveness of employer support for good labour relations (which often played out in initial support for a union site), the state of the economy, and the role of the government in the project. As the case studies demonstrate, structural properties of class and gender were crucial to understanding the ways in which economic development influenced workers and workplaces.

This study is also one of the first to provide an intimate portrait of the life of construction workers in Newfoundland. Examining the daily life on three different construction projects allows the study to determine change over time; and also provides a lens through which we can examine gender relations, occupational health and safety, and labour relations on the projects. This thesis, in providing a theoretically informed discussion of detailed case study material, contributes towards the debate on the role of the government in economic development. Because two of three case studies were legislated within a new set of legal parameters, by special collective bargaining provisions as special projects, the study may also aid our understanding of the relationship between economic development, collective bargaining and the role of the government. It also informs the debate on the role of workers/unions and employers in fostering better labour relations.

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Abbreviations

- ACB: Acres Canadian Bechtel (contractor at Churchill Falls)
- Alcan: Aluminium Company of Canada
- Brinco: British Newfoundland Corporation (original owner of Churchill Falls)
- CBC: Come by Chance
- CCA: Canadian Construction Association
- CFLCo: Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation
- CLC: Canadian Labour Congress
- CNOPB: Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board
- ERCO: Electric Reduction Company of Canada
- GBS: Gravity Based System (Hibernia)
- GMT: Gravity Based System Management Team
- HEA: Hibernia Employers' Association
- HFP: Hamilton Falls Power Corporation (renamed CFLCo)
- HMDC: Hibernia Management and Development Company
- IAB: International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers
- IBEW: International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
- IUOE: International Union of Operating Engineers
- LTA: Lost Time Accident
- LIUNA: Laborers International Union of North America
- LRA: Labour Relations Act
- MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
- NARL: North Atlantic Refining Ltd. (Come by Chance refinery)

NCLRA: Newfoundland Construction Labour Relations Association

NDP: Newfoundland Democratic Party

NLBCTC: Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council

NLCA: Newfoundland-Labrador Construction Association

NLCSA: Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association

NOIA: Newfoundland Oil Industry Association

NRC: Newfoundland Refining Company (Come by Chance)

ODC: Newfoundland and Labrador Oil Development Allied Trades Council

OHS: Occupational Health and Safety

PRC: Provincial Refining Company (Come by Chance)

RCIAC: Report of the Construction Industry Advisory Committee

SMW: Sheetmetal Workers International Association

SNR: Shaheen Natural Resources Co. (Come by Chance)

UA: United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry

UBCJA: United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America

WCC: Workers' Compensation Commission

WHSCC: Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission

WITT: Women in Trades and Technology

Sources Abbreviations

CNS: Centre for Newfoundland Studies, Memorial University of Newfoundland

CNSA: Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives, Memorial University

CPWR: Center for the Protection of Workers' Rights, Washington, DC

ET: *Evening Telegram* (St. John's)

NAC: National Archives of Canada, Ottawa

PANL: Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador, St. John's

Chapter One: "Construction Workers, Capital and the Government in Newfoundland, 1949-1997"

Introduction

John Hickey was a carpenter. In his first 20 years in the construction industry he spent eight years working in Labrador City, several years in Churchill Falls, a few more in Come by Chance, and five more in St. John's. Hickey did not initially set out to be a construction worker. When he was looking for work in 1960 he heard there were opportunities in Labrador City at the IOC. There he met up with a journeyman carpenter who taught him the trade. At the time trades were just moving into apprenticeship programs, and most workers received training on the job from more experienced workers. Workers put in 60-hour weeks for \$1.90 an hour, with no overtime, on the non-unionized IOC expansion. By the time of the Churchill Falls project, unionized workers earned higher wages and received overtime. When the Churchill Falls project ended, Hickey was hired on by Lundrigan Contractors, one of the largest contractors in the province. Initially hired to work on the Come by Chance refinery, after two years Hickey was transferred to St. John's to work on the highway overpass construction project.

Hickey's work experience was typical of heavy construction workers; he moved from job to job, leaving his family behind while he went off to work. Hickey was not enthusiastic about travelling to work, stating "I mind working away. But there's no work in Southern Harbour, so you have to go elsewhere." Unlike many others, Hickey's family travelled with him to some of the longer term jobs, such as the ones in Labrador -- the Iron Ore Company (IOC) expansion and Churchill Falls. But most months of the year Hickey's family only saw him on weekends and holidays. While working on the overpass project, Hickey was unemployed during the winter and stayed home to care for his

children and work on repairs to his house. Despite construction's reputation for high wages, in 1980 Hickey made \$9 hour; by the time he drove from his home in Southern Harbour to St. John's, an 80-mile trip, or paid room and board, little money remained to cover the winter unemployment. To help make ends meet his wife worked as a nursing assistant.¹

In the 1960s Andy Coady walked into Clouston Company's office in St. John's and asked for a job. Five years later he completed his tinsmith apprenticeship and became a journeyman. Not long into his journeyman days, mass production signalled the end of his trade, the making and repairing of pots and pans. Coady was fortunate enough to switch over to a different aspect of his trade, namely sheet metal work in the construction field. Primarily involved in installing heating and ventilation systems in buildings, Coady worked all over Newfoundland and as far away as Greenland. His jobs included the new federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans building in the White Hills, a new the telephone building in St. John's, and the new Queen Elizabeth II library at Memorial University.² Unlike many sheet metal workers, he had enough seniority to keep employed throughout much of the year during the booming 1960s and early 1970s. By the 1980s Coady joined thousands of other construction workers in the unemployment line. Some trades faced over 50 per cent unemployment, with only 100 out of 176 sheet metal workers employed even at peak season.³

¹ "John Hickey, Carpenter," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 9.

² "Andy Coady, Sheet-Metal Worker," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 15.

³ "Tinsmiths Looking for Rainbows," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 14. In 1979, unemployment was so high that sheet metal business agent Pat McCormick went on unemployment insurance when dues did not cover his salary. High unemployment remained a serious problem in the 1980s and in many areas it was compounded by the practice of double breasting, where unionized contractors operated non-union firms to win bids.

These two stories demonstrate many of the idiosyncrasies of the construction industry, including technological change, seasonal employment, frequent changes in employers and projects, and a male-dominated workforce. This thesis focuses on the construction industry in Newfoundland, particularly heavy construction, and its workers. Heavy construction involves the act of building a major structure – hydroelectric dams, oil refineries, and other large-scale industrial projects. Construction workers encompass any full and part-time employees who work on the payrolls of construction firms up to the working foreperson level, and who are engaged in construction operations, including painters, plumbers, equipment operators, ironworkers, electricians, carpenters, labourers, bricklayers, and others.⁴

Main Argument

This thesis studies three major construction projects in Newfoundland: the Churchill Falls hydroelectric generating station, the Come by Chance oil refinery, and the Hibernia offshore oil platform. I have chosen these three projects as in their time each was seen as central to Newfoundland's economic development plans and as key to generating new secondary industries. These projects were important not just because they employed a large number of workers but because they were central to government plans to trigger economic development.⁵ My work examines economic development in terms of

⁴ The Centre to Protect Workers' Rights (CPWR), *The Construction Chart Book: The US Construction Industry and Its Workers* (Washington, DC: CPWR, 1998), 56.

⁵ While I chose the Churchill Falls hydroelectric generating station, a case could have been made instead for the Bay d'Espoir generating station. Ultimately I opted to go with Churchill Falls as there was a wealth of data on its construction at the National Archives of Canada. Unlike Churchill Falls whose power was ultimately exported, power from Bay d'Espoir remained within the province to be used on the Come by Chance and other development projects. For more on Bay d'Espoir, see Melvin Baker, "Rural Electrification in Newfoundland in the 1950s and the Origins of the Newfoundland Power Commission," *Newfoundland Studies*, 6, 2 (1990), 190-209.

its human consequences, not simply its conceptualization. Examining the human consequences of development places my work in the social history camp. To examine the human consequences of the government's modernization program, my work focuses on construction workers, their workplace behaviour, and worker-management interaction (labour relations) within the three projects.

Much of Newfoundland's economic development occurred under the label of modernization. By modernization I am referring to deliberate government development policies to mimic economic, political and social systems of mainland Canada and the United States. Under modernization, government and industry support export-led growth as the way to develop. A large component to modernization was building a modern capitalistic labour market, one divorced from the subsistence living familiar to many Newfoundland fishery workers. Workers were strongly encouraged to give up their subsistence lifestyle and become "professionals" in their field. Moving away from a subsistence living made workers particularly vulnerable to economic fluctuations. Surplus labour had no where to go. This was a particular problem in Newfoundland where small production and mega-projects went hand-in-hand, without a robust middle sector to hire the surplus labour when the mega-projects ended.

Structure of the Thesis

My thesis examines the human consequences of the province's economic development program on its construction workers. I chose the construction industry as I viewed construction as the starting point to any industrial development. Construction workers were on the front line in modernization programs. Before a single manufacturing plant could be built, before roads could link the province, and before hydro-electric

projects could provide the power necessary to attract outside industrialists, a construction workforce had to be put in place and taught the rhythms of industrial work. How did workers react to these new industrial work sites? What avenues did they pursue to cope with industrial employers?

I chose the Churchill Falls, Come by Chance, and Hibernia projects because the government accorded each of these projects a critical importance to the province's industrial development.⁶ Each of the three case studies involves a relatively closed, company-run community, particularly Churchill Falls, which was constructed in an isolated part of Labrador. All three case studies involved workers living in construction camps for a long duration (the projects lasted three, four and six years respectively). Workers were housed in bunkhouses or dormitories, ate all of their meals on site, and, despite residing in a more populous area in two of the cases (Come by Chance and Hibernia), spent much of their leisure time in activities planned or offered by the company. While workers on all three projects worked shift schedules that allowed them time off to spend with their families (every few weeks at Come by Chance and Hibernia, after six months at Churchill Falls), the distance made travel difficult for many workers. In all three cases the company dictated who had access to the site and to the living quarters.

⁶ Like Claus Offe, I view the government as an institution made up of diverse groups of administrative and political units that play a coordinating role in managing the structures of socialization and the capitalist state. Offe views the democratic state as enmeshed in contradictions that arose out of its dual role of maintaining the process of capital accumulation while still upholding its position as operating as a neutral arbiter of class interests. According to Offe, state planners were caught in the contradictory position of trying to organize an accumulation process that was largely outside state control, yet upon which they depended for revenues. Offe's work was unique, as it asked why regulatory systems were not working, rather than how to make the system work. Offe, *Contradiction of the Welfare State* (Boston: MIT Press, 1984), 12-13.

Before we can understand the human consequences of modernization, it is necessary to understand how (and why) modernization was adopted in Newfoundland. Hence in chapter two, I explore how the government's modernization program developed and what its key tenets were. Two of the factors affecting workers were the government's development of trades and technical colleges to help "professionalize" workers and its use of growth centres to pool labour. Chapter three examines the political and economic significance of three specific case studies in Newfoundland's development trajectory. It provides a bridge between the general economic development literature of chapter two and the more thematic approach of the remaining chapters. Why hydro development in the 1960s? Why an oil refinery in the 1970s? Why oil and gas development in the 1980s and 1990s? What has made these projects the ones pursued by industrialists and the Newfoundland government?

After examining the modernization theory and its application in Newfoundland, chapters four through nine explore the human consequences of modernization on construction workers. Chapter four introduces the world of industrial construction workers, including their living and working conditions, and the incentives needed to draw them to construction. Chapter five examines worker-management interaction on the Churchill Falls and Come by Chance construction sites with a focus on strikes and lockouts. It also explores the factors that underlay projects with more successful labour relations climates. As such chapter five explores how each site both operated as an individual microcosm and was representative of the wider labour relations climate.

In chapter six I examine management and the provincial government's reactions to the labour relations crisis of the 1970s, and how both sides used the economic downturn to their advantage over workers. In the case of the provincial government, the reactions included the appointment of royal commissions and advisory committees. Industry on the other hand reacted by banding together to demand concessions from both government and unions. Chapter seven focuses on how workers reacted on an individual basis to perceived problems on the shop floor. While most workers were happy to exchange their labour for a good paycheck, others found it difficult to follow the myriad of rules covering their work and camp lives. The central issue this chapter discusses is the methods workers used to assert their own interests and demands. A small minority of workers came up with innovative ways to control their work processes and their rate of production including pilfering time and company property.

In chapter eight the issue of the gendered nature of construction is discussed, including how the social constructs of masculine and feminine established specific jobs on construction sites as male and female. It examines the experiences of women in traditional jobs on construction sites and examines the pioneering women who tried to overcome prejudices and harassment to become construction workers. Chapter nine explores the consequences of modernization on the occupational health and safety of Newfoundland's construction workers. This chapter concludes with an examination of what impact masculinity and the gendered nature of construction has had on occupational health and safety. Studying occupational health and safety is important as many of Newfoundland's core industries, including mining, fishing, logging, construction,

offshore oil extraction, are occupations with high rates of accidents, injuries, and occupational illnesses. Regulation of occupational health and safety in Newfoundland has often been held in check by governments desperate to be seen to be bringing in economic development. My thesis concludes with a chapter examining what the overall human consequences of the government's modernization programs have been on workers.

Methodology

In answering "how" and "why" questions such as those introduced in my thesis, a case study methodology offers several advantages. By using case studies much is gained in detail and specificity. Approaching more than one case study allows opportunities for comparisons on a geographic, temporal, and spatial basis. Case studies are particularly valuable in examining what impact a process, such as modernization, has had on events and individuals. One drawback of the case study approach is much can be lost in the pre-case study time frame and in terms of events occurring outside the geographic boundaries of the study. I have tried to address these problems through an analysis of the larger economic transformations wrenched by the expansion of industrial capitalism and through attention to the role of the government in the entire process. Hence chapter two and three focus on the government's role in economic development in Newfoundland. This allows the inclusion of events which had an impact on each of my case studies but which were difficult to incorporate into the case study approach.

Under traditional case study methodology it is standard for historians to approach the sources for each case with a set list of questions and then to account for similarities and differences. This proved impossible for my purposes because the available data for each case was different. For Churchill Falls I had access to company records and a

company newspaper, both of which provided management's view of events. No records were found representing the unions' views. For Come by Chance the refinery's bankruptcy in the mid-1970s meant that few of the papers – either management or union – survived. In that case I was forced to rely on newspapers and other government records. For Hibernia, the most readily available documents were from the Oil Development Council, the super-union on site. The employer was less open with its documents, but interviews with the Hibernia Employer's Association representative, James Kenny, the company-sponsored newspaper, and public documents shed light on the owners' perspective.

The disparate nature of each record set made it difficult to ask the same questions of the data. Instead I opted to use each case study to demonstrate a different aspect of the industry using thematic chapters, each one using examples from at least one of the case studies. Jettisoning a more structured case studies approach also allowed me to make use of different types of sources for each chapter. Churchill Falls, with its company records, allowed me to examine the benefits offered to attract workers to industrial construction and the efforts to keep them there. Using newspapers in the Come by Chance case allowed me to trace the events that were deemed important by the media, generally negative events such as strikes, lockouts and productivity slow-downs. The union files available for Hibernia allowed me to trace activities on the "shop floor" itself, including the system of discipline. In all three case studies, government records -- where available -- were also used. When combined with thematic chapters on the gendered nature and the dangers of working in construction, this approach allowed a detailed examination of the Newfoundland construction industry.

This study occurs largely at the provincial level, as resource development is a provincial responsibility. Many of the issues, however, transcended provincial boundaries. On the Churchill Falls project an agreement with Québec was necessary to transmit electricity to American markets. In the case of Hibernia a jurisdictional battle resulted in several court battles and only ended after the election of Brian Mulroney led to joint federal-provincial control (the Atlantic Accord). At these points the research goes beyond the provincial level. I have also limited the time frame to the post-Confederation period (post-1949). My terminal point is relatively recent, 1997, and was chosen to allow an examination of the completion of the Hibernia on-shore construction project.

Sources

Data on the three case studies was gathered from 1997-2000. Much of the data is archival in nature, with key information gathered from the Centre for Newfoundland Studies (CNS) and its Archives (CNSA), the Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), and the National Archives of Canada (NAC). The Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council (NLBCTC) made additional archival material available. I was also given access to Oil Development Council (ODC) records by former president, and IUOE leader, Derm Cain. These records proved invaluable in their scope. Mike Powers of the IBEW also provided access to his considerable Hibernia records. My trip to the Centre for the Protection of Workers Rights in Washington DC was key to helping me conceptualize the issues of occupational health and safety. Given the contemporary nature of the three projects, archival data was not always easy to come by. In the Come by Chance case study, newspaper research and secondary data have been used to make up for a shortage of archival material. In all three cases newspapers proved

an invaluable source. The *Churchill Falls News* and the *Hibernia News*, both company sponsored community newspapers, provided in-depth coverage of life on each project. Needless to say, neither newspaper can be considered unbiased as little was published that did not meet company approval. In neither case were accidents, fatalities, or labour strife noted in the papers.

Archival records were primarily government documents, employer and union records, including memoranda, minutes of meetings, and press releases. Detailed records for the Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation (CFLCo) are housed at the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa and included the collective bargaining agreement, accident reports, and detailed financial statements. Interviews were also used but to a much lesser extent than archival materials. In part this was due to the large numbers of construction workers on each project. While interviews with construction workers from the three projects would have provided additional information, time and space constraints made that difficult. Time-wise, in-depth interviews would have necessitated focussing on only one project. In addition, the transitory nature of construction meant that many of the construction workers were no longer in the province or even still in construction. Interviews on the Hibernia case study were conducted with key participants, union and management officials, in the project. Interviews were designed to be responsive and flexible and followed no set questions. This format allowed the establishment of rapport with the interviewee and allowed the interviewee to put forward issues they felt were important. Interviews generally began with a general, open-ended question. While none of the interviews were taped, extensive notes were taken during each interview;

something made easier by having two people conducting the interviews.⁷ Interview and archival documents were not treated as factual reports of actual events but were treated as evidence of different perspectives. Wherever possible information gathered from one source was corroborated from other sources.

In cases where individual workers' names were part of the public record, I have used them here. The only exception was the Hibernia arbitration files. While the records were open to the public, given the contemporary nature of the project and the nature of many of the grievances (theft, sleeping on the job), I have chosen not to include workers' names or other personal details (including home towns). I have also left out names and other identifiers in documents such as letters written by workers or their families to the premier's office or their unions detailing personal or job-related problems, as the authors of such letters likely did not intend for their correspondence to become part of the public domain. In newspaper sources where names were given they have been used here.

Literature Review

To examine the human consequences of the government's modernization program on construction workers, I draw on concepts, methods, and approaches developed within political economy and labour history. This section begins with a brief overview of the early labour history and political economy literatures and how each developed. Following the overview, my primary focus is on the left-nationalist political economy, modernization, and Newfoundland labour history literatures.

Labour History

Early labour history focused on the workplace, primarily on organized craft workers and on trade unions. Canada's first labour "historians" had their interest sparked

⁷ Several of the interviews were conducted by Dr. Gregory Kealey and myself.

in the "labour problems" of the period from the 1890s to 1919 as workers struggled to resist industrial capitalism. One of the early labour "historians" in Canada was William Lyon Mackenzie King whose *Industry and Humanity* encapsulated his 20 years' experience as a labour relations expert and his belief in industrial harmony.⁸ Following in the liberal progressive footsteps of King, in the 1920s a second generation of scholars undertook research into Canadian labour topics, including Bryce Stewart, Edmund Bradwin, and Harold Logan.⁹ Many of these early works, including Bradwin, were aimed at reforming conditions of work. Logan's *History of Trade Union Organization in Canada* and subsequent *Trade Unions in Canada* are representative of a focus on establishing an institutional framework in which to place Canadian labour. Following Logan's institutional focus was Eugene Forsey. Forsey, a political scientist and an activist in the CCF, wrote an exhaustive study, *History of Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902*.¹⁰

During the 1930s, the social problems engendered by mass unemployment led to a surge of academic interest in workers. Following the example of their American colleagues, many of the Canadian studies in the 1930s concentrated on unemployment, western settlement, and ethnicity.¹¹ Other works such as Harold Innis, *The Cod Fisheries* undertook to explain the differences between Canadian and American economic development. Innis's work was one of the first, along with that of W.A. Mackintosh, to

⁸ William Lyon Mackenzie King, *Industry and Humanity* (Toronto: Allen, 1918).

⁹ Bryce Stewart, *Canadian Labor Laws and the Treaty* (New York: AMS, 1926); Edmund Bradwin, *The Bunkhouse Man: A Study of Work and Pay in the Camps of Canada, 1903-1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1928); Harold Logan, *History of Trade Union Organization in Canada* (Chicago 1928); and Logan, *Trade Unions in Canada* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1948).

¹⁰ Eugene Forsey, *History of Trade Unions in Canada, 1812-1902* (Toronto: UTP, 1982). For more on the early literature, see Gregory S. Kealey, "Writing about Labour," *Workers and Canadian History* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1995), 9.

expound the staples theory which explained Canada's economic and political development as resulting from the extraction of raw resources (cod, fur, minerals, and wheat to name only a few), which dominated settlement patterns and the local economy.¹² Innis argued "concentration on the production of staples for exports to more highly industrialised areas in Europe and later in the United States has broad implications for the Canadian economic, political, and social structure."¹³

Staples theory offered the premise that Canada's disadvantaged regions had once been prosperous but once the staple declined in importance -- either through over exploitation, changes in demand, or lower cost production elsewhere -- the area declined. Innis argued that each staple left its mark on Canadian development, and the shift to new staples produced periods of crisis as the economy and society adjusted to the new staples production. Staples literature put forward the idea that once a marketable resource was discovered, capital would flow in. To remain a viable region, it became necessary to diversify away from a reliance on staples. While the masters -- Innis, Lower, and Creighton -- focused on how staple production affected politics and the development of the nation, others focused on resource development and its impact on provincial economies, on foreign investment, or on government planning.¹⁴

¹¹ See for instance Harold Innis on the mining frontier, Arthur Lower on the lumber industry, and Carl Dawson on immigration.

¹² Donald Creighton, *Commercial Empire of the St. Lawrence* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1937); Harold Innis, *The Cod Fisheries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press [UTP], 1954); and Innis, *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: UTP, 1956).

¹³ Harold Innis, *The Fur Trade in Canada: An Introduction to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: UTP, 1956), 358.

¹⁴ After a period of dormancy, the work of Innis was reincarnated in the 1970s (Watkins and Nelles) and 1980s (Clement, Marchak, Drache) by authors intent on explaining US dominance of Canadian industry. See for instance, H.V. Nelles, *The Politics of Development: Forests, Mines and Hydro-Electric Power in Ontario, 1849-1941* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1974) and Nelles and Christopher Armstrong, *Monopoly's Moment: the Organization and Regulation of Canadian Utilities, 1830-1930* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986); Jorge Niosi, *Canadian*

In the late 1940s pioneering works in labour history from a "peoples' perspective" were started by Communist Party members Stanley Ryerson and Charles Lipton.¹⁵ The period from the 1940s-1960s was more known for institutional labour history, including studies of labour economics, labour legislation, and trade unions.¹⁶ In the 1950s and 1960s labour relations and biographies dominated the field. Stuart Jamieson's *Industrial Relations in Canada* and *Times of Trouble* became the standard texts for labour relations.¹⁷ Biographies included Kenneth McNaught's work on CCF founder and Winnipeg General Strike participant J.S. Woodsworth, and Harry Ferns and Bernard Ostry's critical *The Age of Mackenzie King* which decimated King's image as a pro-

Multinationals (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1985). Translated by Robert Chodos; Patricia Marchak, *In Whose Interests: An Essay of Multinational Corporations in a Canadian Context* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1979) and Marchak, *Uncommon Property* (Toronto: Methuen, 1987), 3-4; Daniel Drache, ed., *Staples, Markets, and Cultural Change: selected essays of Harold A. Innis* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995); Wallace Clement, *Continental Corporate Power: economic elite linkages between Canada and the United States* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1977); and Clement and Drache, *A Practical Guide to Canadian Political Economy*, (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1978). These new staples theorists focused on the economic and political consequences of staples extraction, and were heavily tinged with a left-wing nationalism. Authors such as Levitt and Watkins argued that by continuing to rely on staples for economic growth, Canada was allowing its surplus profits to flow to the United States and limiting its own development as a mature industrial economy. Kari Levitt, *The Silent Surrender* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1970); and Mel Watkins, "The Staples Theory Revisited," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, 12, 5 (Winter 1977), 83-95. Little of the staples work, old or new, paid sufficient attention to the historical development of the working class.

¹⁵ Stanley Ryerson, *The Founding of Canada: Beginnings to 1815* (Toronto: Progress Books, 1960); Ryerson, *Unequal Union: Confederation and the Roots of Conflict on the Canadas, 1815-1873* (Toronto: Progress, 1973); and Charles Lipton, *Trade Union Movement of Canada, 1927-1959* (Montreal: Canadian Social Publications, 1966).

¹⁶ See for instance, R.L. Elliott, "The Canadian Labour Press from 1867," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 14 (1948), 220-45; J.T. Montague, "Trade Unionism in the Canadian Meat Packing Industry," PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1950; and Egil Schonning, "Union-Management Relations in the Pulp and Paper Industry of Ontario and Quebec, 1914-1950," PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1955. Kealey, "Writing about Labour," 12-3.

¹⁷ Stuart Jamieson, *Industrial Relations in Canada* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1957); Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada 1900-66* (Ottawa: Task Force on Labour Relations, 1968).

labour reformer.¹⁸ An exception to this institutional focus was the work of H. Clare Pentland whose early works addressed the role of labour in the staples economy of the colonial era.¹⁹

Dissatisfaction with the current approaches to history was welling up within historical ranks by the mid-to-late 1960s. Many historians began calling for a consideration of what was labelled the "totality" of the working-class experience, not simply trade union organization, the economic struggles, and political activities of workers but also issues such as the tensions between organized and unorganized workers and between the paid and unpaid work forces. Intellectual and political ferment greatly influenced the topics of many young academics, as did the resurgence of working-class militancy in the late 1960s.²⁰ A trend towards social history also sparked interest in women's history as many academics turned to historical topics that allowed them to connect their political ideology with their intellectual curiosity.²¹

¹⁸ Kenneth McNaught, *A Prophet in Politics* (Toronto: UTP, 1959) and Harry Ferns and Bernard Ostry, *The Age of Mackenzie King* (London: Heinemann, 1955).

¹⁹ H. Clare Pentland, "The Role of Capital in Canadian Economic Development before 1875," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 16 (1950), 457-74; "The Development of a Capitalistic Labour Market in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, 25 (1959), 450-61; and *Labour and Capital in Canada 1650-1860* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1981).

²⁰ See for instance, Kealey, "Preface," *Workers and Canadian History*, xiv.

²¹ More recently, labour history has branched out to become more inclusive of the role of women in working class survival. Many of these works identified areas of women's waged labour, pointed out the existence of job ghettos for females, and discussed the conditions under which women worked. See Suzanne Cross, "The Neglected Majority: the Changing Role of Women in Nineteenth Century Montreal," *Histoire sociale/Social History*, 6 (1973); and Veronica Strong-Boag, "The Girl of the New Day: Canadian Working Women in the 1920's," *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 4 (1979), 131-164. For more on the early intersections of women's and labour history see Bettina Bradbury, "Women's History and Working Class History," *Labour/Le Travail (L/LT)*, 19 (Spring 1987), 23-43. Later studies discussed who these women workers were, why they were in the labour force, and what role they played in the family. One of the best works in this area was Bradbury, *Working Families: Age, Gender, and Daily Survival in Industrializing Montreal* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1993). *Working Families* focused on each family member's role in the paid and unpaid economies, examining how women provided the sustenance for their families to go out to work by tending the home, gardening, and taking in boarders. Other

Many of the new approaches – and much of the rhetoric – of the late 1960s sparked debates among labour historians. Initially debates in the late 1960s and 1970s centred on who was to be studied and what approaches were appropriate. On one side of the debate were those approaching labour history from a liberal tradition, including David Bercuson, Irving Abella, and Desmond Morton, while on the other side were those approaching labour history from a Marxist perspective including Bryan Palmer and Greg Kealey. Canadian Marxist historians were greatly influenced by the work of British Marxists (E.P. Thompson and E.J. Hobsbawm) and American labour historians (Herbert Gutman and David Montgomery). As the debate is laid out elsewhere, I will not go into its roots here.²² Marxists such as Kealey and Palmer attempted to place their work within a social history framework. Ultimately Palmer, Kealey and others were trying to show how industrialization created a distinct working class and a working-class consciousness using a community study approach.²³ Like their earlier counterparts, however, labour

writers have examined what effect gender had on workplace relations. See Mark Rosenfeld, “‘It was a hard life’: Class and Gender in the Work and Family Rhythms of a Railway Town 1920-1950,” Canadian Historical Association, *Historical Papers* (1988); and Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners: Women, Men and Change in Two Industrial Towns, 1880-1950* (Toronto: UTP, 1990); and Gillian Creese, *Contracting Masculinity: Gender, Class, and Race in a White-Collar Union, 1944-1994* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1999). One article important to my own thinking on gender and women’s roles within a masculine culture was Franca Iacovetta, “Defending Honour, Demanding Respect: Manly Discourse and Gendered Practice in Two Construction Strikes, Toronto, 1960-1,” in Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, and Nancy Forestell, eds., *Gendered Pasts* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1999), 199-222. Iacovetta’s article examined women’s roles in construction strikes. Iacovetta argued that the early 1960s strikes coalesced around the image of the “honourable family man whose proven capacity for hard work” entitled him to respect and better treatment.

²² Kenneth McNaught, “E.P. Thompson vs. Harold Logan,” *Canadian Historical Review*, 62 (1981), 141-68; Desmond Morton, “E.P. Thompson dans des arpents de neige,” *Revue d’histoire de l’Amérique française*, 37 (1982), 165-84; David Bercuson, “Through the Looking Glass of Culture,” *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 7 (1981), 95-112; and Carl Berger, *The Writing of Canadian History* (Toronto: UTP, 1986, 2nd edition).

²³ Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism, 1867-1892* (Toronto: UTP, 1991, 2nd ed.) and Bryan Palmer, *A Culture in Conflict: Skilled Workers and Industrial Capitalism in Hamilton, 1860-1914* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s Press, 1979).

historians writing in the 1970s remained largely focused on male workers, on production, and on the workplace, particularly writers focusing on the 20th century.²⁴

Newfoundland Historiography

As my thesis focuses on three major construction projects in Newfoundland, each seen as the central element in Newfoundland's economic development, it is important to review the literatures on modernization and labour history. Newfoundland historiography is dominated by the question of why it has failed to develop along the North American model. Early efforts to explain Newfoundland's underdevelopment include D.W. Prowse and J.D. Rogers, each of whom fostered a different explanation for Newfoundland's economic stagnation.²⁵ Prowse believed that the English West County merchants who dominated Newfoundland's economy, prevented agricultural development and local settlement. Rogers, by contrast, believed that, while the merchants were partially responsible for the lack of economic growth, Newfoundland's poor soil and climate were ultimately responsible for retarding alternatives to the fishery. From Prowse and Rogers, the field turned to staples theory to explain Newfoundland's underdevelopment.²⁶

In the 1960s modernization theory dominated examinations of Newfoundland's development. Modernization was based on the concept that cultural factors intrinsic to each region were at the root of economic disparities and to blame for impediments to economic advancement. The modernization approach viewed Newfoundland's uneven development pattern as the result of Newfoundland's great distance from the markets, its

²⁴ Craig Heron, *Working in Steel* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988) and Ian Radforth, *Bushworkers and Bosses: Logging in northern Ontario, 1900-1980* (Toronto: UTP, 1987).

²⁵ D.W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland from the English, Colonial and Foreign Records* (London: MacMillan and Company, 1895) and J.D. Rogers, *Newfoundland: Historical and Geographic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911).

²⁶ See for instance, the work of Harold Innis, *The Cod Fisheries*.

sparse population and its dependency on resources. Many modernization proponents blamed a supposed over-reliance on the fishery for Newfoundland's underdevelopment. David Alexander, whose work was influential on the next generation of Newfoundland scholars, disagreed. He argued that Newfoundland's elite with an interest in the fisheries demonstrated limited general economic leadership while politicians focused on a policy of landward diversification, refusing to admit that the colony depended on marine resources. Rather than focusing on an over-reliance on the fisheries, Alexander suggested that scholars examine how fisheries neglect contributed to Newfoundland's economic decline in the early 20th century.²⁷

Alexander's work sparked new research into economic development. In his examination of the seal fishery, Shannon Ryan argued that the roots of underdevelopment lay in the international arena, not with local élites. Ryan found that the saltfish trade was under attack from producers outside Newfoundland, technological advances, and changing market conditions. According to Ryan, the root of the political and economic crisis wreaking havoc with Newfoundland in the 1920s and 1930s was the salt fish trades collapse. Bill Reeves reconstructed the trade relationship between Newfoundland and the United States, and found that Newfoundland merchants actively pursued fisheries modernization. He argued that Alexander and others placed too great an emphasis on merchants and their ability to manoeuvre as a group. Work by Bob Hong demonstrated that the Board of Trade attempted to modernize the fishery and work for reforms, but only through voluntary self-regulation.²⁸

²⁷ David Alexander, "Development and Dependence in Newfoundland 1880-1970," *Acadiensis*, 4, 1 (Autumn 1974).

²⁸ Shannon Ryan, *Fish Out of Water* (St. John's: Breakwater Books, 1986); William Reeves, "'Our Yankee Cousins': Modernization and the Newfoundland-American Relationship, 1898-

Other authors also focused on the role of local élites in the fishery, including Henry Veltmeyer, Steven Antler, Gerald Sider and Sean Cadigan. In the 1970s Veltmeyer and Antler set out to apply a Marxist analysis to Newfoundland economic development. Both Veltmeyer and Antler used the dependency theory developed for Latin America by Andre Gunder Frank and others to analyze Newfoundland underdevelopment.²⁹ According to Antler, class, not geography was to blame for Newfoundland's failure to develop along the North American model.³⁰ Other authors who used dependency theory to explain Newfoundland included J.D. House and Valerie Summers. House viewed Newfoundland's underdevelopment as a combination of outside factors and internal mistakes. Newfoundland, in his view, had been in a struggle to avoid having its resources 'captured' by multinational corporations, but had yet to find an alternate means of maximizing benefits for the province.³¹ Summers' *Regime Change in a Resource Economy* explores the inter-connections between a resource economy and transformations in political regime in Newfoundland.³²

1910," PhD thesis, University of Maine at Orono, 1987; Reeves, "Alexander's Conundrum Revisited," *Newfoundland Studies*, 5, 1 (1989); Robert Hong, "An Agency for the Common Weal': the Newfoundland Board of Trade, 1909-1915," MA thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN), 1998.

²⁹ Their theory was based on the work of André Gunder Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment in Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review, 1969, revised edition).

³⁰ Henry Veltmeyer, "The Capitalist Underdevelopment of Atlantic Canada," in Robert Brym and R. James Saccouman, eds., *Underdevelopment and Social Movements in Atlantic Canada* (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1979); Steven Antler, "The Capitalist Underdevelopment of Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland," in Brym and Saccouman, *Underdevelopment and Social Movements in Atlantic Canada*, 179-202; and Antler, "Colonial Exploitation and Economic Stagnation in Nineteenth-Century Newfoundland," PhD thesis, University of Connecticut, 1975.

³¹ J.D. House, "The Mouse that Roars: New Directions in Canadian Political Economy," in Robert Brym, ed., *Regionalism in Canada* (Toronto: Irwin Publishers Inc., 1986); and House, *The Challenge of Oil* (St. John's: ISER, 1985), 27-29.

³² Valerie Summers, *Regime Change in a Resource Economy: The Politics of Underdevelopment in Newfoundland since 1825* (St. John's: Breakwater Press, 1994). Summers traced Newfoundland's underdevelopment back to the early 19th century where she found local development was stymied by a lack of investment capital, a weak investment banking sector, and

In his attempt to explain the relationship between the "unique" cultural practices of rural Newfoundlanders and the truck system by which workers exchanged their labour for goods, Sider also blamed merchants for underdevelopment. Merchants, Sider claimed, perpetuated a system maintaining their personal economic dominance at the cost of overall development. He claimed a combination of the inability of subsistence production to meet needs, and the contradictions between the social relations of commodity and subsistence production forced local communities to turn to the state for aid and to individualize experience, thus undermining the political assertiveness of outport culture.³³ Many authors criticized Sider for failing to account for geographical factors, for neglecting political dimensions, and for being a-historical.³⁴ Sean Cadigan disagreed. His work posited that it was necessary to examine class relationships more fully. Rather than take as a given that merchants were a conservative force, Cadigan argued the credit system had to be examined historically as an accommodation between fish merchants and fisher families as both attempted to advance their own interests. He argued that the credit system developed within a society and economy shaped by not only limited resources, but also by the political and legal infrastructure of a region and an industry marked by antagonistic capitalist and imperial interests.³⁵

a government which focused predominantly on the fishery and represented the English mercantile system. Summers also examines resource depletion and the complicated nature of dealing with resources in a federal context.

³³ Gerald Sider, *Culture and Class in Anthropology and History: A Newfoundland Illustration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

³⁴ J.K. Hiller, Robert Paine and J. Overton, "A Comment on Gerald Sider's *Culture and Class in Anthropology and History*," in Nigel Rapport, ed. Roundtable discussion, St. John's, 1987. In CNS.

³⁵ Sean Cadigan, "Economic and Social Relations of Production of the Northeast-Coast of Newfoundland, with special reference to Conception Bay 1785-1855," PhD thesis, MUN, 1991. 3; and Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant Settler Relations in Newfoundland* (Toronto: UTP, 1995).

More recent works viewed dependency theory as a good starting point to examine Newfoundland's development, but criticized it for failing to take into account the political environment. Miriam Wright's work has provided a good counter to those authors who failed to look at the impact of politics. Wright focused on the state and the fishery, examining the state's use of the modernization theory in the fishery.³⁶ Another author to examine the political thrust behind underdevelopment was William Lawton. Lawton examined provincial and federal development policies and found that while internal factors were an important factor in formulating responses to underdevelopment, they were not the cause. According to him, the Newfoundland economy was structurally underdeveloped and could not be directed at will by governments and policy makers, especially given the contradictions between stated policy and policy implementation. Lawton determined there were three reasons for policy failures: inherent inconsistencies in the theory the policy was based on; incompetent policy implementation grounded in good theory; deliberate misrepresentation of reasons for which policy was introduced.³⁷

Much of this literature focused on the failure of domestic capital to flourish, the dominance of American capital, or the failure of the Newfoundland government to safeguard local interests. Rather than examining Newfoundland development on its own terms within capitalist society, it started from the question of why Newfoundland failed to develop along Ontario's lines.

³⁶ Miriam Wright, "'The Smile of Modernity': The State and the Modernization of the Canadian Atlantic Fishery 1945-1970," MA thesis, Queen's University, 1990; Wright, "Newfoundland and Canada: the Evolution of Fisheries Development Policies, 1940-1966," PhD thesis, MUN, 1997; Wright, *A Fishery for Modern Times: the State and the Industrialization of the Newfoundland Fishery, 1934-1968* (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2001).

Labour History/Historiography

Newfoundland labour history developed more slowly and in different ways than Canadian labour history. As great debates were beginning to divide the study of Canadian labour history, Newfoundland scholars were only starting to put forward their own labour history. Before debates could occur scholars needed to establish an institutional framework of labour history. Newfoundland labour history dates to the late 1960s and early 1970s. It is not surprising that it was this period when many scholars turned to labour history; in the late 1960s and early 1970s the Newfoundland labour movement experienced a strike wave drawing considerable attention to workers as a field of study.³⁸

Studying Newfoundland labour history received a boost in 1966 when Municipal Affairs Minister John Crosbie suggested that it was time for an official history of organized labour. After consultations between the Federation of Labour and the government, the new Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Memorial University agreed to take on the task.³⁹ The Department of Labour agreed to provide

³⁷ William Lawton, "Contrary Agendas: Political Culture and Economic Development Policies in Newfoundland," PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1994.

³⁸ The early 1970s were a period of great upheaval for Newfoundland workers; public sector workers were fighting for changes in their legal position as were many in the fishing industry. Royal commissions on labour legislation (1968) and illegal work stoppages (1973) also sparked scholarly interest. *Royal Commission on Labour Legislation* (St. John's 1972), Maxwell Cohen, chair. *Report of the Royal Commission on Illegal Work Stoppages* (St. John's 1973), Edward Neary, chair.

³⁹ Much of Newfoundland's early labour history was written under the auspices of the Federation of Labour or the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) at Memorial University. See Newfoundland Federation of Labour, "Brief to the Government of Newfoundland concerning labour legislation," (St. John's 1962), CNSA, Collection 075 (Smallwood Collection). Created in 1961 to support social and economic research in Newfoundland, ISER promoted intensive research under the assumption that Newfoundland was "on the cusp of massive social and economic change." At the time, Memorial had few doctoral programs in the humanities or social sciences allowing ISER to play an important role in attracting scholars to the study of Newfoundland. While ISER's mandate was not labour history, it financed several community studies that included significant labour portions, including Tom Philbrook, *Fisherman, Logger, Merchant, Miner: Social Change and Industrialism in Three Newfoundland Communities* (St.

funding for the project. Rolfe Hattenhauer, a professor in the business school, agreed to undertake the study. Hattenhauer examined Newfoundland's economic development, looking at the fishery, the truck system, economic diversification and industrialization, and examined labour legislation, foreign influences, and the historical roots of collective action in Newfoundland. While the Hattenhauer manuscript was never published, scholars have found his archival collection useful.⁴⁰

During the 1970s and 1980s many historians began to turn their attention to studying individual unions. For instance, Ian McDonald wrote one of the first case studies of an individual union, with his thesis and later book on the Fisherman's Protective Union.⁴¹ Other union histories were to follow, including Bill Gillespie's history of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour, Gordon Inglis' study of the NFFAWU, Landon Ladd on the IWA strike, Harry Cuff on the Newfoundland Teachers' Association, and Rob Greenwood on NAPE.⁴² These remained largely institutional

John's 1966) and Louis Chiaramonte, *Craftsmen-Client Contracts: Interpersonal Relations in a Newfoundland Fishing Community* (St. John's 1970). See J.D. House, "ISER: Retrospect and Prospect," in *ISER Research Policy Papers*, no. 15 (St. John's: ISER, 1992) and Ingrid Botting, Robert Hong, Rick Rennie, and Miriam Wright, "Evolutions in Research on Resource Development in Newfoundland, 1960 to the Present," Paper presented to the Atlantic Canada Workshop, 14-16 October 1999, 2.

⁴⁰ The manuscript is now in the hands of Dr John Scott (MUN, Philosophy department) who graciously made it available to me with the approval of the Hattenhauer family. Hattenhauer published a shorter version of his manuscript as part of the *Royal Commission on Labour Legislation*. Rolfe Hattenhauer, *A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland, 1970).

⁴¹ Ian McDonald, *"To Each His Own": William F. Coaker and the Fishermen's Protective Union in Newfoundland Politics, 1908-1925* (St. John's 1987). McDonald's book was published after his death and was based on his MA thesis written in the 1970s.

⁴² William Gillespie, "A History of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour, 1936-1963," MA thesis, MUN, 1980; Gillespie, *A Class Act: an Illustrated History of the Labour Movement in Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Newfoundland Federation of Labour, 1986); Gordon Inglis, *More Than Just a Union: the Story of the NFFAWU* (St. John's: Jespersion Press, 1985); H. Landon Ladd, "The Newfoundland Loggers' Strike of 1959," in W.J. Cherwinski and G.S. Kealey, eds., *Lectures in Canadian History* (St. John's: CCLH, 1985), Harry Cuff, *A History of the Newfoundland Teachers' Association* (St. John's: Creative Publishers, 1985), and Robert

histories. Works on labour in the fisheries were more common, including studies by Barbara Neis, Rosemary Ommer, Eric Sager, and Shannon Ryan. Ommer's work, for instance, included several community studies that examined Newfoundland merchants in considerable detail. Her work placed the Newfoundland fishery in the larger Canadian context.⁴³

In the early 1980s Greg Kealey, a prominent Canadian labour historian moved to Memorial University.⁴⁴ While Kealey undertook some work on Newfoundland labour history, including a broad overview of the labour movement for the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, his most important role was in fostering the study of labour history.⁴⁵ The addition of a doctoral program in history in 1986 at MUN also promoted this agenda. The first graduates completed theses in the early 1990s. Many of these early theses attempted to provide an empirically grounded base for labour history. Most works focused on Newfoundland's resource base, the social relations of production, or technological changes. Their works have focused have focused on the government's

Greenwood, "The Newfoundland Association of Public Employees, 1936-1973: the transition from civil servants to trade unionists," Honours Dissertation, MUN, 1984. Another book which examined the Newfoundland Federation of Labour was Cyril Strong, *My Life as a Newfoundland Union Organizer* (St. John's: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1987), edited by Gregory Kealey. Gillespie and John Joy both wrote their Masters theses under David Alexander, an early pioneer in Newfoundland economic history.

⁴³ Barbara Neis, "From Cod Block to Fish Food: the Crisis and Restructuring in the Newfoundland Fishing Industry, 1968-1986," PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1988; Rosemary Ommer, ed., *Merchant Credit and Labour Strategies in Historical Perspective* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1990); Eric Sager, *Seafaring Labour: the Merchant Marine in Atlantic Canada 1820-1914* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989); Shannon Ryan, *The Ice Hunters: A History of Newfoundland Sealing to 1914* (St. John's 1994).

⁴⁴ Kealey's arrival also brought the journal *Labour/Le Travail* to MUN. In 1990 *L/LT* published a special issue on labour in Newfoundland, including articles by many Memorial alumni. Included in *L/LT* were articles on the Reid Newfoundland railway strike by McInnis, on longshoremen in St. John's by Jessie Chisolm, and on the fishery by Cadigan. *Labour/Le Travail*, 26 (Fall 1990).

⁴⁵ Kealey, *The History and the Structure of the Newfoundland Labour Movement* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1986).

and industry's attempts at land-based industrialization, including work on agriculture, forestry, mining, and the railway.⁴⁶

As work by Sean Cadigan demonstrated, early attempts at economic development beyond the fisheries started around 1855 when Newfoundland began to formulate some of its own economic policies. Cadigan's work demonstrated how the government promoted agriculture and began to develop the necessary infrastructure to foster economic development. To encourage agricultural settlement, the government passed a series of laws, the Homestead Act (1873, 1884), an act to facilitate licences to settle farm families (1880), an act to promote agriculture (1886), and established a Board of Agriculture (1889). While poor soil and climate hampered commercial agricultural development, supplementary farming was crucial to fishing economies.⁴⁷ To foster industrial development the government set up a legal framework for liability (1873), passed an act to encourage local manufacturing (1877), and established tariff protection on many goods (1870s-1890s).⁴⁸ It also attempted to stimulate manufacturing and land settlement by building a railway (started in 1896) across the island.

By the turn of the century the railway was seen as the way to open the interior to develop new resources, including mining, lumbering, and farming. As work by Rick

⁴⁶ Peter Crabb, "Agriculture in Newfoundland: A Study in Development," PhD thesis, University of Hull, 1975; Cadigan, "The Staple Model Reconsidered," *Acadiensis*, 21, 2 (Spring 1992), 48-71; John Munro, "Public Timber Allocation Policy in Newfoundland," PhD thesis, University of British Columbia, 1978; James Hiller, "The Origins of the Pulp and Paper Industry in Newfoundland," *Acadiensis*, 11, 2 (Spring 1982); and Hiller, "The Politics of Newsprint: The Newfoundland Pulp and Paper Industry, 1915-1939," *Acadiensis*, 19, 2 (Spring 1990).

⁴⁷ The household economy was a vital part of outport survival, with any goods not developed in-house or bartered having to be bought from the market economy. Many of those employed in the fisheries worked for credit or a share of the catch, while family members provided (unpaid) household production, including supplementing their incomes with gardening, berry picking, sealing, woods work, making their own clothes, hunting and trapping, and other means.

Rennie shows, mineral development was seen as a key to industrialization. Mining provided industrial employment to hundreds of Newfoundland workers and followed the continental model of resource development. Early mining projects included iron ore mines in Bell Island (1895), lead and zinc mines in Buchans (1927), and fluorspar mines in St. Lawrence (1930s). Rennie's thesis found that pre-existing social, economic and cultural factors played a key role in the way the mining industry was established in St. Lawrence. His work examined how desperation for jobs allowed the mining industry, with government cooperation, to establish and maintain unsafe working conditions.⁴⁹

As work by Cadigan, Ingrid Botting and Dufferin Sutherland has shown, forestry was also seen as a key landward resource to be exploited. While early uses of lumber were for domestic use and sawmilling, pulp and paper has dominated the forestry industry in the 20th century. Pulp and paper mills at Grand Falls (1909) and Corner Brook (1925), each provided industrial employment to over 1000 workers. Jobs in the pulp and paper mills were steady and relatively well-paid, especially compared to work in the woods or in the fisheries, and allowed for luxuries rarely found elsewhere in Newfoundland. Work by Cadigan examined the impact of forest fires while Botting's

⁴⁸ Cadigan, "Agriculture," Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website, <http://www.heritage.nf.ca>; and Report of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, *Building on Our Strengths* (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1986), 41.

⁴⁹ One of the leading sources for iron ore at the turn of the 20th century, the Bell Island mines, operated by the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company and Dominion Steel Corporation, fed steel mills in Sydney, Nova Scotia and in Germany. Labrador was also home to many mineral deposits, including iron ore deposits, which began development in the 1950s. Fluorspar mining was undertaken to meet United States chemical, manufacturing and military requirements. While fluorspar and asbestos mining (started in the 1950s in Baie Verte) brought industrial employment to economically depressed areas they also brought serious occupational health and safety hazards. See Rick Rennie, "Mining and Industrial Disease in St. Lawrence, Newfoundland, 1921-1935," PhD thesis, MUN, 2001 and Rennie, "The Historical Origins of an Industrial Disaster: Mining, Working Conditions, and Government Policy in St. Lawrence, Newfoundland 1933-1939," Paper to the Canadian Historical Association Conference, Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities, Sherbrooke, 1999.

work examined the relationship between paid and unpaid domestic work in the company pulp and paper town of Grand Falls. She found factors such as migration patterns, ideology over the gendered division of labour, and social stratification all played a role in shaping and reshaping class and gender relationships.⁵⁰

Sutherland's work focused on the woods labour force of the two pulp and paper mills in Newfoundland. He found that many of the workers were inshore fishermen who turned to logging to supplement their incomes. He argued that having workers move between logging and the fishery prevented the development of a working class by dispersing protests against poor conditions in either industry. He also found that simmering grievances were often prevented from becoming strikes, as workers feared employers would simply close operations in the face of protests. With a declining market for newsprint in the early 1930s, both the Anglo-Development Newfoundland Co. (AND) and International Power and Paper halted their cutting operations in many regions and the workers who managed to hang on to their jobs barely covered room and board. Hundreds of loggers simply walked out of the woods and returned to their families while others banded together, organized and struck for better conditions, especially in 1934, via the new the Newfoundland Lumbermen's Association.⁵¹

⁵⁰ See Cadigan, "A Smoke in the Woods: The Moral Economy of Forest Fires in Outport Newfoundland, 1875-1946" paper presented to the Canadian Historical Association, Sherbrooke, 1999, and Ingrid Botting, "'Getting a Grand Falls Job': Migration, Labour Markets and Paid Domestic Work in the Pulp and Paper Town of Grand Falls, Newfoundland, 1905-1939," PhD thesis, MUN, 2000.

⁵¹ Dufferin Sutherland, "'We are only Loggers': Loggers and the Struggle for Development in Newfoundland, 1929-1959," PhD thesis, SFU, 1995 and Sutherland, "Newfoundland Loggers Respond," 85. For more on the 1930s see Peter Neary, *Newfoundland in the North Atlantic World, 1929-1949* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Press 1988) and James Overton, "Economic Crisis and the End of Democracy: Politics in Newfoundland During the Great Depression," *L/LT*, 26 (Fall 1990), 85-124.

Prior to the 1940s these railway, pulp and paper and mining towns were among the few isolated industrial enclaves across Newfoundland. Large factories were the exception in manufacturing rather than the norm, and handicraft forms of production, particularly in the fishery, predominated. As work by John Joy has demonstrated, St. John's in the pre-World War I period was host to a number of machine shops and small-scale manufacturing projects.⁵² Workers in St. John's, Corner Brook, Grand Falls, Buchans, St. Lawrence, and along the railway line were more likely to receive wages for their work than workers in rural areas.⁵³ This began to change during World War II; Malcolm MacLeod's work showed that increasing numbers of workers began engaging in wage labour, including 20,000 workers hired to U.S and Canadian military bases.⁵⁴ These new large-scale projects marked the first time many workers were employed in industrial jobs. Along with these new jobs came many workers' first introductions to trade unions.

Two works which examined Newfoundland workers and their organizations were MA theses by Peter McInnis and Nancy Forestell. McInnis's work examined the founding of the Newfoundland Industrial Workers Association (NIWA) in 1917. The NIWA attempted to give a broader voice to workers' common interests and identity but foundered in the post-war recessionary period as weak primary product prices prevailed

⁵² John Joy, "The Growth and Development of Trades and Manufacturing in St. John's, 1870-1914," MA thesis, MUN, 1977.

⁵³ In many families, one member worked outside the area in a cash economy and sent money back to the family in the outport, combining labour in the fishery -- or mine, farm, forest -- with labour on board ships or in manufacturing plants. While some of this was done within local communities, a great number of Newfoundlanders worked in St. John's or outside Newfoundland altogether. Such occupational pluralism was a necessity for survival, especially in years when the fisheries were in crisis. Ron Crawley, "Off to Sydney: Newfoundlanders Emigrate to Industrial Cape Breton, 1890-1914," *Acadiensis*, 17, 2 (Spring 1988), 27-51; Peter Neary, "'Traditional' and 'Modern' Elements in the Social and Economic History of Bell Island and Conception Bay," *Historical Papers* (1973).

⁵⁴ Malcolm MacLeod, *Peace of the Continent: The Impact of Second World War Canadian and American Bases in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1986).

and competition increased, leaving fishing, lumbering, mining and much local manufacturing in a crisis throughout the 1920s. Forestell's work on wage-earning women in St. John's remains one of the few historical works to explore women's paid labour outside of the fishery. Not surprisingly, Forestell found age, marital status, and class played a role in women's decision to work outside the home for wages and in what capacity. Domestic and factory work were two of the most common jobs outport women took once they arrived in St. John's.⁵⁵ Others have examined how workers moved between jobs in industrial enclaves and seasonal employment in fishing or logging.⁵⁶ Neary, for instance, examined the Bell Island mining workforce and found that many were fishermen from Conception Bay who worked in the mine in the off season while Ron Crawley discussed how a crisis in the fishery led many workers to migrate to Cape Breton for industrial employment.⁵⁷

Labour history has not only been the purview of labour historians. Folklorists, sociologists, and geographers have also examined various aspects of Newfoundland labour history. Folklore students have explored topics ranging from an oral history of the 1979 *Evening Telegram* strike (Jane Burns) to occupational narratives of pulp and paper workers in Corner Brook (Contessa Small).⁵⁸ Sociologists have also played a key role in

⁵⁵ Peter McInnis, "Newfoundland Labour and World War I," MA thesis, MUN, 1987; Nancy Forestell, "Women's Paid Labour in St. John's between two world wars," MA, MUN, 1987.

⁵⁶ See Daniel Samson, ed., *Contested Countryside: Rural Workers and Modern Society in Atlantic Canada, 1800-1950* (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1994) which examines farming, fishing and logging in the Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland.

⁵⁷ Peter Neary, "'Traditional' and 'Modern' Elements in the Social and Economic History of Bell Island and Conception Bay," *Historical Papers* (1973) and Ron Crawley, "Off to Sydney: Newfoundlanders Emigrate to Industrial Cape Breton, 1890-1914," *Acadiensis*, 17, 2 (Spring 1988), 27-51.

⁵⁸ Jane Burns, "An Oral History of the 1979 Strike at the St. John's Evening Telegram," MA thesis, MUN, 1982; Contessa Small, "Occupational Narratives of Pulp and Paper Mill Workers in Corner Brook, Newfoundland," MA thesis, MUN, 1999. See also Gail Weir, "The Wabana Iron Ore Miners of Bell Island," MA thesis, MUN, 1986; John Ashton, "A Study of the Lumbercamp

uncovering workers and unions in Newfoundland. For instance, work by sociologist Barbara Neis has examined topics such as the development of the Fisheries Protective Union, the occupational health and safety risks women face in fish plants, lost-time rates for trawler workers, and the impact of restructuring on the fisheries.⁵⁹ James Overton, Larry Felt and Peter Sinclair have also added to the literature with studies on poverty, the myth of the reluctant worker, unpaid labour and household reproduction.⁶⁰

Sociology students have also produced theses on labour topics, including Tanya Chapman's examination of the fishery crisis on the domestic division of labour in Trepassey, Nicole Power's thesis on the local ecological knowledge of women fish plant workers, and Linda Parsons' work on the lives of women in Labrador City.⁶¹ The work of Parsons was particularly interesting as it examined how the Iron Ore Company of Canada

Song Tradition in Newfoundland," PhD thesis, MUN, 1985; and Mark Ferguson, "Making Fish: Salt-Cod Processing on the east coast of Newfoundland," MA thesis, MUN, 1996.

⁵⁹ Barbara Neis, "Work-Related Risk Factors for Female Fish and Crab Processing Workers in Newfoundland and Labrador," Paper presented to the Research Round Table on Gender and Workplace Health, 22-3 June 1992; Neis and Susan Williams, *Occupational Health in Newfoundland's Deepsea Fishing Industry* (St. John's: ISER, 1990); Neis, "From Cod Block to Fish Food," PhD thesis, University of Toronto, 1988; and Neis, "Trends in Fatality Rates and Lost Time Accidents among Newfoundland Trawler Workers, 1980-88," Paper presented to the International Symposium on Safety and Working Conditions Aboard Fishing Vessels, Université du Québec à Rimouski, 22-24 August 1989.

⁶⁰ James Overton, "Poverty, Dependence and Self-Reliance: Politics, Newfoundland History and the Amulree Report of 1933," Paper presented to the Newfoundland Historical Society, Amulree's Legacy, St. John's, 24-5 March 2000; Overton, "Myth of the Reluctant Worker: Attitudes to Work and Unemployment in Newfoundland," in Robert Chateloup, ed., *Labour in Atlantic Canada* (Saint John: UNB, 1981); Peter Sinclair and Lawrence Felt, "Everyone Does It': Unpaid Work in a Rural Peripheral Region," in G. Lowe, ed., *Work in Canada: Readings in the Sociology of Work and Industry* (Scarborough: Nelson Canada, 1993); Sinclair and Felt, "Gender Work and Household Reproduction: Married Men and Women in an Isolated Fishing Region," Paper presented to Rural Sociological Society Annual Meeting, 6 August 1989; and Sinclair, *From Traps to Draggers: Domestic Commodity Production in Northwest Newfoundland, 1850-1982* (St. John's: ISER, 1985).

⁶¹ Tanya Chapman, "The Effects of the Fishery Crisis on the Domestic Division of Labour in Trepassey, Newfoundland," MA thesis, MUN, 1997; Nicole Power, "Women, Processing Industries and the Environment: a Sociological Analysis of Women Fish and Crab Processing Workers' Local Ecological Knowledge," MA thesis, MUN, 1997; Linda Parsons, "Passing the Time: the Lives of Women in a Northern Industrial Town," MA thesis, MUN, 1987.

attempted to create a "community" around the mine. Parsons examined the lengths the company went to in trying to attract families to the community, including higher wages, overtime, and vocational training for male workers and subsidized housing, shopping facilities, schools, and health services for the wives. Parsons' work was important to my own study as in many ways it mirrored my Churchill Falls case study. Other works that proved informative to my work included Suzanne Ottenheimer, "Fish and Oil Don't Mix" and Pamela Jones, "Offshore Oil Development and Community Impacts." Both examined community reactions and interactions with the onshore Hibernia construction site. Ottenheimer explored the power relationship between inshore fishers and Mobil Oil and Jones explored local residents' changing perceptions of the oil industry over a period from pre- to post-construction. Neither examined the actual construction site; both provide useful information about the surrounding communities.⁶²

While the more recent historiography has become more worker-centred (for instance, Sutherland, Botting, and Rennie), my work stands somewhat unique in its focus on the human consequences of the government's modernization program. It is also unique for its focus on construction workers. Few books in Newfoundland have examined the construction industry with any depth. In addition, while several other authors have noted the importance of large-scale projects, my work is one of the first to examine how central these particular projects have been to the government's development agendas.

⁶² Susanne Ottenheimer, "'Fish and Oil don't Mix': Power Relations at the Bull Arm Construction Site, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland," MA thesis, MUN, 1993; and Pamela Jones, "Offshore Oil Development and Community Impacts: Changes in Attitudes and Perceptions in Communities Affected by Onshore Activities, MA thesis, MUN, 1998.

Chapter 2: History of Modernization in Post-Confederation Newfoundland

My work examines modernization in terms of the impact its policies had on workers, rather than its theoretical underpinnings. Part and parcel of modernization was the development of a capitalist labour market, one quite divorced from the subsistence living familiar to many Newfoundland fishery workers. Moving away from a subsistence living made workers particularly vulnerable to economic fluctuations. As part of modernization the government wanted to pool surplus labour in growth areas to be available for development. In economic downturns, surplus labour had no where to go. This was a particular problem in Newfoundland where small production and mega-projects went hand-in-hand, without a robust middle sector to hire surplus labour when the mega-projects ended. Modernization also entailed creating a workforce that was both skilled in particular fields but also taught social habits conducive to industry.

Before we can understand modernization's human consequences, however, it is necessary to understand what modernization is, and how (and why) the modernization theory was applied in Newfoundland. Much of Newfoundland's development occurred under the label of modernization. By modernization I am referring to government development policies which promoted industrialization, including investment in technology, education, and the local economy. By defining underdevelopment in terms of the quantitative differences between "rich" and "poor" countries, it offered a road map for poor countries to follow to become rich. This is a road map the Smallwood government was quick to follow.

As a theory, modernization grew out of the post-World War II period as western governments, predominantly the United States, looked to develop “underdeveloped” regions and prevent the spread of communism.¹ Modernization carried with it a certain set of assumptions about the required impetus for social and economic change and the nature of capitalism. One of these assumptions was that western industrial patterns had universal applicability. A second assumption was that growth was a linear, and unidirectional, progression. A third assumption was that there was a dichotomy between traditional and modern societies and that when a society modernizes it must drop all of its traditional ways of thinking, its traditional structures and values. Modernization places a strong emphasis on psycho-cultural factors necessary for development including having the right values and individual motivation to succeed.

According to Walt Rostow, one of the chief proponents of modernization theory, there were five basic stages of economic growth.² Societies started out in the traditional stage with relatively limited productive capacity and were largely agricultural (or fishing as in the case of Newfoundland), and hierarchical societies. Societies then began to develop the necessary preconditions for take-off, often triggered by an external stimuli

¹ Robinson Rojas argues that modernization theory is the historical product of three main events: the rise of the United States as a superpower, the growth of the world-wide communist movement (USSR, China, Vietnam, Cuba), and the process of decolonization in African and Asia. “Modernization Theory and the Laws of Social Change,” 1996. www.rrojasdatabank.org/capital8.htm.

² W.W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960, 3rd Edition 1991). See also Bert Hoselitz, *Theories of Economic Growth* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press of Glencoe, 1960). For Newfoundland references see David Alexander, “Development and Dependence in Newfoundland, 1880-1970,” in *Atlantic Canada and Confederation* (Toronto: UTP, 1983), Gerhard Bassler, *Alfred Valdmanis and the Politics of Survival* (Toronto: UTP, 2000), and Miriam Wright, “‘The Smile of Modernity’: The State and the Modernization of the Canadian Atlantic Fishery, 1945-1970,” MA thesis, Queen’s University, 1990; and Wright, “Newfoundland and Canada: the Evolution of Fisheries Development Policies, 1940-1966.” PhD thesis, MUN, 1997.

and the development of a local elite. During preconditioning, entrepreneurs are encouraged to invest in new enterprises, banks were encouraged to mobilize capital, and increasing investment was needed for social capital (transportation, communications, health and education). In the third stage, take-off, investment as a proportion of national income rises and political and social institutions are reshaped to encourage development. Under the fourth stage, the drive to maturity stage, science and technology use expands outside the core industry as the economy switches from industries involving resource extraction to more refined and technologically more complex processes. In the fifth and final stage, societies were expected to reach the stage of mass consumption where the leading sectors of the economy shifted towards durable goods and services and the general public benefits from the economic growth.³

The government has played a central role in economic development since 1949, but its vision of what economic development should look like developed in the late 19th century when the government began promoting roads, railway, industry and land-based resource extraction.⁴ Industrialization was the cornerstone of Newfoundland's economic policy despite changes in political status from responsible government to a British-

³ There is a considerable literature detailing the problems with Rostow's modernization theory, particularly how modernization was applied to Asia and Africa. Dependency theorists have attempted to counter Rostow's work by taking a more historical approach and by examining issues such as the role colonialism and imperialism has played in development. See for instance, A.G. Frank, *Capitalism and underdevelopment in Latin America; historical studies of Chile and Brazil* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1967). World systems theorists also attacked modernization theorists by pointing out development occurred on a much larger scale than the nation state. For more on this see Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis* (1974) and Wallerstein, *The Modern World System I: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (1976).

⁴ Michelle McBride, Gregory Kealey, and Sean Cadigan, "Jobs at Any Cost: The Political Economy of Development in 20th Century Newfoundland," in R. Ommer, ed., *The Resilient Outport, Ecology, Economy and Society in Rural Newfoundland* (St. John's: ISER, 2001).

controlled Commission of Government (1934), to a province of Canada (1949). While many identify this push to modernize with Joseph R. Smallwood, Cadigan and others have shown its roots are much deeper.⁵

In the 1950s and 1960s the Smallwood government, albeit often using federal dollars, began ensuring Newfoundland had the necessary infrastructure to industrialize – railway, roads, airports, communications, and an educated workforce. Seeing opportunity in post-war political realignments, and relying on the advice of provincial Director of Economic Development Alfred Valdmanis, Smallwood courted a series of German entrepreneurs. While Smallwood initially courted German corporations including Krupp, Volkswagen, I.G. Farben, and Siemens, none of these companies wanted to invest in Newfoundland. Instead Smallwood turned to smaller companies looking for an escape from Germany. Coming from war-ravaged countries, many of the smaller entrepreneurs were long on ideas but short on funds. The shortness of funds did not bother Smallwood who had a surplus of \$46 million accumulated under the Commission of Government. From 1949-1953 the government subsidized 20 new secondary industries through its New Industries program. New industries included heavy machinery plants, tanneries, a rubber company, textile, boot and shoe factories, and a chocolate factory, knitting mills, and gypsum, hardwood and cement plants. To attract as many new industries as possible in the shortest time, Smallwood relaxed screening procedures and increased assistance to

⁵ See Sean Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995) and Cadigan, "The Merging of Farm, Fishery and Wage Labour in Rural Newfoundland: A Long-term Perspective," paper presented to the Social Science History Association, Chicago, November 1995; "A Shift in Economic Culture: The Impact of Enclave Industrialization on Newfoundland, 1855-1880," Paper presented to the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, Moncton, 1996.

investors. The results were not always successful. Few factories materialized, and fewer survived the decade.⁶

The Newfoundland government also massively extended services such as education and health care. Premier Joseph Smallwood liked modernization because it offered him a solution to Newfoundland's economic woes. By infusing enough capital into the economy, introducing new technologies, rationalizing the fisheries, promoting productivity and the entrepreneurial spirit, and by reshaping Newfoundlanders attitudes through the education system, Newfoundland was sure to develop. According to modernization theory Newfoundland's economy at the time of Confederation lay between traditional society and the preconditions for the take-off stage. The fisheries were viewed as having limited productive capacity, with a ceiling on output levels that could only be overcome by modernization. Under Rostow's modernization theory, in the take-off stage, new technology and production processes would be applied to the core industry (in Newfoundland's case fishing) as well as to industry.

Between 1940 and 1969 the fisheries underwent industrialization as frozen cod, not the traditional salt-cod, came to dominate the market, creating a new type of fisheries employment – waged labour in fish processing plants.⁷ The government also offered aid to the industry, including loans to companies willing to buy fish plants and factory trawlers. Fishers received provincial subsidies to purchase longliners and new harvesting gear. With increased fisheries capitalization, employment levels were expected to

⁶ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, 361; Bassler, *Alfred Valdmanis*, Bassler, "Develop or Perish," 111, and Doug Letto, *Chocolate Bars and Rubber Boots: the Smallwood Industrialization Plan* (Paradise, NF: Blue Hill Publishers, 1998).

decrease in the fisheries, making industrial diversification even more important. To meet the demands of the new fishery, Smallwood encouraged the professionalization of the fishery, including new technologies and training for offshore fishing.⁸ As Newfoundland moved more towards a waged economy, workers had less time for earlier survival techniques such as occupational pluralism and household production.⁹

Smallwood had long felt that Newfoundland's productivity was limited by its lack of modern technology and the experts to run it. Smallwood did not believe Newfoundland entrepreneurs had the determination to lead development. He argued, "It was useless to turn to the businessmen of Newfoundland. Most of them were scrambling around, like henhawks eyeing a chicken coop, for their share of the millions of family allowances and other cash pouring in from Ottawa... It would be useless to talk to them about investing money in new industries, so I would have to search outside, and I did."¹⁰ To remedy this

⁷ Saltfish was largely processed by fishing families. Fish plants required a more regular catch to keep the processing plants in operation and led to the extension of offshore fishing trawlers. With the fish plants, inshore and offshore fishers were paid in cash for their product.

⁸ Wright, *A Fishery for Modern Times*; Wright and Danny Samson, "The State and the Newfoundland Fishery, 1930-1966: Logics of Society, Economy, and Environment," Paper presented at Eco-Research Conference, May 26-28, 1997.

⁹ Fishing families had long relied on a wide variety of activities for their survival, from growing their own vegetables and keeping livestock, to cutting firewood for lumber and fuel, and hunting and trapping. As Sean Cadigan stated Newfoundland and Labrador's climate and soil have not been conducive to agriculture, but outport isolation and poor incomes in the fishery have made supplementary farming crucial. Fishing families raised root crops, some hay and oats, and livestock for their own use." Cadigan, "Agriculture," Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site Project, 1998.

¹⁰ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, 27. He turned to outside experts for advice on how to industrialize, including the International Basic Economic Corporation (Nelson Rockefeller) and World Enterprises Inc. (William Stephenson). Both preached caution. When none of the entrepreneurs approached was willing to meet Newfoundland's timetable, the government funded three projects on its own. The plan was to start industries and later privatize them, using the funds from their sale to start new industries. When the government ran into difficulties selling two of the initial plants (cement and gypsum), it decided that instead of financing projects directly, it would provide secured loans and match private investments. Centre of Newfoundland Studies Archives (CNSA), Collection 075 (Smallwood), box 101, Economic Development, files

he set out to hire "the best technical people we could find anywhere (and that almost invariably was anywhere outside Newfoundland itself) to drill, survey, measure, delineate and blueprint specific resources."¹¹ Simply by infusing a traditional society with capital, technology, entrepreneurial leadership, and the "right" attitude, modernization assumed the traditional society would transform itself into a diversified economy. Smallwood was not alone in accepting modernization theory. Modernization also became an accepted part of the federal government's attempts to deal with the regional disparity in Atlantic Canada during the 1950s.¹²

In his quest to bring industry to Newfoundland, Smallwood undertook to supply not only capital and resources but also a cheap and ready labour force. They did this in two ways which were to prove pivotal to workers: the creation of growth centers and the promotion of resettlement. In the 1960s the Newfoundland government's economic goal was to remove obstacles to growth and to rationalize production structures. Plans were made to consolidate, to focus on a few growth centres and to improve existing services. New public expenditures were to facilitate wealth-producing activities.¹³ By the 1960s modernization theories encompassed the work of François Perroux, who argued on a theoretical level that innovation should be concentrated in "growth centres" spreading

3.08.336-3.11-082 and box 134, "Economic Development Correspondence," A.L. Gaudins to M. Green, 21 March 1952.

¹¹ Joseph Smallwood, *I Chose Canada, volume II: The Premiership* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), 18. Parentheses in original.

¹² See Wright, "'The Smile of Modernity'," for an example of how the federal department of fisheries embraced the modernization concept.

¹³ *Report of the Royal Commission on the Economic State and Prospects of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Creative Printers and Publishers, 1967), chaired by Gordon Pushie, 1.

economic development out to the surrounding areas.¹⁴ Growth centres were production centres located around key industries. Growth, according to Perroux, "reveals itself in certain points or poles, with different degrees of intensity; it spreads through diverse channels."¹⁵ Perroux argued that concentrating certain industries (petroleum, coal, electricity, steel and aluminum among others) in select growth areas would propel economic development that would spread out to the surrounding areas, helping modern culture diffuse into more remote areas.¹⁶ Growth centres were established around Newfoundland to serve as service centres for the surrounding smaller communities.

In combination with the creation of new growth centres the government encouraged a policy of resettlement whereby people from more isolated fishing outports were offered financial incentives to move to these growth centres.¹⁷ The government created two resettlement programs, the Centralization Program and the Fisheries Household Resettlement Program. Both programs encouraged outports to relocate to areas with more services. People from the outports were offered financial subsidies to move and once the majority on an outport agreed to the resettlement, government services were withdrawn from the area. In total between 1954 and 1972, 220 communities were resettled for a

¹⁴ *The Report of the Royal Commission on the Economic State and Prospects of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's 1967), 2-3 defined economic development as embracing "the whole socio-economic process whereby an economy's real income increases at a rate faster than its population growth. It means more than simply extra output: extra output may merely imply more inputs and more efficiency. Development goes beyond these to imply changes in the very structure of output and in the allocation of inputs... Economic development thus denotes a rising standard of living for the people of a country as measured in real terms."

¹⁵ Cited in Benjamin Higgins and Donald Savoie, "Introduction: the Economics and Politics of Regional Development," in Higgins and Donald Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Essays in Honour of François Perroux* (London: Unwin Press, 1988), 3-47.

¹⁶ François Perroux, *A New Concept of Development* (Paris: UNESCO, 1983); Ducamel Bocage, *The General Economic Theory of François Perroux* (London: University Press of America, 1985). Perroux's French language writings dated to 1941 with *Le Néo-Marginalisme*, *Les Comptes de la Nation* (1949), and *Economie et Société* (1960).

total of 27,000 people. Not everyone agreed to the move and many communities were divided over the issue. The area of Fogo resisted resettlement entirely.¹⁸

In addition to reducing the costs of providing services to outports, resettlement and growth centres were intended to mobilize surplus labour for employment in new industries. Thousands of workers were employed in the construction phases of each new large scale project, and many Newfoundland families moved to Labrador to take advantage of well-paying industrial jobs. Resettlement would also help with another part of the modernization platform, changing cultural values to be more accepting of the modern way of life. Under Rostow's traditional society, social relationships were on a one-to-one level which was viewed as a constraint to developing efficient capitalist relations of production. A much more efficient market relationship could be developed with more neutral social relationships. By removing people from familiar surroundings and their existing social relations, it became easier to put relations of production on a more indirect level. Removing families from their traditional societies also loosened their bonds to traditional subsistence activities such as hunting, fishing and berry picking. Under Rostow's traditional society model, families were responsible for production (farm or fishery) and reproduction, much of the education (informal) and welfare of their

¹⁷ Matthews, *The Creation of Regional Dependency*, 118

¹⁸ Jeff Webb, "Outports," Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website, 2000. As Webb states "It is also worth noting that before and after the government program, rural communities in Newfoundland, as elsewhere in the world, continued to lose people to urban centres. Many unsettled outports would not have continued to exist even if no program had existed." In the face of almost 60 per cent male unemployment after a slump in the inshore fishery, the government suggested that the 5000 Fogo residents resettle to a more economically viable area. Islanders refused to move and formed an island-wide producer's cooperative which handled and processed fishery catches locally. Wendy Quarry, "The Fogo Process: An Experiment in Participatory Communication," MA Thesis, University of Guelph, 1994.

family. Smallwood wanted his new modern families to concentrate more on production, with the state taking over the education and welfare functions.¹⁹

Growth centre theories made regional development seem relatively simple. By pushing or pulling some industries into an urban area and by providing the area with incentives for private development, the resulting infrastructure construction would spread through the surrounding area. Perroux's ideas gained currency throughout Atlantic Canada.²⁰ New growth centres would also provide better access to education (including the government's new vocational and technical schools) and health services and pool the labour required for new industrial projects in central locations. Pooling surplus labour also kept down wage costs and often left labour vulnerable to large corporations.

Newfoundland established growth centres around the province in the 1960s.²¹ Many of the growth centres were built around the province's new infrastructure projects.

¹⁹ For more on this see R. Rojas, *Laws of Social Change* cited in <http://www.rrojasdatabank.org/capital8.htm>.

²⁰ Benjamin Higgins and Donald Savoie, *Regional Development Theories and their Application* (London: Transaction Publishers, 1995), 89 and Savoie, *Regional Economic Development: Canada's Search for Solutions* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 5-8.

²¹ Newfoundland was not alone in following the growth centre model. In 1963 the federal government introduced the Area Development Incentives Act (ADIA), providing monetary incentives, including capital grants and improved tax incentives, to encourage private sector investment in economically depressed areas, including most of Newfoundland. Five years later Prime Minister Trudeau created a new department with responsibility for regional development, the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE). DREE's mandate was to promote economic development in regionally depressed areas. Its approach was two-fold. It offered a special areas program and a regional industrial incentives program, encouraging manufacturing and processing industries in slow growth areas. Twenty-three areas across Canada were designated as growth centres. In Newfoundland DREE funds were used to build a new industrial park, water and sewer systems, a new arterial highway, high school, and engineering building at Memorial University. Higgins and Savoie, *Regional Economic Development*, 7; Higgins, Fernand Martin, and André Raynauld, *Les orientations du développement économique régional de la province du Québec* (Ottawa: DREE, 1970); and Andrew Crichton, "An Overview of Newfoundland's Industrial Activity 1969-1977 and Future Prospects," unpublished paper, 1977, 7. Deposited in Centre for Newfoundland Studies.

Infrastructure projects were deemed necessary to make Newfoundland more attractive to outside industrialists. New projects in the 1960s and 1970s included hydro-electric generating plants in Bay d'Espoir (1964) and Churchill Falls (1967), an Electric Reduction Plant in Long Harbour (1967), a linerboard mill in Stephenville (1970), an oil refinery in Come by Chance (1971), and expansions to the iron ore mines in Wabush and Labrador City (1970s), each identified as a growth centre.²² The government also labelled the towns around several secondary manufacturing projects, including Marystown (shipyard) as growth centres. Snaring these new industries, however, required government incentives including increased investment in infrastructure and in some cases partnerships with private partners. Even with the incentives, however, the anticipated effects did not spread to peripheral regions. While Perroux had always been clear that his theories were not tenable as regional development policy, governments and planners desperate to develop attempted to apply them anyway.²³

²² Smallwood was not alone in his push towards hydro development; Robert Bourassa and René Lévesque in Québec, W.A.C. Bennett in BC, and Edward Schreyer in Manitoba all began turning towards large hydro electric projects to feed US power demands and to entice U.S. multinationals into setting up manufacturing plants. John T. Saywell, *One More River: an Essay on the History of Hydro-Electric Construction* (Ottawa: Economic Council of Canada, 1975), 55.

²³ Nova Scotia and New Brunswick also jumped on the infrastructure bandwagon, building hydro electric and thermal electric generating stations, pulp and paper mills, a heavy water plant (Nova Scotia), and manufacturing facilities including tires, ships, and chemicals (Nova Scotia). Cost-overruns and bankruptcies were also not unique to Newfoundland, New Brunswick's Point Lepreau nuclear station had a cost over-run of 150 per cent. Within two years the first of these projects failed (Come by Chance refinery) and within 15 years, the heavy water plant (Glace Bay) and the Gulf refinery (Port Hawkesbury) were closed. Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd and Atlantic Consulting Economists Ltd., *Comparison of Major Construction Projects and Offshore Hydrocarbon Developments in Atlantic Canada* (Calgary: Environmental Studies Revolving Funds Report, 1986), 12-25.

In the late 1960s Smallwood promoted the development of a petro-chemical industrial complex at Come by Chance.²⁴ While it is unclear if Smallwood or his advisors read Rostow, this followed Rostow's maturity stage wherein economies switched from industries involving resource extraction to more refined and technologically more complex processes like chemical production. Smallwood loved the idea of a petro-chemical complex with its high spin-off potential. The industrial complex was to contain the elusive third pulp and paper mill Smallwood had dreamed of for years, a hydrous ammonia plant, and an oil refinery. Only the oil refinery was ever built and that, as we shall see in chapter five, was beset by problems. Smallwood's willingness to make concessions to outside entrepreneurs brought him into conflict with members of his own Cabinet (John Crosbie, Clyde Wells, and Alex Hickman) over how projects were being funded and run.²⁵

In theory, when an economy reached maturation it could apply its entrepreneurial and technical skills to the production of almost anything, not just the industries that had powered its take-off. To plan, build, and staff these new industrial workplaces required a trained workforce. Newfoundlanders, according to Smallwood, needed to undergo a revolution in thinking to help an industrial take-off. Hence, he decided to use the

²⁴ Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth*, 1-11. In "Develop or Perish," 102, n. 47, Bassler claimed that given Smallwood's background as journalist and broadcaster and his search for advice from U.S. development agencies, he likely came across modernization theory.

²⁵ John Crosbie described Smallwood as a 'one-man government' who "hated feasibility studies, because he didn't want something to be shown to be not feasible." John Crosbie, *No Holds Barred: My Life in Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997), 110-21. See also Claire Hoy, *Clyde Wells: a Political Biography* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1992); J.R. Thoms, ed., *Call Me Joey* (St. John's: Harry Cuff Publications, 1990); R. Gwyn, *Smallwood: the Unlikely Revolutionary* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968); H. Horwood, *Joey* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1989); and R. Matthews, "The Smallwood Legacy: the Development of Underdevelopment in Newfoundland 1949-1972," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 13, 4 (1979), 89-108.

education system not only to meet the skills requirements for new industries, but also to help to create an entrepreneurial attitude. As the 1967 Royal Commission on the State of the Economy recognized, economic development:

... means a disruption of the old ways of doing things and a break with existing institutions and relationships. The most important factor in the process of growth is the speed with which people adapt themselves – rather than things – to changing conditions. A bulldozer can move trees and earth but not ideas and habits. Development will not take place unless enough people and their leaders are prepared to make changes in their habits, attitudes and thinking necessary to achieve the end.²⁶

Smallwood's belief that an attitudinal change was necessary was backed up by the work of Perroux who stated, "beliefs and values, inequality among individuals and social groups, and social institutions, all affect the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services in an essentially human environment."²⁷ Behind the push for vocational education lay the faith that technology and trained workers could solve any problem. In recognition that many workers, especially the older ones, were unprepared for industrial workplaces, the provincial and federal governments began promoting widespread changes to Newfoundland's education system in the post-war period.²⁸

Little vocational training existed in Newfoundland before World War II.²⁹ The war created an unprecedented importance to science and technology and created a push for vocational training, including increasing the demand for engineers and managers. The

²⁶ Original quote from International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, *The Economic Development of Kenya* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1962), cited in *Report of the Royal Commission on the State of the Economy* (St. John's 1967), 2.

²⁷ It is unclear if Smallwood or his advisors read Perroux. Bocage, *The General Economic Theory of François Perroux*, 11.

²⁸ My thinking and some of this research on training was spurred by my involvement (with Greg Kealey) in York University's Centre for Work and Society project "Training Matters."

²⁹ The exceptions were in-house training programs at the railway and the pulp and paper mills.

war led to a transformation of the employment situation for many Newfoundlanders, including creating a pressing demand for workers with craft and technical skills. The need for vocational education was brought forcibly to the Commission of Government's attention by the lack of skilled workers available for defence works. Commissioners believed that hundreds of men employed on these jobs had been handicapped by a lack of proper trades training.³⁰

The war's end also provided the manpower (and it was men) who needed retraining. Industrialization was seen as a way to prevent a return to depression by ending the almost complete reliance on primary exports, and skilled workers were seen as a necessary precondition to full-scale industrialization. Plans for reconstruction began as early as 1941 as the Commission began to explore the need to retrain not only ex-servicemen but also civilians so they could play a "useful" role in the post-war world. Although vocational training was initially for ex-servicemen, by 1950 civilians were also being encouraged to undertake vocational training in skilled trades.³¹

Studying the post-World War I United States, David Noble found that technical education was used to prepare, mobilize and habituate workers for new types of productive activity, to reorient the pattern of social investment, and to restructure social

³⁰ PANL, GN 38, S3-2-1, Vocational Education and Civil Re-establishment. *Minutes*. 5th Meeting of the General Committee on Demobilization, Civil Re-establishment and Post-War Planning, Department of Public Health and Welfare, 17 December 1942, 4.

³¹ Courses included diesel engineering, auto mechanics, plumbing and pipefitting, carpentry, bricklaying, refrigeration, sheet metal work, general machine shop, and electrical work. PANL, GN 66, 7-5-4-3, vol. 1, Reports -- Vocational Education. Secretary for Education, "Draft: Memo to the Honourable Commissioner for Home Affairs and Education: Vocational Education," 24 April 1948; Newfoundland, Department of Education, *Annual Report, 1950*, 150 and Frank Templeman, "Vocational Training," *Newfoundland Teachers Association Journal* (February 1956), 10.

institutions.³² This held true in post-Confederation Newfoundland where a conscious decision was made to create an industrial workforce. Using federal funds, the Smallwood government promoted education as key to the creation of a “prosperous, progressive Province.”³³ Vocational and technical training encouraged workers to work within the capitalist system for a “better life”, taught them the social habits demanded by industry – punctuality, discipline, loyalty, adaptability – and provided them with the skills needed by industrialists.³⁴ It also severed their connection to the sea and the land for their subsistence and made them wholly dependent on their wages labour for survival.

Workers were trained to be flexible and to adapt to the increasing rise of science-based/technological changes. Initially, the government wanted to establish vocational high schools, a trade school, and regional composite schools to meet the needs of primary industries but Newfoundland’s relatively small population (300,000), its isolated communities, lack of existing facilities, and a poor communication system made the program extremely expensive.³⁵ Instead the government started with a vocational school in St. John’s capable of boarding students from the outports. Not coincidentally, a vocational school was what the federal government was willing to help pay to construct.

Enmeshed in this technology cult was the ideal that Newfoundland needed trained workers for both “brain” and “hand-work”. Vocational and technical training was to “develop the greatest economic asset of the Province..., the latent talents, abilities, and

³² David Noble, *America By Design: Science, Technology and the Rise of Corporate Capitalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), xxii.

³³ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, 343.

³⁴ The idea that vocational programs needed to emphasize civics and good citizenship was included in all draft plans for vocational education. PANL, GN 66-2-E, Vocational and Technical Training, “Notes on Education in Newfoundland,” 11; and “Proposed Vocational Institute,” 1.

energies of our people." This would "enable them to make a fuller contribution towards the solution of political, social, and economic and industrial problems of the Province and the Dominion." To achieve these goals a Vocational School was established in St. John's.³⁶ To meet the needs of "brain" workers Newfoundland's Memorial University College was transformed into a degree granting university in 1949 and expanded greatly in the 1960s.³⁷

Vocational education's focus was trades training, predominantly apprenticeships. In the 1950s employers pushed for Canada-wide uniform apprenticeship standards, including developing nationally recognized core skills. Standardization was seen as important not just in the production of machinery and goods, but also workers. Initially standardization was concerned with ensuring equipment and machinery performed to standard specifications and that parts were interchangeable. All of this was necessary to promote large-scale consumption. Uniformity of materials, machinery and parts was followed by the rationalization of production on the administrative side, accounting and distribution, and on the production process, the workers. Education, through in-house training, apprenticeships, and vocational training, became one-way industries attempting to standardize workers. A similar movement was underway to professionalize the so-called experts, engineers, business administrators, also through education, albeit at the

³⁵ PANL, GN 66, 7-5-4-3, volume 1, Reports -- Vocational Education. Minutes of the 13th Meeting of the Vocational Trade Advisory Council, 15 November 1949. Ottawa. 10-11.

³⁶ PANL, GN 66, 7-5-4-3, vol. 1, Reports -- Vocational Education. G.A. Frecker, "Memorandum to Honourable Minister of Education: Subject: Vocational Education for Newfoundland," 9 November 1949, 1-2 and GN 66-2-E, 3-4-3-1, volume 3, "Memorandum..." 2-3.

³⁷ See Malcolm MacLeod, *A Bridge Built Halfway: a History of Memorial University College, 1925-1950* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1990). Bursaries were established to allow students to attend both the Vocational Institutes and MUN.

university level. Workers were trained for a life of labour, while engineers and business administrators were trained to manage labour.³⁸

Vocational training was largely a male preserve. The emphasis on training young men was not unusual in the 1950s and 1960s. Technology, like apprentice and vocational training, had long been a "masculine" domain, with women given only limited access, and generally only to specific areas.³⁹ With low literacy levels and older workers judged as "wedded" to "traditional" forms of knowledge, the ideal students for vocational training were seen as young men. As the foundation of the future work force, young men were targeted because they were viewed as more adaptable to new ways and more likely to adopt the new "entrepreneurial" spirit demanded if industrialization was to succeed.⁴⁰ Technology could be used to increase employment in the fisheries and to make other fields more attractive. In 1962 Smallwood stated: "If they're going back into the fishery, that fishery has to be a far more up-to-date thing, a far more modern thing."⁴¹ This mantra applied to all facets of the economy. An industrial economy demanded the transformation of Newfoundland's traditional primary industries and the construction of new industries that, in turn, demanded the creation of new workers.

During the late 1950s the federal government placed increasing importance on technical education. A specialist in technical training was added to the Training Branch

³⁸ Noble, *America By Design*, 69-83, 167-8 and Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*.

³⁹ For more on the gendered nature of technology see chapter eight and see Ava Baron, ed., *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991).

⁴⁰ Wright found that the idea that young men would "have to be fundamentally different from their fathers. In fact, the Planners believed that technical training in an institution would soon replace the traditional forms of fisheries knowledge passed down from fathers to sons" was pervasive. Wright, "Young Men and Technology: Government Attempts to Create a 'Modern' Fisheries Workforce in Newfoundland, 1949-1970," *Labour/Le Travail*, 42 (Fall 1998), 143-59.

⁴¹ PANL, MG 644, file 287, "Proceedings, Fisheries Convention, September 1962," 5.

and the federal government passed a second Vocational and Technical Training Agreement, providing \$25 million over seven years for capital costs of constructing vocational and, for the first time, technical institutes. In 1959 the federal Department of Labour's Centre for Vocational Training (CVT) reported that "through team work more than through independent individual effort modern industry has reached its high level of production. The members of this team are the engineer, the technician and the craftsmen." [emphasis in original]. The report described the work of professional engineers as mental, studying, reasoning, visualizing and planning how knowledge can be formulated into practical use. The technician was "required to know basic theories and to apply them in helping to solve the complex problems of modern industry; in other words, the technician can apply, in a responsible manner, proven techniques which are commonly understood by those who are expert in a branch of engineering."⁴² Skilled craftsmen were needed to build the tools designed by engineer and detailed by the technician. The report recommended technicians be trained in post-secondary schools, Institutes of Technology, in 2 or 3 year programs.⁴³

In the early 1960s, the federal government pushed the provinces to concentrate training efforts on unemployed workers. To convince the provinces the federal government increased its share of funding for unemployed training to 75 per cent, up from 50 per cent.⁴⁴ The federal government was willing to pay much of the costs of

⁴² PANL, GN 66-2-E, volume 16, Vocational and Technical Training. "The Engineering Team," CVT.59.T.1, 1. Emphasis in original.

⁴³ Technicians included graduates from journalism courses, secretarial science, drafting, land surveying, instrumentation, machine shop and construction technicians, as well as engineering, science and medical technicians. PANL, GN 66-2-E, volume 16, "The Engineering Team," CVT.59.T.1, 3.

⁴⁴ "Twenty Years Work," 3.

vocational education because it believed only with the creation of a skilled workforce could the country develop. Reports by the federal Department of Manpower helped the federal government decide to transition from training trades workers to training technicians. One report's findings that from 1951-1961 the fastest growing occupations were professional, service, clerical, and commercial/financial (in the numbers employed), had a profound impact on training as the federal government pushed for decreased trades training, and increased technical training. With a decline in the primary labour forces the need to train craft workers was questioned.⁴⁵

In Newfoundland two new technical institutes were created, the College of Trades and Technology (COTT) and the College of Fisheries, Navigation, Marine Engineering and Electronics, both built in the early 1960s. COTT was built to centralize training and to provide adequate facilities for larger numbers and more technically based courses.⁴⁶ The new College of Fisheries offered five streams of study, all focusing on the partnership of young men and technology as the key to a modern fishery, with three directly related to offshore fishing (nautical science, mechanical engineering, electrical engineering), one to shipbuilding and design (Naval Architecture), and the other offering in-plant training programs for employees in fish processing plants (Department of Food Technology). Training young men to work as trawler crews, essential to developing a frozen fish industry, was a central part of the new College.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ "Review of Manpower Training Research," 10-11.

⁴⁶ COTT was equipped with 30 standard classrooms and 32 special classrooms outfitted for clerical and secretarial classes, mathematics, chemistry, physics, drafting, surveying, electronics, art, metallurgy, thermodynamics, machine shops (welding, auto and diesel mechanics), as well as a printing press. Enrolment capacity was 1000 for day use, and tuition fees were nominal. Harrington, "Vocational Education in Newfoundland," 41.

⁴⁷ Wright, "Young Men and Technology," 152.

While the new concentration was on technical training, craft training remained important. District vocational schools were built to ensure that technicians would have qualified workers to implement their plans. New vocational schools were located around the province strategically "so that all young men and women in Newfoundland desiring to equip themselves for efficient living in this modern age would have the opportunity to do so." Minister of Education G.A. Frecker defended the decision to build district vocational schools to federal Labour Minister, Michael Starr, stating:

... we are not only faced with the problem of providing training for the young people who will be leaving or graduating from our schools and not going on to university, but we are also confronted with a bigger problem, proportionately, than any other province in Canada, namely that of providing training opportunities for many intelligent, capable people who left school years ago when no programme was available...

We feel our programme, though it may be expensive to bring into existence over a relatively short period of time, will be cheaper in the long run for both Newfoundland and Canada than allowing our people to go untrained, and that it will ultimately pay high dividends.⁴⁸

When constructing vocational schools and technical colleges failed to help end unemployment, the government began to search for someone to blame. As in the past the workers provided an easy target. In 1966 the Deputy Education Minister wrote: "The fact that a great many of our people are out of work is that they do not have the skills required to obtain such work in today's industry and too often these skills cannot be obtained because the individual hasn't the necessary education required to acquire them."⁴⁹

Vocational schools were soon to come under attack for not meeting the changing needs of Newfoundlanders. Before we discuss the criticisms levelled against vocational education,

⁴⁸ PANL, GN 66-2-E, 7-5-6-1, volume III. Letter from Frecker, Minister of Education to Starr, federal Minister of Labour, 25 September 1961, 1-2.

⁴⁹ PANL, GN 66-2-E, 7-5-4-1, volume 20. Letter from P.J. Hanley, Deputy Minister of

it is necessary to first understand the economic and political situation in Newfoundland in the 1970s and early 1980s.

By the early 1970s protests over resettlement, labour unrest in the fishery, and the failure of several industrial projects resulted in Conservative Frank Moores being elected premier. When Moores was elected, most of Newfoundland's resource sectors were under external control. From 1972-1989, Moores and his successor Brian Peckford identified gaining control over Newfoundland's resources as the best way to develop the province. The focus on regaining control of Newfoundland's raw resources was in part a reaction to the Churchill Falls Project, which saw financial benefits accrue to Québec. Under Moores and Peckford, the Newfoundland government set out to attract an oil industry, to capture revenue, and to assert provincial control over resources, including oil, hydro and the fisheries. To this end, Moores nationalized the Churchill Falls Development Corporation soon after its construction. Not all resource projects were so easy to gain control of; dependency on outside capital for financing, contractual obligations, and jurisdictional limitations all played a role in preventing Moores and Peckford from achieving their goals. Only after a decade of jurisdictional wrangling, did the government get joint control over the offshore oil industry.⁵⁰ Both Moores and Peckford benefited from a growing cultural nationalism in Newfoundland, including a desire to assert Newfoundland's independence from Ottawa and, to a lesser extent, foreign investors. Both premiers believed that only by gaining as many economic benefits from

Education to St. Andrew's resident. 7 February 1966.

⁵⁰ In 1984 Prime Minister Brian Mulroney agreed to joint management of the offshore resources and in 1985 signed the Atlantic Accord spelling out what benefits would accrue to the province. House, *The Challenge of Oil*, 303-312.

development as possible – in the form of jobs and business opportunities – could Newfoundland prosper.⁵¹

By the mid-1970s modernization theories were falling out of favour as governments began looking to spend less money on social and infrastructure programs. Federal politicians worried that DREE and its successor the General Development Agreement (GDA) promoted the profile of provincial politicians despite being paid for by federal funds.⁵² The federal government suggested direct federal delivery of regional development initiatives instead of programs administered by the provinces. With modernization theory in decline, the search began for another economic solution. Federally, the government established the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) in 1987 to provide financing to a wide range of manufacturing, processing and repair and maintenance facilities.⁵³ ACOA's mandate was to assess a project's commercial viability; and if it looked like the project would result in economic benefit for the region, to provide financial assistance. Provincially, the Peckford government turned to trade theory that sought to take advantage of the province's comparative advantage. Under trade theory, each region maximized its economic potential by concentrating its efforts on its economic strengths. In Newfoundland this meant turning away from industrial complexes dependent on imported raw materials and re-focusing on resources

⁵¹ See Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Managing All Our Resources: A Development Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador, 1980-85* (St. John's: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 1980); and *Building on Our Strengths*.

⁵² Higgins and Savoie, *Regional Development Theories and their Application*, 280.

⁵³ With federal government subsidies of 35 per cent of the costs of all ships build in Canadian shipyards for Canadian owners and 50 per cent of construction of any new steel fishing vessels over 100 feet, Smallwood convinced Canadian Vickers Limited to run a steel ship construction and repair facility in Marystown which would be built and owned by the provincial government.

within the province (offshore oil). Oil was seen as a way to make Newfoundland self-sustaining. No longer would Newfoundland attempt to reproduce Ontario's industrial structures; rather it would concentrate on its own areas of strength.⁵⁴

While employment grew fairly steadily throughout the 1970s, unemployment increased in the early 1980s. The worldwide recession (1981-2) had a profound impact on Newfoundland, halting employment growth for the next five years. High unemployment in construction and increased mechanization in logging added to workers' worries. Employment opportunities in the fishing industry, rejuvenated by the 200-mile exclusive economic zone on Canada's east coast, local make-work projects, and out-migration to Ontario and Alberta prevented mass unemployment.⁵⁵ Up until 1981, growth in full-time employment exceeded growth in part-time employment. With the 1982 recession full-time job losses were only partially offset by an increase in part-time employment. Full-time job growth did not begin to recover until 1988-9, and then barely sufficient to restore full-time employment to pre-recession levels.⁵⁶ Just as improvements were beginning to permeate through the economy, especially with Hibernia-related construction jobs, the cod stocks collapsed and the resulting moratorium brought high unemployment back to the province.

The shipyard has been plagued with troubles from the start. Economic Council of Canada, *Newfoundland: from Dependency to Self-Reliance*, 10.

⁵⁴ Higgins and Savoie, "Introduction," *Regional Economic Development*, 9.

⁵⁵ In many cases the government fostered a return to the fisheries by providing grants and loans to both harvesters and processors. The number of registered fishers went from 15,802 in 1975 to 35,271 in 1980 (not all of these were actively fishing), while plant workers doubled from 10,000 to just over 21,000. Fish plants grew from 110 in 1975 to 175 in 1980. Report of the Royal Commission, *Building on Our Strengths*, 49-50.

⁵⁶ Government of Newfoundland, *Labour Bulletin*, third quarter 1989, 21.

By the early 1980s the neo-classical model of economics was more in favour in explaining Canada's regional disparities.⁵⁷ As explained by Thomas Courchene, earlier regional development policies were seen to have interfered with the market, hence "natural economic adjustments" were needed. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s federal politicians espoused the view that reliance on government subsidies increased regional dependency by allowing people to continue to live in marginal areas. To return a region to its natural balance, neo-classical economists on the federal level promoted out-migration and a reduction in the minimum wage to promote new industries. After the federal government cut transfer payments and downloaded services onto the provinces, the provincial government responded with its own cuts to services. It also reorganized its training system to make it more "responsive" to changing labour market needs.⁵⁸ In the process the public colleges underwent almost continuous review. Starting in 1985 the government began to download the costs of training onto those being trained.⁵⁹

The need to transform training was highlighted in the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment's report *Building on Our Strengths, Education for Self-Reliance*, and other reports. Such documents promoted the idea that the education system had to be re-designed to prepare for the new 'global' market. Vocational and technical colleges were called "antiquated and out of touch with the needs of the 1980s in Newfoundland. The vocational school system, locked into training trades people for the industrial expansion of the 1960s, continues to teach for occupations which are now

⁵⁷ Higgins and Savoie, *Regional Development Theories and their Applications*, 274.

⁵⁸ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *White Paper: Reorganization of the Vocation School System* (St. John's: Department of Education 1985), 7-8.

oversupplied.”⁶⁰ Graduating students from vocational schools in 1982-1983 only had a rate of 19 per cent in their chosen profession and only a 41 per cent employment rate. According to the Royal Commission, vocational schools were inflexible, under funded, offered outmoded training, had obsolete equipment and staff who were unable to meet new demands.⁶¹

To be more competitive, one report stated, the education system “...must become more responsive to changing labour market demands for a highly-skilled, innovative and adaptable workforce.”⁶² Under these proposals education, especially at the college level, had to be closely linked with private industry. To be more flexible, and efficient, vocational training was transformed into a community college system in the mid-1980s. With the change, trades courses were reduced; for instance, carpentry courses decreased by 30 per cent while construction worker courses dropped by 40 per cent. In their place, courses in Basic Offshore Survival Training, Oil Spill Prevention, and Radio Operation were set up at the College of Fisheries, and Petroleum Engineering was added to the College of Trades and Technology. This was in keeping with the Peckford government’s attempts to concentrate on Newfoundland’s strategic resources. This, the government argued, would allow the colleges to be more responsive to changes in the economy and to labour market demands.⁶³

⁵⁹ McBride and Kealey, “The Impact of Privatization on Newfoundland College Students: the Case of the Career Academy,” York University, Centre for Research on Work and Society, Training Matters: Working Paper Series #2000-04.

⁶⁰ Report of the Royal Commission, *Building on Our Strengths*, 222.

⁶¹ Report of the Royal Commission, *Building on Our Strengths*, 226.

⁶² Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Change and Challenge: a strategic economic plan for Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John’s: Queen’s Printer, 1992).

⁶³ Department of Career Development and Advanced Studies, *White Paper on the Reorganization of the Vocational School System* (June 1985), 12.

In its desire to create a more flexible, productive workforce, familiar with new technologies including electronics, computers, and telecommunications at a time when it wanted to spend less on the education system, the government agreed to open the educational system to private enterprise. Behind this change was the idea that training must change its mandate to face increasing international competition and to meet requirements in communication, technological and information industries. Private colleges were seen as capable of adapting faster to market needs. When the public college system failed to meet expectations, the government responded by providing funding to private colleges. With the massive student influx due to the moratorium and increased federal training money, the public colleges were hard pressed to meet demands. The costs of retrenchment and privatization were borne by Newfoundland students who were forced to pay higher tuition costs at private colleges but were less likely to find well-paying full-time employment than their public school counterparts. Students at several private schools have also borne the brunt of privatization when their institutions went bankrupt.⁶⁴

Along with a focus on privatizing and downsizing, the provincial government began to focus on regional development.⁶⁵ In the mid-1980s the Royal Commission on

⁶⁴ See McBride and Kealey, "The Impact of Privatization on Newfoundland College Students"; *Review of Private Training Institutions Act and Regulations* (St. John's: Department of Education, 1999), chaired by Phillip Warren; Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Postsecondary Indicators '95* (St. John's: Department of Education, 1995); *Postsecondary Indicators '98* (St. John's: Department of Education, 1998); *Career Search: Employment Experience and Earnings of Recent Graduates* (St. John's: Department of Education, 1999).

⁶⁵ Rural development was not a new idea. The Commission of Government, individual communities, and provincial premiers have all turned to rural development to help diversify local economies, particularly in the 1970s with resettlement and in the mid-1990s after the collapse of the cod fisheries. In the wake of resettlement, many grassroots rural development groups were given government financial support resulting in regional development associations being formed across the province. Regional development associations spread from 17 in 1974 to 54 by 1985, representing over 500 communities. Fisheries projects predominated, but crafts, tourism, aquaculture, and agriculture projects were also promoted by regional development associations.

Employment and Unemployment gave an added boost to regional development, claiming large scale developments alone would not solve Newfoundland's unemployment woes. *Building on Our Strengths* suggested large projects be paired with increased rural or regional development. It recommended creating five new Regional Development Boards to take the lead in promoting development initiatives. These boards were to work with municipalities, fisheries workers, cooperatives, businesses, and local colleges to foster development. Predating the "new economies" thrust by almost a decade, *Building on Our Strengths* also recognized that current thinking on "post-industrial societies envision a future of decentralized populations, appropriate technologies and sophisticated small communities."⁶⁶

With the collapse of the groundfishery (the major employer in rural areas), alternative employment became essential. A federal government program, the Northern Cod Recovery Program (NCARP) and its successor, the Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) provided income support, labour market adjustment and training funds for displaced harvesting and processing workers.⁶⁷ While training courses providing basic adult education were a considerable success, other retraining did not meet community

Many regional development associations became deflected from their original mandate when they were incorporated into the Unemployment Insurance system and started providing short-term employment projects. Rural development, however, was not given a high priority from the provincial government; the Department of Rural, Agricultural and Northern Development remained poorly funded and enjoyed relatively low status. Report of the Royal Commission, *Building on Our Strengths*, 364-386 and House, "Strategies of Diversification," Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website.

⁶⁶ Report of the Royal Commission, *Building on Our Strengths*, 365.

⁶⁷ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy: An Analysis of the Programs on a Regional Basis* (St. John's 1996), 1.

expectations.⁶⁸ By providing income support and funds for retraining, TAGS delayed any long-term decisions on what to do with the outports and gave the provincial government some leeway in implementing its rural development program.

In 1992 the provincial government released its Strategic Economic Plan recommending creating economic development zones. In 1995 the provincial government created 20 economic development zones. Economic zone boards embodied the government's new emphasis on regional development. Each zone board was to apply a more business-like approach to economic development and to act as a coordinating body between business, labour, local development groups, and communities to facilitate economic development. Boards spent a year developing five-year strategic economic development plans for their regions.⁶⁹ The government also created a new Department of Development and Rural Renewal (DDRR) to administer the zone boards. DDRR combined portions of Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, the Economic Recovery Commission's research arm, and employment programs previously offered by the Department of Employment and Labour Relations.⁷⁰ While it is too soon to know if the

⁶⁸ Over 7000 former fisheries workers underwent retraining, 70 per cent in skills training, 30 per cent in adult basic education. HRDC, *TAGS: Background Paper* (January 1996).

⁶⁹ Government of Canada/Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Community Matters: The New Regional Economic Development* (St. John's: Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, 1995); Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *The Report on Community Economic Development in Newfoundland and Labrador* and Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, "The Link Project: Background on Regional Economic Development Boards," <http://www.linkproject.nf.ca/link/redb.htm>. Accessed 10 April 2001.

⁷⁰ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, "Address by Minister of Development and Rural Renewal, Judy Foote, to Newfoundland and Labrador Employer's Council," 19 July 1996. <http://www.gov.nf.ca/releases/1996/drr/0719n08.htm>.

economic zone boards will be successful, in March 2001 the government signalled its commitment to rural development by providing \$60 million to rural development.⁷¹

Most recently, the government has promoted the "new" or "knowledge based" economy. Based on the "Irish model" of economic development, the "new" economy focuses on telecommunications and information technology growth. Ireland used a grants and loans program, in part funded by the European Union, to promote regional development.⁷² The idea is that computer and telecommunications advances have opened up international markets to Newfoundland goods and services in ways they never were before. From 1989-1996 the Newfoundland Economic Recovery Commission examined what was needed to develop these new sectors and partnered with private sector companies and educational institutes to promote them. This approach focuses on so-called innovative technologies, information industries, manufacturing, health services, aquaculture, adventure tourism and secondary food processing as the new economic growth areas.⁷³ Much of this approach is reminiscent of Rostow's fifth stage, where societies shifted towards goods and services.

The rationalization behind the "knowledge economy" is that economies and companies need to adapt to the internationalization of business and the demand for new

⁷¹ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, "Substantial resources for new development," *News Releases*, 22 March 2001. <http://www.gov.nf.ca/releases/20001/itt/0322n48.htm>.

⁷² Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, "Comparative Perspectives on Regional Development," Paper prepared by North American Policy Group, 31 March 1998, 63.

⁷³ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Change and Challenge: a strategic economic plan for Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1992); Newfoundland and Labrador, *New Opportunities for Growth* (St. John's: Economic Recovery Commission, 1992); and Government of Canada/Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Community Matters*.

knowledge under the global economy.⁷⁴ The knowledge-based economy includes research and development intensive industries and the increasingly technological resource sectors such as oil and gas. From the outset the oil and gas industry has placed much emphasis on training and skills.⁷⁵ Newfoundland has also promoted marine technologies and information technology (IT) industries. The government claims the IT sector alone averaged over 10 per cent annual growth from 1992 to 1997, and 25 per cent growth from 1998 to 2000.⁷⁶ Knowledge work is also not tied to resources and can operate in marginal areas. It is unclear at this stage what impact this approach will have on the economy. Many of these jobs (for example the creation of call centres) have come in the form of low-waged, non-unionized employment which does not bode well for Newfoundland's workers.

Conclusions

Newfoundland governments have tried a variety of methods to modernize, including a focus on growth centres, large-scale resource development projects, and various training programs. With the failure of large-scale projects to jump-start mass

⁷⁴ Surendra Gera, "The Knowledge-based Economy," Paper presented to the Skills Development in the Knowledge-based Economy Conference, Summary Report, 22-3 June 1999. Policy Reports and Studies, ACOA, http://www.acoa.ca/e/library/reports/skills_development.shtml. Accessed 9 April 2001.

⁷⁵ InnovaQuest "Skills Needs in the Resource-Based Sectors in Atlantic Canada," Final Report prepared for the Conference on Skills Development in the Knowledge Based Economy (ACOA), Moncton, June 1999. http://www.acoa.ca/e/library/reports/skills_needs.shtml.

⁷⁶ In March 2001 the Newfoundland government released *Securing Our Future Together*. In it the government committed to maintaining a strategic focus on industries where Newfoundland has or can develop a strategic advantage; to helping residents acquire the skills needed for the increasingly knowledge-based economy; diversifying the economy to produce internationally competitive goods and services; supporting the enterprising spirit of the private sector; fostering innovation and technological progression to enhance productivity and competitiveness; encouraging entrepreneurship; and revitalizing rural communities. Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Securing Our Future Together: Final Report on the Renewal Strategy for Jobs and Growth*, March 2001. <http://www.gov.nf.ca/jobsandgrowth/finalreport.html>.

industrialization, the government tried to take increasing control of resources, including nationalizing Churchill Falls and fighting for jurisdictional control of its offshore oil and fisheries resources. In the 1980s and 1990s, with high unemployment and the collapse of the fisheries, the government promoted regional economic development and the growth of a "knowledge based economy". Given the frame of reference that Newfoundland governments, particularly the Smallwood government, were operating in, and the pre-eminence of modernization theories, it is not surprising that this was the option pursued. Newfoundland governments should not be criticized for choosing this development path; it was the dominant approach. It is certainly fair, however, to criticize how these approaches worked in practice and what impact these approaches had on workers.

To modernize, the government attempted to sell the public the idea that Newfoundland needed to join the "North American" way of life. Newfoundlanders were sold the promise of jobs and a better way of life if only the province industrialized. Workers were also told they needed to become "professional" in one area of work. To help meet employers needs, the vocational education system was overhauled to teach not only skills but also the demeanour and attitude needed for industrialization. For much of the 1950s and 1960s workers attempted to conform to these expectations and to adapt to waged work. In increasing numbers they trained for trades or the new fishery, and thousands moved to new growth centres to find work. As we will see in later chapters, by the 1970s, however, workers increasingly began to assert their own concerns, concerns bubbling just below the surface, only coming to the fore when high employment levels allowed workers to gain a measure of control over their workplace.

In the next chapter I explore the political and economic significance of three specific case studies in Newfoundland's development, construction of the Churchill Falls hydro generating project, the Come by Chance oil refinery, and the Hibernia offshore oil project. Chapter three provides a bridge between the general economic development theory of this chapter and the more thematic approach of the remaining chapters. Chapter three examines why the emphasis was put in turn on hydro-generation, refined oil, and offshore oil, what linkages the government anticipated from these developments, and what role the government played in the projects.

Chapter Three: The Political and Economic Significance of the Case Studies

This chapter examines the political and economic significance of three specific case studies in Newfoundland's development. It provides a bridge between the general economic development theory of the last chapter and the more thematic approach of the remaining chapters. An introduction to the three case studies, it provides the reader with each project's significance. It examines why the emphasis was put in turn on hydro-generation, refined oil, and offshore oil, what linkages the government anticipated from these developments, and what role the government played in the projects.

Since the 1960s Newfoundland economic development has focused on a series of large-scale projects, most seen as having tremendous spin-off potential. Large-scale projects involving the exploitation of natural resources were equated with progress. Projects with high spin-off potential were promoted in the hopes of creating new demand through industrial development.¹ For instance, a hydro industry was seen as a necessary pre-condition to economic development. Offering "cheap" hydro power was seen as a way to attract new investors while having a supply of refined oil could be used to create a petroleum products industry. In its time each project (Churchill Falls, Come by Chance and Hibernia) was the central element in Newfoundland's economic development and key to generating new secondary industries and economic policy.

Churchill Falls and the Policy of Cheap Power

Governments have viewed hydro as an essential ingredient to development for over 100 years. Europe's industrial revolution was fostered by a combination of new energy sources (the steam engine), new technologies, and the factory system, which

concurred with the development of a capitalist class and the availability of labour. In the United States, the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Colorado River developments during the New Deal period further demonstrated the potential of hydro-electricity to transform an area from a relatively backward area to an economically productive region. Hydro-electricity was also essential to Canadian economic development. Hydroelectric power was used in general manufacturing and allowed for the rapid expansion of mining and chemical industries. As early as 1899 T.C. Keefer, a Canadian engineer and head of the Royal Society, foresaw the transforming power of hydro-electricity.² Developing the Niagara River in Ontario and the St. Maurice River in Québec in the first decade of the 20th century allowed the modern industry to be born..³

Hydro-electricity has played an important role in Newfoundland's industrial development. Newfoundland's first power stations were constructed to meet the needs of other resource developments. The power stations on the Exploits (1909) and Humber Rivers (1925) provided power to the pulp and paper mills at Corner Brook and Grand Falls, and a hydro plant was built to meet the needs of the Buchans base metal mine (1927).⁴ Speaking before the Newfoundland Board of Trade, Canadian businessmen

¹ James Hornig, ed., *Social and Environmental Impacts of the James Bay Hydroelectric Project* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1999), 3, 15.

² T.C. Keefer, "Presidential Address," Royal Society of Canada, *Proceedings and Transactions* (Ottawa: Second Series, V, 1899).

³ Karl Froschauer, *White Gold: Hydroelectric Power in Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999), 15; Oran Young, "Introduction to the Issues," in Hornig, *Social and Environmental Impacts*, 3; and John Saywell, *One More River: an Essay on the History of Hydro-Electric Construction* (Ottawa: Economic Council of Canada, 1975), 9-37.

⁴ The first power stations in Labrador were constructed in the mid-1950s and early 1960s on the Twin Falls River by private companies to meet the needs of iron ore mines in Labrador City and Wabush, and on the Menihek River to meet the needs of iron ore mines in Schefferville, Québec. Peter Crabb, "Cheap Power – An Expensive Failure: Hydro-Electric Power and Industrial Development in Newfoundland," *Water Resources Bulletin*, 10, 1 (February 1974), 44-5.

Harry Crowe reported in 1924 that "water power is today the greatest asset of any country." Crowe was in Newfoundland to assess the feasibility of a 160,000 horse power hydro development in Bay d'Espoir. Harnessing the power would allow them to establish a third paper mill in Newfoundland, using timber harvested locally and from Hamilton Inlet, Labrador. Crowe did not manage to get his project off the ground and hydro development in Bay d'Espoir was not made a reality until the 1960s.⁵

Interest in Labrador's hydro resources peaked early. In May 1894 Albert Low of the Dominion Geological Survey visited Labrador and predicted Churchill Falls would yield several million horse power of electricity if it could be harnessed. The first proposal to develop Churchill Falls was put forth in 1907 during a series of Canadian Senate debates but was rejected as too costly. In 1915 a French-Canadian engineer, Wilfred Thibaudeau surveyed the Labrador Plateau, and recommended diverting the river above the Falls to a point downstream where a height of over 1000 feet was available. As the Labrador Plateau formed a natural basin this scheme would have negated the need to build a large concrete dam to hold the water, reducing costs substantially.⁶

Until the early 1950s the isolation of Churchill Falls, the climate, and the problems associated with shipping in the workers, machines and materials necessary for the project seemed unmanageable, despite interest in the 1940s from the Aluminium

⁵ Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), GN 2/5, file 196 A, Harry Crowe to William Halfyard, 16 November 1917; Crowe to Alexander Campbell, 31 October 1922 and 7 November 1922. For information on the bids to develop Bay d'Espoir in the late 1920s and 1930s see PANL, GN 2/5, file 507, W.J. Walsh to John Puddester, 31 October 1933. Cited in M. Baker, J. Miller Pitt, and R.D.W. Pitt, *The Illustrated History of Newfoundland Light and Power* (St. John's: Creative Publishers, 1990), 257-8.

⁶ Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation (CFLCo), *An Energy Giant: the Churchill Falls Power Development*, <http://www.k12.nf.ca/eglambert/energy.htm>. Accessed 5 October 2000.

Company of Canada (Alcan).⁷ European development of transmission lines capable of carrying higher voltages of electricity in the 1950s made it more economical to convey power over long distances.⁸ The opening of iron ore mines in western Labrador and north-eastern Québec and the construction of the Québec North Shore and Labrador Railway (1954) demonstrated it was possible to house a workforce and bring in supplies.

Joseph Smallwood advocated hydro development in 1931.⁹ In the 1949 election campaign Smallwood told voters that "cheap power is the foundation of any industry. Grand Falls and Corner Brook would never have amounted to anything without lots of cheap power. Newfoundland has been blessed with great water power. Most of it is running to waste. The Liberal Party will develop it."¹⁰ Upon becoming premier Smallwood continued his focus on hydro, using the lure of cheap power to woo industrialists. From 1950 to 1953 Alfred Valdmanis, Newfoundland's director-general of Economic Development, attempted to attract outside technical expertise and capital to develop Newfoundland's hydro potential. Smallwood wanted to build two new pulp and paper mills, and needed the timber and power from the Churchill River to make the projects economically feasible.¹¹

⁷ CFLCo, *The Churchill Falls Power Development Management and Construction Equipment*, 3. Presented to the Earth Moving Industry Conference of the Society of Automotive Engineers, 1972, Central Illinois by H.L. Snyder, executive vice president CFLCo and R.D. Boivin, vice president and project manager, CFLCo. Deposited in CNS.

⁸ For general overviews of the project, see Philip Smith, *Brinco: The Story of Churchill Falls* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975), 50-1 and Jason Churchill, "Political Pragmatism and the Failure of Confederation: Newfoundland's Struggle to Develop its Hydro Resources in Labrador, 1952-1988," MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 1997.

⁹ Joseph Smallwood, *The New Newfoundland* (New York: MacMillan, 1931), 94.

¹⁰ *Evening Telegram*, 16 May 1949.

¹¹ Gerhard Bassler, *Alfred Valdmanis and the Politics of Survival* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), 259.

Failing to find Canadian or American investors to facilitate the development of Labrador, Smallwood approached British investors. In 1952 Smallwood offered English industrialists "the biggest real estate deal of the present century" which could be "the beginning of England staging a very great industrial comeback" Smallwood persuaded a group of leading bankers and industrialists that Newfoundland needed help to develop those natural resources with potential. Envisioned along the lines of the Hudson's Bay Company, the British Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco) was formed by a consortium of investors led by the de Rothschild merchant bank. The de Rothschild's were joined by several other prominent businessmen renowned in their fields, including chair of mining company Rio Tinto (Vere Bessborough), the chair of diamond mine company Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa, chair of the Anglo Newfoundland Development Corporation (Lord Rothmere), chair of Bowaters (Eric Bowaters), and the chairs of English Electric and Frobisher Mining (the exploration arm of Ventures Ltd which owned Falconbridge Nickel).¹²

Brinco was granted exclusive timber, mineral and water rights for a 20-year period over almost 130,000 square kilometres in Newfoundland and Labrador. Brinco's concession included the right to develop the river systems in both areas. Under the terms of its agreement, Brinco agreed to carry out extensive exploration; should Brinco fail to

¹² Rio Tinto was a London-based mining company, one of the largest in the world, known for its copper and uranium mining. Richard West, *River of Tears: the Rise of Rio Tinto-Zinc Mining Co.* (London: Earth Island, 1972); Edmund de Rothschild, *A Gilt-Edged Life* (London: John Murray Publishers, 1998). In 1953 additional investors were added representing banking (Morgan Grenfell, Kleinworts, Hambros, M. Samuel, Schoders, Robert Beson Lonsdale, W.C. Pitfield and the Bank of Montreal), insurance companies, and industrialists (Imperial Chemical, Sogemines, and C.T. Bowring and Company). Each of the 24 shareholders pledged \$52,100 to defray the first five years exploration costs. Brinco's first chair was Bertie Gardiner, a former chancellor of

develop the land, it would revert back to the government. Brinco also had an obligation to proceed with due diligence to develop any resources that proved economical. In return Brinco promised to pay the government royalties on any project brought to fruition.¹³ In 1958 Brinco formed a subsidiary, the Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation to develop Churchill Falls. The initial shareholders were Brinco (70 per cent), Shawinigan Engineering (20 per cent), the Newfoundland government (5 per cent) and Rio Tinto subsidiary Rio Algam (5 per cent).¹⁴

With high unemployment, by the early 1960s the provincial government was desperate to use "cheap" hydro power to encourage secondary industries. "Cheap power" from Bay d'Espoir and Churchill Falls was to create jobs and foster spin-off development. Churchill Falls was initially viewed as capable of meeting the industrial needs of not only Newfoundland but also Québec and Ontario, which in the early 1950s were beginning to run out of easily accessible hydro power. Power retained in Newfoundland could be used to produce aluminum and other light metals, or to increase mining and pulp and paper production.¹⁵ Despite the offer of cheap electricity few new manufacturing plants moved into Newfoundland. Instead the power was used to expand existing mining and forestry operations, including the two pulp and paper mills whose own power stations were unable to meet their needs. In his examination of the Bay d'Espoir hydro project, Peter Crabb

McGill University and chair of the Bank of Montreal. See Centre for Newfoundland Studies Archives (CNSA), Smallwood Papers, Collection 075, 3.23.004, Churchill Falls 1965.

¹³ CFLCo, "The Origins of Brinco," 1970. On deposit in CNS and Froschauer, *White Gold*, 112.

¹⁴ Shawinigan Engineering was a subsidiary of the Shawinigan Water and Power Company, the largest privately owned utility company in Québec. With the buy-out of Shawinigan Water and Power by Hydro Québec after the 1962 provincial election, its share passed to the government.

¹⁵ All three industries required large amounts of power. Producing aluminum required eight times more power than refining a ton of iron ore. Establishing an aluminum smelter in Sept-Îles was discussed, but by 1957 a surplus of aluminum capacity made a new smelter unfeasible.

found that the government's "cheap power" policy only attracted one new company to Newfoundland, the Electric Reduction Company of Canada (ERCO).¹⁶ While the government anticipated receiving more in taxes and other benefits than it paid in power subsidies, returns from the ERCO development were relatively small given the amount of public funding provided to the project.¹⁷

To finance the billion-dollar Churchill Falls project, CFLCo needed a guaranteed market for the power. While several buyers were interested, Newfoundland needed to run transmission lines through Québec to reach them, something that required the consent of the Québec government.¹⁸ Québec insisted that the power be sold to Hydro-Québec before travelling through its territory. It wanted to use Churchill Falls and James Bay power to attract outside industrial development, while its other hydro projects would be

¹⁶ Crabb, "Cheap Power," 42-53.

¹⁷ ERCO received power at two and a half mills per kWh, roughly half of its cost at the time, for a period of 25 years in exchange for agreeing to locate on the Avalon Peninsula. From 1968 to 1971 ERCO received over \$10 million in electrical subsidies, and by 1973-74 the power subsidies for ERCO and the two pulp and paper companies was up to \$6.5 million per annum. The provincial government also provided a \$15 million bond issue while the federal government provided \$2 million for the road between the mill and local community. The federal government also provided the wharf facilities, and an additional \$5 million grant through the Area Development Incentives Act. Provincial budget speeches in 1969 and 1970 anticipated that from 1967 to 1986 seven new industries (including CbC oil refinery and proposed pulp and paper mill, the linerboard mill, saw mill and hockey stick plant in Stephenville, the forest products plant at Hawkes Bay and the elemental phosphorus plant at Long Harbour) would benefit from the cheap power subsidies and would net the Treasury over \$180 million. Newfoundland and Labrador, *Newfoundland and Labrador Budget* (St. John's: Department of Finance, 1969 and 1970). By 1980 the Newfoundland finance minister was protesting that subsidies to the three companies amounted to \$18 million per year and were hurting Newfoundland's credit rating. He also noted that unless ERCO was willing to share costs more reasonably, the Newfoundland government would have to introduce legislation requiring subsidized users to increase their share of electricity costs. Newfoundland and Labrador, *Newfoundland and Labrador Budget 1980* (St. John's: Department of Finance, 1980), 15.

¹⁸ Negotiations did not begin auspiciously as many Québécois viewed Labrador as a part of Québec. Ownership of Labrador had long been in conflict, one that appeared settled after the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council awarded Labrador to Newfoundland in 1927. In 1971, a

used to develop francophone industries within Québec. With no agreement in sight, in 1964 Smallwood explored the possibility of running the transmission lines through Newfoundland and the Maritimes in order to bypass Québec; the ultimate costs, however, were deemed too expensive. Smallwood also considered (and rejected) appealing to Prime Minister Lester Pearson to declare the project in the national interest. This would allow Newfoundland to run the lines through Québec without selling it the power.

In 1966 Hydro-Québec and CFLCo signed a letter of intent, outlining the deal under which Québec would purchase Churchill Falls power. This enabled CFLCo to arrange interim financing and start laying the groundwork for the largest civilian construction project in North America. CFLCo and Hydro-Québec signed the formal power contract in 1969, selling the majority of the power to Hydro-Québec for 65 years at a fixed price.¹⁹ Once Brinco signed the contract guaranteeing 90 per cent of the power to Hydro-Québec, power was no longer available to promote Newfoundland development. This was not what Smallwood originally had in mind when he originally attempted to lure in outside developers. Worth an estimated \$5 billion, at the time not everyone was convinced Québec had received the better end of the deal. Hydro-Québec arranged to sell the power to both Ontario and New York and to reap whatever profits, or losses, from the sales.

Hydro power was to turn Newfoundland from a resource dependent economy to an economy based on secondary manufacturing. In this it largely failed. Jacobs Engineering, commissioned to examine factors for new industry location in Newfoundland, recognized

Québec Royal Commission decided it was futile to reopen the boundary decision. Froschauer, *White Gold*, 115.

that "with few exceptions, the availability of low cost power is not going to be the single controlling point of competition for modern processing industries."²⁰ Hydro's promoters anticipated that hydro development would advance industrial diversification through forward and backward linkages. Backward linkages were to lead to new investments in input supplying facilities (such as the turbines, generators, and manufacturing needed to build the plant) while forward linkages were to lead to the increased use of electricity to manufacture finished products.

While Newfoundland tried to create many of the requirements for backward linkages with its small-scale secondary manufacturing program in the 1950s, little of the heavy construction equipment or other materials required were available within the province. While all Churchill Falls contracts had a preference clause written into them favouring materials manufactured, distributed or serviced in Newfoundland, by the end of construction, less than \$20 million of the total \$946 million in project costs (2 per cent) was spent in Newfoundland. Québec, with its more advanced technological capabilities, including the capability to manufacture the generators and turbines, won most of the bids.²¹

¹⁹ National Archives of Canada (NAC), CFLCo Files (MG 28), III, vol. 1, file 7. "Power contract Hydro-Quebec and CFLCo," 12 May 1969.

²⁰ Jacobs Engineering, "Preliminary Comment on Guideline Factors for New Industry Location in Newfoundland," (August 1967); and cover letter Stanley Kurgman, vice-president and General Manager, Jacobs Engineering to Marcel Goldenberg, Continental Ore Company, 11 August 1967.

²¹ CFLCo purchased aluminum conductors from Alcan's Stephenville plant totalling \$11 million, cement from North Star cement totalling \$2.5 million, and rebar from the Newfoundland Steel Company totalling \$2.3 million. NAC, MG 28, III, vol. 1, file 7. CFLCo, "Brinco in Newfoundland: A Summary," nd. NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 59, file 7. CFLCo, Minutes of Meeting, "Confidential Turbine and Generators," 9 June 1967; CFLCo, "Turbine and Generator Contract, Press Release Churchill Falls," 30 June 1967; Letter of intent signed by CFLCo President Donald McParland, re: "Churchill Falls (Labrador) Power Project and Supply of Turbines and Generators."

Not long after the Churchill Falls construction project was finished, the Newfoundland government began to entertain thoughts of developing the Lower Churchill River. To control the negotiation process, in 1974 the Newfoundland government purchased a controlling interest in Brinco.²² Newfoundland was determined that an agreement to develop the Lower Churchill would improve upon the conditions of the Upper Churchill agreement. The government was beginning to realize that as export prices rose, Québec reaped the rewards.²³ New premier Frank Moores also wanted a comprehensive approach to developing all the province's resources. He stated "indeed we are of the firm opinion that government ownership of Brinco is a necessary and fundamental step toward ensuring that this province will continue to be able to attract private enterprise in the future."²⁴

While the provincial government formed the Lower Churchill Development Corporation in November 1978, the project remained on hold until the mid-1990s. Newfoundland was unwilling to sign another agreement with Québec until the Upper Churchill agreement was renegotiated. Negotiations only resumed in the 1990s when the continentalization of electricity under free trade forced Canadian provinces to comply with American regulations to export electricity to the U.S. U.S. regulations mandated that utilities had to open their transmission grids to competitors at rates set by regulators. As most of Hydro-Québec's portion of the Churchill Falls electricity was transmitted to

²² Controversy continued to plague the Upper Churchill Falls contract. When the government attempted to buy power to meet its growing industrial needs, it learned that the Hydro-Québec contract remained paramount, despite its new ownership. Newfoundland was only eligible to purchase the electricity produced that was surplus to the Hydro-Québec commitment.

²³ Québec's share of the Upper Churchill has amounted to \$800 million per annum; 96 per cent of profits. "Power Struggle," *Canadian Geographic*, <http://www.cangeo.ca/ND98/churchill.html>. Accessed 20 February 2001.

the U.S., this meant that Hydro-Québec had to allow other provinces to transmit power through Québec. Newfoundland at last could export power through Québec without first selling it to them. In response premiers Lucien Bouchard and Brian Tobin met to negotiate an agreement to develop the Lower Churchill. While initially it looked as if these negotiations would prove successful, Québec withdrew from the project in 2000.

A Petrochemical Industrial Complex: Come by Chance

In the late 1960s and early 1970s Newfoundland promoted itself to industrialists as having all the ingredients for industrial expansion: "great natural resources in fish, forestry and minerals, including offshore oil and gas potential, ample supplies of low cost electricity, magnificent spacious harbours and port facilities, a strategic position in the Atlantic basin within easy reach of great world markets, hard working people and facilities to train them, and people to help in planning and establishment; [and] a stable Government ever ready and willing to assist in any way it can, including generous inducement programmes."²⁵ One area identified for development was Come by Chance on the Avalon Peninsula. Come by Chance's accessibility by rail (the Canadian National Railway), by road (the Trans Canada Highway) and by water (deep ice-free harbour) made it an ideal location for Smallwood's proposed third pulp and paper mill. Come by Chance had been home to several sawmills during the late 19th century and was part of a forested tract of land that spread from Bay d'Espoir to Gander which was thought to offer some of the timber needed for the pulp and paper mill.²⁶

²⁴ Cited in Smith, *Brinco*, 375.

²⁵ Advertisement, Newfoundland and Labrador Government, in "Report on the Atlantic Provinces," *Financial Post*, 19 June 1971.

²⁶ A.K. Dyer, and A.W. Robertson, "Forestry," in *Encyclopedia of Newfoundland and Labrador*, vol. Two (St. John's: J.R. Smallwood Heritage Foundation, 1984), 303.

From 1950 on, Smallwood viewed the construction of a third pulp and paper mill as the crown jewel in his development plans. Pulp and paper had long maintained a special status in Newfoundland's development policies. After earlier development programs failed, Smallwood wrote that his determination to build a third mill only increased.²⁷ In 1959 Smallwood proposed that American firm Crown Zellerbach build a pulp and paper mill in Come by Chance, a proposal that failed to materialize. Throughout the 1960s Come by Chance's strategic location and natural harbour led the government to promote the site as viable for a pulp and paper mill.²⁸ The deep water harbour was a plus as it would allow for transportation of products to markets in the American Eastern Seaboard. In 1961 Smallwood began negotiations with a second U.S. company, Shaheen Natural Resources, to build a pulp and paper mill in the area. In 1962 Newfoundland Pulp and Chemical Company, a subsidiary of Shaheen Natural Resources (SNR), announced it was spending \$52 million to build a pulp and paper mill, a project that also failed to materialize.

A 1965 consultants' report suggested that Come by Chance was a good location for Newfoundland's third mill. It argued that:

experience throughout Canada has shown that industries thrive best in relatively large urban centres where agglomeration economies occur. Such urban centres form concentrations of available labour from which industries can draw their workers, and, when urban centres contain a number of different industries, they offer reasonable economic security in that the workers of an enterprise which is failing have an opportunity to find alternative employment in a local enterprise which is expanding.²⁹

²⁷ Joseph Smallwood, *I Chose Canada* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), 438.

²⁸ See, for instance, the report by Sandwell and Company, *Come-By-Chance Newsprint Mill Technical and Economic Study*, 1968, 1-8.

²⁹ Project Planning Associates Ltd., "Come-By-Chance Area Development Study, Preliminary Report," December 1965, 5. On deposit in CNS.

The consultants' report fit in with the government proposal to build strategic growth centres around Newfoundland and Labrador.³⁰ In response, the government purchased 3000 acres of land around Come by Chance in 1965 and announced that United Paper Mills of Finland would be operating the pulp and paper mill. After the Finnish deal was cancelled in 1966, Shaheen Natural Resources announced it would build the paper mill.³¹

The Newfoundland government agreed to give John Shaheen financial support to build the mill in 1966. Shaheen was an American industrialist whose company, Shaheen Industries, had built the Golden Eagle oil refinery in Holyrood. Alongside the mill Shaheen suggested building a petrochemical complex, including a 100,000 barrel per/day oil refinery and an ammonia plant. The timing behind the Shaheen proposal was impeccable as with the closure of the Harmon Air Force base in Stephenville, the announced closure of the Bell Island mine, and the end of construction projects at Bay d'Espoir, Churchill Falls and Long Harbour, Smallwood was desperate to create new jobs.³²

³⁰ By 1968 the region around Come by Chance had already succeeded in attracting a phosphorous plant to Long Harbour in addition to the proposed mill. Another growth centre, Stephenville attracted a magnesium hydroxide plant (1968), a linerboard mill (1972), a brewery (1968), fishmeal plant (1969), and a dairy (1968) by providing buildings, formerly part of the U.S. Air Force base at Harmon Field, at nominal rents. Industries locating in both Stephenville and Come by Chance were given provincial tax exemptions, reduced electricity rates, and guaranteed bond issues. In addition, the provincial government floated loans to help raise operating costs for industrialists in both areas. Wells, "Regional Economic Impact of Two Growth Centres," 3.

³¹ Anhydrous ammonia was the basic nitrogen ingredient of most chemical fertilizers. Lawrence Felt and Roger Carter, "The Impact of the Provincial Refining Company (PRC) Oil Refinery at Come-By-Chance, Newfoundland Upon its Environment: A Social and Economic Assessment," unpublished report, October 1980, 17. Felt and Carter were hired as consultants to Petro-Canada as part of the decision whether or not to reactivate the refinery in the early 1980s.

³² Michelle McBride, Gregory Kealey, and Sean Cadigan, "Jobs at any Cost," in R. Ommen, *The Resilient Outport* (St. John's: ISER, 2002).

Representatives from the government met with the upper echelon of Shaheen Resources to discuss building a petrochemical complex. The government's first priority was to ensure employment opportunities for Newfoundlanders. To provide a large number of jobs meant developing not just the core petrochemical plant but also satellite plants that would use manufactured chemicals or raw materials to produce consumer goods.³³ Both the government and SNR recognized that satellite plants would only develop if the core industry were large enough to supply the intermediate products with enough of a volume to make it profitable to locate in that area. A 1967 Boni, Watkins, Jason and Co. report found that "the building of a new petrochemical complex is almost invariably followed by the contiguous construction of similar type process units. The concentration of process units enables the initial effort to yield greater value, making the most of the duplication of efforts it entails."³⁴ If the refinery, as the core industry, provided a large enough volume of feedstock, it could provide an attractive incentive for satellite plants to locate nearby.

The consultants' reported "the basic concept is to consider Come by Chance and its surrounding area as an industrial park utilizing the refinery as the principal raw material supplier."³⁵ For instance, phosphorus from the proposed elemental phosphorus plant could then be turned into phosphoric acid, used in fertilizers and detergents.

³³ Labour force requirements for the satellite plants were estimated at 1300 permanent jobs, while the paper mill and timber cutting would need 1200 and the refinery 600. An additional 5000 workers were projected for any consumer goods processing plants, which were thought likely to develop after the satellite plants. Constructing the petrochemical complex required an aggregate of 10-13 million person hours. Boni, Watkins, Jason and Co., *Labor Force Requirement: Petrochemical and Industrial Complex, Come by Chance, Newfoundland*. 8 January 1968, 18-21. On deposit in CNS.

³⁴ Boni, Watkins, Jason and Co., *Labor Force Requirement*, 18.

³⁵ Boni, Watkins, Jason and Co., *Labor Force Requirement*, 1.

Fertilizers and natural gas (from the refinery) could then be used to partially support an ammonia plant. The oil refinery would also provide the raw resources (ethane, propane or naphtha) for the ethylene and polyethylene facility.

The initial plan for the construction called for the government to establish a series of crown corporations to build the refinery (Newfoundland Refining Co.), the pulp and paper mill (Newfoundland Pulp and Chemical Co.), and the ammonia plant (Newfoundland Ammonia and Refining Co.). Shaheen and Smallwood hoped that satellite industries, service and maintenance companies, would move in once the petrochemical park was constructed. Newfoundland Refining Company vice-president Otto Lessing reported that once operational, the refinery (at 35 million barrels per year) and pulp and paper mill (at 200,000 tons newsprint production) would increase the value of the output of Newfoundland's resources by 25 per cent or \$125 million.³⁶ Another benefit to the petrochemical complex was that the industry in the late 1960s was continually growing. Petroleum products accounted for over 60 per cent of the value of all chemical products in the U.S. in 1967. One drawback was its high costs. The Boni, Watkins and Jason report claimed the initial investment was among the highest of any industry in the world. Each new job created in the production phase was estimated to require between \$50,000 and \$100,000.³⁷

Smallwood loved the idea of a starting a petrochemical industry with high spin-off potential, particularly after the proposed pulp and paper mill was put on the back burner.

³⁶ Mineral production was valued at \$400 million, forestry at \$60 million, and fishing at \$40 million. Otto Lessing, "The Effect of Newfoundland Refining Company's Come by Chance Development on the Canadian Petroleum Industry," Speech to the Conference of Propane Gas Association of Canada, Calgary. 17 April 1969, 1-2. On deposit in CNS.

³⁷ Boni, Watkins, Jason and Co., *Labor Force Requirement*, 2-3.

After completing some of the mill buildings, the paper mill was largely abandoned, due in part to insecure wood supplies and government reluctance to subsidize road construction. The ammonia mill was also largely abandoned in 1969, but as late as 1973 both projects were still being discussed.³⁸ Smallwood was impressed by Shaheen, including his wartime service in the Office of Strategic Services and his friendship with prominent American politicians. He later wrote: "bringing John Shaheen and his team of fine men to Newfoundland was one of my proudest triumphs."³⁹ Shaheen was equally impressed with Smallwood and Newfoundland. He described Newfoundland:

under Premier Smallwood's dynamic leadership, [as having] instituted many programs of betterment, including greatly improved educational facilities, a network of new roads and strong governmental support of the development of the natural resources of the province and the encouragement of industry. As a consequence, ... many former Newfoundlanders who had migrated are returning to fill the job opportunities opened by the rapidly increasing industrialization of Newfoundland.⁴⁰

The SNR report also praised "the enormous strides made in the educational system [which] ensures a good supply of intelligent and efficient workers." The report continued: "a new trade and technical college is available close by and... will provide a trained work force to meet the growing industrial needs of the province. In fact, the government has agreed to provide free training schools for any new industry." SNR described the various

³⁸ S.S. Peters, "Memo to the Honourable Aidan Maloney re: Meeting held February 21, 1968, to discuss the Sandwell Report and other Industrial proposals at Come by Chance and Stephenville." 27 February 1968; and Anon., "Draft Memo to JMS." 8 March 1968 (both on deposit in CNS). In July 1971 the House of Assembly gave the Newfoundland Pulp and Chemical Co. a year's grace for completing the paper mill. "Newfoundland News Highlights," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, 24 July 1971, LXVIII, 1 (Spring 1971). In August 1971 Smallwood announced that Shaheen would build two pulp and paper mills at Come by Chance, each with a daily capacity of 2000 tons. "Newfoundland News Highlights," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXVIII, 2 (Summer 1971).

³⁹ Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*.

provincial government departments as "at all times ready to assist in every way possible to further projects leading to an improvement in the economy."⁴¹

The province delegated responsibility for supervising construction and managing the refinery to the Newfoundland Refining Company (NRC). Headed up by Shaheen, NRC was a subsidiary of Shaheen Natural Resources Co., based in Illinois. SNR was a leveraged holding company with holdings in 36 separate companies.⁴² Site preparation for the refinery began in 1968. Construction of the oil tanks, capable of holding seven million barrels of crude, was started in spring 1969. Work on the construction camp began early in 1969, with the hopes that some of the housing planned for operating staff would be ready for management personnel during construction. By October 1971 nine tanks were under construction, as were the pipes, which would carry oil to the tanks.⁴³

To help get the project off the ground, the provincial government promised the refinery power at a rate of two and one half mills, a rate half the production costs. It also

⁴⁰ Shaheen Natural Resources Company, Inc., "Newfoundland," cited in Harvard University, "Manufacturing Policy," 14.

⁴¹ Shaheen Natural Resources Company, Inc., "Newfoundland," 15.

⁴² Shaheen later sold the company, including the Holyrood refinery, to Ultramar. He also controlled the Macmillan Ring-Free Oil Co., a refiner and marketer of gas, jet fuel, asphalt, and lubricating oils in Canada and the United States. Macmillan owned two refineries in the United States, one on the West Coast, the other in Eldorado, Arkansas. SNR also owned radio and television stations in Honolulu, Syracuse, and New Orleans; Can-Amera Export Refining Co., a development company with oil reserves in the Athabasca tar sands of northern Alberta and offshore oil rights off Newfoundland; the Max Waller Co., a Baltimore heating oil marketer; and the Canadian-Caribbean Oil Co., a holding company with stock, real estate and mortgages which operated as the chief borrowing agent for SNR. Shaheen was in the news in 1965 when Octane Oil, an SNR subsidiary, unsuccessfully attempted to purchase part of J. Paul Getty's company, Tidewater Oil. See "Shaheen: a man of action and thrust," *The Daily News*, 10 October 1973 and Harvard University, Graduate School of Business Administration, Final Examination, "Manufacturing Policy," 4 January 1968.

⁴³ Otto Lessing (VP Newfoundland Refining Company), "The Effect of Newfoundland Refining Company's Come by Chance Development on the Canadian Petroleum Industry," Speech to the Conference of Propane Gas Association of Canada, Calgary, Alberta. 17 April 1969, 3 and "Construction right on schedule at Come by Chance refinery," *ET*, 21 October 1971, 3.

provided a \$5 million loan to Shaheen, leading to the resignations of John Crosbie and Clyde Wells from cabinet.⁴⁴ Further controversy erupted over the provincial government's use of crown corporation status. To help fund the project and provide it with federal tax exempt status, the Newfoundland government formed a crown corporation through which it provided a 15-year loan of \$30 million. Once SNR repaid the loans the government gave it the option of purchasing the refinery for \$1,000 (later increased to \$10 million after protests erupted).⁴⁵ In February 1970 the Federal Public Works Minister Arthur Laing added to worries when he stated that the federal government would like to see SNR invest a greater percentage of the capital necessary for the refinery before the federal government would pay for the docking facilities.⁴⁶

After several years of wrangling, the federal Department of Public Works paid to build the \$20 million wharf. The Newfoundland government was to repay the federal government by levying user charges. In July 1971 provincial opposition members gave the Come by Chance financing legislation a rough ride when they realized that the

⁴⁴ John Crosbie, *No Holds Barred* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997); Michael Harris, *Rare Ambition: the Crosbies of Newfoundland* (Toronto: Penguin, 1993); and Claire Hoy, *Clyde Wells: a Political Biography* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1992).

⁴⁵ After Canadian oil companies protested the Newfoundland government's use of crown corporation status, the federal government changed the legislation over crown corporation status to forbid its usage when a private company holds the purchase option from the start. "Notes and Comments on Come by Chance," Broadcast over CBC Radio, February 1976, reprinted in *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXXII, 3 (1976), 3, Harold Horwood, *Joey* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1989), 273 and Smallwood, *I Chose Canada*, 477.

⁴⁶ SNR also took advantage of the federal Area Development Incentives Act that provided grants to manufacturing and processing firms installing new facilities in designated areas across Canada, including large portions of Newfoundland. Under the Area Development Incentives Act, SNR could receive a cash development grant and tax deferrals in the initial years by way of accelerated depreciation rates on new machinery, equipment and buildings. The Development Grant would provide 33 per cent of the first \$250,000 worth of new machinery, equipment and buildings, 25 per cent of the next \$750,000 of such costs, and 20 per cent of any additional costs for machinery, equipment and buildings, up to a total of \$5 million. Government of Canada, *Area Development Incentives Act*. PC 1965-1395 (Ottawa 1965).

financing agreement with the British banks necessitated materials and food used in the construction phase be purchased from England and shipped to the site. Hence, Procon of Great Britain was given the \$155 million contract to build the refinery in August 1970.⁴⁷ Further problems arose in February 1972 when Federal Fisheries and Environment Minister Jack Davies rang alarm bells by stating that the plans submitted by Come by Chance developers did not contain sufficient safeguards against pollution. Environmental protection was a particularly sensitive question in the area. In February 1969 thousands of dead fish washed ashore on the beaches of Arnold's Cove after a spill at the nearby ERCO phosphorous plant in Long Harbour.⁴⁸

The petrochemical complex marked one of the first attempts to develop an industry in Newfoundland that was not dependent on local resources (crude oil was shipped in from Venezuela and the Persian Gulf). In the end only the refinery was built and it went on to have a troubled operational history, including labour problems and shutdowns. Upon completion of the refinery, the newly elected Frank Moores government offered Shaheen a second refinery deal, with an additional 200,000 barrel capacity.⁴⁹ With the new agreement Shaheen assumed responsibility for the government guarantees on the first refinery. When the refinery declared bankruptcy in 1976, this proved to be a blessing.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ "Newfoundland News Highlights," *Newfoundland Quarterly*, 2 February 1970, LXVII, 4, (Spring 1970) and "Newfoundland News Highlights," 21 July 1971, *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXVIII, 1 (Spring 1971).

⁴⁸ "Newfoundland News Highlights," 12 February 1969, *Newfoundland Quarterly*, LXVII, 1 (Spring 1969).

⁴⁹ The October 1971 election saw the defeat of the Smallwood government after over 20 years in power. Interview with the premier, *The Daily News*, 10 October 1973.

⁵⁰ By February 1976 the refinery was in severe financial straits, with the company on the verge of bankruptcy. The bankruptcy was caused by a series of factors: the massive fluctuations in crude

After the shutdown, Petro-Canada purchased the mothballed refinery and maintained it until its sale in 1986 to Newfoundland Processing Ltd. (NPL) for \$1 and a limited competition clause. NPL immediately began to prepare the refinery for reopening, with help from the provincial government who agreed to pay for the pollution clean-up of two on-site areas. Problems continued to plague the refinery; during NPL's refit the contractor refused to recognize the union's successor rights, leading to protests outside the refinery.⁵¹ While the refinery was operational once again in September 1987, a fire and explosion in the first month caused the refinery to shut temporarily. Another explosion and fire in April 1994 led to the refinery being shut for three months. In August 1994, NPL sold the refinery to Vitol Holding BV subsidiary Vitol Refining S.A. With the purchase, the refinery was renamed North Atlantic Refining Ltd. (NARL). Under Vitol the refinery was overhauled and reopened in November 1994. Despite subsequent labour, environmental and safety problems and yet another change in ownership, the refinery remains operational.

oil prices brought on by the Arab-Israeli war and its after-effects; the imposition of U.S. government import restrictions on all non-U.S. refiners; the cancellation of U.S. airline contracts; the British Petroleum contracts which had the refinery purchasing crude oil for \$1 more per barrel than they could sell the refined product; technical problems which prevented the refinery from producing higher end products, and repeated labour relations problems. Gardiner-Pinfold Consulting Economists, *Comparison of Major Construction Projects and Offshore Hydrocarbon Developments in Atlantic Canada* (Calgary: Infopall, 1985), 60.

⁵¹ Problems arose almost immediately as the main contract for repairs to the refinery was awarded to Marco Ltd, a non-union company, which refused to honour collective agreements negotiated by previous owners. Union trades workers responded by blocking the entrance to the refinery on 13 January 1987 and demanding unionized workers be hired. Over 1000 construction and building trades workers held a one-day protest across the province in a show of support. The IBEW and the OCWU claimed they maintained successor rights with each sale since the closing in 1976. The issue went before the Labour Relations Board who agreed that the union agreement with Petro-Canada was binding on Newfoundland Processing; however, it only covered maintenance workers. An employee vote was ordered with certification rights granted in 1991.

The refinery's failure did little to douse the provincial government's enthusiasm for large-scale projects. While the 1986 *Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment* stated mega-projects alone would not solve the province's economic woes, the government continued to look to mega-projects as the engine of economic development.⁵² In the 1980s and 1990s it was offshore oil and nickel mining. Much like earlier mega-projects, offshore oil was viewed as "having the potential to cure un- and underemployment, to stem out-migration, to bail out cash-strapped governments, and to provide new business opportunities for local people."⁵³

Creating an Offshore Oil Industry

Petroleum became an important energy source after the discovery of vast new supplies in the early 20th century. By the early 1920s petroleum was the fuel of choice for much of the North American economy.⁵⁴ While many consider the oil industry in Newfoundland a recent phenomenon, it dates back to the late 19th century. John Silver undertook initial oil exploration on the west coast of Newfoundland, in the Parson's Pond area (near Gros Morne).⁵⁵ Three other men held claims in the area over the next 20 years but little was developed until 1894 when the Newfoundland Oil Company, composed of a group of St.

⁵² The Royal Commission recommended a more integrated approach to social and economic development, combining a modified 'small is beautiful' approach with the more traditional mega-projects approach. See J.D. House, *Against the Tide: Battling for Economic Renewal in Newfoundland and Labrador* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 6.

⁵³ House, *The Challenge of Oil: Newfoundland's Quest for Controlled Development* (St. John's: ISER, 1985), 1.

⁵⁴ Joseph Pratt, "The Ascent of Oil: the Transition from Coal to Oil in Early Twentieth Century America," in Lewis Perelam, Gus Giebelhaus, and Michael Yokell, eds., *Energy Transitions: Long-Term Perspectives* (Boulder, Co: Westview Press, 1980) and Pratt, "Letting the Grandchildren do it: Environmental Planning during the Ascent of Oil as a Major Energy Source," *The Public Historian*, 2, 4 (Summer 1980), 28-61.

⁵⁵ Brian Bursey, "Petroleum Exploration and Development," in J. Smallwood, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1993), 267-272.

John's merchants, staked claim to the area. One developer after another attempted to develop the stake but each was plagued with problems.⁵⁶ From 1919 to 1926 an English company, General Oil Fields Ltd. operated the site, including an on-site refinery. This refinery supplied residents along the west coast with kerosene and gasoline. Unfortunately, low quantities caused them to abandon production. Since 1926 entrepreneurs have searched the West Coast for oil, including in the 1960s and the 1990s, so far with limited results. In the 1930s the search for oil turned to the offshore.

Since the late 1930s, various U.S. government departments and multinational corporations have dominated the development of Canada's offshore resources. American interest in mineral resources off Eastern Canada dates back to 1878 when the U.S. Fisheries Commission asked fishermen from Gloucester, Maine to bring back rock samples picked up during trawls off the east coast. From 1878 to 1936 the 'fishing stage' of research was quite successful and geologists concluded that the Eastern Canadian continental shelf was a submerged extension of the American Atlantic coastal plain. When the U.S.-based Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute determined in 1936 that the Eastern Canadian continental shelf contained oil-bearing sediments, the U.S. government became increasingly interested in Canadian waters.⁵⁷ From 1948 to 1961 the American Lamont Geological Observatory conducted sedimentary surveys across the Georges Banks, the Scotian Shelf, the Laurentian channel, and the Grand Banks. These surveys

⁵⁶ Wendy Martin, *Once Upon a Mine: the Story of Pre-Confederation Mines on the Island of Newfoundland* (Montréal: Canadian Institute of Mining and Metallurgy, 1983), 42-43. Local legend has it that Parson's Pond got its name from a local known for using the oil that seeped out of the rocks to ease his rheumatism. These stories attracted the first drilling in the area.

⁵⁷ Robert Nishman, "Through the Portlights of the *Ocean Ranger*: Federalism, Energy, and the American Development of the Canadian Eastern Offshore, 1955-1985," MA thesis, Queen's University, 1991, 76.

confirmed that the sediments were similar in composition to those found in the oil rich Gulf of Mexico. Throughout the 1960s the U.S. Geological Survey, the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, the University of Massachusetts, the U.S. Naval Oceanographic Office, and the U.S. Joint Oceanic Institutions for Deep Earth Sampling (JOIDES) explored the Grand Banks, the Scotian Shelf, and the Laurentian channel.⁵⁸ The JOIDES program began drilling on Orphan Knoll (roughly 320 miles northeast of Newfoundland) in 1970 and was the first to demonstrate the feasibility of drilling off Newfoundland. Data from U.S. governmental agencies provided both geological and technical knowledge that U.S. multinationals, with their large capital bases, were quick to exploit.

Corporate offshore oil exploration began in Eastern Canada in 1942 when Mobil Oil began drilling in the Maritime Basin off Prince Edward Island. Soon afterward, Mobil abandoned this site to explore the Scotian Shelf. Mobil was the main company involved in East Coast exploration during the 1940s and 1950s. Development of the eastern offshore remained slow until the early 1960s when Shell's request to the federal government to lease 20 million acres around the Scotian Shelf prompted an exploration flurry. By the end of the 1960s much of the Scotian Shelf, Grand Banks, and Georges Bank were under lease, largely to U.S. multinationals.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ D.F. Sherwin, "Scotian Shelf and the Grand Banks," in R.G. McCrossan, ed., *Future Petroleum Provinces of Canada* (Calgary: Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists, 1973), 521-22.

⁵⁹ Within a few years of the initial discovery of petroleum reserves in Alberta (1947) the oil industry was largely foreign-controlled, predominantly by American companies. In 1980, 70 per cent of Canadian oil production was carried out by foreign companies (49 per cent American, 21 per cent other foreign) including Mobil Oil, Imperial Oil (a subsidiary of Exxon), Texaco, Shell, and Gulf. These oil companies were the key landholders, explorers, producers, marketers, and owners and operators of both refineries and pipelines across Canada. Multinationals were able to maintain their dominance over the energy industry because they controlled much of the technology and research and development; they already controlled the market (an oligopoly); and

Disputing the federal government's jurisdiction, the Newfoundland government began issuing its own permits for offshore exploration in June 1963. In February 1965 Newfoundland granted a 30 million-acre concession to Octane Oil. This large land grant heightened the federal-provincial jurisdictional dispute as the provincial permit to Octane overlapped federally claimed areas. The federal government also worried that one of the permits would raise jurisdictional problems with France as it was in an area potentially under the jurisdiction of St. Pierre and Miquelon. From 1964 to 1972 permits were issued by both governments at such a rapid rate that by 1972 leases covered the continental margin as far as 425 miles off Newfoundland's eastern coast.⁶⁰ Before the issue was settled, BC and Newfoundland both ended up in court fighting the federal government, supported by Québec, Manitoba, and Nova Scotia.⁶¹

Canada was quite slow to recognize its offshore hydrocarbon potential. Only in 1955 did the Dominion Observatory and Nova Scotia Research Foundation undertake a geological study of Sable Island and not until 1958 did the Geological Survey of Canada begin investigating Eastern Canada's continental shelf. Pressured by U.S. multinationals, in 1969 the Canadian government began its own studies on the Scotian Shelf, Grand

because of the huge financial barriers to entering the industry. Wallace Clement, "Debates and Directions," in Clement and Glen Williams, eds., *The New Political Economy* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1989), 47 and Jorge Niosi, *Canadian Multinationals* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1985), 35-42.

⁶⁰ In April 1965 the Newfoundland government passed the *Petroleum and Natural Gas Act* which gave the Lieutenant-Governor the power to prohibit any drilling offshore Newfoundland without a provincial permit, license or lease. For oil companies this necessitated obtaining both federal and provincial leases. Nishman, "Through the Portlights of the *Ocean Ranger*," 157-8.

⁶¹ The federal government referred the BC case to the Supreme Court of Canada. The federal government was worried that the provinces were attempting to carve up Canada to suit their own interests. They also worried about the border implications provincial ownership of the offshore might create, including rewriting provincial boundaries, boundaries with the US, and native claims.

Banks, and Labrador Shelf. In the early stages of offshore oil exploration, federal policy development and regulatory powers were fragmented, with the federal Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources responsible for much of the duties. Northern Affairs, however, appeared more concerned with asserting federal claims over the offshore and in hastening development than in regulating the offshore. In addition to Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, the Department of Mines, Energy and Resources (MER), the Department of National Defence (DND), the Canadian Coast Guard, the Department of Transport, and the Department of Fisheries all had some say. In 1966 the federal government attempted to rationalize energy policy into one department, Mines, Energy and Resources.

Until the early 1960s all regulatory initiatives originated with requests from industry. In 1960 the federal government set up the *Canada Oil and Gas Regulations*, establishing an administrative structure for the offshore. The early 1960s were pivotal as they marked the beginnings of Canada's offshore regulations, under Prime Minister Diefenbaker's National Oil Policy. As the Canadian government's strategy was to encourage rapid growth of the offshore, it attempted to make investment in the offshore as attractive as possible. The government felt the industry might languish without these incentives, given the inhospitable climate, the oil glut on the world market, and the federal government's inadequate geological knowledge of the offshore resources. The Canadian offshore permit system differed greatly from its American counterpart. In the United States oil companies underwent a sealed competitive bidding process to lease

relatively small portions of lands (on average 25 square kilometres). In Canada, permits were granted on a non-competitive basis with few requirements for Canadian content.⁶²

Throughout the 1970s provincial and federal goals became increasingly divergent. Newfoundland wanted a slower pace of development than either Ottawa or the industry to allow Newfoundland companies an opportunity to ready for job opportunities. The 1973-1974 international oil crisis marked a turning point for federal and provincial government involvement in the offshore. As oil prices skyrocketed, the federal government became increasingly interested in ensuring Canadian energy self-sufficiency. With the energy crisis of 1973-1974 and the subsequent push for energy self-sufficiency, the federal government began the push to "Canadianize" the industry through price freezes, financial incentives, the construction of a pipeline, and the creation of Petro-Canada.⁶³ The 1973-4 oil crisis also encouraged the Newfoundland Department of Mines and Energy to undertake an economic analysis of the potential profitability from offshore oil, the results of which encouraged development of an offshore oil industry.

In 1977 Newfoundland established a more comprehensive provincial regulatory regime, the *Newfoundland-Labrador Petroleum Regulations* (NLPD) under *An Act*

⁶² To get around the Canadian participation clause in the new regulations, which included restricting leasing to Canadian-owned firms or foreign-owned firms in which Canadians were given the opportunity to invest, US multinationals established Canadian subsidiaries. Canadian leases for much larger parcels of land, averaging 2000 square kilometres, were significantly cheaper (in Canada companies paid \$0.20 per acre per annum while in Norway companies paid \$9 per acre), and were for much longer initial periods, 21 years up to the mid-1970s (when it was reduced to 5 years).

⁶³ Petro-Canada owed its existence to Ottawa's frustration that frontier resources were not developing fast enough, to the OPEC crisis (1973-1974), and to the realization that US multinationals were dominating the industry. Economic Council of Canada, *Petro-Canada: Its Role, Control and Operations* (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1988), 1-4 and John Fossum, *Oil, the State, and Federalism: the Rise and Demise of Petro-Canada as a Statist Impulse* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 152.

Respecting Petroleum Regulations, when it became clear that political negotiation would not solve the jurisdictional dispute over offshore resources. Economic motivations and the desire to give Newfoundland the majority of benefits from offshore oil production fueled the 1977 regulations. The Newfoundland Act was predominantly concerned with funding and leasing issues with the underlying purpose to assert the provincial claim over the offshore.⁶⁴ Newfoundland's regulatory regime was patterned on the North Sea model, which was a clear rejection of proposed federal regulations that favoured an American system of regulations (following the example set in Alberta). Neither Ottawa nor industry was pleased with Newfoundland's regulations; Ottawa wanted a more rapid extraction system to help it meet its federal supply objectives.⁶⁵

The Newfoundland regulations stalled activity off the province's coastline. Companies already uncertain over jurisdictional disputes were increasingly unhappy with the new regulations and the power they allotted the province. Two projects were suspended, Eastcan's exploration off Labrador and the Shell-Petro-Canada Scotian Shelf exploration. When drilling resumed in 1978 it was under increasing federal subsidization. In the 1978 budget Ottawa announced its super-depletion policy that granted corporate tax incentives, including the ability to write-off up to two-thirds of offshore exploration costs in their federal taxes.⁶⁶ The federal government also began to allow farm-ins, wherein a lease-holder could lease their lands to another company. The other company would assume the drilling costs for a percentage in future returns. The

⁶⁴ Nishman, "Through the Portlights of the *Ocean Ranger*," 162.

⁶⁵ Fossum, *Oil, the State, and Federalism*, 174.

⁶⁶ Fossum, *Oil, the State, and Federalism*, 98-99.

Canadian government promoted these measures in an attempt to have offshore resources developed as quickly as possible.

From 1978 to 1982 the Eastern Canadian offshore was influenced by federal government efforts (U.S. and Canada) to promote the development of continental shelf resources. The U.S. developed a continental energy policy to ensure that an adequate energy supply was available to fight the Cold War. During the 1979-80 international oil market upheaval, the Canadian government again intervened in the oil industry, regulating prices, introducing the National Energy Program, and attempting to decrease the influence of both the provincial governments and multinational corporations.⁶⁷ The 1979-1980 crisis was precipitated by the Iranian Revolution (1978-1979) and the subsequent Iran-Iraq war which hastened the breakdown of the oil industry's vertical integration structure, and caused the relationship between oil-exploiting states, multinationals, and oil-importing states to change dramatically. In effect, the role of multinationals was reduced as several oil-exporting states began to deal directly with (or to choose not to deal with) oil-importing states. Oil supplies were reduced drastically,

⁶⁷ The National Energy Program (NEP) was introduced in 1980. Trudeau opposed efforts to consolidate North America's energy reserves into a continental pool, and wanted to assert federal control over energy resources. The NEP represented a challenge to both provincial governments and multinational oil companies as it revoked established industry rights and encroached on areas under provincial jurisdiction. It aimed to achieve self-sufficiency in oil production and 50 per cent Canadian ownership levels in offshore resources by 1990. It included a Petroleum Incentive Program which gave incentives to Canadian-controlled firms in lieu of the old depletion allowances, and a "back-in" clause which would allow the Crown to take a 25 per cent stake in oil and gas discoveries on Crown lands without compensating the corporations involved. Ironically, Petro-Canada's push to open frontier access allowed joint-partnerships with the multinationals whose power the federal government was attempting to mitigate. The NEP faced problems in 1981 after the price of oil failed to rise as anticipated and the government was forced to lower some of the tax and price regulations. A combination of intergovernmental competition, the power of the oil multinationals, and the 1984 election victory of Brian Mulroney resulted in the dismantling of the NEP. Petro-Canada was later privatized. See Fossum, *Oil, the State, and Federalism* and Economic Council of Canada, *Petro-Canada*, 19-21.

causing prices to spiral upwards. In Canada and the U.S. this sparked an increased demand for state-sponsored searches for oil. The 1979 Hibernia discovery intensified American interest in Newfoundland's offshore, but it simultaneously increased concerns in the Trudeau government over U.S. domination.

American corporate expertise, capital, technology, geological knowledge and a weak regulatory regime (both federal and provincial) allowed the multinationals to set the development pace. Both the federal and provincial governments were forced to scramble to set up regulatory systems in response to American pressure to open the offshore. These issues combined to create a weak offshore regulatory regime that resulted in tragedy. After the Hibernia discovery in 1979 a consortium of American multinationals (Gulf, Chevron, Columbia Oil and Gas, and Mobil) initiated an extensive drilling program to delineate the size of the reservoir. Three drilling platforms were in the area, including the *Ocean Ranger*. Launched in 1976, the *Ocean Ranger* was the largest self-propelled mobile offshore drilling unit in the world. On 14-15 February 1982 during a winter storm, the *Ocean Ranger* sunk, with all 84 crew on board lost. Inquiries into the tragedy determined that despite being in Canadian waters, few safety regulations were in place and even fewer were monitored. The platform was not under certification in Canada (it was certified by the U.S. Coast Guard), nor did the Canadian or Newfoundland governments attempt to inspect it.⁶⁸

Newfoundland was desperate to develop its offshore as it looked to the offshore as the mega-project to help it escape its "have-not" status. A 1980 federal government report

⁶⁸ For more on the tragedy see Sue Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations in the Newfoundland Offshore Oil Industry Since the Ocean Ranger Disaster in 1982," *New Solutions: A Journal of*

described the discovery and development of oil and gas off Newfoundland's shore as carrying with it the possibility of turning Newfoundland into a "have" province. Despite these hopes, the first major project (Hibernia) did not get underway for another decade due to jurisdictional wrangling and falling oil prices.

In July 1988 Brian Mulroney, Brian Peckford, and members of the Hibernia consortium signed a statement of principles to proceed with the development of the Hibernia project. Announcing the deal, Peckford stated:

to the life of every generation there comes a turning point – that before and after – that everyone marks as a great watershed. For our ancestors, those great turning points would have been the gaining of representative government in 1832 and responsible government in 1855. For our parents those great turning points would have been the two great wars and Confederation... I believe that in normal times the signing of the Atlantic Accord on February 11th, 1985, would have been for this generation a great before and after point.⁶⁹

Peckford described the other governments in the western world as standing transfixed by the benefits of cheap oil, "like a rabbit in the headlights of a car" with himself and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney attempting to develop an insurance policy for depleting oil reserves. According to Peckford, the offshore meant a whole new economic chapter for not only Newfoundland but for Canada as a whole, much as the Leduc discovery in Alberta was in 1947. He went on to predict that "the next generation of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians will be free once and for all; free from that agonizing choice to stay in poverty or to leave for prosperity; free from having to leave home, leave family and go off to live in another part of this world to earn a living." While Peckford realized this would

Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, 10, 1-2 (2000); and Nishman, "Through the Portlights of the *Ocean Ranger*".

⁶⁹ Statement by Honourable A. Brian Peckford, "The Hibernia Agreement," St. John's, 18 July 1988. On deposit in CNS.

not happen overnight, he claimed it would start in the months ahead as Hibernia got underway.⁷⁰ To help get the project underway and to ensure that most of the jobs and benefits accrued to Newfoundland, the provincial and federal governments gave numerous financial concessions to the project owners.⁷¹

Conclusions

The main purpose of this chapter was to introduce the political and economic significance of the three case studies that make up the evidentiary backbone of my thesis. In turn, each project was promoted as *the* way to modernize. With high unemployment levels, the provincial government promoted using “cheap” hydro power to encourage the development of secondary industries. Exploiting Newfoundland and Labrador’s water potential, “cheap power” from Churchill Falls was to create jobs, foster spin-off development, and to turn Newfoundland from a resource dependent economy to an economy based on secondary manufacturing. In the early 1970s, the provincial government switched its focus to creating a petrochemical industrial complex in Newfoundland. It hoped that by building a petrochemical base, vertical integration from industries requiring oil and its by-products would result. In the 1980s and 1990s offshore

⁷⁰ Peckford, “The Hibernia Agreement,” 6.

⁷¹ The federal government agreed to contribute up to \$1.04 billion in financing, a grant equal to the lesser of 25 per cent of pre-production capital expenditures and \$1.7 billion in loan guarantees to the Project owners. If in the repayment period of the loan guaranteed by the federal government the price of oil dropped beneath \$25 US/barrel, the federal government also promised an interest free loan of up to 50 per cent of the monthly interest payments to the consortium, not exceeding an overall total of \$300 million. The provincial government waived the PST on production start-up expenditures attributable to the project. They also agreed that the PST would be levied at 4 per cent, instead of 12 per cent, on remaining project operating costs. As well, the provincial government provided a tax credit on corporate income tax payable to the province. It also waived royalties on the initial stages of the project. Joint government funding of \$95 million was also provided by the Canada Newfoundland Offshore Development fund towards the construction facilities at Bull Arm. Wade Locke, *Economic Issues Related to*

oil was to become the engine of economic growth. With the creation of an offshore oil industry, the government envisioned becoming the Alberta of eastern Canada and anticipated a reduction in unemployment and out-migration. While none of these projects brought the desired results, each one created thousands of jobs in their construction phases and did add a considerable boost to the province's economy, although in the case of Come by Chance, it took several decades for this to become apparent. In chapter four we will turn our interest to the types of jobs created in the construction of these projects.

Chapter 4: The Lure of Industrial Construction

Introduction

To examine the human consequences of the government's modernization program, this chapter focuses on the work lives of construction workers. In the late 1960s thousands of construction workers moved to central Labrador to begin work on the largest construction project of its time in Canada, the Churchill Falls hydro project. Employees on site worked in over 200 different job classifications from construction worker to engineer, from teacher to traffic officer.¹ After five years of non-stop fieldwork, at a peak of 6000 workers on site, on 6 December 1971 the first two generating units delivered power. With all the generators operational, Churchill Falls ceased to be a construction site.² Only a few years later, many of the same construction workers, joined by local workers, gathered outside of St. John's to begin construction on the Come by Chance oil refinery. Building the refinery resulted in 4000 person years of employment over three-years. Twenty years later in the same area, thousands more construction workers gathered to start work on the Hibernia offshore oil production platform. Hibernia required 7000 workers over seven years.³ These three projects rank among the largest construction projects in Newfoundland and offer us a window into Newfoundland's construction workers.

Construction projects in Newfoundland often meant poor weather, long hours of work, seasonal unemployment, isolation from friends and family, and dirty, often

dangerous work.⁴ And yet workers entered construction in droves, making them the first line on Newfoundland's modernization front. Workers were drawn to construction by external factors such as high unemployment levels and a lack of other job options, government promotion of construction, and the increasing provision of training programs. Workers were also attracted by relatively high wages and the provision of corporate welfare programs on many of the larger projects.⁵

Part I: Overview of Industrial Construction Industry

The construction industry was (and still is) faced with seasonal fluctuations and a cyclical business cycle, which lead to demand instabilities in the industry. Having a smaller volume of construction than other mainland centres, Newfoundland contractors rarely offered year-round employment to workers. Each site was a constantly changing mix of firms and employees. Unlike the traditional labour relations model where a relatively stable group of employees worked for one employer in one location, in construction a shifting collection of workers moved from employer to employer and from

³ Hibernia Management Development Company, *Economic Benefits from the Hibernia Construction Project: Summary* (January 1996), 3. As of April 1996 Newfoundland had garnered a 63 per cent share of direct employment, which equated to 18,100 person years of work.

⁴ Weather played a large role in construction's seasonal nature and added to the sense of isolation in remote areas. Churchill Falls also faced extremely cold temperatures that made winter work difficult. The Falls are located 650 miles north west of St. John's, and 700 miles north east of Montréal. CFLCo, *Churchill Falls Power Development Management and Construction Fauinment*. 18.

job to job.⁶ In any given year workers were employed by several contractors. Workers were hired on a per-project basis. Industrial construction projects were undertaken by a contractor who contracted out work to a number of subcontractors, each with their own workers. Subcontractors were forced to specialize to compete in the type of construction (industrial, commercial or residential) and at the trade level in one trade.⁷

Workers in industrial construction had to be mobile, willing to move wherever the next project was. Given the short construction season in Newfoundland, and the short life of most projects, many workers were forced to leave the province for work. One author described the job uncertainty workers faced, "any one job for the construction worker is short and fleeting and he must be prepared to be highly mobile, shifting from project to project across a wide geographic area."⁸ Hence, each project necessitated assembling a new labour force. Unemployed construction workers were constantly engaged in job negotiations with their local manpower offices, their unions or contractors to find new employment. Given its relatively small workforce, skilled workers in Newfoundland knew and were known by most of the contractors, foremen and supervisors, and traditionally, hiring was based on personal relationships. Workers entered the construction industry through family and friendship networks.

⁶ In 1968, the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation was appointed to examine the effectiveness of existing labour legislation and to propose new legislation to meet the needs of the province with

Table 4-I: Numbers of Workers Engaged in Construction

Place of Residence	All Industries #	Construction #	Construction %
Canada			
1951	5,286,407	321,245	6.1
Male	4,123,270	315,669	7.7
Female	1,163,137	5576	0.5
1961	6,471,850	438,554	6.8
Male	4,705,518	427,679	9.1
Female	1,766,332	10,875	0.6
1971	8,626,925	538,220	6.2
Male	5,665,715	511,940	9
Female	2,961,210	26,280	0.9
Newfoundland			
1951	106,411	5,472	5.1
Male	89,384	5,426	6.1
Female	17,027	46	0.3
1961	112,310	9,588	8.5
Male	88,702	9,489	10.7
Female	23,608	99	0.4
1971	147,990	15,535	10.5
Male	107,175	15,165	14.1
Female	40,815	370	0.9

Source: Statistics Canada, Labour Force 15 Years and Over by Industry Divisions and Sex for Canada and the Provinces, *1971 Census of Canada*, 94-739, Table 1.

Considerable monthly variations occurred in construction employment, with peak

months, 9 per cent from 10-11 months, the remaining 55 per cent for less than 9 months of the year. Despite a winter employment scheme, employment was down from 1966 when 40 per cent of carpenters worked less than 9-10 months. Electricians and plumbers, with lower rates of unemployment, faced rates of over 25 per cent unemployment for four or more months in 1968.¹⁰ To cope with unemployment and other problems, many Newfoundland construction workers organized into trade unions early on, bricklayers and plasterers in 1896 and others in the first decade of the 20th century. Most of Newfoundland's building trades unions were affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL).¹¹

After a downturn in organizing in the mid-1920s and 1930s, construction unions underwent a renaissance in the late 1930s when bricklayers, masons, carpenters, painters, plumbers and pipefitters all increased their membership.¹² Membership growth continued throughout World War II and into the post-Confederation surge of industrial development.¹³ In 1949 construction union membership was 1200, a figure that rose to 3000 by 1958 and to 3500 by 1968. By 1968 roughly 40 per cent of the industry was

¹⁰ Maxwell Cohen, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's 1972), 129. While the total federal employment levels varied by 11.5 per cent between the low and high employment periods, in the construction industry employment varied by as much as 55 per cent

unionized, the majority in industrial construction.¹⁴ Twelve unions – ten international, and two independent unions the Electrical Workers Union and the Newfoundland Painters Protective Union – represented Newfoundland construction workers. Many construction unions also represented other workers, including the carpenters (loggers), ironworkers (machine fabricators), and the electrical workers (light and power workers).¹⁵

To deal with organizing on a project-by-project basis, Newfoundland construction unions attempted to obtain bargaining rights for geographic locations, not just individual projects. Geographic bargaining was one way to stabilize terms of employment, including wage rates, and to remove wages from the competitive bidding process.¹⁶ By the late 1960s only three unions had provincial jurisdiction: the International Association of Bridge, Structural, and Ornamental Iron Workers (IAB), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), and the United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipefitting Industry (UAPP). Other building trades unions had varying jurisdictions, some in St. John's only, others in the Avalon Peninsula, Corner Brook, Grand Falls, and Stephenville.

Workers in industrial construction had permanent relationships with their unions, not their employers. Unions often played the role of employment brokers, collected employment information, and distributed work. In many parts of Canada, unions handled

hiring on larger sites. Under such closed shop provisions, unions dispatched workers upon demand to contractors.¹⁷ Closed shop hiring, however, was not prevalent in Newfoundland. Where skill level or experience were in question, as contractors believed they were in Newfoundland, closed shops were strongly resisted. In two of the larger projects in the late 1960s and early 1970s, Churchill Falls and Come by Chance, hiring was handled through on-site contractors and Canada Manpower. Despite not regulating hiring, unions in Newfoundland still played an important role. They ensured minimum wage rates were paid and prevented contractors from cutting wages to lower their bids, both of which had a stabilizing effect on the industry. Unions, especially in the electrical and mechanical trades, also set up "industry funds" where, under the collective agreement, money was set aside for training and safety.¹⁸

Construction unions faced considerable challenges in organizing workers, including the short-term nature of construction sites. By the time many unions succeeded in an organizing drive, projects were in the finishing stages. Given the large numbers of contractors and subcontractors, unions were not always clear whom to target in their organization attempts. The constant turnover in workers also made organizing problematic. Workers who signed union cards might no longer be on site by the time of a ratification vote. Craft lines also meant that several different unions were attempting to unionize one site. Such jurisdictional disputes have played an enduring role in the

construction industry. The application of new materials and technology often increased the number of jurisdictional disputes as one craft lost work to another union.¹⁹

In the mid-1960s both building trades unions and contractors formed their own organizations to give their members a more united voice. Building trades unions formed the Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council (NLBCTC) while contractors formed the Newfoundland-Labrador Construction Association (NLCA). Composed of thirteen unions, the NLBCTC affiliated with building trades unions across Canada and the U.S.²⁰ Its principal aims were to improve workers wages and working conditions and to advance the construction industry through lobbying for improvements to the Labour Relations Act, the Industrial Standards Act, workers compensation, and health and safety legislation. The NLCA was created in reaction to a dramatic increase in construction certification applications in the late 1960s as many unions that had

¹⁹ "Huff and Puff, but the Houses Won't Blow Down," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 10. As reinforced steel and concrete replaced wood as the dominant construction material, ironworkers and others have replaced carpenters causing a shift in power among unions. From 1951 to 1961 carpenters in Canada dropped from 24.6 to 19.7 per cent of the construction workforce.

²⁰ After leaving the Canadian Labor Congress, in 1982 the NLBCTC joined with other dissident building trades unions to form the Canadian Federation of Labor. Problems between the building trades unions and the CLC erupted in the late 1970s as 13000 IBEW linesmen and electricians seceded from the IBEW to form an independent union after being told contributions to the international pension fund would be compulsory. Despite rules that affiliates of building trades councils must be members of international unions, the independent locals continued to sit on the CLC Building Trades Council. Degenerating into a pro- and anti-Washington debate, in

previously operated under voluntary recognition pushed for certification.²¹ The NLCA aims were to negotiate on behalf of individual firms in a trade and to synchronize collective bargaining to have agreements end on the same date. When agreements ended on different dates collective bargaining was continuous and as one union garnered concessions, other unions used that settlement to leverage more favourable terms. By the early 1970s seven of the building trades unions signed contracts with the NLCA.²²

Two firms accounted for one-third of all construction activity in Newfoundland in the 1960s, while another 10 medium-sized firms accounted for another one-third of construction activity.²³ Small firms carried out the final third, most in residential construction. Mainland contractors were often used in larger projects, in part because of their ability to arrange financing, their familiarity with technical needs, and their possession of equipment. In peak periods in the 1950s and 1960s demand for contractors was high and there were few barriers to establishing a construction firm. In the early 1960s local firms began taking an increasing share of projects as the government issued an edict that construction companies from outside the province had to use local labour and materials wherever available and of suitable quality.²⁴

During the 1960s and 1970s construction workers gained experience at projects in Churchill Falls (1967), Wabush, Labrador City, Come by Chance (1970), and

²¹ The Construction General Labourers' Back and Tunnel Workers local 1208 obtained recognition

Stephenville (1970). Combined, these projects constituted an abnormally large volume of construction.²⁵ On large-scale projects, most owners turned to international contractors. To provide engineering and construction management, the Churchill Falls Labrador Company (CFLCo) hired Acres Canadian Bechtel (ACB) in 1964. Acres was an engineering firm based in Niagara Falls, which had undertaken Alcan's initial survey of Churchill Falls and had worked on many of Canada's hydro-electric projects. Bechtel had experience in constructing oil refineries and pipelines across Canada and had worked on the Iron Ore Company's mining operations in Labrador.²⁶

Part II: External Factors Which Drew Workers to Construction

Starting in the 1960s the government advocated that workers turn to construction for employment. With the start of Churchill Falls, the Newfoundland government released radio ads suggesting that workers consider construction as an occupation, and work at Churchill Falls in particular. As Newfoundland's industrial construction workforce was relatively small, project managers envisioned many workers from the mining and fishing industries could be transformed into construction workers. Who were the workers employed on Newfoundland's large-scale projects? Most were men between 20 and 50 in age. Many were Newfoundlanders. On the Come by Chance project, many of those hired

²⁴ R. Hayward, "Construction Industry," in R.I. McAllister, ed., *Newfoundland and Labrador, The First Fifteen Years of Confederation* (St. John's: Dicks and Co., 1966), 155.

as labourers had previously worked as casual labourers in construction, cartage, or on government projects.²⁷

The government ensured that many of the new construction jobs were filled by Newfoundland workers. As the Newfoundland government owned much of the land the large-scale projects were built on, it had the authority to insist that companies implement local hiring provisions. In the case of Churchill Falls, CFLCo agreed to a Newfoundland hiring provision that required the "provision of employment opportunity for Newfoundland residents to a maximum extent compatible with their qualifications with the aim of providing a broader base for future economic development of the area."²⁸ The Newfoundland government kept a careful eye on hiring at Churchill Falls, set up provincial recruitment centres to compile lists of workers available for work, and regularly contacted CFLCo to find out why workers were being hired outside of Newfoundland.²⁹ Contractors were required to submit labour requisitions to the St. John's CFLCo office to find qualified Newfoundland workers, which in turn contacted provincial recruitment centres and Canada Manpower Offices around the province to

²⁷ Labourers performed any work not assigned to trades workers, including loading or unloading materials, pouring concrete, shovelling snow, and digging trenches. Unlike other trades, labourers were not required to have a certificate of competence or any tools. CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.009. "Trade Specifications and Job Descriptions," 3-5. In October 1971, Homer White, president of the Newfoundland Refining Company (NRC) claimed that 94 per cent of the workforce was Newfoundlanders. White worried that it would be difficult to get enough skilled labour for the next phase. To meet its needs, NRC trained local workers. L. Felt and R. Carter,

furnish workers.³⁰ When workers were not available in Newfoundland, contractors were free to hire them from elsewhere, with next priority to residents of Québec.

Local labourers did much of the work on all three projects. On the Churchill Falls project, 70 per cent of the trades workers were drawn from Newfoundland and Labrador, 26 per cent from Québec and 4 per cent from elsewhere. Only 37 per cent of non-manual labour was recruited from within the province, the rest were brought in, especially engineering and construction supervisors, from Québec and the U.S. Workers complained that jobs unfilled in Newfoundland were being filled in Québec by workers without the appropriate skill level. CFLCo promised to investigate the situation, and, if confirmed, to end it. CFLCo president, Donald McParland ordered confidential spot checks on workers qualifications to ascertain if different standards were being accepted.³¹

The provincial government also played a role in promoting hiring of Newfoundland workers for Hibernia. It pushed for a gravity-based system (GBS) for the offshore platform, as it would entail a larger number of jobs in the construction phase. In exchange for the GBS, both levels of government offered project owners considerable

²⁹ CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.009, Letter from Franklin Colbourne to Smallwood, 26 September 1967; 3.23.007, Memorandum, "Re: Churchill Falls Hiring," from Gordon Pushie to Smallwood, 24 February 1969; Memo, Minister of Labour Keough to Smallwood, 26 February 1969.

³⁰ Canada Manpower referred workers to the provincial recruitment centre which then referred them to the site. Not everyone was happy with the use of recruitment centres. MP John Lundrigan (PC) charged that the recruitment centres were open to political interference and decried their use of name hiring. (Name hiring was when the contractors asked for specific

financial concessions. Under the Atlantic Accord and the site collective agreement, Newfoundland workers received preference for both project-related training and hiring.³² Bringing in outsiders, however, continued to be a problem at Hibernia. The Oil Development Council (ODC) charged that management maintained the attitude that locals were incapable of completing the more skilled work required. In one case, sub-contractor Kenonic Controls hired outside workers to do work the IBEW thought local electricians were qualified for. When the grievance went to arbitration, the HMDC claimed the grievance was a non-issue as they had already met all local labour requirements and could hire anyone they wanted. Kenonic Controls claimed that there were no qualified local workers available and that it was now too late to include local electricians.³³ While the HMDC suggested bringing in outside workers led to an increase

³¹ CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.009 and Newfoundland Statistical Agency, *Total Persons Hired, 1967-1974*. (June 1980). CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.007. Memo from W.J. Keough to the Premier, 26 February 1969 and Letter from Donald McParland to Smallwood, 28 April 1969.

³² Unlike earlier projects, Hibernia employed a union hiring hall. Hiring took place through the local union offices, where members in good standing prior to 5 July 1990 received work priority. Anyone who joined the union after that was given seniority after they attained two years work within the union. Many local residents complained that uncertainty about the project's future meant they had not joined the union by the deadline and were put at the bottom of the hiring list. Others complained they could not afford union fees, which ranged up to several hundred dollars. Others complained of nepotism in union referrals, charging that only family members of existing union members were gaining access to the jobs. The unions denied this, claiming their hiring was done on a first-come, first-serve basis. "Row erupts over Labour deal," *Globe and Mail*, 10 August 1988; "Thousands scramble for few Hibernia Jobs," *Globe and Mail*, 4 October 1990; "Hibernia Hiring Hurdles," *ET*, 9 January 1991; "No guarantee of local jobs on GBS work, Wells states," *ET*, 17 January 1991; Chris Flanagan, "Too late for Hibernia work," *ET*, 17 March 1996. Despite the unions' denials, a study by Women in Trades and Technology (WITT) reported that

in technology transfer, the IBEW was sceptical as it believed the Newfoundland workers were more skilled than the so-called specialists. Several other trades also complained of problems with the hiring of outside experts.³⁴

The specific requirements of each site required different balances of trades. At Churchill Falls, heavy equipment operators and electricians were among the most sought after workers. Ironworkers, particularly riggers and scaffolders, boilermakers, pipefitters, welders, and insulators were the main trades needed at the refinery. Ironworkers and operating engineers were among the trades in highest demand at Hibernia.³⁵ Many of the jobs involved in industrial construction were outside the norm of "typical" construction. At Churchill Falls, workers were as likely to have mining backgrounds as construction.³⁶ Mining techniques were required to build a mile long tunnel 1000 feet below the surface to give access to the power station. Sinking the shaft, for instance, involved workers

Bernie Bennett, "Local workers 'robbed' of Hibernia jobs," *ET*, 19 October 1996; Bennett, "Hibernia hiring practices under the gun again," *ET*, 2 November 1996; "Hibernia boss insists local labour getting fair share," *ET*, 28 November 1996; John Murphy, "Hibernia Hiring report doesn't satisfy union," *ET*, 12 December 1996; and Gary Hebbard, "IBEW counters Hibernia defence: Technology Transfer not happening," *ET*, 23 October 1996.

³⁴ Canadian divers were upset when an all-Italian dive team was hired to install Hibernia's pipeline system. Local divers and others pressured both the provincial and federal governments and Immigration Canada initially refused to issue work permits. In an effort to prevent delays, Hibernia management offered to hire one Canadian diver in an observation role. After three weeks of negotiations, however, the HMDC was forced to hire ten Canadian divers for surface jobs to get the work visas for the Italian divers. Chris Flanagan, "Divers won't take the bait," *ET*, 10 June 1997; and Flanagan, "Hibernia diver dispute solved," *ET*, 26 June 1997.

³⁵ In the first year of construction welders were needed to weld over 5000 tons of steel into the

drilling holes vertically, loading them with dynamite and blasting them. In a typical day building the penstock tunnels, workers would drill pilot holes upward from access drifts, using platforms on monorails bolted into the rock to reach the site. Workers on the hydraulic platform completed scaling, while other work crews laid rail behind the drills.³⁷

Charlie Anfossi was one of the earliest workers at Churchill Falls, arriving in Labrador from Montréal for the construction of the railway and staying for the construction of the Twin Falls hydro project. Anfossi was at Churchill Falls for the start of the Bridge Camp. He recalled that the camp was over-crowded, often with five to six men to a two-person room. Overcrowding resulted in new workers staying in the "honeymoon hotel," a plywood surveyor's shack. Problems quickly mounted at the early camps, including losing water, light or heat. He claimed "it wasn't unusual then to have the first man up in the morning go down to the Churchill River and cut a hole in the ice so we would have water for coffee."³⁸ Many of the miners saw work at Churchill Falls as a way to get ahead financially, to provide for their families.³⁹

³⁷ "Churchill Falls Hydroelectric Project is a Record-Breaker Above and Below Ground," *Construction Methods*, LII, 5 (May 1970), 65-7 and "How's Business, Mr. Scarabelli," *Churchill Falls News*, 20 September 1969.

³⁸ "Meet Charlie Anfossi," *Churchill Falls News*, 21 March 1970. For more on the early days at Churchill Falls see National Archives of Canada (NAC), MG 28, Churchill Falls Collection, III, 73, vol. 49. Acres Canadian Bechtel, "Weekly Field Progress Reports," December 1963-April 1964. See also H.I. Snyder, "Construction Summary," 19 April 1964.

Professionalization of Skills/Training Programs

To help attract workers and to ensure they met required skill levels, government-run vocational schools offered construction trades training. Initially apprenticeship training was only conducted at the St. John's Vocational Institute but by the early 1960s the program spread to Stephenville, Deer Lake, Corner Brook, Argentia and Bell Island.⁴⁰ In 1961 the provincial government announced plans to build twelve new vocational schools, aided in part by the signing of an extended federal Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act (1960). Each school had a slightly different curriculum; for instance, Gander was given aircraft maintenance by dint of having the international airport and Burin was given refrigeration as it was home to a major fish plant. Due to the closing of the Stephenville Air Force Base (U.S.) and to the need for trained workers for Churchill Falls, Stephenville became home to an Adult Education program (literacy and basic education) and a Heavy Equipment school.⁴¹

⁴⁰ The Vocational Institute offered training in construction, auto mechanics, and marine and navigational engineering. Day classes in trades training (9 months), evening classes, apprenticeship training, and training in navigation and marine engineering were all offered. Workers attempting to upgrade their skills attended evening classes. Vocational training programs were quite popular with students desperate to find work and by 1959 over 6000 workers had received some form of training from the Institute. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), GN 66-2-E (Department of Career Development), 7-5-4-3, volume 2, Reports -- Vocational Education. General Comments on Vocational Education 1958-9; Anderson, "Vocational Education in Newfoundland," 81; and Frank Templeman, "Vocational

Apprenticeship training was key to landing a skilled position in construction. Apprenticeships lasted four years, and during each year – often in the winter when work was scarce – apprentices spent six weeks in the classroom. Once the classroom portion was complete, apprentices wrote a journeyman's exam (up until the mid-1970s journeymen were men).⁴² Over 70 per cent on the exam meant they were eligible to practice in all provinces, 60-69 per cent enabled them only to practice in Newfoundland. Each union maintained its own ratio of apprentices to journeymen, with carpenters and bricklayers using low apprenticeship ratios to restrict membership. Not surprisingly, many unions were opposed to having an oversupply of trained workers available, as it would potentially drive down wage rates. With high demand for workers in the late 1960s and early 1970s many companies hired apprentices who had not yet finished their training and other workers of unknown skill as journeymen to solve their short-term staffing problems. Once paid journey wages workers became part of the union, making it difficult to entice workers to take pay cuts to return to apprenticeship programs.⁴³

Part of the push for training was industry's demands for workers and apprentices to labour on the construction of several large-scale projects, including Churchill Falls. The government feared that industrialists would not invest in Newfoundland unless there were trained workers to build and run new industries. Prior to the start of Churchill Falls,

military building at Blouantville to process them for work on the refinery. "It's beginning to

the government worried it could not supply the required trades workers. While a large number were being trained, the Minister of Labour was concerned that CFLCo would refuse to accept applications from Newfoundlanders still in training. He suggested that to entice CFLCo to accept the trainees, the government should consider establishing in-school training and on-the-job supervision of apprentices on the project.⁴⁴ While CFLCo was also worried about a lack of skilled workers, the recent increase in vocational and technical education in Newfoundland was seen as a plus, as was the ensuing completion of the Bay d'Espoir hydroelectric project.⁴⁵

Despite the increase in training programs, many contractors continued to complain about workers' low skill levels, even among those who completed government training.⁴⁶ Contractors complained of carpenters unable to carry out rough work, and of masons who were really labourers. A lack of qualified supervisors exacerbated the problem and led to strained relationships on many projects.⁴⁷ Productivity rates were deceptive as some companies maintained a small cadre of skilled workers on payroll year round to prevent them being hired away. In slack times companies paid a small number of workers for

⁴³ *Report on the Construction Industry*, 133-43.

⁴⁴ CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.009. Labour Minister C. Wells to Smallwood, 8 November 1966.

⁴⁵ CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.004, Churchill Falls 1965. Donald McParland, *Churchill Falls Power Project: An Address to the Professional Engineers Association of Newfoundland*, 19 November 1965, 25.

⁴⁶ One contractor claimed that it took workers in northern Newfoundland 1.8 hours to complete a task it took a worker elsewhere only an hour to do. Contractors repeatedly mentioned four main

non-productive time, lowering productivity rates. Many contractors claimed Newfoundland construction workers lacked initiative with one report complaining "there is a tendency to resist the tempo and pressures of activity that are common in many other parts of Canada."⁴⁸ Some contractors blamed the attitude on more senior men who worked on wartime projects where work was often stretched as long as possible. As James Overton pointed out, such explanations were ideologically derived. Overton argued that claiming attitudes towards work were different in Newfoundland allowed government and business to blame workers for underdevelopment.⁴⁹

In an effort to improve skill levels, in 1963-4 the College of Trades and Technology began offering construction technician training programs. Unions too recognized the need for increased skill levels and began offering upgrading courses for journeymen in the early 1970s, with the carpenters and the plumbers and pipefitters leading the way. At the same time, MUN's Engineering department included a cooperative construction engineering program. Post-graduate degrees were also offered in the Engineering department for a Masters of Engineering in Construction Project Management, a program started in January 1970.⁵⁰

Lack of Other Job Options

Not all of Newfoundland's industrial construction workers seemed to make a

work. In many cases, wives attempted to help their husbands with their job searches. Part of the job search included approaching premier Smallwood or other officials for help. As early as January 1965 letters started arriving at the Premier's office asking for work at Churchill Falls. Newfoundland workers who had moved to Ontario to find work and wanted to return home wrote many of the other letters. All implored the premier to help them obtain work on the project. By 1967 the government had received over 1500 applications for employment at Churchill Falls.⁵¹ Others, needing employment, converged on new projects in hopes of being hired. At Come by Chance this included two high school students who had decided not to return to school after Easter break in hopes of landing jobs on the site. The two 17 year olds wanted to make sure they were among the first in line when hiring began. Only day hiring was done on site, longer-term hiring was done through the Canada Manpower offices. That did not stop 50 men, and two lines of cars extending from the camp gate to the Trans Canada highway, two miles away, from waiting in line to fill out applications.⁵²

Other workers, desperate to obtain employment, claimed expertise contractors did not believe they possessed. Problems arose at Churchill Falls when several workers arrived for skilled positions but appeared not to have the prerequisite skills.⁵³ Other

⁵¹ See CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.009, Re: Churchill Fall Labour, for copies of the letters.

⁵² Manpower gave priority to workers living within a 2.5-mile radius of the site. With the

employees bore the brunt of management suspicions over skill levels as management began to test workers' skills as soon as they arrived on site. Workers were upset at having to retake competency tests in Churchill Falls that they had passed in St. John's. Those that failed the second test were offered work as labourers or were sent home at their own expense. As many who failed the test had passed courses in heavy equipment operation at the vocational schools, there was considerable resentment against both the company and the schools.⁵⁴

To get on the Churchill Falls site many workers accepted jobs in lower trade classifications than they occupied, hoping that on site they would be in a better position to take more advanced jobs. Once on site many insisted they be transferred to jobs in their field, and as laying them off and paying their expenses home was costly, in some instances they succeeded. In a case that went before the site's Select Committee on Labour, one worker accepted a position as a labourer but upon arrival at the site started looking for work as a linesman. Upon finding an opening with another subcontractor, he indicated to the subcontractor that they could expect little useful work from him and asked for a transfer. While the subcontractor agreed to the transfer, the site authorities refused to allow it. While job-hopping was expected on site, taking employment without

intending to engage in it was not.⁵⁵ Other workers responded to poor working conditions and isolation by simply walking away from their jobs. Given Churchill Falls' isolation – only accessible by air – management was determined to lessen labour turnover as much as possible. Hence when workers insisted on leaving the site to find other work, the company brought it to the government's attention. In a letter to the premier's special assistant Max Button, one contractor reported that several workers were "voting with their feet" and demanding to return home.⁵⁶

Part III: Internal Factors which Drew Workers to Construction

Higher Wages

Many workers chose construction work as it paid higher wages than other jobs available in the area. Construction wages across Canada rose rapidly in the 1950s and 1960s. Wage rates for labourers' rose from 87 cents an hour in 1952 to \$1.35 in 1959. Crane operators' rates rise from \$1.45 to \$1.92 over the same period. By 1959 structural steel workers were the highest paid construction workers at \$2.22 an hour, followed by bricklayers and plumbers \$2.10, and electricians \$2.05, reflecting the changing needs of

⁵⁵ CNSA, Collection 075, 3.23.007. Letter from D.J. McParland to Smallwood, 8 May 1969. At Hibernia, employers implemented a 30-day waiting period before an employee could leave one contractor and be hired by another. When the policy failed to act as a deterrent, the period was changed to six months. Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Environment and Labour, Arbitration Files, Arbitration 96-112, Subject: Wrongful Dismissal, 31 December 1996, 13.

⁵⁶ The letter reported that four truck drivers had walked off the job, abandoning their vehicles, when they decided they wanted to return home. The workers refused requests asking them to

construction and the demand for certain trades. In 1960 labourers were the lowest paid construction workers in Newfoundland, making \$1.45 an hour. Structural steel workers were the highest paid construction workers at \$2.30 an hour, followed by bricklayers, plumbers, and electricians at \$2.15. By 1969 labourers wages had risen to \$1.99, bricklayers to \$3.11, plumbers to \$3.31 and electricians to \$3.33. Overall construction wages rose by 67 per cent from 1961 to 1969.⁵⁷

Wages were divided into apprenticeship and journeyman rates. The carpenters' union initially had a wage classification scale based on skill but discontinued it supposedly because "the majority of workers fell into the lowest category and they [the carpenters union] thus dictated a change in policy."⁵⁸ Despite the increases, wage rates in Newfoundland were significantly lower, and increased at a slower rate, than in Halifax, Québec City, and Toronto. Wage rates for bricklayers, carpenters, painters, plasterers, plumbers, sheet metal workers, truck drivers and labourers were lower in St. John's than Halifax, the second lowest paying city surveyed. Only electricians in St. John's made more than their Halifax counterparts, in 1964 electricians in St. John's made \$2.57 an hour compared to \$2.53 in Halifax. In Montréal and Fort William prevailing wage rates for electricians were \$3.05, a sum that rose to \$3.88 an hour in Toronto.⁵⁹

Strong demand for new construction projects, increased skill and training levels, and cyclical unemployment all increased wage demands. In peak construction periods in the late 1960s and early 1970s many trades faced a scarcity of skilled workers. Scarcity of labour allowed unions to demand higher wages. Skills shortages were a problem at Come by Chance where a welder shortage delayed construction on several occasions. Employers were also worried about a potential loss of workers to the Stephenville Linerboard Mill which offered scheduled overtime.⁶⁰ Some contractors responded to the skills shortages by bringing in workers from outside the province. One contractor brought in masons from Scotland. Masonry workers were in high demand in the early 1970s, with apprentices being promoted to journeymen before their training was completed. The high demand resulted in masons being paid higher than union wages.

As a large part of the Come by Chance project consisted of mechanical work, comprising electricians, ironworkers, and pipefitters, all trades with low unemployment, workers at Come by Chance were able to demand higher wages.⁶¹ Using occupational histories from 282 workers employed in both the construction and operation of the refinery, Felt and Carter found that the average wage paid prior to working at Come by Chance was \$4600, a figure that rose to \$7100 in the construction phase. The increase in wages led to an increased consumer purchasing power as evidenced by new cars and coloured televisions that appeared in the town.⁶²

Work Schedules

Another way the main Churchill Falls contractor (ACB) helped prevent labour turnover and shortage problems was to formulate construction schedules in such a way as to spread out manpower demands. To help reduce the numbers of workers needed – saving on transportation and living costs – and to help maximize production, management implemented a standard ten-hour shift on site.⁶³ Longer shifts also offered management another way to control workers. Workers who worked ten-hour days, six days a week before overtime were often too tired to do much other but sleep. Being tired also made workers less of a discipline problem in the camp. Workers themselves favoured the longer shifts and overtime, preferring to take time off in a block to return to their home towns to visit their families or to travel to St. John's or Montréal for some down time.⁶⁴ Workers also wanted to earn as much money as possible.

Employers also used a variety of means to ensure that workers remained productive throughout their shifts. Churchill Falls employers turned to new equipment to help keep workers productive and to reduce reliance on workers' physical labour.⁶⁵ Using new equipment freed up labour for other tasks and gave skilled workers additional bargaining power, as skilled workers were required to operate it. Operating the cranes, trucks, diggers, and other construction equipment critical to setting the production pace

⁶³ Before construction workers worked ten to twelve hour shifts, five days a week.

allowed workers to maintain a limited control over the speed of work, but close supervision by foremen and supervisors ensured that workers did not stretch work out too far. Churchill Falls and Hibernia employers also used computers to keep track of the movement of equipment (and the workers who operated them) on site. At Churchill Falls, the movement of each piece of equipment was fed into the computer, making it easy to track the whereabouts of a needed machine and to determine exactly where a worker with any equipment should be at any particular time.⁶⁶

Corporate Welfare Programs

In addition to higher wages and favourable shift scheduling, many contractors found they had to offer corporate welfare programs to workers. In the 19th century, under paternalism, employers attempted to equate the job site with the image of a family in an attempt to avoid labour unrest and to preserve managerial authority. In the 20th century paternalism evolved into welfare capitalism. Welfare capitalism used benefit programs (and other material rewards) and human resource specialists to create a culture of consensus and to maintain a stable, preferably non-unionized workforce.⁶⁷ Long-term employment was key, as were higher wages and pension plans. Unlike more traditional factory employment, however, construction employers could not overcome poor working

LII, 5 (May 1970), 65-7; and CFLCo, *Churchill Falls Power Development Management and Construction Equipment*. 8.

conditions by offering long-term employment. Given the short-term, and often seasonal, nature of construction projects, employers had to find alternatives to attract and keep workers. Employers subsequently patched together an industrial management system somewhat reminiscent of woods workers but specifically geared to the needs of construction that included higher wages, housing, sports and recreation programs, and company newspapers. Churchill Falls, for instance, offered a steady and longer (for construction) than usual employment, low living costs in company housing (camp accommodations cost \$2 per day), and recreational facilities.⁶⁸

Company Housing

From the late 1960s on, construction camps offered workers not only a place to sleep but also provided meals, laundry, and a community setting. Churchill Falls, for instance, built an entire town to attract a stable workforce for its construction and operating phases. Without the project a settlement would likely not have occurred. To house operational workers, a permanent town site, a main camp and nine out-camps were built.⁶⁹ During construction, the site consisted of trailers and metal bunkhouses designed to meet the needs of construction workers. Unlike other company towns like Grand Falls,

⁶⁸ CFLCo, *Churchill Falls Power Project Master Labour Agreement*, 4.

⁶⁹ The Main camp housed 3500 men and 115 women, with the women housed in interconnected trailers. Nine additional out-camps were built to temporarily house between 500 and 800 workers. As the families of supervisory personnel arrived, additional amenities such as schools and recreational facilities were built. The main camp included a commissary, post office, bank.

which had a sister city where less skilled workers congregated, in Churchill Falls there were no alternative living arrangements. Workers could only stay in Churchill Falls as long as they were employed on site. The only jobs available in Churchill Falls were the ones working for the contractor or subcontractors on site. Company housing was a potential disciplinary tool in management hands; to live on site one had to have the authorization of the town's "mayor" who during the construction period was the highest ranking CFLCo member in town.⁷⁰

Both the Churchill Falls construction and the permanent site were planned, constructed and operated by the private owners. As part of its welfare capitalist program, the company provided several amenities. To make the town more attractive to operations workers, houses in the permanent town site were built along suburban models, either one or two storey with three to four bedrooms and a full basement. The permanent town site included several features of a more urban community, including a 21 room hotel complete with dining room and two lounges and revolved around a unique town centre complex, the Donald Gordon Centre. The centre housed the hotel, theatre, library, bank, beauty salon, post office, recreational and commercial facilities, all under one roof. The company also provided policing, a fire station, streets, sewers, power, landscaping, stores, a church, school, and hospital. The company was willing to pay these costs to attract a stable and productive workforce.

Come by Chance and Hibernia. Both projects were located on the isthmus connecting the Avalon Peninsula with the rest of Newfoundland, about an hour and a half from St. John's. Given the size of the Come by Chance construction workforce, estimated at 1200 workers, it was decided that the existing small towns surrounding the complex were inadequate to house construction workers.⁷¹

Workers at Come by Chance were housed in closely monitored bunkhouses.⁷² Bunkhouses were used to accommodate workers from away or local employees working overtime or double shift. Eleven bunkhouses were constructed; each designed to house up to eighty workers but often housing more as needed. By April 1972 over 1000 construction workers lived on site.⁷³ Similar style bunkhouses were built for Hibernia, which provided housing for workers who lived outside a 50-km radius. Hibernia accommodated 3500 workers. In 1995 to meet the increasing numbers on site, HMDC added ninety-six trailers and built six additional two-story complexes to house additional workers.⁷⁴

Another factor that attracted workers to large industrial projects was that most of their material needs could be met on site. As the majority of workers on all three sites

⁷¹ Local residents were worried about an influx of transient workers and the strains they would place on local communities. (In 1965 Come by Chance had a population of 250, Sunnyside 600, Arnold's Cove 340). Little rental housing, for instance, was available in the area outside of Clarenville (population 2000). Housing largely consisted of owner occupied, single detached homes. With the announcement of the proposed pulp and paper mill in 1965 an influx of workers arrived from the outports around Placentia Bay. Project Planning Associates, *Come by Chance Area Development Study. Preliminary Report December 1965* (St. John's, 1965) and Felt and

were men, contractors undertook to provide many of the tasks typically done by women. Company employees provided workers with the basic necessities while on site, including having their meals, and in some cases their laundry, prepared for them.⁷⁵ At Churchill Falls and Come by Chance male workers initially provided these services. Men worked as kitchen staff, as cleaners, and in the laundry, but as each project progressed female workers took over these jobs, particularly serving food and clearing tables. Feeding workers on these large-scale projects was a complex task. At Churchill Falls, work in the main camp kitchen continued almost non-stop, employing thirty kitchen staff.⁷⁶ Feeding workers at Come by Chance and Hibernia was somewhat easier in that they did not have the same problems with shipping in foodstuffs as did Churchill Falls. The sheer numbers of workers at Hibernia, however, made keeping them fed a difficult task. Hibernia's dining hall served 1000 at a sitting, and had two servings an hour during breakfast and dinner periods.⁷⁷

Site Newspapers

⁷⁵ Workers at Churchill Falls, for instance, were responsible for their personal laundry with washers and dryers in every bunkhouse, but the central laundry washed sheets and blankets. "White as the driven snow." *Churchill Falls News*. 10 February 1968.

To build a sense of community among workers in camp and on site, both the Churchill Falls and Hibernia construction sites started "community" newspapers. CFLCo published *Churchill Falls News* every two weeks. At the time of the first issue there were 745 workers and supervisors on site, 30 accompanied by their families. By 1970 the *Churchill Falls News* had a press run of 10,200 copies, 6000 distributed to workers on site. In June 1994 the first issue of *Hibernia News* was published jointly by the Hibernia Management Development Company (HMDC) and publisher Robinson-Blackmore.⁷⁸ The paper was designed to provide the 3000 workers on site and others interested in the project with up-to-date information. The HMDC also viewed the paper as a good way to communicate its policies and programs to its workforce. Site newspapers were used to create support for company objectives, to build a sense of teamwork among the disparate trades on site, and to help workers "buy-in" to company safety and efficiency programs. As construction sites were made up of multiple contractors, site papers also gave the owner or general contractor a forum to discuss the project as a whole and to try and build loyalty to the project, not just the individual subcontractor.

Papers were also used to help convince workers that the company cared about their needs. It did this by reporting on the milestones in workers' home lives, including marriages and births on site. Several articles in both newspapers stressed the company's loyalty to workers and their families. Throughout the *Churchill Falls News*, editors

for families. Each Christmas the paper devoted several pages to its annual Christmas party, complete with pictures of Santa handing out presents to the children on site.⁷⁹

Every issue of the *Churchill Falls News* carried pictures of workers carrying out their work duties. Articles profiled workers on the Churchill Falls site, including one of a driver who picked up new arrivals at the airport and transported them to the site. The *Churchill Falls News* also announced the arrival of new women workers to the site.⁸⁰ *Hibernia News* highlighted articles on individual workers and their accomplishments both on the job and on the playing field. Articles in the *Hibernia News* also reminded workers of the company's loyalty to its workers including one article praising the company's role in helping a labourer injured on site come back to work after his injury. Other articles told workers how, with hard work, they could move up the ladder, including an article on a female painter promoted to foreman. Other articles in the paper focused on how the project provided an opportunity for many ex-Newfoundlanders, forced to move to Ontario and Alberta for work, to return home.⁸¹

Hibernia News also included features on construction techniques, explained the often complicated work procedures, and offered safety tips to workers. Many of the articles in the *Churchill Falls News* dealt with safety issues, including article on the cost of carelessness, slips and falls, and making a safety resolution for New Years. In its first

issue, *Hibernia News* attempted to give workers a sense of pride in what they had accomplished to date. Other articles spelled out the rules and regulations on site, including the site's policy for maintaining law and order. The paper also attempted to put a face to its safety department, regularly introducing safety managers to workers. New safety initiatives were also introduced to workers through the newspaper, including the training programs and the safety incentive program.⁸²

Recreation Programs

Companies believed that they could help control workers' off time and help reduce the stress on the surrounding communities by providing activities for workers in their leisure time. Providing an increasing array of entertainment, leisure, and educational activities became increasingly common on remote sites after World War II.⁸³ Employers used sports and other recreation programs as a means to help create a disciplined and committed workforce, on and off the job. Sports were also seen as a way to build teamwork between workers and to keep them busy during their down time. While workers on industrial construction projects only had a limited amount of free time as many worked extremely long hours, employers quickly realized that employees were less

⁸² See issues of the *Churchill Falls News*, 2 December 1967, 16 December 1967, and 30 December 1967. See for instance the article on thermal arc snraving as well as articles on

likely to end up in trouble if their downtime could be monitored by the company.⁸⁴ Sports leagues, hunting and curling competitions were company-sponsored at Churchill Falls, while softball teams were the norm at Hibernia.

Recreation programs were seen as a way to reach out to both workers and their families. By keeping workers' wives and kids occupied, employers hoped to increase families' identification with the project and to reassure workers that their families were kept occupied while they worked their long hours. For workers recreational programs were seen as a way to build friendships, relieve monotony, and help improve their mental and physical attitudes.⁸⁵ Companies that offered a wide variety of these programs gained a good reputation among workers. Recreational facilities at Churchill Falls included a gymnasium, curling rink, bowling alley and an indoor swimming pool, in addition to a community library. Curling was very popular among workers and the site newspaper regularly reported on the winners of bonspiel tournaments.⁸⁶ Outdoor amenities included a ski-hill, cross-country ski trails, playground, and a baseball diamond. Sports programs at Churchill Falls began in earnest in 1967 with the creation of hockey, curling and other team sports for workers. Many subcontractors fielded their own sports teams; workers interested more in intramural play organized others.

For workers who wanted social activities but were not into organized sports, the recreation centre offered swimming and classes in self-defence. Other workers played

holiday while most workers returned to their hometowns, the company offered sports and games programs for those left on site. Programs included dart and pools championships, broom ball and hockey tournaments. The company also offered several recreational activities geared towards the women on site, particularly the ones not employed outside the household. CFLCo funded an Arts and Crafts Club and provided it with an old contractor's building to offer its classes. It also purchased the kilns, potter's wheel, and looms necessary to get the crafts club started. Women were offered day and night courses in pottery, metal enamelling, copper tooling, leathercraft, weaving, and macramé. For those women not interested in crafts, the site also offered bridge and cribbage groups.⁸⁷

To help improve workers' education, the local school offered adult education night courses at both the elementary level (grades 1-7) and at the advanced level (8-10). In addition, the school offered workers advanced English, science and math courses.⁸⁸ Several workers attended night classes to complete high school, including a security guard from Bell Island with grade 8 education. Other workers wanted to upgrade their high school marks before taking trade or technical school courses.⁸⁹ Hibernia also provided a wide array of recreational activities to its workers. Leisure activities at Hibernia included a tavern, swimming pool, weight room, games room, library, television rooms and a softball diamond, and pictures in the *Hibernia News* showed workers

relaxing by playing horseshoes, pinball and soaking in the hot tub. Hibernia also put a strong emphasis on team sports and had regular softball and hockey tournaments.⁹⁰

Conclusions

When construction workers joined the forefront of Newfoundland's modernization programs, they became party to both its benefits and its drawbacks. Benefits included relatively high wages and the provision of corporate welfare programs on many of the larger projects. Drawbacks included poor weather, long hours of work, seasonal unemployment, isolation from friends and family, and dirty, often dangerous work. Other factors such as high unemployment levels and a lack of other job options, government promotion of construction, and the increasing provision of training programs also made many workers turn to construction.

Unlike workers at Churchill Falls and Hibernia, there were few incentives offered by employers at the Come by Chance site. From the planning stage on, Churchill Falls planned its town site to attract and maintain a stable workforce included good quality housing, a wide selection of sports and recreation programs, and a sense of community. Workers at Churchill Falls were offered regular trips home to visit their families and other incentives. This is in direct contrast to Come by Chance where little of management's attention appears to have gone into keeping their workforce content. It is interesting that the two projects offering a wide variety of corporate welfare programs

for the labour strife at Come by Chance, the lack of recreation programs and a site newspaper was indicative of a project where workers did not feel that the company cared about their needs.

This chapter reveals a perennial problem with construction labour and construction unions not just in Newfoundland but often found in regions with low industrialization. With the tight labour market common to mega-project developments, labour's power increases and construction unions manage to press their advantage. Typically this translates into jurisdiction and wage and benefit advantages, not long-term advantages. Rarely does this lead to increasing their long-term organizational integrity such as providing hiring halls, union security, province-wide bargaining, legal protection against double breasting or employment security. As soon as the mega-projects are over, employers press their advantage and not only are wage gains lost but often the organizational integrity of the union is damaged. While it is easy to say that construction unions should fight for broader goals than compensation, the problem is exacerbated by employers and the government.

Chapter 5: Workers Respond to Modernization

Introduction

Newfoundland's industrial construction workers have responded to modernization and their new work environments in both collective and individual ways. Collective actions such as strikes are generally acts committed for the perceived benefit of a group of people, based on an idea of what is fair. Strikes are part of a rather limited array of options open to workers attempting to forge a decent place for themselves in society.¹ Strikes are not a new phenomenon, they have existed in the transition to industrialism, in the system of "free competition", and in corporate capitalism. While each stage of economic development has its own patterns of accumulation, and uses its own ignition to start strikes, many of the reasons remain strikingly similar. Underlying causes include trade cycles -- such as a depression -- or political events, while more immediate causes include such things as the piecemeal forms of pressure applied by employers attempting to escape falling profit margins, technological advances, resistance to wage increases, overall control over the workplace, or by workers trying to improve their living standards.² Strikes occur in industries of all sorts, including those whose production increases without technological or organizational change and those who have undergone rapid technological change. After technical or organizational changes both management and labour are forced to adapt their relationship, with the adjustment rarely smooth as the

¹ Workers also responded to poor conditions with high levels of absenteeism and worker turnover, slowdowns and lowered productivity. Some workers chose to unite into political or social organizations, forming mutual aid societies or unions. More individual protests have taken the form of disobeying company rules including taking longer lunches hours, slacking off, pranks, and fighting. For more on this see chapter eight.

² E. J. Hobsbawm, "Economic Fluctuations and Some Social Movements since 1800," in *Labouring Men: Studies in the History of Labour* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1968), 139-40.

new pattern of industrial relations replaces the old. Strikes occur in industries that are static or expanding, changing technologically or not, as a result of short or long-term cyclical factors, in essence anywhere, anytime.³

On large scale construction projects workers have responded to modernization by pushing the boundaries of management's rules, leaving jobs they were dissatisfied with, turning to unionization, and striking. Workers at the Come by Chance refinery project, for instance, repeatedly turned to the strike. Workers struck for reasons both internal (shop floor, union-worker, and union-management relationships) and external (economic and political) to their workplace. This chapter examines both the micro level of labour relations at Churchill Falls and Come by Chance and the macro level of strike patterns in Newfoundland in an attempt to discern why labour relations were relatively peaceful at one project and anything but at the other.⁴

Workers have always been an unknown variable in labour relations. While governments established rules governing labour relations, and employers set up elaborate plans to control their workforces, there were never guarantees that workers would follow either set of regulations. Workers brought their own priorities to each job, ones that had the potential to diverge quite widely from their employers. Workers' priorities included improving their income levels, controlling the rate of production as much as possible, and ensuring that they were treated with a level of respect and fairness. When workers'

³ There are two different strike propensity theories, strikes as mistakes and strikes as collective voice. See John Godard, *Industrial Relations: The Economy and Society* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1994).

⁴ Labour relations at Hibernia are covered in chapters six and seven.

interests differed from their employers' attempts to maximize production and profits, conflict often resulted.⁵

Post-Confederation Labour Relations in Newfoundland

The provincial government has played a myriad of roles in Newfoundland's economic development. Both the federal and provincial governments were crucial to the creation of the labour relations climate, largely through their promotion of capital accumulation. Governments have attempted to foster capital accumulation in Canada in four main ways: by creating a favourable fiscal climate, by underwriting the private risks of production, by creating capitalist labour markets, and by providing technical infrastructure. Governments affect both the macro and micro-economic situations through taxation, trade and regulation policies as well as through active labour market policies. There are four main elements to labour-market policy: actions to improve the way the labour market functions including job placement services, vocational counselling, collecting and disseminating labour-market information; actions to influence the supply of labour including mobility assistance, job training, and basic skills development; measures to influence the demand for labour including direct job creation projects, wage recruitment subsidies; and, finally, provisions of unemployment benefits and other social services for the jobless.⁶ When deemed necessary, both levels of government were willing to use their powers to ensure minimal interruptions to the capitalist system. Provincial and federal governments were also responsible for regulating labour standards including

⁵ Craig Heron, *Working in Steel: the Early Years in Canada, 1883-1935* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), 112.

⁶ Leo Panitch, "The Role and Nature of the Canadian State," in Panitch, ed., *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977) and

conditions and environment of work, the minimum wage, hours of work, vacations, and occupational health and safety.⁷ While it is difficult for the same government to further two such disparate goals, promoter and regulator, the Newfoundland government has managed to marry the two by establishing the bare minimum of regulations in areas which were seen to threaten economic development. In other areas deemed less threatening the government has paid more attention to regulation.

Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949. By then private sector workers across Canada had the legal right to organize, to bargain collectively, and to strike under the Industrial Relations Disputes Investigation Act and its provincial equivalents. During the 1950s collective bargaining across Canada became more routine, with unions in the post-war era opting to compromise with employers, focus on issues like wages and benefits, and accept that working within the capitalist system entailed certain concessions on their part.⁸ One such concession was their "agreement" to act in an "appropriate" manner, which in mainland Canada essentially meant a purge of communists and in Canada and Newfoundland meant putting economic development at the forefront.

With Confederation, Newfoundland adopted a labour relations system patterned on the Canadian model.⁹ Under premier Joseph Smallwood, organized labour had an assigned role in economic development. Labour's role was to organize and operate within a limited sphere. The government was willing to tolerate unions that would work within

Stephen McBride, *Not Working: State, Unemployment, and Neo-Conservatism in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), chapter 5.

⁷ For more on this, see Judy Fudge and Eric Tucker, "Law, Industrial Relations, and the State," *Labour/Le Travail*, 46 (Fall 2000), 251-306.

⁸ Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, *The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms: From Consent to Coercion Revisited* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1988), 21-22.

the system for increased benefits but those which threatened economic development were unacceptable.¹⁰ Rules of collective bargaining were defined in Newfoundland's Labour Relations Act (LRA), passed in 1950. It committed public policy to collective bargaining, including the duty to bargain in good faith, and regulated unfair labour practices and industrial conflict. Collective agreements were binding on both parties and had to contain a proviso for arbitration in case of a stalemate. The Labour Relations Act also provided for government intervention if collective bargaining procedures were ineffective, including conciliation services or the appointment of an arbitration board.¹¹ In many regards Newfoundland simply adopted legislation created for mainland Canada. Many Newfoundlanders were engaged in the fishery for their livelihood, but the new legislation

⁹ Andrew Luchak and Morgan Cooper, "Industrial Relations in Newfoundland and Labrador," in M. Thompson and J. Rose, eds. *Regionalism in Canadian Industrial Relations* (forthcoming), 4.

¹⁰ Richard Gwyn, *Smallwood: the Unlikely Revolutionary* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972, 2nd edition), 199-205. Smallwood had a youthful flirtation with socialism and experience as a labour organizer. His first Cabinet included former president of the Newfoundland Federation of Labour Charlie Ballam as Labour Minister. Harold Horwood, an organizer with the Labourers' and General Workers' Protective Union, was also a member of the government. Smallwood appointed an Advisory Committee to recommend new labour legislation. The Committee was comprised of union representatives and one lawyer. Not surprisingly, it responded with draft legislation that included Labour Relations, Minimum Wage, and Workers Compensation Acts. Maxwell Cohen, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Labour Legislation, 1971), 61-69.

¹¹ To mediate and adjudicate disputes, a Labour Relations Board (LRB) was set up. The Labour Relations Board had the power to inquire into disputes, and if necessary to set the terms of a first collective agreement. The Labour Relations Board also examined disputes under the Public Service Collective Bargaining Act, the Fishing, Teachers, Interns and Occupational Health and Safety Acts when each was passed. Canada, *Labour Legislation in the Past Decade* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1961), 3; and Newfoundland, *An Act Respecting the Right of Employees to Organize and Providing for Mediation and Conciliation of Industrial Disputes* (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1950); and Newfoundland, "The Labour Relations Act," *Revised Statutes of Newfoundland 1970*, vol. 5 (St. John's: Queen's Pinter, 1970).

did not cover fishers, who were deemed independent, nor were their collective organizations considered trade unions.¹²

Under the Labour Relations Act, strikes became standardized, complete with a set of operating procedures. Strikes were to operate following a strict protocol, with the rules set down by the government. The government had the power to declare a strike illegal and to appoint conciliators. Strikes were only considered lawful once the compulsory conciliation procedures laid down in the Labour Relations Act were exhausted. Strikes for recognition, strikes attempting to pressure secondary employers, strikes designed to force an employer to accept the union's interpretation of the agreement, strikes to protest management's rights, and political strikes were deemed illegal by the government. No strikes could legally occur while a collective agreement was in place. Non-unionized workers could not legally strike until a union obtained bargaining rights and exhausted conciliation mechanisms.

In some industries unions wielded a significant amount of power, including railway, mining and construction but how much power generally depended on economic fortunes. Construction unions have been powerful for several reasons: the seasonal nature of their work gave employers an added incentive to have their negotiations completed prior to the start of construction season; construction projects have been one of the bell-weatheres of the economy, when construction starts are up, the economy is generally rebounding; construction boasts a high level of skilled workers who are often able to exert more power over employers as they are not as easy to replace as unskilled or semi-skilled operatives. In other industries, strikes were carefully timed to take

¹² Cohen, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland...*, 98.

advantage of employment and market conditions. When labour was scarce strikes appeared to be more successful.

Strikes in Newfoundland

Strike levels remained relatively low during the 1950s.¹³ Few new industries were organized and the Smallwood government was seen as relatively friendly to labour. The relative labour tranquillity of the 1950s was shattered 31 December 1958 when loggers represented by the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) launched strike action against the Anglo-Newfoundland Development Corporation (AND). For the first five weeks the strike was largely peaceful. After Smallwood attacked the IWA in a radio address, recommended the formation of a new government-led union, promised loggers welfare if they left the IWA, and passed emergency laws decertifying the union, the strike turned violent. Smallwood opposed the IWA as he saw it as a threat to his leadership, especially in the wake of IWA speeches talking of the need for a new social and political order (for instance a new government) in Newfoundland. When 200 loggers and their families gathered in Badger, blocking the road, Smallwood increased the number of police officers in the area. On 10 March 1959 members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) clashed with striking loggers, a clash that resulted in the death of a RNC constable. With the death, the Smallwood-led Newfoundland Brotherhood of Woodworkers negotiated a settlement

¹³ During the 1950s, 53 strikes were recorded, involving 16,317 workers, and 331,528 person days lost. Michelle McBride, "An Examination of Economic Development and its Consequences: Strikes in Newfoundland, 1949-1999," Presented to the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, Halifax, May 2000.

with AND ending the strike.¹⁴ After the strike, Smallwood asked union leaders to sever all connections with national and international unions, especially with the CLC. He also encouraged unions to come directly to him with their concerns, bypassing the Federation of Labour, which had spoken out against him during the strike. The Federation retaliated by forming its own political party, the Newfoundland Democratic Party and running candidates in the 1960 election. While it failed to win any seats, the NDP's political challenge forced Smallwood to repeal emergency legislation passed during the strike.

Strikes remained rare through most of the 1960s, in part due to the uncertainty of striking while Smallwood remained in power. With high employment levels in the late 1960s strikes began to increase, as did wage demands. There were 64 strikes, with 15,064 workers, and 328,830 person days lost in the 1960s. The 1960s also saw the early stages of organizing in the public sector, with small groups of hospital and town council workers achieving wage increases and improved working conditions. These small victories spurred the leader of the Newfoundland Government Employees Association (NGEA), Bill Noseworthy, to approach the government about transforming the NGEA from an association to a union. The government opposed the idea until a series of protest marches and threats to strike convinced the new premier (Frank Moores) to pass the Public Service (Collective Bargaining) Act in 1973.¹⁵

¹⁴ The new settlement met the terms originally asked for by the IWA. For more on the strike see H. Landon Ladd, "The Newfoundland Loggers Strike of 1959," in Gregory Kealey and W.J.C. Cherwinski, eds., *Lectures in Canadian Labour and Working Class History* (St. John's: Canadian Committee on Labour History, 1985), and Jerry Lembcke and William Tattam, *One Union in Wood* (New York: International Publishers, 1984).

¹⁵ NGEA became NAPE in 1973. While allowing public sector collective bargaining, the Act also established government's right to control who could strike and to legislate an immediate end to any strike if deemed in the public's best interests. Separate statutes for health care workers, school teachers, police officers and fire fighters were passed in the early 1970s. Wage increases

Churchill Falls

Churchill Falls began construction during this period of relatively few strikes. Workers at Churchill Falls turned to the strike only infrequently. This was quite typical of Newfoundland in the mid- to late- 1960s when strikes were infrequent and wildcat strikes almost unheard of.¹⁶ One factor which helped prevent strikes at Churchill Falls was the general economic conditions at the time of the project. At the start of the project, many Newfoundlanders were anxious to find employment. When they found jobs, workers were less likely to strike and risk unemployment again. While there was growth in construction in the mid-1960s, unemployment levels remained high until the late 1960s.

Several other factors helped influence the relatively low strike rate at Churchill Falls. First, the government helped smooth labour relations by according Churchill Falls special project status under an amendment to the Labour Relations Act. A special project

of 20 per cent in some blue collar collective agreements in the 1970s convinced many "white collar" workers of the benefits of unionization. Bill Gillespie, *A Class Act: an Illustrated History of the Labour Movement in Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's: Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, 1986), 116-122.

¹⁶ An exception was the non-unionized Bay d'Espoir hydro project which had three strikes in 1965 and 1966. Workers at Bay d'Espoir complained of not receiving an expected raise, a geographical double standard in paying wages, and overcrowded bunkhouses. *Evening Telegram*, 3 September 1965; CNSA, collection 075, file 3.23.001. Letter to Smallwood, 8 September 1965. Two strikes occurred in October 1965, both over changes to shift assignments. A third strike over wages occurred in March 1966. With the increase in labour disruptions, the company wondered if there was union activity going on in the background. For more on Bay d'Espoir, see Canada, Department of Labour, *Strikes and Lockouts in Canada, 1965-1966*; and CNSA, Collection 075 (Smallwood Papers), file 3.23.001 including Notes taken by Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour during phone conversation with Harold Lundrigan, 15 October 1965; Report of Interview with Arthur Lundrigan, Foundation-Lundrigan Joint Venture, Bay d'Espoir, no date; Report of Meetings held with contractors and representatives at Bay d'Espoir, 1 November 1965; and letter from G.P. Hobbs, Chair, Newfoundland Light and Power Commission, to A.A. Fuller, project manager, 21 October 1965 and response, 26 October 1965.

was defined as “an undertaking for the construction of works for the development of a natural resource or for the establishment of a primary industry which is planned to require a construction period exceeding three years” and hence was given special treatment under the Act to ensure it greater labour relations stability.¹⁷ Special project agreements were desirable for lengthy construction projects, especially those in remote or under-developed areas (Churchill Falls was both), because the master agreement provided a method for stabilizing labour conditions, providing a guarantee of minimum hours, and fixing wage rates at a level that would attract trades workers but not unduly upset the rest of the construction industry. Special project agreements shared similar characteristics, including uniform hiring procedures and wage scales. Under special project legislation, strikes were banned for the life of the project. In the case of Churchill Falls neither employers nor the provincial government wanted any labour strife, internal or external to the project, to halt progress.¹⁸

Several on-site factors also influenced the relative labour peace at Churchill Falls. Learning the lessons of the Bay d’Espoir project, the Churchill Falls Labrador Corporation (CFLCo) was willing to negotiate a master collective agreement to ensure labour peace. High rates of non-residential construction growth across Canada in the mid-1960s influenced their decision as they worried they would not be able to import in the

¹⁷ Special project status also acknowledged that pre-project collective agreements were enforceable despite their negotiation while there were no employees in the bargaining unit. Newfoundland and Labrador, *Revised Statutes of Newfoundland 1970*, volume 5 (St. John’s: Queen’s Printer, 1970), 2983-3028.

¹⁸ Early special project agreements were used on BC Hydro projects from the late 1950s to the 1970s, Alberta’s Syncrude project, Ontario’s Welland Canal project, the Halifax Imperial Oil refinery, and the Montreal Expo 1967 installations. CLFCo, *Churchill Falls Power Project Master Labour Agreement*, 7-8.

required skilled workers without a collective agreement.¹⁹ The collective agreement established standardized working conditions, uniform hiring procedures, wage rates and fringe benefits, and set out procedures to deal with grievances and jurisdictional disputes and covered the life of the project, from 1967 to 1975. Under the agreement, management was given the right to hire workers from any source – no union hiring – but workers had to join the appropriate union within 15 days as a condition of employment. Management retained the right to determine the qualifications of employees, to transfer, promote and demote, and to discipline and discharge workers. Management also kept the right to determine the methods of performing and the scheduling of work.

Contractors were represented by the Churchill Falls Power Project Contractors' Association, while workers were represented by the Churchill Falls Power Project Allied Construction Council, a super-union made up of eight construction unions and the Teamsters and Hotel and Restaurant Workers Union. Individual unions and contractors ceded to their Council and Association the right to conduct collective bargaining and to settle any labour disputes that arose. CFLCo was willing to bargain with construction unions as it was worried that the United Steelworkers, considered to be more militant, would organize the site. The United Steelworkers Union launched its first on-site organizing campaign in the spring of 1967 but its application for certification was rejected by the Labour Relations Board when it was learned the Local had not received its charter yet.

¹⁹ From 1964-1966 Canadian non-residential construction grew at an annual rate of just under 20 per cent. By 1966 many trades faced shortages of skilled construction workers across Canada. Average Canadian unemployment was only 3.6 per cent in 1966, with no measurable unemployment in many of the trades, including electricians, pipefitters, ironworkers and boilermakers. CFLCo, *Churchill Falls Power Project Master Labour Agreement*, 1.

Pre-project planning and a master labour agreement covering all workers on site went a long way to helping ensure labour peace on site.²⁰ By setting out pre-project agreements, labour unrest often experienced in the organizing stage could be avoided, procedures to handle jurisdictional disputes and grievances would already be in place, and access to experienced and skilled trade workers could be enhanced. Towards this end, project managers hired full-time labour relations personnel to anticipate and avoid labour shortages and other labour problems. Under the agreement, jurisdictional disputes, seen as one of the potential trouble spots, were to be referred to the international building trades unions' National Joint Board in Washington, DC. While work was under dispute, construction was to continue by the assigned group. Setting out wage increases and regulating camp conditions also helped prevent labour disruptions.²¹

Formal labour relations on site remained good, which CFLCo attributed to the agreement covering all workers and contractors on site, to regular wage increases

²⁰ One unanticipated result of the agreement was the added power it gave to international unions. During the 1960s many electricians, painters and labourers in Newfoundland broke away from their international unions and formed an "independent" union. To get work on the Churchill Falls project, however, the breakaway labourers' union had to re-affiliate with the Labourers' International Union or risk being left out of the project. Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), MG 668 (Newfoundland Federation of Labour papers), Correspondence, box 4. Letter from William Dodge, executive vice-president, CLC, to Joseph Connolly, general organizer, UAPP, 24 February 1964; Letters from Cyril Strong to J. Mackenzie, Director of Organizing for the CLC, 4 December and 19 December 1968.

²¹ The contract laid out the basics of camp living, including how often the bed sheets were to be changed (every week), the provision of flush toilets, and the prohibition of double tier beds. It also established rate increases for all the unions on site at 15 cents an hour, applied twice a year from 1968 to 1970, with a 10 cent an hour minimum increase applied semi-annually for the remainder of the project. In August 1970 an additional annual adjustment was provided for, to match the basic hourly rate increases of workers in similar job descriptions in ten Canadian cities

(averaging 11 per cent per year), and prompt grievance settlement.²² Few incidents marred the labour peace. One exception was a dispute in July 1970 between survey workers, mostly instrument and rod workers, working for Foundation-Lundrigan. The workers wanted Memorial Day (1 July in Newfoundland) observed as a holiday or double time wage rates as other contractors were offering. Foundation-Lundrigan refused and told the men to report to work. After the 22 workers observed the holiday anyway, nineteen were sent back to their original jobs, but three were ordered to work with one of the labour gangs, which the workers viewed as selective punishment. When the other workers heard about the treatment, they refused to work unless their fellow workers were returned to survey work. The contractor told the workers either to report to work or collect their wages. The men collected their wages and left the site.²³

The strength of the union vis-à-vis management also influenced dispute settlements. Sam Whalen, business agent for the International Association of Structural and Ornamental Ironworkers and part-time business agent for the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters, recalled that during the first year on site, "some of the contractors who were here tested the unions pretty thoroughly to see if we really could look after the men. They found out we could and did." He claimed the unions never had any serious trouble but were tested on almost a daily basis.²⁴ Contractors often pushed the boundaries of the contract to see if the union would force them to stick to it. Workers' geographic isolation may also have played a role in limiting the number of strikes. Not

²² CFLCo, "Churchill Falls Power Development Management and Construction Equipment," 5.

²³ "Labour dispute at Churchill," *Evening Telegram*, 17 July 1970.

²⁴ "Meet Sam Whalen," *Churchill Falls News*, 13 February 1971.

having an independent community – the site was a company town – diminished potential community support for any actions that would harm the project.²⁵

Labour Relations at the Come by Chance Refinery

Unlike Churchill Falls, Come by Chance did not have a peaceful labour relations climate. At Come by Chance, workers' protests most often took the form of wildcat strikes where workers downed their tools and walked off the job. Workers at Come by Chance were only the first in a long line of workers to turn to the strike in the 1970s. The 1970s saw a huge jump in numbers of strikes (439), strikers (110,444), and person days lost (2,018,448). In the early 1970s collective bargaining was extended for the first time to fish harvesters and public sector workers in Newfoundland. Fish harvesters and processors were given the right to engage in collective bargaining in 1971 under the Fishing Industry (Collective Bargaining) Act. This gave fish harvesters and processors the right to form unions and to strike if a collective agreement could not be reached. Recognition strikes quickly followed in Burgeo with plant workers in 1971-2, and with trawler workers in 1974.

Public sector workers also began to be covered by collective bargaining rights under a series of legislative statutes in the early 1970s, with separate statutes for health care workers, school teachers, police officers and fire fighters. Doctors and interns were

²⁵ This goes against the Kerr-Siegel theory that workers living in one-industry towns with closely unified structures were more likely to strike. Those working in physically tough, casual or unskilled jobs were also viewed as more likely to strike. If the Kerr-Siegel hypothesis were correct, Churchill Falls with its isolation from other workers and few moderating influences in the community should have developed an "us versus them" mentality leading to regular strikes. While location and the rough and tumble nature of employment may be a factor in determining the propensity of some workers to strike, it is not a predominant influence and fails to explain why service workers or textile workers have high strike records. It also ignores that some

not given the same rights until 1984. While many public sector workers were initially wary of unions, this was not to last. With the benefits accruing to many blue collar workers in the 1970s, including wage increases on the 20 per cent level in some construction collective agreements, many newly organized "white collar" workers began to see the benefits of unionization. Initially public sector unions had problems adapting to their new workers – white collar and women – who had little experience with unions. Women were seen as a problem in the mid-1970s because they were thought to work for shorter periods than men, creating a higher labour turnover and not strongly supporting the union.²⁶ In the early to mid-1970s nurses in Newfoundland overwhelmingly joined the Newfoundland Nurses Union, demanding better wages, working conditions and job security.²⁷

Newfoundland was not alone in seeing such a large jump in the numbers of strikes; the 1970s were a particularly turbulent period for labour relations across Canada. Strikes in the 1970s reflected the volatile economic conditions – spiralling inflation and increasing oil prices. Strikes in Newfoundland in the 1970s largely matched the Canadian pattern, with fishing, mining construction, and woods industries particularly strike prone.²⁸ In almost every year from 1969-1975 there was a major mining strike between the United Steelworkers of America and mines in Wabush, Buchans and Labrador City, the bulk over wages and benefits. Thirty per cent of strikes in Newfoundland in the

industries are more strike prone in one country than another and that there are wide variations of strikes within an industry.

²⁶ "CUPE: a growing union," *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 19-20.

²⁷ "Unions' sophistication grows," *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 17.

²⁸ For more on Canadian strike patterns see Stuart Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-1966* (Ottawa: Task Force on Labour Relations, 1968);

period were in the fishery, 24 per cent in mining, 13 per cent in construction, 9 per cent in public sector.²⁹

While Minister of Manpower Ed Maynard blamed some of the labour problems on the larger than normal numbers of contracts being negotiated, he emphasized that the majority of contracts were settled without strike or lockout. The unions came in for some of the blame as "some local leaders are not as sophisticated in their thinking and outlook as they are in other places."³⁰ According to Maynard, new unions and new management generally made for rough negotiations as they lacked experience. Where industries had been unionized for a long time, such as the paper industry, Maynard found that "normally there is little trouble because they have gained the experience."³⁰ During the early 1970s officials of the Department of Labour decried the lack of knowledge by employers and employees of the Labour Relations Act and suggested that an educational campaign might help both sides understand their responsibilities and help decrease the number of strikes, especially illegal ones.³¹ Despite the soaring numbers of strikes and lockouts -- and the increase in demand for conciliators -- in the mid-1970s the Minister of Manpower was reluctant to increase its conciliation resources, stating that there was little point to creating a "huge bureaucracy for a peak demand five years from now, and then not use it for the next 15 years."³²

In 1974 there were 187,000 workers in the workforce, of whom 50,000 were represented by 150 certified unions (26 per cent). Unionized labour in 1974 launched 88

and Morley Gunderson, John Kervin and Frank Reid, "Logit Estimates of Strike Incidence from Canadian Contract Data," *Journal of Labour Economics*, 42, 2 (1986), 257-76.

²⁹ The remaining 24 per cent were spread across the rest of the occupations.

³⁰ "Maynard blames inflation," *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 24.

³¹ "Rules," *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 11.

work stoppages, resulting in 89,000 person days lost. 16 of the work stoppages were deemed legal (27,000 person days lost), while 72 were deemed illegal – not following established procedures and encompassing walkouts, wildcats, sit-downs, and study sessions. While legislation existed for prosecuting the organizers of illegal work stoppages, it was rarely used in the 1970s, in part because the Department was reluctant to lose their credibility by seemingly favouring one side over the other.³³

In the three year period when Come by Chance was built, construction was one of the most strike prone industries in Newfoundland's history, comprising 35 per cent of all strike hours lost, 84 per cent of all illegal strike hours lost, and 5 per cent of all legal strike hours lost.³⁴ In 1971 construction made up 18 per cent of all person hours lost to strikes in Newfoundland, including 27 per cent of illegal strike hours. By the period of peak construction on site (1972) the percentage of total hours lost to strikes in construction was 13 per cent, with construction making up 61 per cent of all illegal strike hours. By 1973 construction strikes accounted for 67.5 per cent of all person hours lost to strikes in Newfoundland, and 93 per cent of all illegal strike hours lost. As confirmation that at Come by Chance wildcats had become the norm, less than one per cent of all legal strike hours lost were from construction.

Construction strikes were blamed on organization along trade lines and the large number of unions in the construction industry (13 unions). A Royal Commission established to investigate the high incidence of illegal work stoppages in Newfoundland in the early 1970s found that work stoppages occurred due to "distorted values and

³² "Maynard blames inflation," *Decks Awash*, 24.

³³ "Illegal strikes take over," *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 25.

attitudes in our industrial relations environment," a basic lack of respect for the law, a lack of trust and understanding between labour and management, a lack of communication, a lack of understanding of the collective bargaining system, inadequacies in the collective bargaining process, and issues relating to working in remote areas, international unions, jurisdictional disputes, political interference in hiring, and to the paying of welfare to strikers.³⁵ Workers were viewed as having trouble adjusting to regulated industrial settings and as slow to cope with the accelerating industrialization, while employers were criticized for a strong anti-union stance, particularly in newly unionized areas.³⁶ Delays in certification, conciliation, and grievance arbitration were also blamed for many of the strikes.

Not surprisingly, the initial construction period (1971-1973) accounted for the majority of work stoppages at the refinery. In 1968 the provincial government appointed a royal commission to examine Newfoundland's labour legislation. The government was motivated by several factors including a push by public sector workers and fishers, and a spate of new industrial projects on the horizon.³⁷ Chair Maxwell Cohen investigated the

³⁴ Construction Study Group, Planning Task Force, Government of Newfoundland, *Report on the Construction Industry* (1973), 169.

³⁵ Edward Neary and Michael Harrington, *Report of the Royal Commission on Illegal Work Stoppages* (St. John's: Royal Commission, 1973), 12-25.

³⁶ The idea that workers were more likely to strike while adjusting to new industrial working conditions is one posited by Kerr. He argued that as workers made the transition to industrialization, striking was likely. He viewed these strikes as transitional and believed that as workers were socially integrated into the new system, industrial conflict would decrease. While there may be some merit to the idea that newly unionized workers are more prone to strikes, Kerr's modernization theory downplays workers' ability to strike as a means to express their dissatisfaction with their workplaces or the industrial relations system.

³⁷ The commission was initially chaired by Ivan Rand, known for his solution to the 1945 Ford strike in Windsor, Ontario whereby workers did not have to join a certified bargaining agent union but were required to pay union dues (the Rand Formula). Rand also chaired Ontario's Royal Commission on Trade Union and Employers' Association in 1968. After Rand's death in 1969, Maxwell Cohen was appointed commissioner. Cohen was Dean of Faculty of Law at

adequacy of existing labour legislation for both organized and unorganized workers, including fishing, forestry, mining, manufacturing and construction case studies.

Cohen found that labour legislation for the construction industry was inadequate to meet its changing needs. He found that few workers outside of the major urban areas (Corner Brook, Grand Falls and St. John's) were organized, and that where they were organized they often had only voluntary recognition, not actual certification. This meant that a large number of the construction workers turning up for Churchill Falls were getting their first exposure to collective agreements. Within a few years, with aggressive organizing, building trades unions organized more and more sites. From 1969 to 1971, there was a 75 per cent increase in cases before the Labour Relations Board, much of it in construction. Cohen suggested establishing a distinct panel of the Labour Relations Board to handle construction certifications in a more timely manner. To cope with the special needs of the construction industry, particularly large projects, Cohen recommended creating special project legislation where all workers would belong to a council of trade unions and all contractors to an employers council. This would ensure that the bargaining unit encompassed all jobs on site. Cohen also recommended multi-trades bargaining to "assure stability so that the project can proceed without fear of work stoppage."³⁸

McGill University. Cohen went on to have a distinguished career in civil rights and international law. See William Kaplan and Donald McRae, eds., *Law, Policy and International Justice: Essays in Honour of Maxwell Cohen* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). The Royal Commission was responsible for commissioning one of Newfoundland's first labour histories, Rolfe Hattenhauer's *A Brief Labour History of Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland, 1970). Newfoundland was following the lead of Ontario, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, British Columbia, Manitoba and the federal government in appointing a royal commission into labour relations. Ottawa appointed its own Task Force on Labour Relations (Woods report) in 1968.

³⁸ Cohen, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland...*, 429.

The timing of Come by Chance had a lot to do with the choice of the strike as favoured weapon. Refinery construction began in May 1971 as labour relations were becoming increasingly fractious. The Electric Reduction Company of Canada (ERCO), for instance, reported that in it had experienced more illegal work stoppages at its Long Harbour plant than at its other three Canadian plants.³⁹ One newspaper article declared 1971 a year of labour disputes without parallel. In almost every year from 1969-1975 miners in Wabush, Buchans and Labrador City struck over wages and benefits. Strikes were also underway at several of the province's other industrial projects, including fish workers at Bonavista Cold Storage and British Columbia Packers. Fish plant workers at Burgeo were on strike over union recognition for several month. Forty Bowater Power Co. workers, without a contact since December, also struck in this period, demanding a wage increase.⁴⁰ In great part, workers' militancy was driven by wage increases lagging behind productivity gains.

Strike activity generally mirrored the growth of trade unions; each period of new trade union growth appears to correspond to an increase in strikes. By the time construction was started at Come by Chance, Newfoundland's labour relations climate was undergoing dramatic changes. In the early 1970s collective bargaining was extended to fish harvesters and processors in Newfoundland. Workers were given the right to engage in collective bargaining in 1971 under the Fishing Industry (Collective Bargaining) Act. This gave harvesters and processors the right to form unions and to strike. Recognition

³⁹ Many workers moved between employment at the refinery and at the nearby Long Harbour phosphorous plant (only 20 miles away). When workers struck at one, they often found employment at the other.

⁴⁰ Editorial, "Our Troubled Labour Scene," *Daily News*, 20 July 1971; "900 off jobs in strikes," *ET*, 2 April 1973; and "Come by Chance Strike Ends," *ET*, 12 October 1971.

strikes quickly followed in Burgeo with plant workers in 1971-2, and with trawler workers in 1974.⁴¹ With these newly unionized workers, the identity of union members changed from largely blue-collar (construction and resource workers) to a mix of blue, pink and white-collar workers. Unionization rates went from 21.3 per cent of the labour force in 1970 to 35.3 per cent in 1981, well ahead of the 26.7 per cent Canadian average. The high rate of unionization was also attributable to the large proportion of its labour force in traditionally heavily unionized sectors including mining, construction, transportation, and, by the 1970s, the public sector. In 1965 Newfoundland's largest union was the carpenters, but by the mid-1980s the largest unions were fishermen (FFAW), public sector workers (NAPE, CUPE, PSAC), teachers' (NTA), and nurses (NLNU).⁴²

Internal Problems at Come by Chance

Strikes at Come by Chance were also influenced by several factors internal to the site. Many construction workers viewed themselves as transient workers, in construction

⁴¹ The Burgeo strike was against Spenser Lake. Lake owned the fish plant, the only supermarket, the gas station, beauty parlour and was the town's mayor. Despite threats to sell the plant if workers unionized, workers voted in favour of the union in 1971. When Lake rejected all demands in negotiations, workers went on strike. Lake operated the plant with replacement workers. With an upcoming election workers pressured the government to intervene but the government did not intervene until workers destroyed several of Lake's commercial properties and Lake responded by welding the gates to the plant shut. Frank Moores promised if elected he would settle the dispute, even if it meant buying the plant. Gordon Inglis, *More Than Just a Union: the Story of the NFFAWU* (St. John's: Jespersen Press, 1985).

⁴² In 1979, trawler and inshore fishery workers joined fish plant workers in organizing the Fishermen Food and Allied Workers Union (FFAW). This increased the number of organized fish workers from 9-10,000 to 26,000 by 1981. Flexing their union muscles, inshore fisheries workers conducted an industry-wide strike in 1980. Membership in unions increased from the low 20,000s in the early 1960s to 75,000 by 1982. By the 1990s Newfoundland had the highest percentage of union density at 53 per cent, as compared to New Brunswick at 37 per cent, PEI at 33 per cent, and Nova Scotia at 31 per cent. Newfoundland and Labrador, *Employment and Unemployment in Newfoundland: A Profile* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and

to make as much money as possible in the shortest amount of time. This left them with little attachment to the job. While both construction workers and employers wanted to see the job done professionally, as construction workers were employed on short-term basis, workers had a vested interest in improving their pay cheques. Several strikes on site involved demands for higher wages, including a strike by fifteen insulators in September 1972. The insulators were seeking higher wages and a new contract to replace the one that expired in May 1972. Workers also demanded increased travel and subsistence allowances. The insulators agreed to return to work when the matter was sent to arbitration.⁴³

Conversely, employers also had to contend with the emergence of a core of experienced construction workers who were starting to demanding more respect from their employers. When workers did not feel they were receiving the respect they were entitled to, they launched a series of strikes, some for higher wages, others for better treatment and working conditions. With the labour scarcity of the period, many unions were also able to exert more power than only a few years earlier. The relatively flush economic times of the early 1970s made many workers more willing to strike because they had "money in the bank" or were not worried about finding alternate employment. Many of the construction workers were relatively young with only limited family obligations. This allowed them to take more chances than when the labour market was tighter and they risked long-term unemployment by striking.⁴⁴

Unemployment, 1986), 7 and Kealey, *The History and Structure of the Newfoundland Labour Movement*, 79-80.

⁴³ NAC, RG 27, vol. 3453, T3456, strike 72-345, 18 September 1972; CNSA, Collection 073, file 011, Procon Progress Report, no. 22, 27 November 1972; and "More Labor Trouble for Refinery," *ET*, 5 September 1972.

⁴⁴ My thinking on wildcat strikes in the early 1970s has benefited greatly from discussions with Sue Hart and Herb Butt, a union representative at the Long Harbour plant during the early 1970s.

From 1971 to its completion in late 1973 29 work stoppages occurred at the Come by Chance construction site, five in 1971, thirteen in 1972 and eleven in 1973. In the three-year period, Procon lost over 100,000 person hours of work, with subcontractors losing an additional 30,000 hours. The strikes were largely wildcats and the issues ranged from wages and jurisdictional lines to support for dismissed workers. The strikes involved almost all of the unions on site, and included Labourers, Carpenters, Pipefitters, Boilermakers, Electrical workers and Operating Engineers.⁴⁵ Unlike Churchill Falls where special project legislation was put in place covering the entire workplace, work at Come By Chance started while the unions involved were still negotiating collective agreements. Not until late 1971 were various building trades unions granted certification. Attempts at a master labour agreement covering all workers failed when two of the unions refused to sign the site agreement.

Work was only underway for two weeks when the first pickets went up around the refinery site. Striking members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), local 2330, set up picket lines around Newfoundland as part of a province wide strike in June 1971. The IBEW members were on strike against the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association over demands for union security and provincial jurisdiction. Thirty-six IBEW members were employed on site. The other 431 construction workers on site refused to cross the picket line. The IBEW later withdrew the picket to allow other workers to return to work, but electricians stayed off the job.

⁴⁵This data is compiled from Newfoundland, Department of Labour statistics, including *Annual Reports*, "Summary of Wildcat Work Stoppages," and "Legal Work Stoppages," for the years 1971-1973.

Trying to bring public attention to the IBEW's complaints, the picket was timed to coincide with a press tour of the construction site.⁴⁶

Management's failure to execute a master agreement for the entire project was a sign of the communications failure on site. While most of the Building Trades Unions were covered by the Master Agreement, the Plumbers and Pipefitters and the Boilermakers, both crucial to the construction, were not.⁴⁷ The Plumbers and Pipefitters Union argued that since it had not signed the site agreement, its workers were operating under their national contract. The national agreement provided greater benefits to the union than those available in the site contract.⁴⁸ Under the national agreement, workers were entitled to Regatta day as a statutory holiday, something not offered under the site agreement. As Procon was a signatory to the plumbers' national agreement, the union expected Procon to stand by the national contract and pay the workers for the holiday. After trying to meet with Procon to discuss the issue for over a month, 340 pipefitters walked off the job in August 1972. Work continued on site by the remaining 1400 workers. Four days into the strike, Procon fired the strikers, 50 from the company's prefab plant in St. John's and 290 at the refinery site.

⁴⁶ "Electricians Picket at Come by Chance," *ET*, 2 June 1971. Attempts to mediate the dispute proved fruitless. Editorial, "Our Troubled Labour Scene," *Daily News*, 20 July 1971. In a letter to Steven Neary, acting Minister of Labour, the Construction Association chairman Donald Holden asked for the appointment of a conciliation board and reminded Neary that the companies affected by the strike were large contributors to economic growth. Letter from Holden to Neary, 29 July 1971, CNSA, Collection 073 (Crosbie Papers), file 3.07.035. On 20 July 1970 Holden wrote directly to Smallwood, predicting that without government intervention in the strike, 17 major projects would be shut down across the project, leaving 4600 workers unemployed and potentially delaying an additional 19 projects. *Evening Telegram*, 3 June 1971.

⁴⁷ The Labour Agreement between Procon Inc. and the Building and Construction Trades Council of Newfoundland and Labrador included the Carpenters (UBCJA), Heat and Frost Insulators, Electrical Workers (IBEW), International Association of Iron Workers, Labourers, Operating Engineers (IUOE), Painters, Sheet Metal Workers, and Transport and Allied Workers.

⁴⁸ "Refinery Pipefitters take Regatta holiday," *ET*, 3 August 1972; "Union backs employees on Regatta holiday," *ET*, 5 August 1972 and "No chance of Procon pulling out - White," *ET*, 9

Workers were rehired one week later after Procon and the United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters agreed that the workers would work under the terms of the union's national agreement.

The International Boilermakers Union also refused to sign the site master contract. In November 1971 eighty boilermakers walked off the job to protest the lay-offs of eleven workers. The eleven workers were laid off for refusing to unload a vessel at the wharf. They were protesting a travelling clause in their agreement. The Boilermakers were covered under a national agreement. The striking workers were ordered back to work by their union which warned workers if they failed to obey they would face fines, suspensions, and possible termination. Workers returned to work 16 November 1971 after Horton Steel, responsible for erecting the storage tanks, informed workers they had until Monday to return to work or be fired.⁴⁹

In March 1973 the lack of a master contract again plagued the site when Procon's new contract with the Plumbers and Pipefitters gave them wage increases that Procon was unwilling to offer to other workers on site. Not surprisingly, 978 carpenters, millwrights, labourers, teamsters, and operating engineers walked off the job when Procon refused to extend the raise to the other unions on site. The Pipefitters were granted an increase of one dollar an hour, from \$4.90 to \$6 an hour. Under their separate contract the pipefitters also worked a different shift schedule of eight hour days, five days a week. After a week of unfruitful meetings between Procon, the unions, and government officials, it took a court

August 1972; "Procon fires striking workers," *ET*, 12 August 1972; and "Pipefitters Returning to Refinery Project," *ET*, 18 August 1972.

⁴⁹ The Boilermakers contract was negotiated by the contractors association and the union, not with individual employers. NAC, RG 27, vol. 3615, T3453, strike 71-446. NAC, RG 27, vol.

injunction to end picketing of the site by the four unions involved. The court injunction did not end the strike. When workers arrived for work on 3 April 1973, they found the picket line now manned by the IBEW, one of the unions not previously involved and therefore not included in the injunction.⁵⁰

Frequent inter-union battles and jurisdictional disputes also plagued the site. Part of this stemmed from the fact that little pre-operation time was spent on planning how to distribute the work. Given the temporary nature of construction projects each union wanted to obtain as many of the jobs as possible for its workers. Moreover, jurisdiction was based on precedent; therefore giving up a job now could affect obtaining work in the future. In November 1972 90 ironworkers went on strike alleging that pipefitters were carrying out duties normally performed by ironworkers.⁵¹ In August 1971 395 employees walked off the job in support of a grievance filed by twelve former employees of Lundrigan's. The labourers, who had been laid off for lack of work, launched a grievance that their jobs had actually been filled with other labourers. Workers returned to work after the company assured them that the workers had not been replaced; the other workers had been

3615, T3453, strike 71-446, 6 November 1971; Pat Doyle, "Union Warns Workers," *ET*, 10 November 1971; and "Come by Chance Strike Ends," *ET*, 16 November 1971.

⁵⁰ CNSA, Collection 073, file 012, Progress Report, 4 April 1973; NAC, RG 27, vol. 3620, T3457, strike 73-137, Report on Industrial Dispute Commencement, Statement by Procon, 17 April 1973; "Another Strike at Refinery Site," *ET*, 22 March 1973; "Talks today on refinery strike," *ET*, 27 March 1973; and "Court injunction issued against strikers," *ET*, 31 March 1973; and "Wildcat continues at Come by Chance," *ET*, 3 April 1973.

⁵¹ Ironworkers were served with an injunction to stop picketing the same day. A joint jurisdictional board had been set up by the Newfoundland Building Trades Council and the provincial Department of Labour to deal with construction labour disputes, but in this case the workers chose to strike instead. In the wake of the strike, Ironworker business agent, William Woodford, demanded the labour minister investigate the rash of strikes. Woodford claimed Come by Chance had more strikes "than there has been in Newfoundland in the past 25 years." "Come by Chance Strike Ends," *ET*, 28 November 1972; and "Union wants Investigation of Strikes at Refinery Site," *ET*, 30 November 1972.

transferred between subcontractors.⁵² Other workers protested the use of non-unionized workers on site. Eighty electricians struck in October 1972 after learning that non-unionized workers were constructing a power line to the site for Chico Construction Company, under subcontract to the Newfoundland and Labrador Power Commission. After 1200 workers refused to cross the electricians' picket line, the project was brought to a standstill, ending only with a court injunction. In September and October 1971 65 boilermakers at Come by Chance went on a week long strike to protest the hiring of boilermakers from the mainland.⁵³

Another reason workers adopted their down-their-tools attitudes, however, was the extremely slow pace of arbitration hearings. Workers' spontaneous walkouts were an indication of their frustration level with both unions and management for failing to enact a speedy arbitration system. After watching many grievances falter before reaching the arbitration stage and others languish once they got there, many workers simply took matters into their own hands by walking off the job. In November 1972, for instance, pipefitters walked off the job to protest the firing of twelve fellow union members. Other unions on site respected the unmanned pickets, closing the site for two days until the dispute was settled. The pipefitters agreed to return to work and to file a grievance over the firings.⁵⁴

⁵² NAC, RG 27 (Strikes and Lockout files), vol. 3614, T3454, strike 71-318, Lundrigan's Ltd, Come by Chance, 4 August 1971; and "Wildcat walkout ends at refinery," *ET*, 4 August 1971.

⁵³ "Electricians Strike at Come by Chance," *ET*, 30 October 1972; and "Injunction Halts Picketing at Come by Chance Refinery," *ET*, 1 November 1972.

⁵⁴ "Come by Chance Project Shut Down," *ET*, 16 November 1972; "Strike Ends at Come by Chance," *ET*, 18 November 1972.

Procon's refusal to maintain an on-site labour relations specialist also caused considerable problems.⁵⁵ Many of the wildcats might have been avoided had there been someone on site with the power to address problems as they arose. One hundred and fifty boilermakers walked off the job in October 1972 after workers learned that management had carried out union work after workers were sent home due to bad weather. The union complained that under its contract, supervisors were only permitted to assist their workers, not to do regular work. Subcontractor Horton Steel agreed they were wrong to allow the supervisors to complete the work and promised it would not happen again. It is likely that had a union shop steward been on site at the time, the illegal strike could have been avoided. Workers were compensated with a full day's pay plus two day's boarding costs. The supervisors' work was scrapped and redone by the boilermakers.⁵⁶

Another factor which helped determine how workers would respond was their relationship with supervisors. Circumstances which under one supervisor could lead to a walkout, under another would be settled with a conversation. In April 1972 233 boilermakers went on strike for four days to protest dissatisfaction with a foreman on site.⁵⁷ Recognizing its own field staff were part of the problem, Procon reorganized their field

⁵⁵ Several strike propensity theorists have argued that the likelihood of striking is related to the quality of the industrial relations system in place. Green (1991), for instance, found that where good industrial relations policies, practices and procedures exist, strikes are less likely to occur. Green's work builds on the Mayo approach to Human Resources management which argues that effective labour management communication is critical to preventing strikes. Poor communications, however, fail to explain what makes some industries more strike prone than others. And while poor communications are likely to exacerbate situations, they are unlikely to be a primary cause of strikes. Blaming poor communications is confusing the instrument of conflict with its cause.

⁵⁶ NAC, RG 27, vol. 3453, T3456, strike 72-554; and "Another strike at refinery," *ET*, 4 October 1972; and "Come by Chance Strike Settled," *ET*, 6 October 1972.

⁵⁷ NAC, RG 27, vol. 3616, strike 72-132, Work Stoppage Preliminary Advice Report, 15 April 1972; and "Come by Chance Strike Expected to End Today," *ET*, 15 April 1972.

construction supervisory personnel in August and September 1972 which the company noted resulted in a noticeable change in construction workers' work attitude.⁵⁸ Procon replaced its general construction superintendent and several other top ranking personnel on site. A Procon spokesperson denied that personnel changes were a direct result of labour instability, claiming instead that "a reorganization such as this is normal practice with large corporations such as Procon." Sources claimed otherwise, arguing the labour unrest was the root cause of the shake-up.⁵⁹ A March 1973 progress report noted that construction progress was much improved and that there had been a noticeable improvement in the attitudes of both workers and supervisors but again warned that:

we continue to be very concerned about Procon's field management on this project... We continue to remain concerned about: a) Procon's inability to maintain proper labour relations with the various craft unions both at field and management levels; b) lack of supervision and scheduling by Procon with their subcontractors; c) lack of day planning and co-ordination of Procon work forces; d) Inefficient handling of materials arriving at jobsite...; e) inefficient utilization of construction equipment.⁶⁰

September's progress report, however, noted that "the month of August saw a marked change in the attitude of the entire Procon construction forces. This change is attributed directly to Procon's reorganization of its top supervisory personnel of the first of August. Mr. Ray Freeman, General Construction Superintendent for Procon, Great Britain, was brought in as Project Construction Superintendent...With the settlement of the Pipefitters dispute, it is anticipated that the month of September will show some real improvement in progress." Field supervisory changes were also expected to help improve

⁵⁸ CNSA, Collection 073, file 009, Newfoundland Refining Company Progress Report, 22 September 1972.

⁵⁹ "Come by Chance Construction Chief, other top Personnel to be Replaced," *ET*, 5 August 1972.

⁶⁰ CNSA, Collection 073, file 012, Progress Report, 4 April 1973.

workers morale and to correspondingly increase production.⁶¹ Given that many of the strikes were wildcats – that is without the union's support or consent – the unions must also take their share of the blame for poor labour relations on site. When contractors sign contracts with unions, it is under the assumption that unions will be able to control their workforces. This was not always the case at Come by Chance. It is important to note, however, that not all wildcat strikes occurred without the union leadership's support. While union leaders often had to denounce wildcat strikes in public, in private many leaders supported, and made use of, the wildcats.

Workers also walked off the job to protest poor working and living conditions. On 15 September 1971 fourteen ironworkers walked off the job to protest conditions in the newly opened bunkhouses. The men were unhappy over the bunkhouse conditions, demanding instead a return to the travel allowance workers had received prior to the bunkhouse opening. Within hours of the walkout Procon obtained an injunction from the Newfoundland Supreme Court ordering the workers back to work, but the workers refused to obey. The Ironworkers Union did not sanction the strike, and its representative, W.B. Woodford, publicly attempted to convince the striking ironworkers to return to work. Five hundred other construction workers refused to cross the picket line. The ironworkers returned to work two days later after the company promised to look into its concerns over housing conditions.⁶²

In June 1972 eighty operating engineers walked off the job to protest poor working conditions, resulting in the site being closed for six days. Operating Engineers operated

⁶¹ CNSA, Collection 073, file 009, Progress Report, 22 September 1972, 9.

cranes and mobile equipment. As their strike paralyzed the project – construction was at the stage where heavy pipes were being lifted into place, a task which necessitated the operating engineers – Procon shut down the site. All 1500 workers were laid off. Despite being asked to return to work by their union, the operating engineers remained off the job. Workers had previously tried to meet with Procon officials to discuss working conditions but found management unavailable. Procon's labour relations manager, Tim Shea, did meet with striking workers but refused to discuss working conditions until workers ended their illegal walkout and returned to work. After six days the Operating Engineers returned to work.⁶³

A lack of respect was one issue that was stressed during strikes at Come by Chance. Workers, for instance, were unhappy with comments by John Shaheen claiming labourers were deliberately “trying to do a stretch-out job” on the project. Shaheen reported that “when we demanded we get a day's work for a day's pay that's when the trouble started.”⁶⁴ Many strikes began after management attempted to increase control over workers or to enforce what workers considered unfair rules. By 20 July 1972 four of the unions (boilermakers, pipefitters, ironworkers, and electricians) on site, representing half of the workers, walked off the job after forty men were fired for exceeding their 10 minute coffee break. Workers had taken their afternoon coffee break in the lunchroom, several minutes walk from their work site as it was quite cold outside. Under their contract workers

⁶² When the bunkhouses opened on 13 September 1971, Procon discontinued the allowance and offered housing on site. “Walkout Halts Work at Come by Chance Refinery,” *ET*, 15 September 1971; and “Picketers at Come by Chance,” *ET*, 16 September 1971.

⁶³ NAC, RG 27, vol. 3618, T3455, 72-256, Work Stoppage, Preliminary Advice Record, 4 July 1972; CNSA, Collection 073, file 8.07.017. Newfoundland Refining Company Ltd., Summary Progress Report, no. 19, 18 July 1972; “1500 off job at Come by Chance,” *ET*, 30 June 1972; and “Work to Resume at Oil Refinery,” *ET*, 4 July 1972.

were to take coffee breaks at their work stations unless the weather was bad. When the workers were fired, over 1100 workers walked out in protest. Project manager Robin Lillibridge claimed that some of the workers were on break for nearly half an hour and that if every worker on site did the same thing nearly 2000 person hours would be lost every day. After a week on strike Procon flew in Tim Shea, an industrial relations officer from Chicago, to meet with the unions involved. The company was worried that that strike, and another one by operating engineers on 26-27 July, had badly hampered progress on the job, time that could only be made up if strikes ended.⁶⁵

When management unilaterally changed shift schedules – which it had the right to do under its contract – cutting workers' hours, workers again downed their tools. Upset over low productivity rates, in July Procon had announced all overtime work was discontinued and a straight 40 hour work week initiated. Procon claimed to be making the move due to workers' low productivity rates. Workers responded with a series of walkouts, including a strike by Operating Engineers which resulted in 542 construction workers not reporting for work for two days. While strikes continued to occur, Procon saw enough of an improvement that in October 1972 it again instituted a 48 hour work week.⁶⁶

Workers also protested what they considered too many rules and too much supervision in the camp. On 8 January 1972 25 pipefitters walked off the job after eight

⁶⁴ By trouble, Shaheen was referring to the large numbers of strikes that dominated the construction project. "Labor Ills at Come by Chance Hurting Planned Nova Scotia Refinery," *ET*, 27 July 1973.

⁶⁵ NAC, RG 27, vol. 3614, T3456, 72-298, 26 July 1972; "Four Unions on strike at Come by Chance," *ET*, 20 July 1972; "Workers Still Out at Come by Chance Project," *ET*, 21 July 1972; "Come by Chance Workers Still off the Job," *ET*, 22 July 1972; and CNSA, Collection 073, file 8.07.017. Newfoundland Refining Company, Summary Progress Report no. 20, 17 August 1972.

workers were fired for drinking in violation of camp rules. Three hundred and sixty seven workers respected the picket line. The workers fired for drinking were not rehired despite the wildcat strike. Workers launched two one-day protests in March 1972, one of which was over the company's decision to suspend work due to bad weather and involved 700 workers. With no apparent end to strikes on site, the premier appointed Eric Martin to act as a liaison between the company, unions, and the government.⁶⁷

In September 1972 representatives from the Provincial Building Company, NRC, Procon, and Jacobs Engineering met with the Newfoundland government to discuss the spate of strikes on site. After detailing the recent strikes, Procon asked the government for assistance in dealing with the strikes, to which the government officials responded that Procon had to exhaust all avenues open to it under the law before the government could intervene. Premier Frank Moores did speak out against wildcat strikes. He called the strikes "Irresponsible... we can't condone illegal acts." Moores was worried that progress at the refinery, at a critical stage, was being held up by the strikes.⁶⁸

Bell Island Liberal MHA Steve Neary blamed the "labour war" on site on workers from outside the province being paid more than Newfoundlanders. Neary claimed employees from outside the province received a cheque sent to their homes in addition to

⁶⁶ CNSA, Collection 073, file 008, Progress Report no. 19, 25 August 1972; NAC, RG 27, vol. 3453, T3456, strike 72-560, 28 July 1972; and CNSA, Collection 073, file 009, Progress Report 21, 26 October 1972.

⁶⁷ Martin was a defeated PC candidate in the riding of Trinity North. NAC, RG 27, vol. 3615, T3454, strike 72-567, 9 January 1972; "Work Returns to Normal at Come by Chance Refinery," *ET*, 11 January 1972; and "Government Holding Talks on Come by Chance Strike," *ET*, 24 March 1972.

⁶⁸ CNSA, Collection 073, file 008, Progress Report, 22 September 1972. Moores was reacting to the announcement that 92 crane operators and survey engineers were on a wildcat strike on the site. Boilermakers and ironworkers had just returned from a strike a week earlier when the crane

their standard pay, something which later proved to be unsubstantiated. As the strikes dragged on Procon warned that unless workers returned to work and labour troubles stopped, the project would miss its year-end completion date.⁶⁹ The IBEW agreed to return to work on 7 April 1973 after Procon agreed to meetings to discuss problems at the refinery.⁷⁰ When those meetings proved fruitless 848 electricians, operating engineers, teamsters, millwrights and labourers again walked off the job resulting in Procon's closing the site. Workers returned on the 25th April after a series of meetings between the Premier and Procon and the Premier and the Building Trades Council resulted in a new contract with increased wages, improved vacation and subsistence allowances. All workers received a base increase of 15 per cent, a vacation pay increase from two to eight per cent, and a guarantee that all overtime work be paid at double time rates based on a fifty hour work week. Workers who lived within 35 miles of the site were to receive subsistence of \$4 per day, while those living farther received \$8 per day or free room and board in the camp.⁷¹

Just as it looked like the construction project was settling down, John Shaheen warned that labour problems at Come by Chance had made it difficult for Shaheen Natural Resources to reach an agreement with contractors for a refinery in Nova Scotia. Shaheen went on to state that before the now planned second refinery began construction he would be demanding a government and union guarantee of no work stoppages.⁷² In the wake of the U.S. energy crisis in February 1973, premier Frank Moores had announced an

operators walked off the job, according to Procon due to internal problems within the union.

"Labor Problems Continue at Come by Chance Project," *ET*, 27 July 1972.

⁶⁹ "'Labor War' at Refinery?" *ET*, 4 April 1973; and "Procon, Crosbie warn that wildcat strike will nullify year-end completion target," *ET*, 5 April 1973.

⁷⁰ The IBEW was facing internal problems during this period as insulators broke away to form a local of the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Asbestos Workers.

⁷¹ NAC, RG 27, Strikes and Lockouts Files, vol. 3620, T3457, strike 73-137.

agreement for a second oil refinery at Come by Chance. The new 300,000 barrel-a-day refinery was to be built and operated by John Shaheen. Unlike the first refinery which was heavily dependent on government funding, the government's only investment in the second refinery was a loan guarantee. The new deal also altered the original refinery's financing, relieving the provincial government from much of its financial obligations if the refinery failed, something that proved a blessing in the mid-1970s when the refinery declared bankruptcy.⁷³ The second refinery was never built.

Conclusions

Strikes occur for a variety of reasons, from larger socio-economic policies to wage disputes. What factors made Churchill Falls relatively strike free compared to Come by Chance? What changed between the late 1960s and the early 1970s to make union leaders unwilling or unable to keep their members within legal bounds? While poor communications and an uncaring employer are easy answers, it is important to examine the different socio-economic factors at each site. By the time of Come by Chance, a strike wave dominated much of the Canadian landscape. Workers militancy was fueled by heavy-handed legislation, wage increases lagging behind productivity gains, automation (rail and post office), the demands of public sector workers to unionize, and the success achieved by other striking workers.

Strikes at Come by Chance kept recurring for several main reasons. Strikes were an effective way to focus attention on the problems of the workplace. New problems were steadily created on site and by modernization. As James Cronin stated "Workers strike

⁷² "Shaheen wants assurances of no work stoppages in second oil refinery," *ET*, 4 August 1973.

because striking works and because they have grievances.”⁷⁴ Making the decision to strike was not an easy one for workers; possible job loss -- either through being made redundant or being fired -- and almost certain financial hardship follow a strike. So why did the workers continuously turn to the strike as their weapon of choice? Strikes served as a means of communication between workers and their employers. Repeatedly workers and unions on site complained that they were unable to meet with managers to discuss concerns or that when they met with managers their grievances were not addressed. Striking was one of the few ways workers at Come by Chance had of attracting their employer's attention. Rather than defensive action, these strikes offered workers a sense of collective identity, gave them a voice, and allowed them to make demands of a system which was normally unresponsive to their needs.

These strikes offered workers leverage they would ordinarily not have. As a project with considerable government financial backing, Come by Chance was constantly under media attention. Workers took advantage of the attention to put forth their own agenda, one that included higher wages, better working conditions, and being treated with respect. While the walkouts occurred as spontaneous protests, other strikes on site were more carefully planned. It is no surprise that the Come by Chance project led to a determination by government and industry that such a strike fraught project would never again occur. The next chapter examines the steps taken by both government and management to counter the growing power of construction unions.

⁷³ “US Energy Crisis, Government Loans Spark Second CBC Refinery,” *ET*, 27 February 1973.

⁷⁴ James Cronin, *Industrial Conflict in Modern Britain* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 5.

Chapter 6: Government and Management Respond

Introduction

In the aftermath of the Come by Chance project, the Newfoundland government was quick to react to the strikes which it viewed as a threat to its modernization program.¹ Come by Chance was only the first in a line of what would turn out to be a decade long strike wave.² In the mid-1970s, strikes in Newfoundland gained momentum from one strike to the next, often taking on an insurgent quality. Four industries accounted for 76 per cent of all strikes from the mid-1970s to 1983: the fisheries (30 per cent), mining (24 per cent), construction (13 per cent), and the public sector (9 per cent).³ In this "decade" of extraordinary strikes, Newfoundland unions won the title of most militant in Canada, losing 42 days per member, followed by Québec (36 days) and BC (30 days).⁴

Newfoundland's strike wave was based not only on larger numbers than the previous years, but it also had broader scope and range, including a more varied cross section of the work force than other strike years. While previous strike waves varied in

¹ Shorter and Tilly defined strike waves as when the number of strikes and strikers in a given year exceeds by more than 50 per cent the mean of the previous five years, and has broader scope. Edward Shorter and Charles Tilly, *Strikes in France 1830-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 106-7. An international phenomenon, strike waves have been documented in France, Britain, Germany, the U.S., and Canada. See for instance, Wolfgang Mommsen and Hans-Gerhard Husung, eds., *The Development of Trade Unionism in Great Britain and Germany, 1880-1914* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1985); P.K. Edwards, *Strikes in the United States, 1881-1974* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981); and Douglas Cruikshank and Gregory S. Kealey, "Strikes in Canada, 1891-1950," in Kealey, *Workers and Canadian History*.

² James Cronin found that each wave generally represented a transition between different patterns of economic activity. This parallel movement of strikes suggests that historic factors common to different industries have to be examined, rather than the factors which make each industry unique. James Cronin, *Industrial Conflict in Modern Britain* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 17.

³ In the 1980s there were 211 strikes, involving 86,426 workers and resulting in 2,084,998 person days lost. In addition to the reduction in the number of strikes, the nature of strikes also changed as wildcat strikes dropped considerably. See appendix for strike database.

⁴ Manitoba was the lowest at 12 strike days per union member. James Bagnall, "Now We're Tops

time and from one group of workers to another, they generally marked both qualitative and quantitative changes in the work force. These changes included expansions into new industries, new regions or new classes of workers, and coincided with the adoption of new policies or ideas. The strike wave in Newfoundland corresponded to an intense period of organizational change, when large numbers of new workers were unionized, including public sector and fisheries workers. Construction workers also began to push for more advances as their numbers grew dramatically with each new project in the 1970s. Neither government nor industry was slow to react to workers' challenges, and particularly to the lessons of Come by Chance. In this chapter we examine employers' and the provincial government's reactions to the wave of militancy. The provincial government's responses included the appointment of royal commissions and advisory committees, back to work legislation, and wage restraints. Industry reacted by banding together to demand concessions from both government and unions.

Initial Reactions

The government's first response to the strikes was to appoint a royal commission. Federal and provincial governments had long used royal commissions as a way to cope with mounting labour pressures. The 1886 Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital was only the first in a line of such commissions, all called to answer the surge of working-class militancy. In his examination of the Royal Commission on Labor and Capital, Kealey found that royal commissions served a number of useful functions: they bought time for the government "by placing a lengthy investigation in the way of labour's immediate legislative demands" and they stood as testimony of the government's interest in the

in Strikes," *Financial Post*, 27 August 1983.

problems facing workers.⁵ Best of all they offered participants a sense that they were involved in the process without according them any additional power. Heron described how the 1919 Royal Commission on Industrial Relations gave craft union leaders the mistaken belief "that someone was taking them seriously."⁶ They also allowed both sides to vent their frustrations without placing the government in a position where it had to follow any of the recommendations. Royal Commissions were also used to examine conditions in specific industries, such as the Royal Commission on Unrest in the Nova Scotia Steel Industry (New Glasgow, 1918), the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations established to examine the cross country unrest in 1919, and numerous others.⁷

Newfoundland appointed its own share of Royal Commissions including a Royal Commission on the Cost of Living in Newfoundland (1950), Royal Commission on Forestry (1955), Royal Commission on Unemployment (1958), and a Royal Commission to examine a labour dispute between Western Memorial Hospital and its Union (1963).⁸ In the late 1960s, Newfoundland appointed a royal commission to examine labour relations, the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation, partially driven by the demand to extend collective

⁵ For more on the use of royal commissions, see Gregory Kealey, ed., *Canada Investigates Industrialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973) and Kealey, *Toronto Workers Respond to Industrial Capitalism 1867-1892* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 241.

⁶ Craig Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement: A Short History* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1996, 2nd edition), 54.

⁷ Heron, *Working in Steel* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1988), 132.

⁸ Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Cost of Living in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on the Cost of Living in Newfoundland, 1950); Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission on Forestry* (St. John's: David R. Thistle Printer, 1955); Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission on Unemployment* (St. John's: The Commission, 1958); Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission appointed to enquire into the labour dispute between the Western Memorial Hospital Employees Local Union, no. 488, N.U.P.E. and the Western Memorial Hospital and into the possible consequences of granting the demands of the union* (1963).

bargaining rights to public servants and fishers and by the idea that existing labour legislation was ill-equipped to deal with large scale industrial projects.⁹

Only a few years later, during the worst of the Come by Chance strikes, the government appointed another royal commission to investigate wildcat strikes. Chaired by lawyer Edward Neary, the commission followed in the footsteps of the Woods federal task force on labour relations.¹⁰ The Neary commission was called to examine the dramatic increase in the number of work stoppages in Newfoundland from January 1971 to September 1973. The government was alarmed about the rise of "illegal" strikes, the sharp increase in the number of workers involved, and the impact of wildcat strikes on the economy, particularly the potential negative effect on Newfoundland's competitive position in domestic and foreign markets.¹¹ Newfoundland was already disadvantaged, according to the government, given its geographic location, and needed to improve its labour relations climate to attract new industries.¹²

Neary set out to uncover the causes underlying the increase in work stoppages. He found seven main causes including "distorted values and attitudes in our industrial relations environment," a basic lack of respect for the law, a lack of trust between labour and management, a lack of communication, a lack of understanding of the collective bargaining system, and inadequacies in the collective bargaining process.¹³ Neary

⁹ Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission on Labour Legislation in Newfoundland and Labrador* (St. John's 1972). For more on this, see chapter five.

¹⁰ Stuart Jamieson, *Times of Trouble: Labour Unrest and Industrial Conflict in Canada, 1900-66* (Ottawa: Task Force on Labour Relations, 1968).

¹¹ Any strikes that occurred outside the regulations in the Labour Relation Act were considered illegal. This included strikes while a contract was in effect.

¹² The Department of Finance estimated lost labour income of \$15,000,000 due to work stoppages from 1970-1974. Newfoundland, *Report of the Royal Commission on Illegal Work Stoppages* (St. John's 1973), 7. Issued in September 1973. Hereafter referred to as Neary, *Report of the Royal Commission*.

¹³ Many public and employer submissions to the Commissioner condemned the lawless attitude of

concluded that the social and economic background of Newfoundland had moulded the attitudes of many of its citizens in a manner uncondusive to good labour relations, including their long history of self-employment, their unfamiliarity with industrial workplaces, and their lack of leadership qualities. He also recognized that with the relatively recent phenomenon of unions in Newfoundland, many workers were striving to catch up to their counter-parts in the rest of Canada and hence had high expectations of rising wages.¹⁴

Many of the submissions to the Neary Commission dealt specifically with Come by Chance. John Wiseman, business agent with local 904 of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), told the commission that "we are lucky to just have a withdrawal of services at Come by Chance and not a militant withdrawal of services." He claimed the "situation at Come by Chance is ugly and the workers have lost all trust in the company." Wiseman blamed many of the wildcats on Procon's failure to have someone on site to negotiate new contracts and settle grievances. Many union leaders feared the workers might react with violence if the company failed to live up to its promises again. Others were worried that the commission would lead to legislation decertifying unions undertaking wildcat strikes. Esau Thoms, an official with the Brotherhood of Railway, Airline and Steamship Clerks, suggested that instead of wildcat strikes, union leaders contact their management counterparts to organize labour-management consultative committees. Many of those before the Commission recommended such joint union-management committees

workers and called for harsher penalties and greater enforcement of the provisions of the Labour Relations Act. While legislation existed for prosecuting the organizers of illegal work stoppages (section 51 of the Labour Relations Act), it was rarely used in the 1970s, in part because the Department was reluctant to lose their credibility by seemingly favouring one side over the other. Under the Labour Relations Act the Minister of Manpower's approval was needed before anyone could be prosecuted for violating section 51. "Illegal Strikes Take Over," *Decks Awash*, 25.

under the assumption that meeting on a regular basis would prevent the build-up of frustrations that led to wildcat strikes.¹⁵

Neary made a series of recommendations to the three parties involved in labour relations (management, labour, and the government) to prevent future wildcat strikes. He recommended that management demonstrate greater concern for the rights and welfare of employees (including recognizing their rights to unionize), that management show more flexibility in interpreting collective agreements, that they train management personnel in collective bargaining, that they hire trained industrial relations personnel, and that they improve communications within their own ranks. Turning to labour, he recommended that unions educate their members in all facets of labour relations, that unions ensure that grievances are taken to management in a timely fashion, and that unions listen to their members. Neary recommended that the government amend the Labour Relations Act to provide an officer with powers to enquire into work stoppages and determine their legality, to issue cease and desist orders to illegal stoppages, and to recommend prosecutions if either side failed to adhere to the cease and desist order. Neary also wanted it made illegal for a union to condone a wildcat strike.

The commission made special recommendations for the construction industry, recognizing that many of the strikes involved workers in major construction projects. It acknowledged that construction unions were suffering from growing pains and that the construction industry was more susceptible to economic fluctuations than many other

¹⁴ Neary, *Report of the Royal Commission*, 12-25.

¹⁵ "Six Submissions Presented during First Day of Hearing into Strikes," *ET*, 18 April 1973; "Union Agent Launches Bitter Attack on Procon," *ET*, 18 April 1973; "Unionist Fears Wildcat Strikes may Force Union Decertification," *ET*, 29 August 1973; and "Labor Officials to Meet Minister on Brief to Strike Commission," *ET*, 9 January 1973. The Federation of Labour recommended a speedier arbitration system and criticized the government for not enacting the Cohen

industries. In peak periods workers were in demand and employers were forced to compete for skilled labour. In slow periods, employers had more power over hiring as more skilled workers were unemployed. To cope with employment instability, Neary recommended that the government work with management and labour to develop a program whereby work was better planned for more continuous employment. He also recommended that successful construction projects be studied and their lessons learned, to help prevent further wildcats.¹⁶

Even before the Commission issued its report, the government acted on one of its recommendations and amended the Labour Relations Act to allow for area-wide employer certification in construction. This proved one of the only recommendations the government acted upon. Despite soaring numbers of strikes and the Neary Commission's finding that delays in certification, conciliation, and grievance arbitration were to blame for many of the strikes, the Minister of Manpower was reluctant to increase its conciliation resources, stating he saw little point creating a "huge bureaucracy for a peak demand five years from now, and then not use it for the next 15 years."¹⁷ With few new large-scale projects in sight the government did not see a pressing need for action. Instead, it relied upon rhetoric from its ministers. Minister of Manpower and Industrial Relations Joe Rousseau,

Commission recommendations. "Federation Critical of Labor Relations Act," *ET*, 16 May 1973.

¹⁶ In recommending area certification for a council of unions, Neary was following the example of Nova Scotia. Neary found that projects were more likely to succeed when all employers (and all unions) belonged to one contractors' association (or council of unions). One master contract including provisions for a full mark-up of work before the project started was also key to avoiding trouble, as were the use of a foreman's handbook setting out guidelines in the handling of workers and weekly foremen's meetings to discuss problems. Successful collective agreements covered wage increases and working conditions, dispute resolution mechanisms, and provided adequate industrial relations personnel to cope with problems. Neary, *Report of the Royal Commission*, 70-1.

¹⁷ "Maynard Blames Inflation," *Decks Awash*, 24.

for instance, gave a speech in April 1974 deploring the trend of "down tools, off-the-job" attitude prevalent on many projects.

An Unstable Industry

To understand the economic downturn that plagued the construction industry in the late 1970s and 1980s, it is necessary to first understand the somewhat uncharacteristic period of growth that ran from 1943 to the early 1970s. Commencing with the construction of military bases during World War II, Newfoundland's industrial construction industry experienced rapid expansion. In addition to the tremendous spending brought about by Confederation with Canada (roads, schools, hospitals etc.), workers were also employed in the construction of the province's new industrial base (including hydro plants, manufacturing plants, and refineries). With the growth, construction became the fourth largest sectoral employer in the 1950s, behind transportation, communication and utilities, and manufacturing and trade.¹⁸ Each large-scale project required a massive increase in the numbers of construction workers, who were then left unemployed at the completion of each project.

Construction grew alongside the economy during the 1960s and early 1970s as the provincial and federal governments made a concerted effort to increase both the level and range of public goods and services.¹⁹ Relative to the rest of Canada, construction in

¹⁸ Manufacturing received an artificial boost from the inclusion of fisheries workers in the manufacturing category rather than as a separate subset. Canada as a whole experienced an increase in aggregate demand for housing, business, and social capital construction in the wake of World War II. A 1952 U.S. government report warning of a potential shortage of raw resources helped fuel a construction boom in Canada. Major projects included highways (the Trans-Canada), the St. Lawrence seaway, mines and smelters, pipelines (Alberta), and hydro-electric installations. Frank Wildgen, "Economic Aspects: Work, Income and Cost Stabilization," in Carl Goldenberg and John Crispo, eds., *Construction Labour Relations* (Ottawa: CCA, 1968), 32.

¹⁹ From 1961-1971 the total contribution of the construction industry to the gross domestic product (GDP) of Newfoundland grew from 11.3 per cent to 20.7 per cent. At its peak in 1971 construction was the single largest contributor to the GDP. In Canada as a whole in 1971

Newfoundland had a higher dependency on provincial and federal government expenditures. The federal government funded many projects through the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE), while the provincial government set up crown building corporations to finance many projects. By using crown corporations the provincial government avoided paying taxes on the work.²⁰

With the larger industrial (Churchill Falls) and institutional projects (Confederation Building, Memorial University, and other large structures), many Canadian and U.S. firms became interested in bidding on Newfoundland jobs. As more firms bid on Newfoundland work, local firms had to use new technology or risk not being competitive.²¹ Across North America in the 1960s and 1970s a few large firms dominated and won most of the contracts while a coterie of smaller firms led much more of a hand-to-mouth existence, scrambling for small jobs and subcontracts. Given the cyclical fluctuations, many Newfoundland firms appeared and disappeared in rapid order. To cope with economies of scale, the construction industry undertook rapid mechanization from the 1950s to the early 1970s. To cover the rising costs of equipment purchases and higher wage costs, contractors put in higher bids on jobs resulting in a cost-push

construction accounted for 6.4 per cent. GDP is the total gross value added by all productive enterprises in the economy. Statistics Canada, *Construction in Canada*, Catalogue 64-201 (Ottawa 1971); Statistics Canada, *Private and Public Investment in Canada*, Catalogue 61-205 (Ottawa 1971); Government of Newfoundland, *Historical Statistics of Newfoundland and Labrador*, October 1971, vol. 1 (1).

²⁰ Crown corporations were used to build the Confederation building, Memorial University, hospitals in Grand Falls, Gander, and Bell Island, the Technical College, district vocational schools and other government buildings. The government also used crown corporations as a way to encourage projects such as the Marystown Shipyard and the Come by Chance refinery. Royal Commission on Economic Prospects of Newfoundland and Labrador, *Sector Study on the Construction Industry* (St. John's 1967), VI-15.

²¹ Technological advances included switching from concrete to brick and structural steel in the 1950s, and then switching from brick and structural steel to pre-cast concrete. R. Hayward, "Construction Industry," in R.I. McAllister, ed., *Newfoundland and Labrador, The First Fifteen Years of Confederation* (St. John's: Dicks and Co., 1966), 152.

inflationary trend.²² From 1966 to 1971 the Newfoundland construction industry's gross value of output grew by 116 per cent, from \$255,256,000 to \$552,762,000. After that peak, construction activity declined by 13 per cent in 1972 and a further six per cent in 1973.²³ With the boom, construction unions were able to demand large wage increases from employers desperate for skilled workers. Many employers complained that the higher wages paid by outside contractors were being forced on local employers.

Employers also complained about the union practice of "leap-frogging" where other trades used a stronger union's negotiated settlement to pressure employers for an equal settlement.²⁴ Individual contractors were often hard put to maintain solidarity as unions targeted contractors on tight schedules or larger budgets to sign the first agreements. The contractors' association worried that if one contractor signed a separate agreement it would set a precedent for the entire sector. In response, the Canadian Construction Association (CCA) demanded that employer associations be accredited by the provincial government as the exclusive contractors bargaining agent. Employers believed that if bargaining was done on a multi-trade basis then they could counteract construction unions' increasing power. In a meeting with the CCA, Smallwood agreed

²² Profit levels in the industry as a whole in the 1961-1971 period ranged from a high of 3.16 per cent in 1968 to a low of 1.89 per cent in 1970. This followed the Canadian trend where construction industry profits were falling from 3.1 in 1968 to 1.8 in 1970. Falling profit levels were due to increased capital expenditures on machinery and equipment as well as large expenditures on equipment repairs because much of the "new" equipment was purchased used and necessitated frequent repairs. Government of Newfoundland, *Economic Geography of Newfoundland* (St. John's 1974) and Statistics Canada, *Corporation Financial Statistics*, catalogue 61-207 (Ottawa 1971).

²³ Government of Newfoundland, *Report on the Construction Industry* (St. John's: Construction Study Group, Planning Task Force, 1973), 9.

²⁴ For an examination of the way leapfrogging played out in the United States, see Steven G. Allen, "Developments in Collective Bargaining in Construction in the 1980s and 1990s," in Paula Voos, ed., *Contemporary Collective Bargaining in the Private Sector* (Madison: Industrial Relations Research Association, 1994), 421.

that many of the wage increases won by construction unions in 1970 and 1971 were excessive and could have a disruptive inflationary effect on the whole economy.²⁵

With all the public and private spending, workers and employers alike began to view growth as the norm. This began to end in the mid-1970s as an economic downturn struck the construction industry. By 1975, with most of the large-scale construction projects completed, the number of construction workers employed declined to levels not seen since the early 1950s. By the early 1980s, the Newfoundland construction industry was in a severe slump as construction starts declined and contractors began demanding wage roll-backs. Unemployment was rife, even among trained workers. Neither labour nor contractors were prepared for the slowing of construction growth that occurred in the mid-to late-1970s. To cope with increased competition for fewer jobs and with the need to cut costs to win bids, employers began to utilize a new arsenal of tactics, including using non-union labour, to abrogate workers' bargaining power. While in earlier periods the provincial government used infrastructure spending to help regulate overall economic activity, by the early 1980s high provincial debt, high interest rates, and a dearth of new federal-provincial agreements combined to create recessionary conditions.²⁶

²⁵ In a strike between local 2330 of the IBEW and electrical contractors, one contractor complained that an offer of a 40 per cent wage increase was turned down by the province's electrical workers. The IBEW strike was not, however, just about wages. They were also demanding use of union hiring halls and a reduction in the number of apprentices per journeymen from a one on one (apprentice) to a three (journeymen) to one ratio. CNSA, Collection 073 (John Crosbie Papers), file 3.07.035. NCLA file. Letter from Donald Holden to S.A. Neary, Acting Minister of Labour, 29 June 1971. Also see Joe Ashley, "Ashley... One," *Free Press*, 21 July 1971; file 3.07.037. Robert Saunders, President CCA, *Mid-Year Report*, 31 August 1970; and Letter from RTC Stewart, CCA, to Smallwood, 6 May 1971 confirming Smallwood's views.

²⁶ *Report on the Construction Industry*, 111-112 and *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 1.

Government and Capital on the Offensive

The strike wave and high wage demands of the early 1970s seemed to many to be evidence of a serious labour problem. With rapidly rising inflation and other weaknesses in the Newfoundland and North American markets, employers and government looked for scape-goats on whom to blame the economic woes. Working people, especially unionized workers, were cast as the villain, with wages and social security programs (including Medicare) blamed for high inflation. Prime Minister Trudeau demanded workers "tighten their belts". Reversing the government's supposed stance of neutral arbiter of labour relations, in 1975 the federal government introduced compulsory wage and price controls, followed in rapid succession by provincial programs. Wage controls were aimed at organized workers whose wages had sharply risen in the early 1970s, especially construction workers. Under the Anti-Inflation Board's watchful eye, wage increases were to be kept to 8, 6 and 4 per cent in each of the following three years. In essence, workers and unions were stripped of the right to negotiate their own collective agreements as government programs mandated wage increases through Anti-Inflation Boards. While wage increases were controlled, attempts at price controls proved far less effective and company profits continued to rise.²⁷

While some blamed newly unionized workers or intransigent managers for the high numbers of strikes in the mid-1970s, Gerry Royce, a Memorial University economics professor, disagreed, explaining that "At the present time we are experiencing an abnormal number of strikes. The major reason for this is the world economy is going through a terrifically high rate of inflation, and what tends to happen in an inflationary

²⁷ D. Wolfe, "The State and Economic Policy in Canada, 1968-1975," in Leo Panitch, ed., *The Canadian State: Political Economy and Political Power* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,

period is that wages tend to lag behind prices and workers are always trying to catch up.” Royce continued that “once inflation occurs, usually there is a wage push-off phenomenon in which workers are not only trying to catch up, but very often, they are anticipating future inflation as well. So they strike to get more. Once the strikes start, production is slowed down because businesses never know when there is going to be a strike.” He blamed the inflationary spiral on the U.S. intervention in Vietnam where the government printed more money to pay for it, rather than raise taxes.²⁸ In contrast to employers, Royce saw the push for higher wages as a symptom of inflation, not the cause. Price stability was needed to quell unrest, argued Royce, something the government was unwilling to undertake as it meant considerable short-term unemployment.²⁹

As double digit inflation returned in the late 1970s, workers again pressed their wage demands in hopes of keeping even with inflation. Deciding the policy of Keynesian economics could not deal with the crisis, federal politicians turned to monetarism. Monetarists believed that if the government could keep the supply of money stable, allowing for some expansion for natural economic growth, then the market would solve inflation and unemployment problems. In general, monetarist government pushed for lower tax rates, reductions in money growth and inflation, and an end to exchange controls and wage-price guidelines.³⁰

1977), 228-251.

²⁸ “Easy Economics,” *Decks Awash*, 4, 3 (June 1975), 27.

²⁹ It is important to note, however, that many of the strikes at Come by Chance were not about wages and concerned internal problems on site, including problems with supervisors and jurisdictional disputes. It was often easier, however, to blame surface causes (such as wages) than to look for (or explain to the media) the underlying problems on site.

³⁰ For more on monetarism see Thomas Mayer, *Monetarism and Macroeconomic Policy* (Aldershot, England: E. Elgar 1990) and Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, *The Assault on Trade*

With the change in policy, the federal government began reducing government spending, particularly on large-scale projects and social services. With drastic cuts to infrastructure spending, employment in construction nose dived. When federal wage restraint laws were re-implemented in 1982 (6 and 5), federal finance minister Marc Lalonde threatened to allow non-unionized contractors to bid on federal government projects if the construction industry did not follow wage guidelines.³¹ Lalonde's threat added fuel to an already simmering fire between the building trades unions (the Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council) and the contractors' association (the Newfoundland Construction Labour Relations Association or NCLRA), as the NCLRA proclaimed that unions had priced themselves out of the market. Bill Alcock, director of labour relations with NCLRA, insisted that if union contractors wanted to win contracts, unions needed to provide concessions on contracts already in place.

In the 1980s, both federal and provincial governments responded by attempting to underwrite investment by giving new subsidies to capital in the form of loans, grants, and tax concessions, rather than on reducing unemployment. Provincial government attempts to lure new businesses into the province angered unions. The NLCBTC resented the provincial government giving information on individual unions, rates of unionization, and overall union strength to Cumberland Farms while the company was preparing its bid to purchase the bankrupt Come by Chance refinery.³² Government charges of quality

Union Freedoms: From Wage Controls to Social Contract, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1993).

³¹ Lalonde was reacting to a Nova Scotia plumber's settlement which saw an 11 per cent wage increase. "Official Says Union Contractors could be Priced out of the Market," *ET*, July 1982.

³² "Government Provided Cumberland with information on Union Strength," *Sunday Express*, August 1986.

problems also infuriated the NLCBTC, including one statement that "few local welders are used to strict tolerance levels..., local welders have been hampered by the fact that local training institutions have not kept abreast of technological changes... [and a] lack of work in this category [pipefitting] has caused the trade to deteriorate in skills." In an open letter to the Premier the NLCBTC accused the Peckford government of "hav[ing] too many friends in the construction industry who want to get richer on the backs of Newfoundland workers..." The letter denounced Peckford for shouting "theatrically at Ottawa, while whispering sweet nothings to Newfoundland and foreign businessmen."³³ Relations between organized labour and the Peckford government (1979-1989) were troubled. Peckford was the first Newfoundland premier since 1959 to enact back-to-work legislation (used against hospital workers in 1981 and public sector workers in 1984).³⁴

The recession had serious implications for employment and income levels. In the winter of 1979, 75 per cent of carpenters were unemployed, many of whom had not worked enough in the peak season to collect unemployment insurance.³⁵ Despite high

³³ Ultimately, refinery operators opted to go non-union for the refit. "A Second Letter to Premier Peckford," *ET*, 28 February 1986.

³⁴ The Newfoundland government passed Bill 59, requiring public sector unions to designate up to 49 per cent of its members as essential workers, in 19 minutes. In response, NAPE President Fraser March took his members out on an illegal strike (without designating essential workers). Arrests ensued, including March and NDP leader Peter Fenwick. Evolving into a flash point of protest against both levels of the government, the strike assumed national significance and the provincial government was forced to make amendments to Bill 59. After suffering setbacks in the 1985 election the Peckford government attempted to placate labour by amending the Labour Relations Act to allow the imposition of an initial collective agreement. Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, *The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms: From Consent to Coercion Revisited* (Toronto: Garamond Press, 1988), 86-88; Bob Levin, "Days of Crisis," *MacLean's* 14 April 1986, 15-18.

³⁵ "Smoother Sawing for Carpenters," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 8; Newfoundland, *Employment and Unemployment in Newfoundland: a Profile* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986), 41. Newfoundland's blue collar workers faced much higher unemployment rates than their Canadian counterparts, at 20.4 per cent compared to 7.4 per cent in Canada as a whole, while service worker unemployment rates were 16.7 per cent in Newfoundland, 8.1 per cent in Canada. Transportation accounted for 15 per cent of the unemployed, construction 28 per cent, processing 19 per cent, primary manufacturing 19.8 per

unemployment levels, a major building trades strike shut down much of the construction industry in 1980 which led the NLBCTC and the NCLRA to discuss voluntary multi-trade bargaining. Under multi-trade bargaining, the NLBCTC was to negotiate with the NCLRA, and, after reaching an agreement, the individual trades were to take the agreement back to their membership. While multi-trade bargaining was relatively successful in both 1981 and 1982, the NLBCTC was reluctant to see it made mandatory.

A combination of economic crisis and technological changes in the construction industry contributed to close to one in ten full-time positions being lost between 1980 and 1981, a number much higher during the off season. In 1981 construction unemployment hovered around 50 per cent in many trades, with a high of 70-80 per cent in some trades. Mine closures and layoffs of paper and fish plant workers added to high levels of unemployment as competition for jobs in construction increased. In 1982 official construction unemployment rates were 44 per cent, the highest to date in the province. This was not a short-term problem. In 1985 the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners estimated carpentry unemployment at 75 per cent.³⁶ Employment levels were slow to improve. In 1986 Haig Young, the Minister of Public Works, commented that only public sector initiatives were keeping the construction industry alive. Newfoundland was not alone in facing high construction unemployment, which limited construction

cent, and service 16.7 per cent.

³⁶ In January 1986 the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission listed 32,002 Newfoundland construction workers as unemployed. Dorothy Anger, Carmelita McGrath, and Sandy Pottle, *Women and Work in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986), 23. See also Fred Bowdring, Business Manager, NLBCTC, "Council Concerned with Jobsite Conditions," *ET*, 24 March 1983; Patricia Lush, "Construction Industry is Anticipating Average Jobless rate of 16% This Year," *Globe and Mail*, 23 March 1982; and "Brief Submitted to Advisory Committee to deal with Construction Labour Relation Climate in this Province," Submitted by UBCJA, local 579, 1985.

workers from moving outside the province for work. Those who were working were employed on a few large projects.³⁷

The Newfoundland construction industry was not alone in facing an economic downturn. Across Canada, national unemployment rates for construction hovered around 20 per cent with Statistics Canada reporting that unionized wage rates in construction only rose by 2.4 per cent in 1985, the smallest rate in over 25 years. Given that inflation rose by four per cent, unionized construction workers faced a loss of 1.6 per cent in real wages. The limited number of new projects led to fierce competition between contractors and calls for wage roll-backs. In the mid-1980s, many contractors began hiring non-union labour or hiring union workers willing to work for less than scale.³⁸ This led to a tremendous growth in non-union contractors who were able not only to pay their employees less but also had the added flexibility of being able to assign workers to jobs outside their formal job classification or to assign semi- or unskilled workers work traditionally done by skilled workers. Carpenters' local 905 president Cyril Troke warned that such double breasting was increasing at an alarming rate and that it was difficult to control as contractors simply changed their names from project to project, leaving behind any collective bargaining obligations when one project ended. According to Troke, as one

³⁷ Some workers were employed on the Hinds Lake hydro project, the MUN library, a Corner Brook housing project, or the St. John's taxation and telephone building projects. "Public Sector Initiative Keeping Construction Alive, says Public Works Minister," *ET*, 6 January 1986.

³⁸ While many authors claimed that rising cost differentials made union construction less competitive, work by Steven Allen on the construction industry contradicts this. Allen found that the reasons for declining unionization in the construction industry in the U.S. rest not with the argument that unions are less competitive (with wage or productivity differentials) but with judicial and NLRB decisions which facilitated double breasting and management's desire to use non-union contractors. Allen, "Developments in Collective Bargaining in Construction in the 1980s and 1990s," 411-445. This is an area that warrants further research in Newfoundland.

contractor went with double breasting, it had a snowball effect as others followed suit to remain competitive.³⁹

A Glimmer of Hope

In 1985 the Newfoundland construction industry received a boost it had long anticipated. After years of jurisdictional wrangling including a Supreme Court case, Brian Mulroney and Brian Peckford signed the Atlantic Accord. The Accord divided jurisdictional powers for the offshore between the two levels of government and opened the door to developing the Hibernia offshore oilfield. The announcement that the oil industry was going to proceed with a Gravity Based System (GBS) for Hibernia largely built in Newfoundland was music to the ears of construction workers and contractors across the province. With the project imminent, the government convened a Construction Industry Advisory Committee to examine the "problems associated with the construction industry in the Province of Newfoundland," and to ensure "adequate structures are in place to provide a stable Construction Labour Relations climate in the province." Chaired by lawyer Gordon Easton, other committee members included United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners representative Gonzo Gillingham and executive director of the Newfoundland Construction Labour Relations Association Bill Alcock. The government wanted the report to address industry problems so that Newfoundland companies could become more competitive for oil-related work. Throughout the report, much like the earlier Neary report, the Come by Chance project symbolized what was to be avoided.⁴⁰

³⁹ "Practice of Double Breasting under Fire at Labor Hearings," *ET*, 17 October 1985; and UBCJA, local 579, "Brief Submitted to Advisory Committee to deal with Construction Labour Relation Climate in this Province," 1985. See also "No Member Control Means no Stability, says NCLRA Head," *ET*, March 1987 which discusses the NLCA agreement to ban double breasting, an agreement many of its contractors ignored.

⁴⁰ "Labor Minister to Meet with Advisory Committee," *ET*, 11 October 1985 and Easton, *RCLAC*,

The Construction Advisory committee report recommended that the Hibernia construction site be declared a Special Project under the Labour Relations Act with an employers' council and a bargaining council of the building trades unions responsible for negotiations, along the lines of the Churchill Falls project. It also recommended that the government introduce legislation requiring a system of multi-trade bargaining for industrial and commercial construction and that the industry as a whole commit to a five-year no strike, no lockout agreement. In addition, it recommended requiring employers use mark-up and pre-job conferences prior to the commencement of major jobs, that the government appoint a jurisdictional umpire under the Labour Relations Board, and that employers use more composite crews to avoid jurisdictional disputes.

To cope with double-breasting, the Construction Industry Advisory Committee recommended that a minimum wage be set for all trades workers in the industrial construction industry and that the Labour Relations Board be given the power to determine any question arising that relates to the commercial and industrial sector of the construction industry.⁴¹ The Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association disagreed with a standard wage approach, arguing that "standardized wage policies are dangerous, short sighted, and merely a tinkering with market forces which most authorities agree cannot be approached other than by a complete overhaul of our political, social, and economic system."⁴² An international joint labour-management committee also met to deal with the issue of double breasting and recommended that workers seek less money and fewer benefits to help stem the rapid growth of non-union contractors.⁴³ While the document

8-26. Easton was later to become the chair of the Newfoundland Labour Relations Board.

⁴¹ Easton, *RCIAC*, 59-63.

⁴² "Practice of Double Breasting under Fire at Labor Hearings," *ET*, 17 October 1985.

⁴³ "Construction Workers take a Beating at the Bargaining Table," *ET*, 25 January 1986. Western

was endorsed by both the Canadian and International executive boards of the fifteen international building trades unions and the Canadian Construction Association, some union leaders worried that advocating contract concessions might undercut labour's bargaining ability.⁴⁴ Gonzo Gillingham, representative of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, disagreed, arguing that recent concessionary contracts had allowed unions to recapture a large per cent of jobs. He claimed that "right now [January 1986], 75 per cent of heavy construction is union. A year or a year and a half ago, that was not the case – it was about 30 per cent."⁴⁵ As unions competed with each other and with non-union contractors for work, frequent mark-up and jurisdictional disputes resulted, as did inter-union rivalries.⁴⁶

Following the Construction Industry Advisory Committee recommendations, the NCLRA and NLBCTC began negotiations for a two-year multi-trade bargaining agreement. When bargaining looked unfruitful, the Minister of Labour appointed a mediator whose subsequent report set out a blueprint for overhauling labour relations in the construction industry. A mediation report by Leslie Harris found intractable problems

Canada and Newfoundland fared far worse than other parts of the country as both their construction industries sank into depression. James McCambly, president of the Canadian Federation of Labor reported that in some areas of Newfoundland and Alberta construction unemployment was at 80 per cent.

⁴⁴ "Construction Union Officials Rapped for Supporting Document," *ET*, 6 November 1985. U.S. building trades union officials had already stated their willingness to grant wage and other concessions in hopes of curbing non-union growth.

⁴⁵ "Commission says Drop in Union Membership more Severe in US," *ET*, 20 January 1986.

⁴⁶ In 1983, for instance, the Steelworkers accused the NLBCTC of stealing work at the IOC plant in Labrador City. After layoffs of its own members, Steel challenged the Building Trades contract which gave construction unions five weeks work refurbishing and rebuilding machinery on site. Press Release, NLBCTC, 12 April 1982. Problems between the Steelworkers and the building trades may also have been influenced by the 1982 breakaway of building trades unions from the Canadian Labour Congress. The CLC suspended the unions after they refused to remit their per capita dues. In response the unions left the CLC and created the Canadian Federation of Labour. Joseph Rose, "Some Notes on the Building Trades-Canadian Labour Congress Dispute," *Industrial Relations*, 22, 1 (Winter 1983), 87-93. Gordon Easton, chair, *Report of the*

across the construction industry, that its structure was irrational, chaotic, and that it failed to served either employers or employees adequately.⁴⁷ Harris viewed the root cause of the instability as the oversupply of trades workers and an undersupply of steady work which allowed non-union contractors to flourish. This forced employers under collective agreements to compete with non-union contractors who were not bound by either contractual or legislative obligations as only unionized employers were covered by the Labour Relations Act. With the oversupply of trades workers, unions became increasingly zealous at protecting their traditional areas of responsibility, leading to frequent jurisdictional disputes.⁴⁸

To cope with the inherent instability, Harris recommended an overhaul of the collective bargaining system, including creating a licensing system for all construction contractors. In addition, Harris wanted the NCLRA expanded to represent all licensed contractors and to bargain on an industry wide basis. Certification was one way to insure that workers were trained and qualified, and had health and safety education. Certification would also provide job security for *bona fide* construction workers and deter moonlighting. Harris believed that:

the requirement that legitimate construction workers be registered as such would discourage individuals, many of them already fully-employed or committed to other industries, fields, or vocations, from casually entering the building and construction trades work force as moonlighters or in some other guises to exacerbate unemployment and to diminish cohesion among the legitimate building and construction trades.⁴⁹

Construction Industry Advisory Committee (RCIAC) (St. John's 1986), 12.

⁴⁷ At the time Leslie Harris was president of Memorial University.

⁴⁸ Leslie Harris, *Report in the Matter of the Labour Relations Act (1977) and in the Matter of a Dispute Between the NCLRA and the NLBCTC* (St. John's 1986).

⁴⁹ Harris, *Report in the Matter of the Labour Relations Act...*

Harris also recommended that individual construction unions transfer authority for collective bargaining to the NLBCTC to allow for industry-wide bargaining. He also suggested the NCLRA and NLBCTC create a joint board of trustees to administer a new welfare and benefits plan. By adopting a formula similar to the Rand Formula, all employers, union or non-union, would contribute to the benefits plan. Harris also suggested that the government establish a minimum wage for construction under the Labour Standards Act to help prevent non-union contractors from drastically undercutting union contractors. To help further stabilize wages, Harris advocated that the NCLRA and NLBCTC establish a joint committee to oversee wage rates. He also recommended establishing a mark-up system and developing a special tribunal to adjudicate jurisdictional disputes. Harris' final recommendation called on the building trades unions to organize non-union construction workers, thereby taking away the power of non-union contractors to undercut wage rates and destabilize the construction industry.

To ensure labour peace while these changes were implemented, Harris asked that both sides negotiate collective agreements that would run from 30 April 1986 to 30 April 1988. In those agreements he asked both sides to commit to a no-strike, no lock-out clause. He also asked the NCLRA to commit to a policy of no more double-breasting and the NLBCTC to commit to wage increases of between no more than 5 to 10 per cent. Before the report was released, however, the Minister of Labour undermined the process by announcing that the government had no intention of dealing with double breasting. With the expiry of the collective agreements, a bitter province-wide strike shut down the construction industry for five weeks in August 1988.⁵⁰ In the aftermath of the strike, the NLBCTC and the NCLRA negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the

provincial government that all sides hoped would bring labour peace to the unionized construction industry.

The MOU agreed to a no strike/no lockout clause in exchange for a ban on double breasting for a five year period and for a government commitment to legislate mandatory multi-trades bargaining. In lieu of striking, the parties asked for a Board to mediate any deadlocks. Mediation failure was to result in a case going to binding arbitration. Under the agreement, the parties involved agreed to do a feasibility study on the practicality of registering trades workers. The government initially agreed to revise the Labour Standards Act and to establish minimum wage levels for the industrial and commercial sector of the construction industry. In announcing the MOU, the Minister of Labour stated that "with the recent announcement of the Hibernia Agreement, it is more important than at any other time in our history that we create an atmosphere of confidence in labour relations in this province."⁵¹ Unfortunately, the agreement was short-lived. It failed when the government refused to meet its commitments of implementing amendments to the Industrial Standards Act and to introduce legislation banning double breasting. The government reneged after protests by non-union contractors. The death of the MOU added to the already acrimonious relationship between unions and contractors. A nine week strike resulted, with over 6000 construction workers out on a province-wide strike.⁵²

⁵⁰ Press Release, Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour, 22 August 1986.

⁵¹ Ted Blanchard, Minister of Labour, "Statement," *Week in Review*, 29 July 1988.

⁵² Non-union contractors claimed the issue was not double breasting but competition. Union and contractor associations wanted a minimum wage schedule for non-union construction workers that would equal 75 per cent of the total union compensation package; the cabinet approved a rate of roughly 50 per cent of the union rate. The deal ultimately failed when despite Labour Minister Ted Blanchard's support, other cabinet ministers refused to sign it. See "Non-Union Contractors Vow to Fight Labor Deal," *ET*, 10 August 1988; "Court Action to be Postponed," *ET*, 28 January

As industrial relations deteriorated, plans proceeded for the Hibernia project. In August 1988, the principal lead owner, Mobil Oil, asked each of the four companies bidding on the Hibernia project to prepare their own labour relations management plans, no longer confident that the government would solve the problems plaguing the construction industry. All were worried about the current crisis in construction, particularly what impact double breasting might have on the project. Each of the four contractors suggested the same remedy to the instability plaguing construction in Newfoundland: that the project be declared a special project under the Labour Relations Act and that the project be unionized, by the building and construction unions. As a result, Mobil arranged a meeting in November 1988 between the four contractors and representatives of the AFL-CIO Building and Construction Trades Department.

Before agreeing to a unionized site, the employers sought three commitments: that local unions act collectively in a council of unions; that parent international unions be present at the negotiating table; and that the agreement be limited to the project only and not part of the larger province-wide agreement building trade unions had with the NCLRA. In response, the building trades unions created an Oil Development Council in December 1988, representing twelve construction unions plus the Teamsters and the Hotel and Restaurant Workers. While the local unions were initially leery of having the international unions at the table, they acceded. The third demand, to bargain away from the NCLRA, was a more difficult one as the Newfoundland government had given the NCLRA exclusive bargaining rights for the Newfoundland construction industry. When

1989; "Peckford Mum on Suggestion he is at Odds with Blanchard," *ET*, 16 September 1988. Lana Payne, "Construction Industry Contract talks 'in Limbo'," *ET*, 1 February 1989; Payne, "Construction Peace Pact is Dead," *ET*, 28 January 1989; Payne, "A Rocky Road to Labor Peace in Province's Construction Industry," *ET*, 8 December 1989.

the Hibernia Employers Association (HEA) convinced the NCLRA to give up those rights, it opened the door for negotiations to begin in earnest in February 1989. At the table were 29 union representatives (14 each from the local and the international unions plus Guy Dumoulin, the Canadian Executive Director of the American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations Building and Construction Trades Department), James Kenny for the HEA, and representatives from each of the four contractors still contending for the contract.⁵³

One early sticking point at the negotiations was the ODC's insistence on representing all workers on site. The Marine Workers' Union, which represented workers at the Marystown Shipyard, was also interested in representing workers on site. Given the potential for jurisdictional conflict, the ODC convinced the HEA it was safer to go with only one council of unions on site. Another sticking point arose when the ODC attempted to bring the 14 different union contracts in line with one another, particularly on issues such as the length and composition of the work week. On several occasions, both sides came close to walking away from the talks and, as John Crosbie relates, only Brian Mulroney's intervention put the talks back on track. In one instance, a conflict between newly elected Liberal premier Clyde Wells and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney over the Meech Lake Accord threatened to put an end to the negotiations when Québec MPs threatened to block legislation providing the federal funding for Hibernia.⁵⁴

⁵³ In preliminary meetings in January 1989 the HEA publicly committed itself to going union. Gregory Kealey and Gene Long, *Labour and Hibernia: Conflict Resolution at Bull Arm, 1990-1992* (St. John's: ISER, 1993), 2-4.

⁵⁴ John C. Crosbie with Geoffrey Stevens, *No Holds Barred: My Life in Politics* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1997), 435. Crosbie also takes credit for convincing Mulroney to buy part of Gulf Canada's stake in the project after Gulf withdrew in 1992.

Hibernia

Given the overall size of the construction project and the limited deadline given for its completion, considerable importance was placed on labour relations at Hibernia. Both parties had a vested interest in having the project completed on time, on budget, and with harmonious labour relations. To this end, two things occurred. In July 1990, after 18 months of negotiation, a comprehensive collective agreement was signed between the ODC and the HEA, and in September 1990 the site received Special Project designation under the Labour Relations Act. Within a week Hibernia Management Development Committee awarded the contract for site development.⁵⁵

Project owners supported the project being unionized as the construction period was one time when the oil companies were vulnerable to delays and cost-overruns. During construction companies spent immense sums building an offshore drilling installation with little return on their investment. The amount of money being expended, and the relatively tight timeframe potentially gave workers increased power, as both sides knew how important it was for the companies to start recouping their construction costs. Hibernia's time frame was particularly vulnerable to delays as there was only a short window of opportunity when the rig could be towed to its offshore drilling location, and any delays meant that the project might be on hold for almost a year.

The Hibernia Construction Project Agreement was negotiated between the ODC representing 14 unions and the HEA representing all contractors on site. The collective agreement incorporated many of the recommendations made by the various commissions. When the government failed to enact legislative changes, the HEA and ODC opted to add commission recommendations to the collective agreement. In almost every provision it is

clear that both sides were determined to avoid another labour relations disaster, particularly the frequent work stoppages and jurisdictional disputes that plagued the construction industry in the 1970s and 1980s. Several articles of the contract were key to labour relations on site, including articles which recognized the ODC as the sole bargaining agent and which guaranteed no slowdowns, strikes or lockouts for the length of the project. The agreement also laid out a fast-track grievance and arbitration system in an attempt to prevent small disagreements from escalating into major disputes.⁵⁶

To prevent jurisdictional disputes, a Jurisdictional Umpire was appointed. Mark-up conferences had to be held before any work was started. For each new job all the unions on site received a notice of work details and the initial union assignment. After the notice went out, a mark-up meeting was held allowing unions to 'claim' work. Work was assigned by established practice. Jurisdictional disputes that were not resolved within 14 days were sent to an umpire. Unions had the right to appeal an umpire's ruling to the Impartial Jurisdictional Disputes Board of the Building and Construction Trades Department (AFL-CIO).⁵⁷ Despite the mechanisms in place, on several occasions the ODC attempted to take mark-up grievances to arbitration. On one occasion, the Plumbers and Pipefitters filed a grievance after they claimed the contractor failed to follow mark-up procedure. The arbitrator sent the case to the umpire after the HEA objected the

⁵⁵ Kealey and Long, *Labour and Hibernia*, 2-5.

⁵⁶ Under the three step grievance system, workers were given two days to take their complaint to the site representatives. Management was then given two days for initial response. If nothing was resolved, step two allotted the union business manager two days to file a grievance and gave the Principal Contractor an additional two days to respond. In step three ODC and HEA representatives were to meet in a final attempt to settle the grievance. Following that meeting either side had two days in which to file for arbitration. Once an arbitrator was appointed a hearing had to be held within five working days. Given the importance of the project, the government assigned four arbitrators to cover all Hibernia related arbitrations. *Project Agreement between Hibernia Employers' Association Inc. and Newfoundland and Labrador Oil Development Allied Trades Council for Hibernia Development Project* (July 1990), 10.

arbitrator could not hear a jurisdictional dispute.⁵⁸ In another case, the ODC filed a grievance after they alleged no mark-up was held for a mandolite (fireproofing) pump job. The HEA maintained that as a mark-up issue it belonged before the umpire, but the ODC argued that as there had been no mark-up it could not be taken before the umpire. Arbitrator Alcock found that there was a mark-up, but no final work assignment. Hence, he ordered that the HEA complete the final work assignment after which, if the ODC was still unhappy, they could take the issue before the jurisdictional umpire.⁵⁹

Labour relations on site were initially positive. Some problems, however, were evident quite early. At a meeting in August 1992 HEA executive director James Kenny spoke of problems on site. After a speech reminding the ODC of earlier co-operation, Kenny launched into an analysis of their current relationship, raising what he described as some "disturbing issues." Kenny reported that in "too many instances the business-like approach to problem resolution has disappeared. Common sense, courtesy and open dialogue have been replaced by common threats and intimidation and attempts at coercion." High levels of staff turnover on both the union and management sides were also seen as a problem. Kenny was also upset about the evolution of the site representative position. The HEA viewed the site representative as a problem solver but felt that it had recently changed into more of a walking steward role.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ *Project Agreement*, 10.

⁵⁸ See Government of Newfoundland, Department of Labour, *Arbitration 94-139*.

⁵⁹ In addition to these cases there were 13 more jurisdictional cases awaiting arbitration which were examined in a month of meetings between the ODC and the HEA in July 1995. These cases ranged from a tower crane installed without a mark-up and work performed by another trade to work performed by management. All thirteen cases were referred to the umpire. *Review Committee Report between Hibernia Employers' Association and Oil Development Council*. 20 July 1995.

⁶⁰ ODC files, box A-Z, File: ODC-HEA Joint Meetings. J.P. Kenny, HEA Executive Director, "Presentation to the ODC," 20 August 1992, 3, 11-13.

As the site became larger and costs increased, both parties became less willing to settle grievances informally. From 1994 on a lack of trust/co-operation developed. In May 1994 members of the ODC and HEA met at the St. John's Airport Inn to discuss the increasing numbers of grievances and arbitration issues. At the meeting Bill Parsons attempted to convince Kenny that the settling of individual grievances did not set precedents.⁶¹ To Derm Cain of the ODC Kenny appeared worried about making a misstep, choosing to let issues go to arbitration rather than set precedents via grievance resolution.⁶² By 1995 grievances and arbitrations were backed up considerably and an increasingly confrontational relationship was developing between the HEA and the ODC. The United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters (UA) representative Cal Jones was barred from site by the HEA for "poor behaviour".

At a joint ODC-HEA meeting in May 1995 both sides agreed labour relations on site were deteriorating, something HEA representative James Kenny blamed on the ODC's abuse of the arbitration system. Kenny complained that thorough investigations were not being done before cases were sent to arbitration. He was also unhappy that the ODC had gone to the government to complain about labour relations on site. ODC

⁶¹ Kenny had taken a more active role on site after one of the on-site management representatives, Harold Mercer, left the site in a disagreement over restructuring in June 1994. Morale problems among managers led the GBS construction management team to hold a series of meetings to define its mission statement and get them to "opt" into the team. Meetings were held after many managers complained of too many meetings, too much paper work, late design changes, low morale, and undefined areas of responsibility. "GBS Management Team Building Session Held," *Hibernia News*, 27 July 1994, 1.

⁶² Interview with Derm Cain, 17 September 1996. Meetings between the ODC and HEA in July 1995 led to the establishment of a joint HEA-ODC committee comprised of three representatives from each side to discuss labour relations at the site. This committee was given a mandate to resolve all outstanding grievances and arbitrations. Unanimous decisions were binding and final on all affected parties, however, if a unanimous decision was not reached then the grievance was sent back to normal arbitration procedure. While several grievances were settled, neither side was pleased with the compromises. *Review Committee Report between the Hibernia Employer's Association and the Oil Development Committee*, 20 July 1995. 7-18.

president Derm Cain saw things differently, and blamed the HEA for problems. He stated that "Failure and unwillingness for the contractor and HEA to settle as quickly as possible and failure by the HEA to accept arbitrators' decisions are just a few of the problems for bogged down grievances and arbitrations."⁶³

The situation continued to deteriorate as the HEA refused to use one arbitrator and asked to have another removed for bias. By 1996, 42 cases were before the arbitrators with a further 56 settled (or dropped) in a month of meetings between the ODC and HEA to discuss arbitrations.⁶⁴ While the construction project wrapped up in the spring of 1997, labour relations problems did not end. The ODC maintained that all construction work was not complete at the time of tow-out, and that unionized construction workers were guaranteed the work under the project agreement. Arbitrations on that and other issues continued until late 1998.

Conclusions

Government and management used a wide variety of tactics to cope with labour relations problems in construction. Governments had at their disposal tools to regulate the marketplace. In the mid-1970s the Newfoundland government joined the federal program of wage and price controls in an attempt to help control inflation. When inflation returned, governments at both levels turned away from Keynesian responses to the crisis

⁶³ ODC files, box A-Z, file: ODC Meetings. "Minutes – ODC Meeting," 23 May 1995 and Joint ODC-HEA-HMDC Meeting, 24-25 May 1995.

⁶⁴ In *Arbitration 95-311*, 17 April 1995, Re: Violation of the Collective Agreement, the ODC charged that the HEA's failure to choose arbitrator Dennis Browne in rotation was contrary to article 11.04 and exhibit 1 of the Collective Agreement. In *Arbitration 96-063*, Subject: Procedural Ruling, Reasonable Apprehension of Bias, 4 August 1996, the HEA asked for Dave Alcock to be removed after Jim Kenny of the HEA learned Alcock discussed work load problems with ODC lawyer Norm Whalen and Bill Parsons. The HEA believed the unilateral discussions showed no regard for HEA concerns and asked Alcock to remove himself while the HEA brought a court application seeking his removal from all current Hibernia cases.

towards a tight money policy involving a reduction in workers' rights. Governments also responded by turning to an old standby, the royal commission or investigative body. By appointing an investigative committee, the government looked like it was taking action even if it had no intention of following the committee's recommendations. Having a series of investigative committees allowed the public to feel the government was doing something and allowed the participants a forum for their complaints. Commissions also gave the government concrete suggestions on how to improve labour relations, should the government choose to implement them. Few of the construction industry reports were implemented in full, but some recommendations were included by the contractors and unions in their collective agreements.

By using special project designation the Hibernia project was able to overcome many of the flaws in the existing Labour Relations Act, an option not offered the earlier project. In both Hibernia's special project designation and its collective agreement, great care was taken by both sides to avoid repeating the problems of Come by Chance. This was done through ensuring that all parties on site were signatories and bound to the collective agreement, something that did not happen at Come by Chance where two of the unions were not bound by the contract. Unlike the Come by Chance contract, the Hibernia contract included an article banning strikes, slow-downs or lock-outs. The Come by Chance contract in comparison simply stated in its preamble that it was to both parties' mutual advantage to avoid strikes, work stoppages and delays.

Employers had their own arsenal of responses to the union challenge of the early 1970s. They pressured government for area-wide certification and for multi-trades bargaining. When the number of new projects slowed and contractors were struggling to

survive, many contractors turned to double-breasting and increasingly tight regulations of their workforces. In the case of Hibernia's collective agreement, the HEA was given the power to make rules and regulations covering the work and campsite, something they were quick to do. The HEA regulated almost every aspect of life on the project, from banning alcohol on site to penalties for everything from insubordination to tardiness. Construction workers were quick to respond to the myriad of rules and regulations, not always behaving favourably. How workers responded to management attempts at control is the focus of the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Fighting, Drinking, and Pilfering at Hibernia

Introduction

In much of the construction literature, construction workers were portrayed as a different breed of workers than mass production workers.¹ In 1981 Herbert Appelbaum wrote that trends like Taylorism had not taken hold in the construction industry because its technology made these practices inappropriate. He maintained that the technological

¹ Works by Appelbaum and Riemer epitomize the literature on the culture of construction workers. Written by sociologists and anthropologists with a construction background, these books were billed as taking an "inside look into the work world of those who build our buildings." None took a historical approach, but instead offered a snapshot of the profession. Herbert Applebaum, *Royal Blue: the Culture of Construction Workers* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981); Jeffrey Riemer, *Hard Hats: the work world of Construction Workers* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1979). See also Bob Reckman, "Carpentry: the Craft and Trade," in *Case Studies on the Labor Process*, edited by A. Zimbalist (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1979); and Mark Silver, *Under Construction: Work and Alienation in the Building Trades* (Albany: State University of New York, 1986). There are few books focusing on construction in Canada. Several Canadian historians have written books commissioned by individual unions. See Ian McKay, *The Craft Transformed: An Essay on The Carpenters of Halifax, 1885-1985* (Halifax: Holdfast Press, 1985); Gerry Berkowski, Ed Reed, Nolan Reilly, and Doug Smith, eds., *All That's Made of Wood: the Story of Local 343 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Labour History Series, 1995); and Mark Leier and M.C. Warrior, *Light at the End of the Tunnel: The first forty years, a history of the Tunnel and Rock Workers Union, local 168* (Vancouver 1992). This is a trend dominant in the U.S. historiography as well, see Raymond Robertson, *A History of the Iron Workers 1896-1996* (Washington 1996); Walter Galenson, *The United Brotherhood of Carpenters: the First Hundred Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); and Grace Palladino, *Dreams of Dignity, Workers of Vision* (Washington: IBEW, 1991). Few books have looked at Newfoundland's construction industry, one exception being Malcolm MacLeod, *Peace of the Continent: The Impact of Second World War on Canadian and American Bases in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Harry Cuff, 1986) which examines the construction of military bases in Newfoundland during World War II. This book focuses on the relationship between Canada, the U.S., and Newfoundland. Scattered mentions of construction projects lay in other books, including Phillip Smith, *Brinco: the Story of Churchill Falls* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975). There are social, economic, and environmental impact assessments on both the Come by Chance and Hibernia projects, including Larry Felt and Roger Carter, "The Impact of Provincial Refinery Co. Oil Refinery at Come-by-Chance, Newfoundland upon its Environment," commissioned by Petro Canada (1980); Douglas Inkster, "Background Paper on the Potential of the Come by Chance Refinery to Contribute to the Economic Development of the Province," (Economic Recovery Commission, 1990); John McKnight, "The Political Economy of Environmental Regulatory Policy: the Case of Come by Chance," MA, MUN, 1996; James Locke, "Socio-Economic Impact Assessment Auditing: a Critique using the Case Study of the Hibernia Offshore Oil Development Project," MA, MUN, 1996; and Wade Locke and James Feehan, *The Development of the Hibernia Offshore Field* (St. John's: ISER, 1993). One exception

and social organization of the construction industry fostered a particular pattern of work behaviour, stressing the independence and autonomy of construction craftsmen, whom he viewed as controlling their own work process. Applebaum described the differences between construction workers and mass production workers:

Unlike the factory worker, a building craftsman's job is neither narrowly defined nor performed under close supervision. The repetitive nature of manufacturing work is absent. Instructions are general, not specific... The men are given their work locations and operations and told what material and equipment are available. The organization of the tasks and how the work is to be performed is left to the craftsmen and their foremen. The craftsman is responsible for the layout of his work and completing it within a certain time.²

Work autonomy was not the only difference separating the construction worker from blue-collar workers in mass production. According to a Saskatchewan Conciliation Board hearing:

The production rhythm in construction has to be totally different from that of manufacturing where employees all work together on one location, at one time, in one integrated operation, mass producing goods which are sold for use elsewhere. The general contractor [did] some of the basic construction work itself, but in most cases the general [contractor] will subcontract the skilled technical work (electrical, plumbing) to trade contractors.... Corresponding to each of these subcontractors are the several kinds of tradesmen who have the specialized skills that are required at different phases in the construction project. The normal pattern is for each firm to agree to have its supervisors and tradesmen and equipment at the job, at the right point in the construction schedule to perform their task. When they are finished, both contractors and tradesmen go their own separate ways, to perform the same kind of operations on different projects, at other sites and other new contracts.³

is Greg Kealey and Gene Long, *Labour and Hibernia: Conflict resolution at Bull Arm, 1990-1992* (St. John's: ISER, 1993) which examines the first two years of labour relations at Hibernia.

² Applebaum, *Royal Blue*, 21. What Applebaum failed to take into account is that construction is made up of workers of different skill and training levels. While workers with more training were able to exhibit some control over their rate of production, others were not.

³ Gordon Easton, Chair, *Report of the Construction Industry Advisory Committee* (St. John's 1986), 5-6. Hereafter Easton, *RCIAC*. Citing Saskatchewan, *Report of the Board of Conciliation*, 4 October 1985.

Applebaum argued that the localized nature of the industry with its decentralized work processes, the unique structure of each building, the weather variability, the temporary duration of each project, and the organizational features of the industry, including the small size of most construction firms, the skilled workforce, and the strength of craft unions, resulted in increased independence and autonomy. Applebaum concluded that these variables, when combined, reduced the amount of control employers could impose. Construction workers' relative independence was a by-product of the autonomy and control of the work process maintained by skilled craftsmen, informal management administration, handicraft technology, hazardous working conditions, uncertainty, fairly high job satisfaction, and an occupational community which was displayed in a lifelong commitment to their crafts, a merging of work and non-work lives, and the identification of their self-image from their work.⁴

According to many authors, the construction worker was able to perform a range of complex operations, while the assembly-line worker was viewed as a single-purpose tool.⁵ Another celebrated difference separating craft workers from assembly workers, at least in the days before Japanese teamwork was embraced in North American auto plants, was that craft workers embraced the team concept early on. Work was done in teams or pairs, with every craftsman paired with an apprentice learning the trade. While some mass production companies have turned to 'team concepts', lean production and total quality management in the past decade, recent studies indicate that these are teams in name only and have acted simply to give management even more authority on where and

⁴ Applebaum, *Royal Blue...*, 13.

⁵ Peter Drucker, *The New Society* (New York: Harper, 1950), 172-3.

how to use workers.⁶ In addition, construction work was seen as different from mass production work as construction workers had to continuously coordinate their work with other trades. Unlike assembly line workers, construction workers were thus able to perform a wide range of operations, allowed mastery over tools, and provided with a work environment that fostered cooperation. Or so claims the literature.

If any of these precepts were true in earlier times, by the time of the Hibernia project, the myth of the independent craft worker working with his own tools at his own pace was long past. Construction workers who still held onto the idea of themselves as self-directing, independent crafts workers were in for a surprise when they reached Hibernia. The site's collective agreement put strict limitations on workers' abilities to assert their own needs; everything from behaviour at work to life in the camp was explicitly spelled out. While the majority of workers, skilled and unskilled, were happy to exchange their labour for a good pay check, a select few found it difficult to follow the rules covering their work and camp lives. This chapter examines the minority of workers who ran into difficulties at Hibernia and how they attempted to resist management's encroachment on their work and camp life.⁷

⁶ Tod Rutherford, "The Canadian Automobile Industry: Work Reorganization and Industrial Relations Change," in *Employee Relations*, 12, 2 (1990); and James Rinehart, Christopher Huxley, and David Robertson, "Worker Commitment and Labour Management Relations under Lean Production at CAMI," *Relations industrielle/Industrial Relations*, 49, 4 (1994).

⁷ The rules imposed at Hibernia were to control all workers on site, not just craft workers. Hibernia wages were higher than standard union wages in Newfoundland. Boilermakers started at \$22.95 at Hibernia, \$15-20 in other union environments, and \$11 in non-union jobs. Labourers at Hibernia were paid a base rate of \$18.46, non-union labourers anything from minimum wage up to \$11 an hour. NLBCTC, "Typical Construction Wage Rates," 18 January 1995. While this chapter deals with disciplinary actions at Hibernia, it is important to note that Hibernia does not appear atypical from other construction projects. Unfortunately, disciplinary records no longer exist for Churchill Falls or Come by Chance preventing us from making comparisons. Churchill Falls, with its geographical isolation, likely had less pilfering while Come by Chance, with its poor labour relations, may have had more.

Work lives at Hibernia were highly regimented. Before workers picked up a tool they were subject to an orientation spelling out site rules. For those workers living on site there were also a set of rules that they had to adhere to, even when workers were "off". Taken together, the rules covering work and camp life meant workers were tightly controlled every minute they were on site. The issue of workplace regulations first arose during the collective agreement negotiations when the Hibernia Employers Association (HEA), the umbrella group overseeing all contractors on site, insisted on setting rules and regulations covering both the work site (article 32.00 of the agreement) and the camp.

Theft, drinking and drugs, and fighting were viewed as the three main sins on site, each carried the penalty of dismissal.⁸ Theft has traditionally been treated as among the most serious forms of employee misconduct that attract disciplinary action in Canada. Repeated arbitration cases have upheld the right of the employer to discharge an employee caught stealing on the first offence, particularly where allegations of theft were proven, when unauthorized possession of company property was demonstrated, or when an employee refused to provide information respecting thefts by fellow workers.⁹ Hibernia arbitrators agreed that firing may be an appropriate response for a first drug or alcohol offence. Arbitrator Leslie Harris argued that:

the nature of the Hibernia project is such that all employment at the site is of relatively short duration. Workers come and go, sometimes after a few weeks, some after a few months, and some after a few years... There is no long term relationship between employer and employee. ...further the project is on a critical path to completion within a narrowly expandable time frame. Tasks must be completed on time. So much is dependent upon proper execution of every function, that the necessity for strictly enforced rules of behaviour and conduct is readily apparent. From the very outset of the

⁸ *Arbitration 95-039*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 17 February 1995, 11. Arbitration files are held by the Newfoundland Department of Environment and Labour.

⁹ See Arbitrator Adams, Re: Phillips Cable Ltd., 6 LAC (2nd) 35, 1974 cited in *Arbitration 95-039*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 17 February 1995, 19.

project it was made clear in orientation sessions and otherwise that substance abuse was not a type of conduct that could be condoned or permitted in any way. Nor, in the nature of the Hibernia experience could there be any time to consider long-term solutions through drug or alcohol rehabilitation programmes...¹⁰

Arbitrator Alcock agreed, arguing there was no opportunity for workers to establish "a bank of good conduct upon which they may draw to mitigate disciplinary sanctions. Neither is there opportunity to ensure adequate time for any kind of rehabilitation. Therefore the penalty of discharge may be justified more often on such ventures as the Hibernia project."¹¹

Theft and Pilfering

The issue of theft or pilfering is a terrain that is hotly contested by employers and employees.¹² As Rod Hay pointed out, "for an act to be seen as theft by all parties, there has to be a shared view of property rights. For the 'legal owner' any appropriation is theft, although some may be tolerated. For the person taking the object it will only be considered theft, if the 'legal' set of property rights is accepted." Hay noted that some acts of appropriation are seen as owing to the workers, so taking them is seen as part of the moral economy, if not the legal system.¹³ Indeed, what constituted pilfering appears to differ by occupation. While the pilfering of small goods has a long tradition in many industries, in other occupations it was seen as stealing. As Leo Casey pointed out, while

¹⁰ Cited in *Arbitration 96-086*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal, Arbitrator: D. Alcock, 30 September 1996, 32.

¹¹ *Arbitration 96-086*, 32.

¹² My views on pilfering benefited from a discussion on H-Labor, a subset of H-Net Humanities & Social Sciences OnLine. H-Labor is an interdisciplinary organization of scholars, students, librarians, and union members discussing workers and their unions. H-Labor is run by moderators Seth Wigderson (University of Maine-Augusta) and Andrew Lee (Tamiment Library, New York University). See <http://www.h-net.msu.edu/~labor>.

¹³ See Rod Hay, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 17 June 2001. <http://h-net.msu.edu/cgi-bin/logbrowse.pl?trx=lm&list=H-Labor>.

many workers viewed pilfering from a private sector employer as acceptable, in the public and non-profit sector, such pilfering takes badly needed resources from an underfunded system.¹⁴ The distinction between what was considered acceptable and unacceptable pilfering also depended on the amount of goods taken and on whether the pilfering was for personal use or for profit. Many workers deemed pilfering out of necessity and for personal use as acceptable.¹⁵

In some industries, what is now considered pilfering was once part of a worker's entitlement. It is only more recently that these prerogatives have become crimes. For instance, historically in Britain's Southampton ship yards, workers were entitled to take home any piece of wood under two feet as a "perk."¹⁶ In a white-collar occupation pilfering encompassed everything from spending time on personal emails and searching the internet, to playing computer games. Selling Avon or conducting a job search on company time were only two of the ways employees challenged employer control over their rates of production. Other "perks" such as taking office supplies home or making personal phone calls from work are not even questioned by many employers. In many offices a certain amount of latitude for non-work related activities is tolerated, depending on the amount of time workers allot to it.¹⁷ Retail jobs were not as flexible. One author reported that Wal-Mart informs its employees that any non-productive time spent by workers was viewed as stealing company time.¹⁸

¹⁴ For more on the differences between public and private sector thoughts on pilfering see Leo Casey, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 20 June 2001.

¹⁵ Jeri Reed, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 17 June 2001.

¹⁶ For more on the historical roots of how prerogatives became crimes, see David Montgomery, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 18 June 2001.

¹⁷ For more on white collar pilfering see Paul Mishler, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 21 June 2001.

¹⁸ Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2001).

An American blue collar craftsman (electrician), reported that pilfering was not uncommon. He found there was a vaguely definable, although elastic, moral standard towards pilfering among workers. According to him, most workers had little problem with taking small parts from the job site to do work at home, or, for instance, for an electrician to give a carpenter wire for a home renovation project. What was acceptable, however, varies by region. In some areas of the United States, it was common practice to give scrap wire and copper to apprentices, who were paid much lower wages, while in other areas scrap was the prerogative of the foreman. This craftsman reported that while scrap and nuts and bolts were "open" to pilfering, to most workers, company tools were off-limit as without tools there was no work. The one exception was when pay cheques were not forthcoming, in which case many tools were "liberated".¹⁹

In some low-paying jobs workers viewed pilfering as a way to stretch poor pay. As Jeri Reed pointed out many waitresses ate as many of their meals as possible at work (and fed their families there as well) in an attempt to supplement their income. In other industries, many workers believe their pilfering acquired legitimacy because of the size of profits made by employers, poor working conditions, or a particularly unpleasant supervisor. Studies of New York City dock workers found that many longshoremen justified their pilfering, often alcohol, foods, and tools, out of a sense of entitlement. "Snagging a bit extra as their due" was something researchers have also reported among street car conductors in Philadelphia and New York. Penalties, however, could be high if workers were caught pocketing fares, and company spies kept a careful watch.²⁰

¹⁹ Mike Wood, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 17 June 2001.

²⁰ See posts by Jeri L. Reed, 15 June 2001; Steve Penfold, 17 June 2001; Colin Davis, 15 June 2001; Rob Vaughan, 15 June 2001; Joshua Freeman, 19 June 2001; and David Montgomery, "Pilfering" post, H-Labor, 18 June 2001.

Pilfering at Hibernia

Security personnel at the main gate were directed to carry out regular checks of vehicles entering the site, keeping a particular eye out for firearms and alcoholic beverages. Any vehicle found in possession of such goods was denied access to the site and written up. Security also made random checks of vehicles exiting the site. In a two-hour period, between 12 and 50 checks would occur, depending on traffic. Security could only search vehicles and personal luggage with the permission of the worker involved; workers who did not agree were turned back from entering or exiting the site. In cases where workers refused to allow their cars to be searched, as long as the vehicle returned and allowed the search, they were treated as if the earlier incident had not occurred. This allowed workers trying to bring alcohol onto the site the option of driving away, leaving their beer behind, and returning to the site without penalty.²¹

Workers acquiesced to the searches as a condition of their employment, but by early summer 1994 rumours were rife that security lacked the authority for their searches, particularly of workers' personal bags. Security reported that many workers were demanding warrants allowing them to conduct the searches. Some of the guards felt that there was a "conspiracy" among some workers to refuse the searches. After a series of incidents where workers refused to allow searches or show their identity cards when demanded, two notices were erected at the main gate in July 1994 stating that "removal of company property or food from the job site will result in disciplinary action including suspension of camp privileges," and "This is a controlled access site. Vehicles and contents are subject to security searches upon entry/exit. Persons refusing to consent to

²¹ See testimony of James Kenny, *Arbitration 94-116*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 24 November 1994, 4.

such search will be denied access to the site.” Around the same time the signs went up (the HEA claimed the signs were already up, the workers and ODC denied they were in place yet), a vehicle carrying three workers was stopped exiting the site. When security asked to look in one of the worker’s bags, the worker refused. The driver intervened and, when asked for his identity card, he too refused. After learning who the driver was through calling in the plate number to the RCMP, security wrote up both workers.

Both workers received letters from PASSB’s Labour Relations Division the next day, advising them that their access to the site was now denied as they had failed to comply with the search (as per the Collective Agreement). Two weeks later the workers were both terminated for their absenteeism. Given that they were absent because the employer refused them access to the site, the workers grieved. The arbitrator agreed that while the employer had the right to deny them access to the site, it could not then fire them for absenteeism. He also found that the employer was not fairly applying its discharge rule as it had failed to punish all workers equally for refusing searches. Other workers who had refused searches had been treated much more leniently, some received no punishment at all. He felt that the employer could not choose to make an example out of two workers as a way to nip an incipient protest movement in the bud. The workers were subsequently allowed to return to their jobs.²² To prevent further problems, the HEA sent notices to workers with their paycheques spelling out the punishment for refusing to permit a search.

²² *Arbitration 94-116*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 24 November 1994.

While the Hibernia project was anticipated to last seven years, many workers were only on site for a short period. Workers were hired for specific tasks and then laid off when the task was over. Some workers were later rehired as needed. When laid off, many workers helped themselves to company property. One worker received a three week suspension for theft and was warned that any further incidents would result in termination. The site maintained a zero tolerance policy, but in cases of minor theft by laid off workers, the employer listed them as no longer eligible for rehire.²³

As theft became more serious, company leniency, used against them in arbitrations, declined and the penalty for theft became automatic termination. A worker caught leaving the site with steel bolts, nuts and washers in his pocket, and hacksaw blades and heat shrink tubing handed the goods over to security and returned to camp. He was later fired. After being caught with gloves, safety glasses, and a respirator mask in his bag, another worker claimed that he did not know the equipment was in his bag as he left the site. Another worker was fired after being caught taking a raincoat, two vests and work gloves with him as he left the site. Yet another worker who was caught smuggling out welding mitts and four pairs of insulated work gloves, a grinder, grinding wheels, torch tips, and a box of fruit was also fired. After asking if he was going to be fired, the worker admitted "I should not have taken them but every one down there was at it."²⁴

²³ Theft from the camp was often treated with more leniency. One worker was given a \$10 fine for using the camp facilities without a meal ticket. In another instance two workers received warning letters for food removal, others were given two-month camp suspensions for the same offence. As theft from the camp worsened, one worker was fired after he was found with four packages of butter, three packages of cereal, an apple and an orange in his possession. As the worker was about to be laid off, the company listed him as ineligible for rehire. See ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc.; and box A-Z, "Meetings – Camp Committee," 30 May 1996.

²⁴ ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc.

On several occasions, in addition to firing the worker involved, the site brought in the RCMP to investigate the thefts. As the site had community status, the RCMP was responsible for policing on site. On at least one occasion, the RCMP was also called in when sabotage was suspected. Several incidents in one area had made the company suspicious that the incidents were not accidents.²⁵ In 1995 forty employees were discharged for theft and the HEA suspected there was an organized theft ring on site.²⁶ In 1995 40,000 rain suits were ordered for the site, 42,000 vests for the GBS site alone, while 15,000 tape measures and 23,000 pairs of gloves were ordered in one month alone. Ralph Emberley, labour relations manager on site, heard rumours that tools were being sold directly from tool cribs. To help cope with increasing theft, site security increased the number of foot and car patrols and attempted to check the majority of vehicles leaving the site. Attempts to introduce airport style metal detecting equipment failed, however, when it was realized that almost every employee on site wore steel tip boots.

The HEA introduced additional security measures to help reduce opportunities for theft, including the introduction of special laydown areas. Laydown areas were places where equipment and materials were stored under secure conditions, including locked gates and restricted key access. Only warehouse supervisors had keys to unlock the gates; if workers needed access they had to arrange it with the warehouse. Despite the precautions of secured areas, one worker was fired after security was informed by a guard

²⁵ Oil Development Council (ODC) Files, box A-Z, "Discipline File." The ODC is now defunct and its files are located in the basement of the International Union of Operating Engineers building, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland. I thank Derm Cain for allowing me access to these files in March 2001. While the files contained detailed information about individual workers I have attempted to leave out any identifiers, including the date or location of the offence or the names of the workers involved unless they were already part of the public record.

²⁶ *Arbitration 95-039*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 17 February 1995.

at the Come by Chance refinery of a suspicious event at the scrap yard.²⁷ The security guard had noticed a lugger truck closely followed by a pick-up truck on the road to the scrap wood dump. Upon investigating, security found that the lugger truck had dumped 47 sheets of new plywood, a welding machine, and 200' of welding cable. The truck driver, a teamster, claimed to have picked up the material from a bin in laydown area E, an area supposedly secured by two different security chains. As he had no authorization for the secure area, and no key access, this aroused suspicion. While the worker claimed he had not looked inside the bin, workers generally checked the load to determine if it needed to go to the garbage or scrap dumps. The case against him worsened when the pickup truck following the lugger truck turned out to be driven by his cousin and another person from his home town. The two men in the pickup truck claimed no knowledge of the theft and claimed they were there to meet two women with whom they had set up a "date" at the Tanker Inn, a tavern in a nearby community. Being married men, the two men claimed to have chosen the Tanker Inn because of the anonymity a bar an hour and a half from home afforded them. Adding to the security's skepticism was the two men's claims that they had not entered the Tanker Inn but had met the women in the parking lot and that the women had suggested meeting off the isolated access road for more privacy. Security did not believe the men's story.

²⁷ Initially workers could remove scrap wood from site for their own usage. To remove scrap wood, workers only needed to obtain a site removal permit. When it became clear that workers were using the scrap removal to hide the theft of unused materials, the perk was stopped. The HEA then gave the contract to remove and dispose of scrap wood to a local man, who operated a scrap wood dump near Come by Chance. The deal was that he would get all scrap wood from the site to sell, but he was immediately to inform the site should any new materials turn up. Other scrap material was never under workers' purview to remove. Scrap steel, for instance, was sent to Newfoundland Steel in Argentina. To prevent theft, garbage and scrap materials were loaded into steel bins and taken either taken to the scrap dealers or to the dump in the case of garbage. *Arbitration 95-039*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 17 February 1995.

A second worker (a labourer) on the lugger truck was not suspected of taking part in the theft but there was suspicion that the labourer's foreman might be involved. The labourer assigned to work the lugger truck had never worked on a lugger truck before and had no idea of the lugger truck procedures. The HEA argued that the choice of an inexperienced labourer was intended to minimize the risk. The labourer foreman was investigated by the RCMP and the HEA, but no charges or disciplinary action resulted.²⁸ Interestingly, the labourer foreman turned up in his own grievance a year later. In this case the labourer foreman was grieving his own firing for theft. In the lugger case, the teamster driving the truck was fired, and his grievance for wrongful dismissal rejected.

To deal with the increasing theft problems, the manager of Metropol Security had turned to using undercover informants. One undercover informant told Metropol Security that the labourer foreman suspected in the lugger case had indeed been involved in the theft a year earlier and along with another worker was actively removing small tools from the site by carrying them out under his clothes. Based on the informant's testimony, the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary (RNC) searched the second worker's home and found site property for which he faced criminal charges. As the informant had heard that the labourer foreman had placed all his stolen goods at his father's house, the RNC obtained a warrant for his father's house. At the house, they found a variety of hand and power tools, rain gear, and gloves valued at \$2000, many of which bore the contractor serial number and other on-site identification. The foreman was fired but was reinstated after the arbitrator found that management had failed to conclusively link the worker to the stolen goods.²⁹

²⁸ *Arbitration 95-039*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 17 February 1995.

²⁹ *Arbitration 96-073*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 21 March 1996, 4-5.

Several other workers also grieved their firings. In the case of one catering worker (also the shop steward), who stole significant amounts of food from his employer, the HEA argued that the case was not one of pilferage but one of plunder. The worker was caught leaving the site with \$80 worth of meats, frozen foods and other items (tea bags, fruit, cleaner) stolen from the kitchen. When caught, the worker admitted he had stolen the items out of financial necessity (he had been laid off for a significant period and was behind on his mortgage and bill payments) for use in his own home. The worker had previously received a warning letter after being caught in the supervisor's office looking at time sheets in an attempt to determine if overtime was being handled fairly. The ODC asked the arbitrator to impose a lesser discipline as the worker acknowledged the theft, was remorseful, and had mitigating circumstances. As the theft was only the third which had resulted in discharge, the ODC also argued the worker did not know that a first offence would bring firing. According to the union, only later in the summer did notices make it clear that theft would result in firing. The arbitrator disagreed and the dismissal remained in effect.³⁰

One worker who received a letter of discharge for theft claimed that a mistake was made. He was advised by management representative Ed Beresford to take it to his union representative. As the worker had little knowledge of the grievance system, he did not realize that a grievance had to be filed within two working days to be valid. Consequently, three working days passed before the grievance was filed. Information on the ODC and the grievance process was part of workers' orientation package, but many workers either did not read or remember the specifics. When the case went to arbitration, the HEA claimed the grievance was outside the time limits established by the collective

³⁰ The worker asked for a lesser sentence as he was the family breadwinner.

agreement. The arbitrator agreed but questioned "whether the employer should adhere so rigorously to the letter of the law and insist upon its pound of flesh."³¹ The employer refused to be lenient and the worker remained fired.

Fighting, Drinking and Drugs

Workers responded to the tight supervisory control by seeking an outlet for their energies. While the majority of workers were able to channel this energy into acceptable activities (soft-ball, pool, and other leisure activities), a minority turned to more unacceptable behaviours. One way workers helped alleviate boredom at work, and assert the masculine nature of construction, was through fighting. Two ironworkers were fired after one pushed the other into the Topsides Quay while working on the night shift. The workers had had an earlier disagreement that boiled over into fighting. After the union intervened on their behalf the men received two-week suspensions. Contractors then sent out a notice to all workers on site that fighting would result in termination. This notice, however, did not put an end to all fighting on site.³²

One of the largest contractors on site, PASSB, stated that "Fighting, horseplay, practical jokes or otherwise interfering with other workers is prohibited." A labourer was fired after a verbal altercation with his shop steward accelerated into a physical fight. The worker had several prior run-ins over unauthorized use of the telephone during work hours and entering the administrative building without permission, resulting in verbal warnings. In November 1992 the cutting shop superintendent approached the maintenance supervisor about transferring this worker as he demonstrated little regard for other workers or equipment and showed a general lack of respect for authority. After

³¹ *Arbitration 96-080*, Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator Leslie Harris. 13 August 1996.

³² ODC files, box A-Z, "Incident Report," 19 June 1992.

discussing the problems with the union steward and the Labourers' business manager, all agreed that the worker would be laid off after the Christmas break and would not return to the cutting shop. After Christmas the worker was stationed in the paint and glass shop and told that one more complaint would result in his permanent dismissal from the site.

In May 1994 the labourer approached his shop steward and a foreman on the bus to the site, annoyed that he had not been called in for overtime work over the weekend. Once on site the labourer grabbed the shop steward, pushed him against a wall and threatened to punch him. A few minutes later he challenged the shop steward and a PASSB foreman to continue the argument outside. As many of the worker's threats were to the personal safety of the shop steward and his family, the shop steward and foreman reported the incident to the labour relations department. Security and the RCMP were called in and the worker was charged with assault and fired. The worker grieved his firing, with the union asking instead for a suspension as the outburst was a "momentary" aberration. The arbitrator upheld the dismissal as the worker's aggressive behaviour continued for some time and he had several prior verbal warnings. The arbitrator also spoke of the need to deter any others from solving problems through fighting.³³

Insubordination was also treated seriously by employers. One employee who ignored his supervisor's orders was disciplined for insubordination and warned a second offence would result in his termination. Another worker charged with insubordination received a written warning. A shop steward was also given a written warning after

³³ *Arbitration 94-096*, 21 September 1994, Arbitrator: W. John Clarke. In November 1994, the ODC tried to refer the worker to the site for a position with NODECO but he was denied access by security. The ODC launched a grievance, claiming that under article 8 of the collective agreement the contractor had to use employees who were referred and met the qualifications. The grievance was rejected. *Arbitration 94-138*. Subject: Management rights and hiring practices. 30 December 1994, Arbitrator: Wayne Thistle.

several workers complained of his smoking in the lunch room. As he was a shop steward, he was warned another incidence would result in his termination. Another worker received a written warning after his negative attitude towards the company, union, and fellow workers was deemed disruptive and non-productive. The worker was told the company would not tolerate such behaviour and that if his attitude did not improve he would be dismissed.³⁴

Another employee accepted a layoff and agreed not to return to the marine division in lieu of being fired after he was charged with insubordination. The worker was employed as a deckhand on the motor vessel (M/V) Garden City, despite possessing seaman's papers making him eligible for a much more senior position. On a particularly frustrating day, the worker got into a verbal altercation with the captain and left his duties. Upon realizing the seriousness of his actions, he apologized. Despite the apology, the captain wanted him fired. Intervention by HEA labour relations manager Ralph Emberley allowed the worker either to take another position or a layoff, making him re-eligible for a position outside the marine division where he was no longer allowed to work.³⁵

Another worker (a labourer) who was assigned to work in the marine division had several difficulties with the crew he was assigned to work with. The worker resented being asked to do routine seamen's work such as cleaning and general maintenance. On several occasions he took coffee breaks without authorization. After several instances of

³⁴ See ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc.

³⁵ *Arbitration 96-031*, 29 April 1996, Arbitrator: W. John Clarke. The worker chose to take a layoff as the other position offered was a four days, ten hours on shift instead of the seven on, seven off he had enjoyed in the marine division. Later, the worker attempted to return to the marine division but was refused by the HEA. He found it difficult to return to the site anywhere

unexplained absenteeism and charges of having a disregard for the vessel's operation, the HEA issued him a letter of warning that any further offences would result in termination. Only a week later, and before the mailed warning even reached the worker's home, he was terminated.

One complaint against the worker was that he was careless while positioning the winch operations of the crane, something the worker attributed to difficulty understanding the orders issued in a mix of Dutch and English over the radio. The more serious charge levelled against him was insubordination, in that he had repeatedly bypassed the ship's chain of command, taking complaints directly to external authorities (including the Coast Guard) rather than to the captain. After an incident where the worker phoned the Coast Guard to complain about conditions on board, the worker was fired. This was not the first time the worker had gone to outside authorities, after witnessing a small amount of engine oil being washed off the deck, he went directly to the site pollution control authorities without discussing it first with the ship's officers.³⁶

This worker had had trouble since he started on board, including an incident where he left the vessel during working hours without explanation. He complained that many of the problems on board arose from the attitude of the Dutch crew towards

else, given that he had unsuccessfully worked in the tool crib, and he had a height phobia which made work on the GBS unlikely.

³⁶ *Arbitration 96-072*. Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 28 January 1996. His termination letter stated "Clearly we have tried our best to maintain your position on board, but to no avail. On 10/7/95 you failed to report to work. For the remainder of the week you refused to cooperate with your foreman when asked to do specific tasks. You continually complain that you are be[ing] poorly treated and that your foremen and the Dutch crew are mistreating you. The crew and management tell me that there is no basis for such complaints. You have arbitrarily contacted various external authorities indicating that you are be[ing] exposed to unsafe work conditions. They have advised us that you have provided them with no evidence of unsafe work conditions... Anyway, this situation has got to the point where the management and crew have lost confidence in your participation as a crew member and frankly are concerned about your

Canadian workers, including regularly referring to them as “stupid Newfs”. The worker was so upset with conditions on board he even quit, only to be asked back by HEA representative Adrian Coady as they were having difficulties with labour turnover at the time. The worker agreed to return to work but was several hours late for his first shift. This worker was not the only one who had problems on board. Two other Newfoundland workers (Operating Engineers) on the crew were also unhappy being assigned to tasks like rust chipping and painting and demanded to be transferred to other contractors.

In the subsequent arbitration, it came out the worker had been complaining of poor working conditions on board the vessel for several months, to little avail. His complaints included unsafe scaffolding rigged for painting in the ship’s hold, improperly ventilated paint fumes, and a lack of adequate safety equipment. In cases of safety problems, workers were told to take the problem to the foreman in their area. The foreman had the responsibility of fixing the problem or referring it up the chain of command to a supervisor. If there was still no action, the foreman was directed to take the issue to his shop steward and to the ODC co-chair of the site safety committee. In the event that worker safety was endangered, the foreman had the right to issue a stop work order. While all workers on the GBS site were to hold five minute safety meetings at the start of each morning shift, a 15 minute weekly meeting, and a forty minute monthly meeting, no such meetings had been held on Taklift 7, the grievor’s vessel.³⁷

When the workers involved complained of problems with paint fumes, they were told by the Captain that he himself had painted in the hold without difficulty. The captain

personal well being... we now dismiss you for cause because you have made no effort to improve your conduct and work performance.” Letter dated 14 July 1995 from Adrian Coady to worker.

³⁷ See testimony by Wayne Power, UA shop steward and co-chair of the site safety committee, cited in *Arbitration 96-072*. Subject: Discharge. Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 28 January 1996, 19.

informed the workers that they did not have to return to the hold to paint until after a safety team (half management, half union representatives) conducted its inspection. The safety team found no serious violations but suggested if the workers were having difficulties that they wear protective masks which they then provided. The safety team also noted that the scaffolding used was inadequate, particularly the ladder which was too short. The labourer and two operating engineers repeatedly asked their foreman for proper breathing equipment, good gloves, safety shields, ear muffs and safety glasses, only to be told that "They won't give Harvey's Offshore [the contractor] anything."³⁸ The worker's grievance was upheld; instead of termination he received a one-month suspension and a written letter of discipline. The arbitrator also suggested that he not be returned to this vessel and that the ODC and HEA jointly attempt to place him elsewhere.

Fighting and other problems were also treated seriously in the camp. Hibernia housed over 3000 workers in dormitory style accommodations. Camp life was monitored by a committee (made up of equal numbers of union and management representatives) with the power to discipline workers. Forty-seven rules were laid out to cover all manner of behaviour in the camp. Item 1.7 of the camp rules, for instance, stated that "Vandalism, fighting or violence of any sort, possession of fire arms or other dangerous weapons, persistent drunkenness and the possession, use or sale of illegal substances shall not be tolerated and shall be grounds for expulsion from the camp and termination of employment." Rule 28, posted in recreation areas, each bunkhouse and in camp

³⁸ *Arbitration 96-072*. Subject: Discharge. Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 28 January 1996, 16.

orientation packages, stated that "the instigator of fighting or violence of any sort in any part of the camp will be subject to instant dismissal from the camp."³⁹

Rules also included co-operating with cleaning staff to keep rooms neat. No pets, electric kettles or irons, cooking, open flames or elements, preparing or storing of food was allowed in the rooms. Residents were also not allowed to make any alterations to the rooms, including putting up shelving, driving nails into the wall, or hanging curtains. They were also not allowed to consume alcohol in their rooms; the only spot workers were allowed to drink on site was in the tavern. Drinking in the camp could result in disciplinary action, including termination. Punishment for persistent drunkenness was dismissal.⁴⁰ In November 1991, the camp committee worried about increased problems with alcohol consumption in the bunkhouses and in January 1992, they suspended a worker's camp privileges for one month after he was found breaking camp alcohol rules. After drinking most of a 40 ounce bottle of rye, he attacked another resident watching television in his room, causing considerable damage to his dental work. In its March 1995 meeting the camp committee issued ten warnings for alcohol offences.⁴¹

In a September 1996 meeting, the camp committee sent out several disciplinary letters, one for theft, one for drunkenness and harassment, another for an alcohol related incident, two for fighting, and one for smoking in bed. The resident disciplined for drunkenness and harassing another resident was relocated to another bunkhouse and warned any further problems would result in his loss of camp privileges. The resident

³⁹ One worker was expelled after striking a camp attendant in the dining hall after the attendant refused to serve his son. Non-employees needed special permission to eat in the dining hall. The worker's intoxication at the time did not help his case. Cited in *Arbitration 94-096*, 21 September 1994, Arbitrator: W. John Clarke.

⁴⁰ ODC files, file: Hibernia Camp Committee, Camp Rules and Regulations, Required Reading for All Employees, Revised 21 August 1992.

involved in the alcohol related incident was suspended from camp for 21 days, while one of the fighters was evicted from camp and the other had to pay damage costs.⁴² Despite vandalism or tampering with fire detection equipment being a firing offence, *Hibernia News* reported smashed windows, destroyed bathrooms, walls kicked in, and vending machines broken by disgruntled workers.⁴³

Possessing drugs on site (at work or in the camp) was also a firing offence, as one worker who showed up for work after taking an illegal substance found out. Another worker who had been enjoying the St. John's nightlife, was in a car pulled over by site security and the RCMP as it reached the site the next morning. The RCMP was involved in a drug investigation against the driver of the car, another worker. All three workers in the car were searched. One worker voluntarily allowed the RCMP to search his hip pouch where they found three marijuana cigarettes. He was charged with drug possession by the RCMP and fired for violating the site's zero tolerance policy. The site's drug policy was spelled out in the orientation booklet, and posted at several points around the site. The policy stated that "The GMT [GBS Management Team] must, in order to deliver the platform as required, establish a strict code of conduct for the workplace so that employees will guide themselves properly. Such a code of conduct must recognize the short-term nature of the work and thereby correct offences swiftly, with fairness and consistency." Punishment for various offences was spelled out, including dismissal for possession and/or use of alcohol or illegal drugs on company property. The policy stated that only under extenuating circumstances might the GBS construction manager change a dismissal for drugs to an extended suspension. In this particular case the worker admitted

⁴¹ ODC files, box A-Z, "Meetings – Camp Committee," 30 January 1992.

⁴² ODC files, box A-Z, "Meetings – Camp Committee," 19 September 1996.

he was aware of the policy and knew of cases where employees were fired for possession of, or trafficking in, marijuana or other drugs.⁴⁴

Ralph Emberley stated that the circumstances surrounding the creation of the Hibernia Project, as well as tight time schedules and the overriding importance of workmanship upon which environmental safety, many lives, and the reputation of Newfoundland workers would depend, were such as to rule out any toleration of substance abuse. Despite the firings, drug dealing and drug use remained sufficiently prevalent that management demanded "vigilance and uncompromising action" in every case. Drugs in the camp were also a firing offence. Camp Rules 40.0 stated that "the possession or sale of unlawful drugs in camp is prohibited. Offenders shall be subject to immediate dismissal."⁴⁵ One worker was fired after a vial containing traces of drugs (hash oil) and drug paraphernalia (razor blades, balance scales) was found in his room. A grievance changed the terminology from fired to laid off with no possibility of rehire.⁴⁶

Drinking on the job was also seen as a serious offence. At a meeting in October 1993, the ODC reminded member unions of their responsibility for addressing drinking on the job with their workers. The ODC was worried that offenders were not being disciplined if their supervisors were in the bargaining unit.⁴⁷ After one crane operator arrived for his shift drunk, he was advised by his supervisor to get a room on site and not drive home. Once the case was reviewed the worker was fired. Not all offences involving alcohol resulted in firing. Another worker who showed up with alcohol on his breath was

⁴³ "Letters to the Editor," *Hibernia News*, 10 August 1995.

⁴⁴ *Arbitration 96-079*. Subject: Discharge. Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 18 June 1996; and D.A. Walters, GBS Construction Worker, GMT Workplace Policy Poster, May 1993.

⁴⁵ *Arbitration 96-079*. Subject: Discharge. Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 18 June 1996; and Hibernia Camp Committee, *Camp Rules and Regulations*, as revised 12 November 1992.

⁴⁶ ODC files, 1996 Grievances.

sent back to camp and given a five-day suspension.⁴⁸ A third worker was suspended after showing up drunk and falling off the bus which was to take him to his work site. His union, the Operating Engineers, had to fight to convince management that this was an error in judgement in an otherwise good worker. Management ultimately decided on a two-week suspension but warned that they would strongly contest a worker's compensation claim should he put one in for an injury sustained in the fall. Another employee, who got into a fight after showing up for work drunk, received a two-week suspension because of his prior excellent work record. Another worker who showed up to work too hung-over to properly perform his duties was given a one week suspension to "rethink" his future. He was told if he returned to work he must demonstrate changes in his performance. Another worker who had been employed on site but was since laid off was killed after a car he was in went into a guard rail on site. The resident he had been drinking with attempted unsuccessfully to rescue the man and was later fired for drinking in an unauthorized area on site. The union grieved and in the arbitration process the worker was reinstated.⁴⁹

Pilfering Time/Efforts to Control the Rate of Production

Under article 10.00 of the collective agreement, the ODC acknowledged that management had the exclusive right to:

- (a) operate and manage its business in all respects;
- (b) maintain order, discipline, and efficiency;
- (c) make and alter from time to time, rules and regulations to be observed by employees, provided such rules and regulations are uniformly and fairly applied to all employees and are not in conflict with this Agreement;
- (d) direct the working force;

⁴⁷ ODC files, box: A-Z, file: ODC Minutes, ODC Meeting, 14 October 1993.

⁴⁸ See ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc, 1 March 1996.

⁴⁹ ODC files, box: 1996 Grievances, Grievance 96-17.

- (e) determine job content, including methods, processes and means of production and handling;
- (f) fire, promote, demote, and lay off because of lack of work;
- (g) discipline, suspend and discharge any employee for just cause; however, any alleged wrongful dismissal, suspension or discharge will be subject to the grievance procedure in Article 11.00.

This section accorded to management full control over productivity rates, efficiency, discipline, and the regulations on site. The issue of who controlled the rate of production became a volatile one on site, leading to a wildcat strike in January 1995. The strike was over whether overtime was mandatory on site. Management believed that all overtime was mandatory. Workers were generally given two days notice for overtime shifts. In normal situations workers were glad to have the overtime. In mid-January, however, word reached management that there was something going on "on the shop floor" and that many electricians and pipefitters were unwilling to work overtime.⁵⁰ Labour Relations officials told electrical, plumbing and pipefitting, and painting superintendents that they should work the shift and grieve the issue later. Despite being told that the work was not voluntary, none of the sixty workers ordered to report for work showed up on the day in question (15 January), including the shop stewards. All sixty workers received a one-week suspension and a letter of discipline was placed on their files. One day later 600 workers walked off the job in protest.⁵¹

⁵⁰ Workers were upset by a scheduling change which substituted a five-day, eight-hour shift for their five-day, ten-hour shifts. Workers were particularly upset as the extra ten hours, implemented the prior fall, were paid at overtime rates. Workers instead asked for a four-day, ten-hour shift so that they could spend their days off with their families who often lived a considerable distance away. Some electrical workers were also upset that cheques handed out the day before Christmas were late with no apology. See letter from Wayne Woodford, Electrician shop steward, to Dave Hollett, 13 January 1995, cited in *Arbitration 95-0054*, 10.

⁵¹ In a May 1994 case where labourers and scaffold workers refused overtime, workers were given a one-week suspension without pay. See *Arbitration 95-054*, Re: Group Grievance re: Suspension for Failing to Work Overtime, 28 April 1995, Arbitrator: W. John Clarke, 9.

The strike was publicly condemned by the ODC and lasted only a few hours before workers were ordered back to work by the Newfoundland Supreme Court. The Court ordered the ODC, its members, and workers to restrain from declaring, authorizing, counseling, aiding or engaging in any way, directly or indirectly, from bringing about an unlawful strike or a slowdown of services.⁵² In the aftermath, the union was forced to negotiate with the employer to keep the workers from being fired. At meetings held in July 1995 to settle outstanding grievances plaguing the site, the HEA demanded the ODC pay \$1.6 million in damages for the wildcat strike. In the end, the union agreed to pay a \$20,000 penalty for not controlling its workers and apologized for 'allowing' the strike to happen:

We acknowledge that the above captioned work stoppage was in contravention of Article 6 "Strikes and Lockouts" of the Collective Agreement. It was the responsibility of the ODC to prevent any strike. Despite this responsibility, a work stoppage occurred.

The ODC does not engage in such activity and it will not engage in any such work stoppage against any employer under the Hibernia Project Agreement... We will undertake to inform each and every member involved in this stoppage of the Council's position as set forth herein.⁵³

⁵² Cited in *Arbitration 96-084*, Subject: Activities of Union Steward, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 5 September 1995, 6. See also "Hibernia Workers Stage Wildcat," *ET*, 17 January 1995. There was a second short work stoppage on 26 January 1996 when several workers refused to continue their shifts after a co-worker suffered a head injury. Once satisfied that the conditions were safe the workers returned to work. "Short Lived Work Stoppage at Bull Arm," *ET*, 30 January 1996. In an arbitration over the suspensions, the arbitrator sided with management that it had the sole right to make changes to shifts, including overtime. The arbitrator upheld the one-week suspensions to all workers who refused the overtime. One shop steward's suspension was not upheld as he had designated another shop steward to work for him. Arbitrator Clark, *Arbitration 95-0054*.

⁵³ See *Review Committee Report between Hibernia Employers' Association and Oil Development Council*, 20 July 1995, 18 and Letter from Derm Cain to James Kenny, 02 November 1995. Cited in *Arbitration 96-084*, Subject: Activities of Union Steward, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 5 September 1995, 7. While the ODC had to apologize for not controlling its members, it is important to note that not all "wildcat" strikes occur without union support.

At the same meetings, the ODC agreed to drop or settle many other outstanding grievances. It would appear that the ODC dropped grievances in exchange for a reduced settlement.⁵⁴

Other Problems on Site

Not long after the wildcat strike was settled but while the issue over who controlled the rate of production was still fresh, contractor PCL-Akerstord-Steen-Becker (PASSB) filed a grievance against the ODC over the activities of one of its shop stewards. PASSB and the HEA alleged that a shop steward with the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators had counseled an apprentice to stop work. The apprentice involved was working without being assigned to a journey worker, a practice which the International union forbade. On several occasions mechanics with the union complained to the shop steward that apprentices were being used to do the work of full mechanics, without supervision. When questioned by the shop steward, the apprentice in question replied that he was working as his foreman had directed. Upon finding the apprentice again working alone, the shop steward warned the apprentice that by working alone he was in violation of his union's constitution, for which he could face sanctions. To be employed on site, workers had to belong to one of the international unions. Had sanctions been applied, the worker would have lost his union membership and his employment at Hibernia. The shop steward advised the apprentice to discuss the matter

⁵⁴ *Review Committee Report...*, 18. In many industries, employers used discipline cases to force union concessions on other issues. This posed a considerable problem at Hibernia where the union (ODC or the individual union) was frequently appealing to management to reduce the severity of a particular punishment. In one instance, a worker's termination was reduced to suspension after the ODC grieved it. Two workers who had written warnings of theft put on their files, successfully grieved the letters, had them removed, and received letters of apology from the company. ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc., and box: 1996 Grievances, Grievance 96-36.

with his foreman and request an assignment where he would work with an experienced mechanic. The shop steward was acting on the advice of his Business Agent, James Pike, whose own access to the site had been barred when Jim Kenny withdrew the passes of business agents to the site.⁵⁵

The apprentice took the shop steward's advice to mean to stop work immediately and find the foreman, a task he claimed took two hours. Soon after, PASSB filed a grievance against the shop steward. The shop steward denied telling the apprentice to stop work. Rather he claimed he told the apprentice to discuss the matter with his foreman. The HEA charged that the shop steward had violated the collective agreement "in that he has been counselling employees under his jurisdiction, as a Steward, in a fashion which will restrict or limit productivity of such employees." The shop steward was issued a written warning for counselling employees under his jurisdiction to work in such a fashion that would restrict or limit productivity. PASSB and the HEA also demanded that the union cease such behaviour and pay damages for the lost production time. The HEA also warned the ODC site representative that the shop steward risked firing should another problem arise.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ In June 1995 Kenny also refused IBEW business agent Mike Power access to the site. Kenny had asked all local and international representatives to hand in their site identification cards and reminded them that entrance to the site was to be in accordance with section 9.02 of the collective agreement. Under this section all visitors to the site had to be approved for each site visit. Business managers could now only get on site with the permission of one of two senior management personnel. Kenny warned that those not following the rules would be denied access to the site. Once on site business managers were to be escorted by the ODC Site Representative and/or one of the contractor's labour relations representatives. At a meeting in February 1996 HMDC General Manager Henk van Zante indicated that if there was considerable improvement in settling many of the grievances, he would discuss relaxing the site access policy. When there was little progress van Zante opted not to reopen the issue. See *Arbitration 96-033*. Subject: Site Access, Arbitrator: Dave Alcock, 3 May 1996 and ODC files, Letter from Kenny to Dan Whelan, 24 January 1996.

⁵⁶ ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc. Letter from Roland LaBossiere, Labour Relations Manager to F. Keiley, Site Representative, re: PASSB Insulator.

The situation was complicated by the fact that the apprentice involved was the nephew of the foreman who was responsible for giving him his work assignments, and the son of a general foreman. The union admitted his referral to the site had been a patronage appointment. His fellow union members were not upset by his appointment to the site but they were upset that despite his lack of formal training and his limited experience his uncle was assigning him the work of a qualified mechanic.⁵⁷ When the shop steward approached the foreman to advise him that this was against union policy and that he could be charged by his International Union for a violation of the Constitution, the foreman walked away.

When the grievance reached arbitration, the arbitrator agreed that the shop steward's actions were inappropriate. He suggested that instead of disrupting the workplace by placing the apprentice in an untenable situation (refuse work or be sanctioned), that the union should have either filed a grievance against the contractor for contravening the project agreement, or laid disciplinary charges against either the apprentice or the foreman if it was an internal union matter. The employer also came in for considerable criticism for treating the apprentice as a full-fledged mechanic, which the arbitrator saw as subverting the mutually agreed upon Apprenticeship Training Programme portion of the collective agreement. While the arbitrator recognized that this appeared to be a practice related only to one foreman, the apprentice's uncle, he noted that "foremen are themselves subject to direction and should, in any case, be cognizant of their responsibilities to honour commitments made by their employer..."⁵⁸

⁵⁷ *Arbitration 96-084*, Subject: Activities of Union Steward, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 5 September 1995, 9-10. First year insulators apprentices were normally used as general helpers.

⁵⁸ *Arbitration 96-084*. Subject: Activities of Union Steward, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 5 September 1995, 20.

This particular shop steward later turned up in two other grievances, one of which concerned his discharge. In one instance he was disciplined, his second letter of warning, for leaving his position without proper authorization. The employer claimed that the shop steward was frequently absent from his job, including leaving his post to eat in the cafeteria while on the night shift. In September 1996, he was fired after again leaving his position without informing his supervisor. After claiming he was at an ODC meeting, the union launched a grievance charging the employer with discriminating against a shop steward. At arbitration, the punishment was reduced to a two-week suspension after the worker agreed not to become a shop steward again.⁵⁹

Controlling the rate of production, including which workers worked when and where, was important to employers. Workers were not allowed to switch shifts and those caught doing so were given written warnings. Workers, who regularly phoned in sick or who failed to show up for their shifts, received a warning and on the second offence were fired. One worker, who was suspected of sleeping on the job, was suspended for two weeks after threatening his supervisor not to report him.⁶⁰ For over an hour the worker could not be found, raising fears that he might have been disoriented between the skirts of the base raft. As a search party was being organized, the worker came out from under the forms, whereupon his foreman accused him of sleeping on the job. While the labourer was initially abusive, given his clean record and his apology, he received a four-month suspension and a two-month probation. Another worker was fired after workers

⁵⁹ *Arbitration 96-143*. Subject: Discrimination of [name deleted], Insulator/PASSB. Arbitrator: W. John Clarke, 20 November 1996.

⁶⁰ See ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc.

complained that he had fallen asleep in his truck during loading, but after the employer learned that he had sleep apnea, a medical condition, he was rehired.⁶¹

Another worker, a pump operator with the Bricklayers and Allied Craft Workers union, was fired after being caught sleeping on a particularly hot day. As a pump operator engaged in applying mandolite, a fire retardant, the worker was responsible for keeping the pump and hoses clean and operational and for any masking tape application, chipping or clearing away that needed to be done. When ambient conditions prevented the pump's use, the worker claimed he had been told by his working foreman that he was "to make himself scarce" so that any "big shots" would not see him standing idly by. On the day in question poor conditions prevented the pump's use. When the worker was assigned no alternative work, he climbed nearby scaffolding to stay out of other workers' way in the cramped quarters until he was needed. Not long after, his supervisor caught him lying down with his feet hanging over the scaffolding, breathing deeply and not responding to prodding. The supervisor had him written up for sleeping on the job, for which he was dismissed. At his arbitration hearing, the worker denied he was sleeping, claiming instead that he was simply trying to escape from the heat, halogen lights and hot steel in the area and to keep out of the way.

According to Roland LaBossiere, a boilermaker turned labour relations manager with the Topsides Hook-up Team (THT), sleeping on the job was considered gross misconduct on most construction projects with the common penalty of dismissal. Canadian jurisprudence also established sleeping on the job as a gross dereliction of duty, in part because of the danger to the worker and their co-workers. There was some

⁶¹ Cited in *Arbitration 96-086*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal. Arbitrator: D. Alcock, 30 September 1996, 26, 29-30.

question in the case noted above about whether the firing was part of a wider problem between the painters (the two supervisors were painters) and bricklayers. The work was originally assigned to the painters but, after the bricklayers questioned the mark-up, the jurisdictional umpire awarded it to the bricklayers. There was also some question as to whether the firing was part of an ongoing harassment campaign by one of the supervisors who regularly asked the worker how many "stamps" he had now, and warned the worker, who had a history of unemployment, that he would be returning to social assistance again soon. The worker did not dispute he was tired on that shift. He had taken off the previous two days to work a booth at the St. John's Regatta, and had only had two to three hours of sleep before arriving on site. While denying he was asleep, the worker claimed he did not know that sleeping on the job was grounds for dismissal. As the employer did not prove the employee was asleep on the job, or derelict in his duties, the arbitrator allowed the grievance and the worker was re-instated.⁶²

One worker was fired after he not only fell asleep on the job but was also insubordinate upon being caught. The worker involved was a shop steward and a past president of the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators. The shop steward had been issued an employee reprimand for tardiness on 3 July 1996. This was his second letter of reprimand; earlier he had been suspended for four days for being absent from his position without informing his supervisor. After complaining, he succeeded in having the suspension lifted. Only four days later the shop steward was again in trouble after the PASSB Insulator Foreman observed the worker sleeping. The worker had been assigned to insulate a pipe above floor level on a mezzanine in the Utility Shaft. When the foreman came upon him, he was lying motionless, stretched out fully, his hand underneath his

⁶² *Arbitration 96-069*. Subject: Dismissal. Arbitrator: W. John Clarke, 26 September 1996.

head, with his eyes closed. The foreman stood three or four feet away from the worker and watched him for five minutes until the worker awoke at the sound of another worker. Initially the foreman was unsure whether or not to report the incident as the worker involved was his shop steward, a person with considerable power in the union. After discussing the issue with his superintendent, he was told to write up the worker for sleeping on the job.⁶³

After filling out the Reprimand Book, the foreman asked the shop steward to sign the reprimand. According to the foreman, the worker denied he had been sleeping, refused to sign the reprimand, and threw the book across the room. He also threatened the foreman, warning him not to step out of line, and stated that he would get him for this. After that meeting, the worker demanded to talk to a safety representative as he now claimed it had been unsafe for him to work alone. When the worker showed up for his next shift he was fired. After he received his letter of termination, the worker attempted to convince his supervisor to rescind the discipline and accused him of firing him for personal reasons. The worker later showed his termination letter, complete with derogatory comments about the foreman and supervisor involved, to several workers on site, including allowing it to be photocopied and passed around.⁶⁴ He grieved his firing but given his past warnings, the evidence that he was asleep, and his conduct in the wake of the incident, the arbitrator upheld it.

Workers were also threatened with dismissal if they were late on more than one occasion. One worker was written up after he showed up an hour after his shift started. As the worker had only been on the crew for two days, the captain of the motor vessel

⁶³ *Arbitration 96-086*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal, Arbitrator: D. Alcock, 30 September 1996.

⁶⁴ *Arbitration 96-086*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal, Arbitrator: D. Alcock, 30 September 1996.

(M/V) where he was assigned was worried about his behaviour. When the worker showed up, he was warned that the captain had spoken to the Marine Services Assistant Manager about him and had been told that the worker was frequently late. The captain warned him he would be written up if this behaviour continued. The worker, a shop steward, claimed that the letter amounted to discrimination against a shop steward and grieved it. He claimed other workers who were late received a verbal warning.⁶⁵ In 1993 the GBS Construction Manager developed a written policy explaining the penalties for being late, with a warning on first offence and dismissal on second offence. Under extenuating circumstances the GBS Construction Manager could modify a dismissal to an extended suspension. All discipline letters were recorded in an HEA database. From 1991 to 1996 NODECO employees alone accounted for 25 pages of disciplines, covering 1039 workers, including 179 for being late. Each worker was identified by name, employee number, and discipline infraction. Fourteen workers had more than one reprimand for absenteeism, some of whom had been dismissed while others received two-week suspensions.⁶⁶

Tight supervisory control also included a computer estimating system, which determined the amount of time needed to complete a job. After it took insulators thirteen hours to insulate and clad a line that the computer had estimated would take five and a half hours, the workers involved were warned that if their productivity did not increase they would be disciplined. The workers, all of whom had good records, grieved the warning, insisted the computer had failed to take into account the adjacent beam and

⁶⁵ *Arbitration 96-092*. Subject: Discrimination Against a Shop Steward. Arbitrator: Wayne Thistle, 16 October 1996, 25. As the grievance was filed outside time limits, the arbitrator ruled he could not hear it and the letter of discipline stayed on file.

subsequent material application complications. They also argued that increasing productivity through intimidation would only lead to a deterioration of workmanship. The company agreed to remove the letters if their work remained good.⁶⁷

Upset over the number of workers leaving long term positions with one contractor to take positions with other contractors (on or off site), in 1991 the HEA and ODC developed a policy to prevent workers from jumping from contractor to contractor to capitalize on overtime.⁶⁸ From the individual contractor's perspective, they were spending considerable time and money training workers who then left to take advantage of better overtime or shift scheduling opportunities elsewhere. The ODC was upset with the policy of workers jumping from a long-term to a short-term position with overtime as the Union had to fill the long-term positions they left, often with non-members or permit holders from outside the jurisdiction. Initially the Liaison Committee, with equal representatives from the HEA and ODC, introduced a Site termination/quit policy which introduced a 30 day waiting period before an employee could be rehired with another contractor. Many workers were quitting jobs at Hibernia to take a temporary job at the Come by Chance refinery during its annual maintenance. They would work at Come by Chance until the overtime ended and then attempt to get rehired at Hibernia. When it

⁶⁶ See testimony by Rosemary Miller, Secretary with HEA, cited in *Arbitration 96-092*. Subject: Discrimination Against a Shop Steward. Arbitrator: Wayne Thistle, 16 October 1996, 11.

⁶⁷ ODC files, box: 1996 Grievances, Grievance 96-60. Letter from Insulator Journeyman to J. Evans, Construction Superintendent, 21 March 1996.

⁶⁸ Moving from job to job on site was one way workers on the earlier Churchill Falls project attempted to improve their conditions of work or pay. Workers at Come by Chance also moved from contractor to contractor in search of overtime. When the Stephenville Linerboard project offered scheduled overtime, many workers left the Come by Chance project to take advantage of it. CNSA, John Crosbie Collection (Collection 073), 8.07.017. Newfoundland Refining Company Ltd., Summary Progress Report no. 19, covering 1 May-31 May 1972.

became clear that the 30 day policy was not acting as a disincentive to workers, in 1994 the policy was changed to a six month layoff between quitting and rehire.

Once payroll was notified a worker had quit, they informed the Labour Relations department, who then compiled a termination list. That list was then sent to security and any workers named on the list would then be denied access to the site. The termination/quit policy was grieved when a worker who was officially on sick leave took a position with another contractor without waiting the six-month period.⁶⁹ It subsequently came out that the worker had asked for sick leave to visit a specialist in Ontario which he failed to do, and took employment with an employer in PEI without quitting his PASSB job. After his employment in PEI was up, and he was informed he had been terminated from PASSB for abusing the sick leave system, he took a position with Cahill State, another contractor on site. When the HEA found out, the worker was let go from his position with Cahill as he was not yet eligible for rehire.⁷⁰ If the employer, union, and contractors involved (current and future) were agreeable, the six-month rehire rule could be put aside, but in the grievor's case, there was no request for an exception. In fact, his previous employer (PASSB) had no idea he was again on site.

Conclusions

It would be naïve to assume that problems like drinking, fighting, sleeping on the job, and absenteeism were unique to the Hibernia project. To a certain extent these factors plague every work site. On the Hibernia site, where the government, employer

⁶⁹ *Arbitration 96-112*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal. Arbitrator: Clarke, 31 December 1996.

⁷⁰ Given the tight time frame of the Hibernia project, there was no employer provision for sick leave. Being on sick leave meant that the employee was considered temporarily off work and was expected to return once doctor's clearance was given. Employees on sick leave received no compensation, other than pay due to them for their earlier work. Once employees quit the project

and contractors, and unions all agreed that the Hibernia project would be a no-strike, no lockout project, workers' options for exerting their own power were limited. When workers attempted to launch a wildcat strike – the method which construction workers had used on the Come by Chance project – 60 workers were suspended and the union was forced to pay a \$20,000 fine for failing to control its workers. Attempts by workers to control their production rates were also closely monitored. Each job was measured in the computer for how long it should take. Workers who did not meet the computer's time frame were threatened with disciplinary action. Each time workers entered and left the site, their cars were liable to be searched for unauthorized removal of goods. Drinking, long a fixture in many construction workers' lives, was closely regulated, only to be done in the tavern, only for a three-hour period each night, and only beer and wine were available. Their entire lives on the construction site and in the work camp were rule bound. There were rules governing their workplace conduct and their camp conduct, and even establishing what time they ate their meals. It is not surprising that a small minority of workers responded with drinking, fighting and pilfering.

they were eligible for demobilization pay so long as the layoff was for lack of work, a lump sum dependent on the distance they had to travel to reach the site.

Chapter Eight: It's a Man's World

Introduction

It is in the spirit of freedom and fair play – the hallmark of the union movement – that the construction unions are taking the initiative to assist women to become part of the building trades industry. Trades have traditionally been acknowledged to be the domain of man. Women were not considered nor even thought capable of performing the work. And women, for their part, were not perceived as wanting such a life and perhaps for many of them that was true. However, society has grown more open to finding new solutions to old problems and indeed to accepting a restructuring of the social norms. Women have directed their ambitions to new and challenging areas... The ODC is working with WITT [Women in Trades and Technology] to conceive a comprehensive program geared to the introduction and apprenticeship of women into the construction industry.¹

With these words in the early 1990s Newfoundland's building trades unions officially welcomed women into the construction industry. The welcome was long overdue in many women's eyes. Unfortunately, it also appeared to be relatively short-lived. By the late 1990s 10,708 people were employed in Newfoundland's construction industry, the construction workforce remained overwhelmingly male at 98.9 per cent.² This chapter examines the gendered nature of construction in Newfoundland, examining how the social constructs of masculinity and femininity established specific jobs as male and female. It looks at the experiences of women in traditionally female jobs on construction sites and examines the pioneering women construction workers.

¹ ODC files, Box – ODCCG Training Group, Equity File. WITT is an education and advocacy group dedicated to promoting and assisting in the recruitment, training and retention of women in trades, technology, operations and blue collar work. WITT has been active in Canada since the late 1970s.

² "Case Study: Construction Sector in Newfoundland," in Canadian Labour and Business Centre, *Proceedings: Regional Seminar on the Changing Workplace* (St. John's, 9-10 February 2000), 5.

Masculinity and the Concept of Skill

Waged work is "sharply differentiated along sexual lines. Few occupations remain entirely the preserve of either men or women, but most male workers are employed in jobs where the workforce is at least ninety per cent male, while most women workers work in jobs that are at least seventy per cent female."³ Phillips and Taylor argued that "far from being an objective economic fact, skill is often an ideological category imposed on certain types of work by virtue of the sex and power of the workers who perform it."⁴ Typically, women's work (both paid and unpaid) was characterized as unskilled, with women generally shunted into jobs that are lower paid. Historically, many unions viewed women and unskilled workers as a threat not only to wages but also to their status. Many unions were organized to further men's needs with unions initiating benefits that favoured long-service workers and bargaining strategies. These strategies entrenched existing wage structures and job segregation.⁵

Assumptions over what constituted skilled and unskilled work have been fundamental to workplace divisions of labour. The concept of skill, what it is, how it is defined, and by whom, is one that is socially constructed.⁶ Historically, women were

³ Anne Phillips and Barbara Taylor, "Sex and Skill: Notes towards a Feminist Economics," *Feminist Review*, 6 (1979-1980), 9.

⁴ Phillips and Taylor, "Sex and Skill," 79-88.

⁵ Employers supported this as it provided them with a cheap labour pool. See Julie White, *Sisters and Solidarity: Women and Unions in Canada* (1993), chapter 1; Arne Forrest, "Women and Industrial Relations Theory: No Room in the Discourse," *Relations Industrielle/Industrial Relations (RI/IR)*, 48, 3 (1993) and Forrest, "The Industrial Relations Significance of Unpaid Work," *Labour/Le Travail*, 42 (Fall 1996). Forrest found that when women's needs were consonant with male workers they were seen as genderless, but if their needs were defined as 'women's issues' (maternity leave, employment equity, childcare) then they fell outside the industrial relations system.

⁶ Jane Gaskell, "Conceptions of Skill and the Work of Women: Some Historical and Political Issues," in Michèle Barrett and Roberta Hamilton, eds., *The Politics of Diversity: Feminism*,

rarely considered skilled workers. In part this was because the definition of skill was a political process in which collective organizations, including unions, sought to buttress the power of their workers at the cost of others. Jane Gaskell argued that assumptions over what constituted skilled and unskilled work were fundamental not only to the workplace division of labour but also to ideological divisions within the working class. Her research found that the work that women have traditionally done was deemed inferior because women did it. Gaskell blamed this on the fact that historically women have not been represented by strong collective organizations, and have been denied access to apprenticeship programs (with the exception of hair dressing and cooking).

Skill in working-class occupations has typically been identified with long apprenticeships. Apprenticeships have served to limit the labour supply, to stop wages from being undercut by non-union members, and to enhance journeymen's status and skill.⁷ For many years, unions monopolized many training programs and chose to admit based on sex. Opening construction apprenticeships to women, for instance, was quite difficult. In her examination of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Grace Palladino described how:

because construction work required physical strength as well as technical skill and knowledge, neither contractors nor the unions themselves saw any good reason to train females who, they believed, could not be counted on to carry their own tools and equipment and who would undoubtedly waste their training by dropping out as soon as they were married. Worse yet, in their view, women would be taking jobs that rightly belonged to family men.⁸

Marxism and Nationalism (London: Verso Books, 1986), 361; and Cynthia Cockburn, "The Material of Male Power," *Feminist Review*, 9 (1981), 41-58.

⁷ Gaskell, "Conceptions of Skill and the Work of Women."

⁸ Grace Palladino, *Dreams of Dignity, Workers of Vision: A History of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers* (Washington, DC: IBEW, 1991), 250. Discriminatory training programs or domestic responsibilities were not the only reasons women's work was defined as

Even when women were admitted into skilled trades, they nearly always found themselves in the lower paying jobs.

Men have been privileged not just through their roles in unions but also through both relative strength and familiarity with tools and machinery. As Cockburn demonstrated, men were able to appropriate muscle, capability, tools and machinery that they have used as an important source of women's subordination. Technology has long been a "masculine" domain, with women given only limited access, and generally only to specific areas. Men have generally been both the designers and the users of technological processes and productive machinery.⁹ This has meant that equipment was designed for the average male worker, and was hence often too big for smaller women workers. This is in contrast to many other industries where the introduction of new technology has prompted the entry of women into what were previously defined as male occupations.¹⁰

Recruitment practices of contractors and unions have also privileged construction as a male domain. The social construction of the building trades worker as male and the clerical worker (one of the main jobs women occupied on major construction sites) as female were not just constructs of training, but were part of the accepted societal images

unskilled. If training and childcare were all that were needed, as women have increased their training and have provided childcare for their children, discrimination should diminish.

⁹ For more on the gendered nature of technology see Ava Baron, ed., *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (Ithaca 1991) and Cockburn, "The Material of Male Power," 54-55. Cockburn concluded that by appropriating physical and mental properties and technical hardware, male printers assigned themselves at the top of the skilled hierarchy and assigned women engaged in printing as subordinate. For a Canadian example, see Christina Burr, *Spreading the Light: Work and Labour Reform in late Nineteenth-Century Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

¹⁰ Cockburn, "The Material of Male Power," 41-58; Graham Lowe, "Mechanization, Feminization, and Managerial Control in the Early Twentieth-Century Canadian Office," in Craig Heron and Robert Storey, eds., *On the Job: Confronting the Labour Process in Canada* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's Press, 1986), 177-209; and Mercedes Steedmen, "Skill and Gender in the Canadian Clothing Industry, 1890-1940," in Heron and Storey, *On the Job*, 152-176.

surrounding gender identities.¹¹ In a special issue on construction, the Newfoundland periodical *Decks Awash* recognized that the stereotypes of construction workers as “big, burly brutes and of union organizers as heavyweight wrestlers still persist.” While the magazine acknowledged that construction workers in the 1980s were well-trained and articulate, it continued to perpetuate the gender identification of men with construction.¹² One author described how men’s “physical strength and their ability to face danger” also helped shape a sense of male superiority over women. She found that while male academics and other workers have had to acknowledge a woman could beat them in an exam or perform a work task faster, construction workers never had to “pit their strength and daring against women.” Given this, she argued that women’s entrance into construction proved even more traumatic to male construction workers’ self-image than would have been the case in other industries.¹³

Concepts of Masculinity

A masculine environment permeated both the town and construction site at Churchill Falls. A visit to Churchill Falls in the late 1960s revealed a predominantly male workforce, something only marginally changed in the 1990s. In their workday most

¹¹ By gender I mean the network of beliefs, personality traits, attitudes, feelings, values, behaviours and activities that differentiate men and women. I see gender as a social construct rather than a biological one. Socially and historically-constructed gender roles designated activities as those appropriate for men and those appropriate for women, with men’s activities generally ranked higher on the scale than women’s. I borrow this definition from Sue Skipton, “Collective Bargaining and Pay Equity: A Study of Pay Equity Bargaining in Two Canadian Provinces,” PhD, University of Warwick, 1995, 22.

¹² “The Men and Their Unions,” *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980). Note the article title.

¹³ M. Burgmann, “Revolution and Machismo: Women in the New South Wales Builders Labourers’ Federation, 1961-1975,” in E. Windshuttle, ed., *Women, Class and History: Feminist Perspectives on Australia 1788-1978* (Melbourne: Fontana Collins, 1980), 453-92. For more on this see M. Donaldson, *Time of Our Lives* (Sydney, Aus: Allen and Unwin, 1991); and Rosemary Pringle and Anne Winning, “Building Strategies: Equal Opportunity in the Construction Industry,” *Gender, Work and Organization*, 5, 4 (October 1998), 220-229.

workers would not encounter women unless they had to visit the construction offices where women worked as telephone, telex and computer operators, and as clerical staff. During the four year construction project (1967-1971), a masculine culture dominated Churchill Falls, a culture that pervaded both work and home lives. The masculine culture had implications for both work and home life; however, only the paid work world will be explored here.

One way construction workers identified their occupation as masculine was through occupational socialization, the process whereby a new recruit becomes a regular member of the occupational group, learns and internalizes necessary skills and techniques, and is accepted by regular members and in turn identifies with that group.¹⁴ Both the explicit mastery of skills and the demonstration of implicit qualities expected from existing group members – including having the right tools, dress, and jargon – played a role in the transformation of a recruit in the socialization process. Male camaraderie, based on shared experiences and relationships, was reinforced by the dangerous nature of the job and by the absence of women.¹⁵

The constructs of femininity and masculinity on the Churchill Falls project led to many male construction workers fashioning their identity around not only their breadwinner status but also around their occupation.¹⁶ Many construction workers used

¹⁴ Everett C. Hughes, *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers* (Hawthorne, NY: Aldine, 1971).

¹⁵ A worker's tools (if used, condition kept in) indicate his or her level of experience and skill. The hard hat is another item that indicates occupational status, with the colours, insignias, the newness, all conveying information about the worker. Herbert Applebaum, *Royal Blue: the Culture of Construction Workers*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981, 24. Even the bonding experiences construction workers have traditionally been drawn to have been masculine in nature, including playing baseball and drinking.

¹⁶ As Iacovetta pointed out "As a relational construct, masculinity, like femininity, is forged in particular contexts and by the critical forces, including class, race-ethnicity, state power,

the dangerous nature of their work as the departure point between them and the white-collar workers on the project and felt that they were entitled to respect based on their capacity to endure dangerous working conditions. The nature of work at Churchill Falls, similar to other single industry towns that paid high wages and offered employment in "dangerous" occupations, contributed to its image as a 'man's town'. Only workers employed on site (or their families) were allowed to live within the town site. Male workers on site earned relatively high wages, enough to support a family. Women workers were not as fortunate. As fewer job opportunities were open to women, women workers were concentrated in retail, clerical and service positions which paid far less than construction jobs. Low wages made it difficult for women to be the sole support for their families.¹⁷

At least two different masculinities were at play at Churchill Falls. One was built around the rugged construction labourer. A second was built around technical competency, the skilled technical worker who used his brain to solve problems. Both these images were regularly portrayed in the *Churchill Falls News*. One prevailing image

patriarchy, and ideology, that shape such contexts." Franca Iacovetta, "Defending Honour, Demanding Respect: Manly Discourse and Gendered Practice in Two Construction Strikes, Toronto, 1960-1," in K. McPherson, C. Morgan, and N. Forestell, eds., *Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity and Masculinity in Canada* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1999), 199. See also Albert Mills, "Cockpits, Hangars, Boys and Galleys: Corporate Masculinities and the Development of British Airways," *Gender, Work and Organization*, 5, 3 (July 1998), 172-88; R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power* (Oxford 1987); and D.L. Collinson and J. Hearn, "Naming Men as Men: Implications for Work, Organization and Management," *Gender, Work and Organization*, 1, 1 (1994), 2-22.

¹⁷ For more on the idea of a 'man's town' see Jennifer Keck and Mary Powell, "Women Into Mining Jobs at Inco: Challenging the Gender Division of Labour," Paper presented to *Women of Steel: Mining Their History*, 2 October 1999, Sudbury, Ontario; and Meg Luxton, *More Than a Labour of Love: Three Generations of Women's Work in the Home* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1980). For a comparison with Sudbury, see Keck and Powell "Working at Inco: Women in a Downsizing Male Industry," in M. Kechnie and M. Reitsma-Street, eds., *Changing Lives: Women and the Northern Experience* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1996).

of working-class masculinity featured dominance over nature; in almost every issue workers were shown “conquering” the wilderness, blasting into the rock face, building dikes, or astride heavy equipment.¹⁸ Middle-class workers were also pictured, but using their brain power. For instance, the cover of the 30 June 1973 issue contains a picture of a computer technician superimposed over a P-2000 computer unit. Another picture shows a foreman at the control console of the compressed air equipment used to power the underground excavating equipment.¹⁹

At Churchill Falls’ start, thirty families lived in the temporary town site. Most were families of managers or supervisors, the camp doctor or school teacher. Once the town site was built, more women came to Churchill Falls, either as wives, daughters or workers in their own right. Employment on the project, however, was overwhelmingly male. The few women who worked outside the home were employed in areas of typically described as women’s work. Their jobs included waitresses, bank tellers, nurses, teachers, secretaries, and retail workers. Many of the jobs women engaged in for wages were extensions of the roles they played in the home. While women entered the paid labour force in record numbers in the 1960s and 1970s, women in Newfoundland were less likely to be found in the paid workforce than any other Canadian province.

Women in Churchill Falls were responsible for the brunt of unpaid household duties, including child-care, cooking, and cleaning, in essence the work that reproduced labour on a daily basis for capitalism. Those men who did not have wives or daughters to care for their needs lived in bunkhouses. The company initially hired male workers to

¹⁸ See *Churchill Falls News*, 16 November 1968 for its photo of workers on an “elevator” descending to the underground construction site. See also the 14 December 1968 issue for a photo demonstrating how to use a new drill to bore into the rock face.

provide food, laundry and other services to workers in the bunkhouses, work typically done by women. In part this was because of Churchill Falls' isolation. Few construction workers brought their wives or daughters. A year into the project, employers began advertising for women workers to come to Churchill Falls.

The jobs women took, even the choice to work outside the home, were contingent on their responsibilities, the division of labour within the home, their age, marital status, level of education, and place of residence. Under the breadwinner ideology prevalent in the 1960s, available jobs generally went to men. In a single resource town like Churchill Falls, the lack of economic diversity and alternative employment worked against women's employment. Women who bore the brunt of reproducing labour power and family subsistence also had little opportunity to work outside the home for wages. Those who did work outside the home often did not find their household duties lessened, creating a double workday. Women also faced other structural problems in taking waged employment including industrial and occupational segregation and unequal pay.²⁰

**Table 8-1: Newfoundland Women in the Labour Force
at the time of Churchill Falls**

Year	Labour Force	Number of Women	Number of Men	% of Women in Total Workforce
1951	106,411	17,027	89,384	16
1961	112,310	23,608	88,702	21
1971	147,990	40,815	107,175	27

Source: Statistics Canada, *Census of Canada 1971* (Ottawa 1971).

¹⁹ *Churchill Falls News*, 7 February 1970.

²⁰ See Dorothy Anger, Carmelita McGrath, and Sandy Pottle, *Women and Work in Newfoundland* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986); Luxton, *More Than*

As can be seen from Table 1, women's workforce participation rose from 16 per cent in 1951 to 27 per cent in 1971. Their jobs, however, remained in areas dominated by women. Over 80 per cent of women wage earners in Newfoundland worked in six occupations in 1971: clerical (24.8 per cent), service (19 per cent), sales (12.9), health care (10.8), education (10.3 per cent), and food processing (3.7 per cent). While these figures demonstrated changes from women's paid employment in 1951, they showed little change in women moving into non-traditional areas such as construction. In 1971, of the 15,040 construction workers in Newfoundland only 75 were women.²¹ As Newfoundland's technical and vocational colleges, especially their apprenticeship programs, were male dominated, it is not surprising that so few women entered construction. In 1963-4, out of the 344 students registered at the College of Trades and Technology, 319 were male (93 per cent). Women's participation rates rose to 15 per cent (345 women out of 2044 students) by 1967, the start of Churchill Falls. The majority of these women, however, were enrolled in clerical and business administration courses.²² Many reasons accounted for women's low participation in non-traditional training programs. In addition to the labour market structures, social attitudes prescribed what

a *Labour of Love*; and Linda Kealey, *Factor's Affecting Women's Labour Force Participation* (St. John's: Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986), 25.

²¹ In 1951 women were employed in the service industry (33 per cent), commercial enterprises (17.5 per cent), clerical (17.4), professional (15.5 per cent), managerial or proprietary (6.5 per cent), and manufacturing (5.5 per cent). Statistics Canada, "Numerical and Percentage Distribution of the Labour Force, 14 years of Age and Over, by Occupation Group and Sex, for Newfoundland and St. John's, 1945 and 1951 Censuses," *1951 Census of Canada* (Ottawa 1951), 98-1951-M4, Table 13.1 and "Labour Force 15 Years and Over, by Detailed Occupation and Sex, For Canada and Provinces," *1971 Census of Canada* (Ottawa 1971), Table 2-1 and Table 2. 94-717.

²² Provincial Archives of Newfoundland and Labrador (PANL), Department of Career Development Files, GN66-2-E, 7-5-6-2, volume XX. Trade, College and District Trade Schools - Vocational. "Enrolment - COTT."

constituted "women's work." Women's jobs reflected their "natural roles" in the home: working as caregivers (nurses, teachers, child care providers), domestic servants, waitresses, and secretaries.²³

The majority of women employed at Churchill Falls for wages were single.²⁴ Many of the single women came to the project as part of family units. After graduating with a Bachelor of Science in home economics, one woman opted to move to the site with her father, employed as site representative for the provincial Department of Labrador Affairs. In June 1968 she took a position as clerk typist with the bank, and quickly moved up to work as a teller, a position formerly filled by male workers. Her sister quickly followed her to the site, taking up a position with the local school to teach grade three.²⁵ Other women arrived without family ties, including Rosamund Watts. Watts worked as a RN on the site after graduating from the Grace Hospital in St. John's and working in small clinics in Sioux Lookout and Labrador City (for the Iron Ore Company). Watts'

²³ See Nancy Forestell, "The Miner's Wife: Working-Class Femininity in a Masculine Context, 1920-1950," in McPherson, et. al., *Gendered Pasts*, 139-157; Patricia Connelly, *Last Hired, First Fired: Women and the Canadian Work Force* (Toronto 1978); Connelly and Martha MacDonald, "Women's Work: Domestic and Wage Labour in a Nova Scotia Community," *Studies in Political Economy*, 10 (1983), 45-72; Joy Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners* (Toronto 1990); and Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect: The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto 1995). On women's roles in Newfoundland see Marilyn Porter, "She Was Skipper of the Shore Crew," *Labour/Le Travail*, 15 (1986), 105-23 and Jane Nadel-Klein and Donna Lee Davis, *To Work and to Weep: Women in Fishing Economies* (St. John's 1988).

²⁴ This fits with the provincial statistics. In 1976, single women in Newfoundland had a labour force participation rate of 42.2 per cent, married women 21.3 per cent, widowed women 12.1 per cent, and divorced women 48.1 per cent. Statistics Canada, "Labour Force Activity," 1976 *Census of Canada*, volume 5, 94-804. Tables 10-1 and 11-1.

²⁵ *Churchill Falls News*, 8 June 1968. Women made up the majority of elementary school teachers in Newfoundland, with a ratio of three to one (3055 women to 915 men) in 1971. Statistics Canada, "Labour Force 15 Years and Over, by Detailed Occupation and Sex," 1971 *Census*, Table 2-3.

previous experience prepared her for Churchill Falls' isolation; she nevertheless looked forward to having the companionship of other single women.²⁶

As the project grew, women were also hired as keypunch operators and to work in the mess area as servers. *Churchill Falls News* reported that the new mess hall was bringing two new innovations to the site, "girls, and the use of identification cards. These are actually separate items, but you are bound to notice both." The paper commented "So how's that? A new mess hall with more room and a pretty gal to look at."²⁷ Women at the mess hall were referred to as "Bona Vista Belles" after caterer Bona Vista Food Services, with the paper reporting that the "Belles" helped make life a "little brighter". Several of the women had worked at other major construction projects. Marge Paquette, for instance, was a veteran of construction projects at Elliott Lake, Blind River, and Wawa, Ontario and Chutes-des-Passes, Québec. Paquette worked as the supervisor in the Main Camp mess hall. Her responsibilities included supervising the 27 "girls" who served the food and cleaned tables.²⁸ One of the first women servers, 19 year old Effie Fancy, arrived in August 1968 from Gander where she had been working in the kitchen at the sanatorium when she heard on the radio that young women were being recruited for Churchill Falls.

Many women who came to work at Churchill Falls were looking for higher wages and an adventure. It was, however, not always an easy adjustment. One woman reported that stepping off the plane into a camp with 2000 men was a bit intimidating. *Churchill Falls News* reported that many of the "girls" faced adjustments over not being able to buy

²⁶ "Meet Miss Watts," *Churchill Falls News*, 23 December 1967.

²⁷ "Girls and ID Cards," *Churchill Falls News*, 29 July 1968.

²⁸ Paquette was one of the 2,675 women employed in Newfoundland as food and beverage preparation and service workers. "Meet Marge Paquette," *Churchill Falls News*, 6 March 1971

nylon stockings. But the "girls'" good humour and the pace "swept away the gloom."²⁹ One woman recalled "the closer the plane came to Churchill Falls, the closer I came to bawling. From the plane window all I could see was rocks and caribou moss and scraggly trees and water. And when I got off the plane there was no one to meet me and I just followed the security fellow around like a puppy."³⁰ This was a common sentiment. Another woman reported "when I got off the airplane I said to myself: 'My God, what have I done?' There was dust and black flies and mosquitoes, and everything looked so strange."³¹ Sent to work at the bank, Brenda Hoyles was only 19 when she arrived. By the end of her first year Hoyles, however, was determined she would remain in Churchill Falls until she was forcibly removed. Hoyles had an older brother working on site, although because of shift schedules they rarely saw each other. Upon completing a commercial course at the Corner Brook Vocational School, Hoyles landed a job with the Bank of Montreal in Deer Lake. After a year at the bank, Hoyles jumped at the opening at Churchill Falls.³²

Other women worked as secretaries, including Hélène Tiernan and Carmel Best. In addition to having taken secretarial courses, Tiernan had bachelor degrees in arts, music and teaching. Her first job on site was as a secretary for the Churchill Constructors Joint Venture from November 1968 to December 1969. After a break to teach, Tiernan

and Statistics Canada, "Labour Force 15 Years and Over, by Detailed Occupation and Sex," 1971 Census, Table 2-7.

²⁹ "Meet Effie Fancy," *Churchill Falls News*, 21 December 1968.

³⁰ "Meet Brenda Hoyles," *Churchill Falls News*, 23 October 1971.

³¹ "Meet Carmel Best," *Churchill Falls News*, 18 March 1972.

³² "Meet Brenda Hoyles," *Churchill Falls News*. Women made up just under 50 per cent of service workers in Newfoundland, 7690 out of 16,245 workers. Women were more likely to be found in food and beverage preparation (2675), and in personal services (2895) while men were

returned to Churchill Falls in the spring 1970.³³ From Branch, Placentia East, Best worked as secretary to CFLCo's assistant general manager of operations. After attending secretarial school, Best worked at the St. John's sanatorium and at the Pepperell Air Force Base where she was married. After she was widowed Best returned to the workforce, first at the U.S. naval base in Argentia, then in the provincial House of Assembly.³⁴ When Best arrived on site the project was still in its early phase, the town centre was not yet open, and the grocery store was in one of the trailers. The only recreation facilities open for women were the library and the theatre.³⁵ In February 1970 a women's lounge was added, demonstrating the growing number of women on site. Open until 11:15 pm, it offered women a place to "entertain" their dates. No unescorted men were allowed in. Facilities included a coin-operated record player, comfortable furniture and a ping pong table.³⁶ Having a special room set aside for women to entertain their dates demonstrated the patriarchal view many of the men – and the companies – had towards women on the site. In this view, women needed watching over.

At least two of the women on site worked in what were normally construed as masculine jobs. Gita Moska was employed as an engineer, while Lucille McCullough was employed as a draftsman (according to the newspaper "surely not draftswoman"). Both Moska and McCullough were employed in the intake field office on Northern

employed in protective services (3190). Statistics Canada, "Labour Force 15 Years and Over, by Detailed Occupation and Sex," 1971 Census, Table 2-7.

³³ "Miss Adaptable," *Churchill Falls News*, 13 May 1972.

³⁴ Women were the majority of clerical workers in Newfoundland (9950 women to 6955 men) with women employed as stenographers (3565 women, 200 men), bookkeepers (2,835 women, 1805 men), and data processors (255 women, 100 men), while men were employed in scheduling and distributing (140 women, 1810 men). Statistics Canada, "Labour Force 15 Years and Over, by Detailed Occupation and Sex," 1971 Census, Table 2-3 and 2-5.

³⁵ "Meet Carmel Best," *Churchill Falls News*, 18 March 1972.

Construction's east forebay dykes contract. A native of Czechoslovakia, Moska earned her civil engineering degree before travelling to Canada to join her boyfriend, also Czech, who was employed at Churchill Falls. Moska was soon hired as an assistant field engineer, and she married her boyfriend while on leave in June 1970. Moska reported few problems from other workers despite working in an all male environment. She seemed more worried about her English than over her status as the only woman. Moska's job description involved working on the calculation of quantities of dyke material placed, and calculating costs and estimates.

McCullough, a Montréal native, received her training in drafting in civil and electrical engineering offices in England. She also followed her husband to the project. McCullough's job included translating the calculations done by Moska and others into charts and graphs. She commented that "the men are courteous to you as a woman, but they treat you like a professional in your work. If you want me to sum up what it's like to be one of a few women working among a lot of men, I say it's wonderful."³⁷ It is not surprising that both women were originally from outside the province, Moska from Czechoslovakia, McCullough from Montréal. Few women from Newfoundland were trained for technical jobs.

Churchill Falls News showed a clear division of labour between men's and women's roles on site. Women's roles were to build the social and family communities while men's roles were to carry out the physical construction of the town and generating plant. Women's representations generally followed similar lines, "women as secretaries", "women as beauty contestants", "women as primary homemaker and caregiver". Several

³⁶ "New Facilities," *Churchill Falls News*, 7 February 1970.

articles focused on women's efforts to fill their "spare time". The assumption was that married women did not work and had idle time on their hands. One article discussed the local arts and crafts club, an all-female enclave. The article began: "It's no problem for a guy to find a way to channel his energy at Churchill Falls. For openers he is probably using most of his head or back muscle to finish building the place, or to operate it." It continued "the gals of Churchill Falls are also quite disinclined to let their hours drift by without something productive to show for them." According to the paper, productive work for women was arts and crafts. Courses were offered in pottery, leathercraft, metal enamelling, copper tooling, weaving, macramé, and paper maché. Women could also take lessons to learn to play bridge.³⁸

Other articles promoted the idea that a woman's job was to look pretty. The newspaper exhorted women to take part in the beauty pageants on site, including a teen pageant. The stated reason for holding the first "teen-queen" pageant was that the "girls" needed something "constructive" to do in their spare time. Eleven young women took part in the pageant, and were judged on talent, personality, and appearance. The *Churchill Falls News* reported that while "beauty pageants and other assorted 'Miss' competitions may have waned with the advent of the women's lib movement, when the participants themselves decide to organize and stage the event, there really isn't much room for bickering."³⁹ The "teen-queen" was not the only beauty pageant for women on site. A beauty pageant was also attached to the annual Winter Carnival.

³⁷ "The Soft Side of Construction," *Churchill Falls News*, 17 October 1970.

³⁸ "Different Strokes," *Churchill Falls News*, 27 January 1973.

³⁹ "'Teen-Queen' Chosen," *Churchill Falls News*, 16 June 1973.

Photos of the women in the *Churchill Falls News* all focused on their feminine qualities. Not surprisingly, all the pictures of women entering beauty contests showed the women as beauty objects. This contrasts with photos of men in the paper that typically portrayed men in the midst of being active, either at work or at leisure. While women's photos showed them sitting indoors around a table working on crafts, men were portrayed fishing, hunting, and playing hockey. One of the few photos showing women moving around has them admiring arts and crafts displays. Even those photos of women at work have the women sitting behind their desks posed for the camera. Male workers were portrayed next to their tools, generally outside, often in the midst of physically demanding tasks, and did not even seem aware their photos were being taken.⁴⁰

Despite the twenty plus years between the projects, the site newspaper *Hibernia News* continued to portray woman workers more in their traditional than their non-traditional roles. While dozens of pictures portrayed male construction workers in their work environment, women were portrayed in their leisure activities. The only woman portrayed in a hard hat in the paper's first few months was federal Minister of Natural Resources, Anne McLellan, and then it was being led on a tour by a group of male workers.⁴¹ That women construction workers were still the exception rather than the norm is made clear in an article entitled "Non-traditional roles nothing new for female iron worker" which explored one woman's career path from the Canadian Armed Forces Reserves to a security guard and finally iron worker. In it, and other articles, the female worker was portrayed as an aberration in a male domain.

⁴⁰ See for instance, *Churchill Falls News*, 27 January 1973 and 30 June 1973 for its portrayal of women compared to 6 March 1971 for its portrayal of men.

Hibernia News also commented on the arrival of the first female pipefitter apprentice in August 1994. She was also the only female pipefitter in Newfoundland then practising her trade.⁴² The paper also took note of Hibernia's first female "foreman". After a year working manning the fireproofing pump, a female worker was promoted to foreman and placed in charge of sixteen male workers. As other women were promoted to "foremen", they too merited mention in the paper, unlike the promotions of their male counter-parts. One article congratulated the female painting foreman for a job well done but had no similar words of praise for her male counterpart. Other articles focused on women's sex, rather than their skill, including an article entitled "Lady Welder not Carrying Torch." None of the paper's articles described male construction workers' sex when discussing their work.⁴³

Equity Policies and their Implementation at Hibernia⁴⁴

In the mid- to late-1970s increasing numbers of women in the United States began looking at construction as an employment opportunity for the first time. In April 1978 President Carter amended the Civil Rights Act to include affirmative action. His administration also set up specific hiring goals and timetables for women to enter non-

⁴¹ *Hibernia News (HN)*, 29 June 1994. For the more typical pictures of male construction workers see *HN*, 13 July 1994.

⁴² See "Non-traditional Roles Nothing New for Female Iron Worker," *Hibernia News*, 27 July 1994 and "Like Father, Like Daughter," *HN*, 24 August 1994. The worker's father was also a pipefitter. He did not encourage her to become a pipefitter but stated "it's nice to see girls working in the trade and proving they can do it."

⁴³ "Female Foreman Excels in Painting Operation," *Hibernia News*, 8 March 1995; "Hibernia's First Female Foreman: Keeping One Step Ahead," *HN*, 19 October 1994; "PASSB Couple Draw Guidelines Between Home and Work," *HN*, 16 November 1994; and "Lady Welder Not Carrying Torch," *HN*, 24 August 1994. The PASSB foreman's husband was also a foreman at the warehouse.

⁴⁴ The following material has benefited from the Women in Trades and Technology (WITT) report on women's experiences at Hibernia, particularly from its interviews with tradeswomen.

traditional fields, including construction. With the introduction of affirmative action, U.S. contractors and unions scrambled to introduce women and minority groups into their training and employment programs. As women pioneers entered the U.S. construction industry, many Canadian women began pushing for admittance into the relatively high paying construction industry. As Canada introduced no similar affirmative action program, interested women had to apply their pressure directly on training schools, unions and contractors to allow them access to the construction industry.⁴⁵

By the early 1980s, a few pioneering women were starting to enter the Newfoundland construction industry, including Ivy Simms, the first woman to enter the manpower apprenticeship program in carpentry. Like many of the other Canadian pioneers, Simms was following in the footsteps of male family members when she entered the construction industry.⁴⁶ As late as the mid-1980s, however, societal attitudes against women working in non-traditional areas prevailed. In a study by Avebury Research (1986) exploring the views of women to non-traditional occupations, the authors concluded that women generally preferred jobs that were indoors, clean and comfortable.⁴⁷ It is interesting how this phenomenon only occurs when discussing women; no one suggests that men who choose office jobs do not like to be dirty.

WITT, *Women, Employment Equity and the Hibernia Construction Project* (St. John's: WITT, 1996).

⁴⁵ Palladino, *Dreams of Dignity*, 250.

⁴⁶ "Ivy Simms," *Decks Awash*, 9, 3 (June 1980), 52. The article starts off describing Ivy Simms' physical characteristics: "She's only 5 feet tall and 100 pounds, but Ivy Simms can drive a nail with a single smooth stroke and chop a log in one powerful blow." Simms is the only one whose physical characteristics and size were noted.

⁴⁷ Avebury Research & Consulting Ltd., *Decade of Promise: an Assessment of Canadian Women's Status in Education, Training and Employment, 1976-1985* (Toronto: Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women, 1986).

A 1987 study on Newfoundland Apprenticeship Training found that while women were making progress in some non-traditional industries, construction and mechanical trades remained bastions of male workers.⁴⁸ Newfoundland was not alone in this. Women's numbers in construction have remained low across Canada. Marjorie Griffin Cohen and Kate Braid found that even in the 1990s "Large-scale construction projects, even when they involve massive amounts of public money have been notorious for the overwhelmingly 'white, male' face of the workforce."⁴⁹ High unemployment rates in the Newfoundland industry throughout the 1980s made unions reluctant to train new construction workers, particularly women, as most preferred to save what jobs existed for male workers. Unions were also worried that a large influx of new construction workers would drive down wages by flooding the market.

Under the Atlantic Accord (1985) Newfoundland workers were given hiring and training preference for Hibernia work. No mention was made, however, of implementing affirmative action hiring practices despite recommendations from the Provincial Advisory Council on the Status of Women.⁵⁰ Nor was there mention of such programs in the 1990 Hibernia Construction Project Agreement. The major contractor on site, Newfoundland

⁴⁸ R. Crocker, *Newfoundland Apprenticeship Training Study Final Report* (St. John's 1987), 44.

⁴⁹ Cohen and Braid's work examines an exception to this pattern, the 1990s BC Island Highway project where employment equity was built into the project agreement. Hiring provisions mandated the hiring of women, disabled, aboriginal, and local workers. Participation rates by total hours worked for women and aboriginal workers went from zero to 6.5 per cent for women and 7.5 per cent for Aboriginals over the life of the project. Marjorie Griffith Cohen and Kate Braid, "Training and Equity Initiatives on the British Columbia Island highway Project: A Model of Large-Scale Construction Project," The Labour Education and Training Research Network, <http://www.yorku.ca/research/crws/network/english/cohen-braid-e.htm>.

⁵⁰ "Women's Council Calls for Mandatory Affirmative Action for Hibernia Oil Development," *ET*, 20 January 1986. Ann Bell recognized that "the only way women will have equal opportunity for employment is if it is a definite requirement." Bell also dismissed the idea that women were not interested in working offshore. She stated that "women have to eat the same as men do. Not every woman wants to go offshore but neither does every man..."

Offshore Development Constructors (NODECO), did have an equitable hiring policy in its Environmental Protection Plan; however, in the new Site Environmental Plan which covered both the GBS and Topsides work the equitable hiring policy was excluded. Only one contractor on site, Metropol Security, was legally required to implement employment equity as a signatory under the Federal Contractors Program.⁵¹ Neither the HMDC nor the provincial government required contractors to provide for equity hiring as part of the tendering process.⁵²

In 1991, the ODC encouraged qualified women to apply for employment at Hibernia and hired an equity promotion co-ordinator. It claimed to be actively seeking female welders, painters, and sand-blowers for the project. The equity co-ordinator obtained graduation lists from colleges and training institutes so she could personally make contact with women workers. However, the equity co-ordinator stressed that Hibernia's was an equity promotion platform and not affirmative action. There were no percentages or quotas on hiring women. Women were told they would still have to go through the seniority system and that hiring was up to the local unions.⁵³

In its equity statement, the ODC recognized that women have historically been disadvantaged in trades because most women did not have access to the same kinds of activities as men in the formative years, including access to math and science, familiarity

⁵¹ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 7.

⁵² The Hibernia Management and Development Company (HMDC), agreed to Newfoundland hiring preferences in exchange for federal and provincial government financial support, including a commitment to pay 25 per cent of construction costs to a maximum of \$1.04 billion and to provide loan guarantees for 40 per cent of those costs to a total of \$1.66 billion. In February 1992 the federal government also became a direct partner, acquiring 8.5 per cent of Gulf Canada Resource's share after Gulf pulled out of the project.

⁵³ Brian Jones, "Hibernia Unions seeking Qualified Female Workers," *ET*, 29 September 1991; and Beth Gorman, "Hibernia Work keeps Woman off Welfare," *ET*, 6 October 1991.

with tools, or familiarity with the nomenclature. To overcome these factors the ODC suggested setting up a six-month course introducing women to four trades, followed by a nine-month pre-employment course and apprenticeship in a trade.⁵⁴ The program was to train two groups of sixteen women per year, one group each for six months. After more than 300 women applied, the ODC suggested the course run for a period of five years.⁵⁵ In April 1993 the Oil Development Council's training coordinating group (ODCCG) asked local colleges to put together a proposal for a four-week equity rebar training course capable of training 50 women. It also requested proposals for a two-week apprenticeship rebar training course for 150 potential workers at Hibernia.⁵⁶

Despite the ODCCG's efforts, many women complained that they were prevented from taking many of the necessary training courses to be eligible for employment and that those women who had taken the courses were among the last to get hired.⁵⁷ By May 1995 350 women had applied for construction trades training. Of the 3127 seats available, however, only 102 women received training, accessing only 168 of the seats.⁵⁸ As of July

⁵⁴ Derm Cain, president of the ODC, wrote to Employment and Immigration Canada to address the question of employment equity. He stated that because of the high skill requirements necessary for the project, most women were not in a position to qualify for the current training initiatives, as they did not have journey status. Cain felt that this was quite unfortunate as many of the women applicants displayed high levels of interest. To solve the problem the ODC decided to pursue the entry of women in trades as a separate program. Cain detailed how the ODC Communications and Equity Coordinator was working with the local WITT group to put together a plan of action to train women at the entry through to journey level status. ODC files, box: ODCCG Files. Letter from Cain to Rick Fifield, Employment and Immigration Canada, 23 March 1993.

⁵⁵ ODC files, box: ODCCG Training, Equity File, "Equity Statement."

⁵⁶ ODC files, box: ODCCG Training. ODCCG, Request for Equity – Rebar Training Proposals, 2 April 1993.

⁵⁷ Deana Stokes Sullivan, "Gender not Factor in Hiring, say Officials," *ET*, 23 November 1993; and Stokes Sullivan, "Tradeswomen Claim discrimination," *ET*, 16 November 1993.

⁵⁸ Many of the women took more than one course, for instance, apprentice rebar and then rebar. Information from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Department of Employment and Labour Relations, July 1995.

1994 of the 102 women who had received training, only 36 were hired on site. Women received training in both traditional and non-traditional fields, with 53 women trained as camp attendants/food service workers, 48 in apprentice rebar, 48 in rebar, 11 as painter/blaster/fireproofers, 5 to work in the warehouse, and 1 each trained in concrete, diving, and structural welding. Sixteen women were hired for rebar work, seven as camp attendants/food service workers, five for the warehouse, five as painters/blasters, and one each in concrete, diving, and warehousing. By the project's end, over 1900 trainees received employment at Hibernia, of whom only 65 were women, a total of 3 per cent.⁵⁹

In August 1993 several women, who had taken Hibernia training and had early application dates, grew tired of watching men with equal or less qualifications get hired and met to discuss what they saw as unfair hiring. Several women trained in cage manufacturing were told they had to wait for jobs in cage manufacturing before they could be hired while the men in training with them were hired on in different job capacities. One woman stated "I perceived cage manufacturing to be segregation because it seemed like they made it a 'female's job'..."⁶⁰ After complaints to Women in Trades and Technology, in September 1993 WITT representative Brenda Grzetic met with members of the Hibernia Employers' Association (HEA) to ask the HEA to ensure that women who performed well in the training courses would be hired. At the meeting Grzetic used the examples of several women with high training scores to demonstrate the issue of unfair hiring practices. The HEA was hostile to the presentation and later wrote

⁵⁹ ODC Files, Box: ODCCG files, Equity Update, ODCCG Training Update, July 1994; WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 16; Deana Stokes Sullivan, "Report 'Sad Reflection' of Reality for Women Working on Hibernia," *ET*, 9 August 1996, and Stokes Sullivan and John Tompkins, "Hibernia not without Harassment of Women," 7 August 1996.

to WITT demanding to know how it had obtained much of its information, particularly its access to students' test scores. WITT executive director Cindy King responded that all the data on training was obtained through the provincial government or from the women in training.⁶¹

Women's late start dates gave them lower seniority and made many ineligible for further training that would have ensured them more work.⁶² Most trades' enhancement courses were reserved for workers with prior experience or journeyman status and few women had the necessary work experience to meet the requirements. One woman commented that "they know they're cutting out the women by having it set up this way."⁶³ Several women were told that their late call-up dates were determined randomly as initially the union put the names in a hat for work on site. One woman complained:

We had to wait and wait and then we started to realize that women weren't going like the men... When I first applied to the ODCCG I had three years of experience and by the time I got there I had reached journey level. I saw the men go there and I knew that some of them weren't senior union members. I knew they had done the training when I did it. I knew that some of the men who were called to work had no experience whatsoever... I also saw how guys pressured the union to be referred to the site, then when we pressured them, it turned into something ugly... I really didn't think we would be treated so unfairly.

Women later learned that they had been put on a separate hiring list, a female hiring list, which they believed was only used once all workers on the standard list had been hired.

⁶⁰ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 21. It is interesting to note that cage manufacturing was dropped from the project plans a short time later in 1994.

⁶¹ ODC files, box: ODCCG files. Letter from WITT Director Cindy King to Jim Kenney, Executive Director, HEA, 28 September 1993.

⁶² WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 18.

⁶³ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 22.

The union claimed it placed the women on a separate hiring list to help implement employment equity.⁶⁴

By November 1993 the women trained as cage manufacturers were joined by a group of women rebar apprentices who filed complaints with the Human Rights Commission alleging discrimination in hiring by all parties involved.⁶⁵ Meetings with the premier and the Minister of Employment and Labour Relations offered the women little hope. In April 1994 the Department of Employment and Labour Relations concluded that the hiring procedures were fair and reasonable and that adequate attempts had been made to train and recruit women. According to the government, the women were not being hired because of their lack of qualifications compared to male workers and their late application dates. The report angered many of the women trainees, particularly those with extensive backgrounds in welding, concrete reinforcement, steel inspection and other construction related occupations.⁶⁶

Women's Work Roles at Hibernia

Women made up less than 4 per cent of workers at Hibernia, with the majority employed in traditional women's work roles. In April 1995 235 women were employed at Hibernia, 201 of them in union positions, and 34 in non-unionized positions. Three main

⁶⁴ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 20.

⁶⁵ Stokes Sullivan, "Tradeswomen Claim Discrimination," *ET*, 16 November 1993.

⁶⁶ Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, "Investigative Summary: Complaints Received Regarding Hibernia Referral and Hiring Procedures Related To Women" (St. John's 1994); and Frangos, Gardias, and Hookey, "Response to the Findings of the Investigation into Women's Concerns about Hiring Practices on the Hibernia Construction Project," unpublished report, St. John's, 1994.

employers accounted for just under 90 per cent of Hibernia's unionized workforce (PASSB, NODECO and Major Offshore Catering) at its peak level of operation. PASSB employed 847 workers, 19 of whom were women (2 per cent). Those 19 women were predominantly in secretarial and catering positions, with only one-third in non-traditional jobs. Major Offshore Catering employed 161 people, 70 of whom were women (43 per cent). Due to the nature of the work, providing catering and camp attendants, almost all of the women were traditionally employed. The third employer, NODECO employed the largest number of workers, 2187, 90 of whom were women (4 per cent). Of those 90 women, 31 were employed in non-traditional work while the other 59 were clerical workers.⁶⁷ Those working in areas dominated by women reported high satisfaction with their jobs. One woman reported "it's been nothing but a positive experience for me... It was a truly remarkable experience to have that many people working so close together and have so few problems given the size of the project."⁶⁸ Women's experiences, however, differed depending on their jobs. Women construction workers noted pervasive harassment, including the general attitude that women did not belong in construction.⁶⁹

To cope with harassment, the ODC introduced its Discrimination and Harassment Policy in May 1992. ODC policies applied to all union members on site. The ODC defined harassment as any improper conduct or behaviour that included but was not

⁶⁷ Hibernia Construction Sites Environmental Management Committee, "Socio-Economic Review of the Hibernia Development Project," January-June 1995. 10-12.

⁶⁸ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 11-12.

⁶⁹ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 11-15, 26-31. WITT sent out questionnaires to the 236 women employed on site, and received replies from 72 women (31 per cent), including 64 unionized and 8 non-unionized workers. 42 of the women were in administrative/clerical positions, while 13 were in construction, 9 in support services, and 8 in management. 29 women also gave permission to be interviewed (15 were administrative/clerical workers, 9 in construction, 5 in support services, and 1 in management).

limited to coercion, intimidation, blackmail, ridicule, or sexual harassment that denied an individual dignity or respect. Sexual harassment was further defined as any unwelcome conduct, sexual advances, or requests for sexual favours. The ODC considered it discrimination or harassment if a person reasonably ought to have known that his/her behaviour constituted harassment. Improper conduct included verbal remarks, jokes or innuendoes, physical touching or leering, inappropriate cartoons or pictures, and breach of confidentiality, for instance, disclosure of an individual's medical condition without the consent of the employee concerned.⁷⁰

The ODC's harassment policy required the harassed worker make their disapproval known to the individual whose conduct was in question, keep a written record of incidents, check with co-workers about similar incidents, and report incidents to their designated representatives. Foremen, shop stewards, site representatives, and business managers were all told to be available to discuss harassment or discrimination claims. Each complaint was to undergo a prompt investigation. Union representatives were reminded that information was confidential and that sanctions were only to be instituted once the claim was substantiated. Punishment for harassment ranged from a written reprimand to dismissal from the union. Harassed workers were also told they had the right to report the case to the Human Rights Commission, especially if they were considering leaving their position because of harassment.

The HMDC and the major contractors on site developed a harassment policy and began instituting courses on sexual harassment in 1994, well into the project's construction. Maria Moran, the training and recruitment co-ordinator with the GBS

⁷⁰ ODC files, box: ODCCG Training. "Oil Development Council Discrimination and Harassment

Management Team (GMT), reported that Human Resources and Labour Relations had received six to eight complaints of sexual harassment in the prior year. Under management's policy, workers were required to report sexual harassment to their department manager, superintendent, labour relations department or their union representative.⁷¹ Moran reported that only in the past year (1994) had any complaints been received, which she attributed to the increasing numbers of women workers employed on site. She also noted that this was also the period when women were becoming more involved in non-traditional areas, although Moran did recognize that harassment claims were not isolated to construction.⁷²

Women workers faced additional safety hazards due to harassment they faced on site or based on the work they were assigned. Few researchers have examined the health hazards to women in construction, perhaps not surprisingly as in 1995 women still made up only 2.3 per cent of construction workers in the United States. As more women entered construction unions in the 1980s and 1990s, concerns began emerging over how gender related to health and safety. One study in the United States examined the primary health and safety hazards for all construction workers and then looked at the additional health and safety hazards affecting women.⁷³ It found that women construction workers faced additional health and safety issues in workplace culture (including anti-women

Policy," 25 March 1993.

⁷¹ Harassment charges could be filed as a grievance.

⁷² "Program Aimed At Stamping Out Sexual Harassment Before it Starts," *Hibernia News*, 8 February 1995.

⁷³ The study was undertaken by the Health and Safety for Women in Construction (HASWIC) working group which was under the Advisory Committee on Construction Safety and Health (ACCSH), an advisory committee reporting to the U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. HASWIC, "Women in the Construction Workplace: Providing

attitudes and discrimination based on sex), in the design of personal protective equipment, in the lack of sanitary facilities for women, in their different ergonomic needs, and in knowledge surrounding reproductive hazards.

In recent years researchers have recognized that sexual harassment is an occupational health and safety hazard. In a National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) study, sexual harassment was an important predictor for lower job satisfaction, more psychological and physiological symptoms, and more on-the-job injuries.⁷⁴ Hostile environments, including sexual harassment, created health and safety issues on several levels, including leading to chronic stress and distractions which could result in injuries not just to female workers but to others around her. Another study found that the behaviour of those in authority, including foremen and union representatives and supervisors and other contractor representatives, set the tone and example for workers on site, and had the potential to strongly affect women trades workers' health and safety.⁷⁵ On her first day at Hibernia, one woman reported that her supervisor "got really upset with me. I thought that he was going to come across the desk at me. I drew back. He asked me 'Who in the hell did I think I was to go out there thinking I could tell them where I was going to work?' He went on and on and I couldn't get a word in. He really frightened me."⁷⁶

Equitable Safety and Health Protection," an unpublished working paper of the OSHA, February 1996, 1. Copy from the CPWR, Washington, DC.

⁷⁴ Paula Arab, "Sexual Harassment Ruled Workplace Safety Hazard," *ET*, 23 August 1997; L.M. Goldenhar, J.J. Hurrell, N. Swanson, A. Ruder, and J. Deddens, "Affects of on the Job Harassment: Outcomes for Women Construction Workers," Preliminary Survey Findings Presented at APA-CDC Conference on Women's Health, Washington, September 1996.

⁷⁵ Susan Eisenberg, *We'll Call You if We Need You: Experiences of Women Working Construction* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 1998), 70.

⁷⁶ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 34.

Women working in non-traditional jobs at Stelco (Hamilton) and Inco (Sudbury) reported negative reactions from some supervisors and co-workers to them taking away men's jobs.⁷⁷ An Inco employee remembered being asked "What do you think you're doing here anyways? This is no place for a woman. This is a man's job. Don't you know you're taking away a man's job? A man has to support his family."⁷⁸ At Stelco one employee talked about an initiation only new female workers were put through, "We'd go out there, and there's like ten males, two women, and we're shovelling, and sometimes you'd be trying to shovel through about two feet of coke off a track. It's a little hard to get your shovel in, and it takes a while to really know how to do it. And you'd look up and there'd be about twenty guys lookin' like they'd never seen a shovel, never seen a human being in their life before, just laughing and pointing and staring."⁷⁹ At Hibernia, female tradesworkers reported being discriminated against based on their sex. A female rebar worker reported that the older men "felt that the heavy work was for them and the [light] work was for me... Even from the first they were ignoring me, avoiding me when it came to this work. Another reported that "...they watched me really closely for the first six weeks. Everyone else was [in another area] but I was doing all those little jobs like cleaning... At one point the boys actually called me Molly [Molly Maid]." The situation was quite visible as was evidenced when a clerical worker reported that "although efforts

⁷⁷ According to Livingstone and Mangan, the Hamilton steel industry – Stelco and Dofasco – "has long been widely regarded to be one of the strongest preserves of traditional white working-class masculine identity and opposition to women trying to do a 'man's job'." D.W. Livingstone and J.M. Mangan, eds., *Recast Dreams: Class and Gender Consciousness in Steeltown* (Toronto: Saramond Press, 1996), 5.

⁷⁸ Jennifer Penney, *Hard Earned Wages: Women Fighting for Better Work* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1983), 16.

⁷⁹ Penney, *Hard Earned Wages*, 16.

are made to make it appear differently," she felt "that on many levels the mentality is that women don't belong in construction."⁸⁰

In a group interview with female Stelco workers, the question of why women faced such hostility from male workers was explored. One woman argued that hostility was bred from women being more short-term employees, "The guys give up and stay forever. And give it their whole body. Their body rots." Another woman added, "Which is one of the reasons the guys are hostile towards us. It's dirty. It's got terrible shifts and terrible time off. So you do this and what do you get in return? You get not a great wage, but a relatively better wage. You do that basically because you're supporting a family... Then you see a woman coming in. And you realize that she can work. And that breaks up that whole thing. It throws a rock into that whole circle that you've got going. Every morning you say to yourself, 'I can't stand this job, but I gotta go in, 'cause I gotta support the wife and kids.' Well, if the wife can work, then it destroys the whole argument. So we are a tremendous threat to that." These women argued that both male workers and their wives were threatened by females working in non-traditional jobs because they challenged the male breadwinner ideology, and its central precept that a woman's role is in the home.⁸¹

Only 6 per cent of the women interviewed on their job experiences at Hibernia reported they felt unsafe in their workplace; however, when office workers were excluded the number rose to 15 per cent. Women's experiences at Hibernia were dependent on the behaviour of the male workers immediately around them, including their foremen and supervisors. While most women reported few problems, others reported co-workers and

⁸⁰ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 28.

foremen who expressed the belief that women did not belong in non-traditional construction jobs. When other workers, or the union or contractor, did not intervene to stop harassment, many women construction workers took this as a sign that the harasser was acting for the greater majority.⁸²

When asked about the most negative health and safety exposures in their daily environments, 33 per cent of interviewed women workers at Hibernia reported drafts and cold as being a problem, 29 per cent reported stressful work and noise as a problem, 21 per cent worried about poor ventilation, 17 per cent reported fear of working at such heights, 15 per cent complained of the heavy physical work load, 14 per cent complained of poor workplace design, while 11 per cent complained of the effects of working with vibrating tools and the remaining 11 per cent worried about working with flammable or hazardous chemicals.⁸³ Several female construction workers reported that their Hibernia-related training was deficient as "safety was not given any priority."⁸⁴ Thirty per cent of interviewed women construction workers reported having seen one or more accidents while working on site. Thirty-three per cent reported having seen at least one near miss, adding to their own health and safety fears.

Much like female construction workers interviewed in other studies, several women at Hibernia found they were placed in dangerous situations by male co-workers or supervisors and that their physical strength was under "test". One ironworker reported being forced by her foreman to lift reinforcing bars heavier than her body weight with few

⁸¹ See Livingston and Mangan, *Recast Dreams* and Penney, *Hard Earned Wages*, 217-8.

⁸² For more on this idea, see Eisenberg, *We'll Call You if We Need You*, 77.

⁸³ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 33. Several women reported more than one health and safety concern, hence the total does not add up to 100 per cent.

⁸⁴ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 17.

breaks between lifts. She felt this was an attempt to "break her" and show her that women could not handle vertical bars. She told interviewers that "When I was on the bars I worked really hard... My arms would be vibrating from the work, they'd be literally moving on their own so at times I wouldn't even eat my lunch because my arms would be moving so much... I said [to my foreman] that I was scared that I might drop the bar and hit somebody with it."⁸⁵ When her harassment became intolerable she returned to the dorm without permission, causing her site supervisor to dismiss her. She was sent for a disciplinary hearing the next day. With the support of the union, the dismissal was changed to a suspension. A second woman quit the project after being assigned to lift vertical bars for ten nights in a row. Another woman was issued a letter of warning after she left her shift without permission and failed to report for her next shift.⁸⁶ It is surprising that working under conditions like these more workers were not injured. While these women could have been quite badly injured on the job, none of the Hibernia trades women mentioned the malicious attempts to injure found in one U.S. study of female construction workers. Women trades workers interviewed by Susan Eisenberg reported such things as having circuits turned back on while trimming electrical receptacles in one instance and someone tying ground wires into a hot wire in a second instance – one assumes to show women that construction was a male domain.⁸⁷

After being injured while catching rebar being fed through the wall, one woman ironworker at Hibernia reported a disturbing lack of attention was being paid to injured

⁸⁵ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 35.

⁸⁶ ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands etc.

⁸⁷ Susan Eisenberg, "Still Building the Foundation: Women in the Construction Trades," *WorkingUSA* (May-June 1998), 23. For other stories on the experiences of women in

workers. While catching the 300-pound rebar, the worker experienced pain in her right shoulder, radiating through her arm and fingers to the extent where she could no longer move her arm. After getting permission from her foreman, she walked to the First Aid Station for medical treatment. Despite difficulties carrying her tool belt given her injured arm, no one accompanied her to the First Aid Station or back to the site to inform her foreman she was off work for the remainder of the shift. When the ironworker returned to work -- in a sling and under doctor ordered modified duties -- she found her foreman unhappy over her inability to function fully. He assigned her to picking up caps on the icewall, something that involved her climbing ladders and carrying a garbage bag with the use of one hand. On her next shift, the foreman assigned her to helping the crew lift rebar during which time she lost her balance and fell against the vertical bars, striking her injured shoulder.

After confronting her foreman over the dangerous work assignments, the ironworker reported that the foreman demanded that she be 100 per cent for the next shift. The worker responded that she was medically incapable of giving 100 per cent and asked to be removed from that particular foreman's shift as he was asking her to perform unsafe work. After the confrontation, the ironworker finished out her shift and approached her union representative for help in dealing with the situation. Back in the camp, eating dinner, a safety officer questioned her on the accident and its aftermath. Feeling besieged in the camp and at work, and feeling she needed a second medical opinion, the ironworker reported in sick for her next few shifts and left the site for St. John's where her doctor recommended she start physical therapy. This worker had worked as an

apprentice ironworker on site for two years at the time of the accident and had prior construction experience as a concrete inspector and as a laboratory inspector in road construction. When asked why she had not refused the assignment lifting rebar when she was already injured or reported the accident to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee representatives on site, the worker replied that she was not aware of the Health and Safety Committee, had never seen minutes of their meetings, nor been told of the representatives while seeking medical treatment. She also reported that she was afraid that if she had refused to climb the ladder that her foreman would reprimand or dismiss her from the site.⁸⁸

Other women complained not so much of unsafe treatment specifically but of gender discrimination which had the potential to create an unsafe working environment. Many female construction workers felt that some of their co-workers were either over-protective of a female tradesman and did not allow her heavy work or were dismissive of her ability to complete the work. Those women that could complete the work were seen as "exceptions". One woman complained that the crew of mostly older men she was placed with would not allow her to do heavy work, despite her having the same training as the other workers. She reported that when she attempted to do heavy work she was pushed away. For this particular woman, gender discrimination became mingled with sexual discrimination when one of the crew began asking her explicit sexual questions during lunch. The foreman present did nothing to stop the behaviour. After a

Construction (Ithaca: ILR Press, 1998).

⁸⁸ The ironworker later asked Bill Parsons to facilitate a meeting with the Director of Occupational Health and Safety Bruce Rodgers to launch an investigation into the events that occurred after she was injured. See file on [name deleted], Factual Events pertaining to [name deleted], Ironworker, Local 764, GBS, 21 June 1995. File at NLBCTC office, St. John's.

confrontation with one worker, she left the site to meet with the labour relations representative and her supervisor to ask to be placed with a new crew. Her request was denied and she was sent back to her crew, returning her to an atmosphere in which safety was compromised.⁸⁹

The above worker was not the only one who complained about only being given light work. One woman rebar worker reported that "I had to fight for my work. I found myself always given the easy work. The other men would call out to [the guys] to come and do something... to help. They refused to bring me in. If I went over to help with the heavy work, they would immediately know somehow that it was my hands in there. They would say 'get your hands out of there, you're going to hurt yourself!'" The woman also remembered one worker screaming at her "if the rebar falls on your toes, you're going to break your toes," to which she replied "listen, I'm wearing steel toed boots just like you..." She found that eventually she just couldn't handle it from the crew anymore. Another woman construction worker remembered being told by her supervisor that he was going to have to be harder to her than the "guys" so that the male workers did not think he was playing favourites. When she asked why he couldn't treat everyone equally, he replied, "I've got to treat you harder, look at you, you don't look like a man."⁹⁰ This attitude was not uncommon in the construction industry. As Rosemary Pringle and Anne Winning found in Australia, "the building industry, as one of the last male bastions, has seen a significant degree of resistance to concepts such as 'gender equity' and 'affirmative action'... with men either taking the stand that women are not equal physically or that if

⁸⁹ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 30.

⁹⁰ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 31.

they want equal opportunity they must demonstrate that they can do everything in the very same way that a man does on the building site.”⁹¹

WITT found that 31 per cent of women respondents were sexually harassed at Hibernia, including 50 per cent of the women construction workers. While most of the women reported that they were harassed only occasionally, 4 per cent of those interviewed reported that they were sexually harassed at least once a week or on most days. Many women reported that while they had worked with men in the past, they were not prepared for the nasty sexual comments made by some of the men.⁹² In one instance, two residents who had been drinking accosted a female cafeteria worker demanding a kiss. When she refused one of the residents grabbed her before a male catering employee intervened. One of the men was given a letter of reprimand; the other had his camp privileges revoked for 30 days, as it was his second offence. Another male worker was disciplined twice in one year for sexual harassment, in his case indecent exposure. For his first offence he was suspended from work and lost his camp privileges for one week. After the second offence the worker lost his camp privileges indefinitely and was warned that any further problems would result in his being terminated.⁹³ A clerical worker was pleased that while initially she received a lot of “nasty sexual comments” that the site had “done very well in coming out with pamphlets and training” which reduced harassment.⁹⁴

A female rebar worker reported a good working relationship with her male colleagues. Her job consisted more of the fabrication of rebar but she was also involved in

⁹¹ Rosemary Pringle and Anne Winning, “Building Strategies: Equal Opportunity in the Construction Industry,” *Gender, Work and Organization*, 5, 4 (October 1998), 220.

⁹² WITT, *Women, Employment Equity*..., 26.

⁹³ See ODC files, box A-Z. Meetings – Camp Committee, 8 July 1992 and 24 February 1994; and box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands Etc.

placing steel on the GBS, one area where women reported harassment. She commented that "Overall, I would say, 99 per cent of the men here are great, especially when they get to know you, get to know you as a person and that you are alright." She found that "When I first went into the shop they really wouldn't do anything. They tried to hold back from swearing and certain kinds of jokes and stuff like that. But they got used to me and found I wasn't too uptight and now they are more relaxed, but they still watch what they say. I kind of like it because it shows respect."⁹⁵ One wonders if her experience would have been so positive if she had complained about the jokes, as did some of the other workers. The first female pipefitting apprentice on site also reported no problems working with an all-male crew but with her father, also a pipefitter on site, watching out for her she had protection many of the other women workers lacked.⁹⁶

One problem with site harassment policies was that many of the sexual harassment claims were launched by one union member against a fellow union member. This put the union in the unenviable position of having to try and meet the needs of both the perpetrator and the person harassed. Harassment was less complicated when it came from someone outside the union. When asked if they thought a harassment complaint would be resolved to their satisfaction, most women construction workers felt it would not. One woman reported that "women report incidents and they were disciplined themselves because of it... I would be very wary of reporting an incident on site." Many

⁹⁴ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 26.

⁹⁵ "Non-traditional Roles Nothing New for Female Iron Worker," *Hibernia News*, 27 July 1994.

⁹⁶ "Like Father Like Daughter," *Hibernia News*, 24 August 1994, 1. Her father reported that "everything they say to her comes back to me one way or the other. She's getting along well with the boys and seems to be doing well herself..."

of the women interviewed by WITT were nervous of reporting incidents as "the nature of the work and the camp and how quickly things travel, there are a lot of repercussions that can happen that will make just living and working there much more challenging and difficult if you were to take things the formal route." While clerical workers were more likely to believe their harassment complaints would be resolved to their satisfaction.

While many workers found their unions helpful, some women workers found that they were prevented from trying to use internal channels to achieve changes. One woman reported that there were regular meetings with her local union president but that he did not tolerate dissent. She reported that "you can speak but you may as well not, because you want the floor to open right after you speak because that's how embarrassed he'll make you feel." She found her union president very intimidating especially when he went on about how good everything was and how much the union was doing for its members. A clerical worker told how she and other workers had attempted to institute changes, but were generally outvoted by the male members of the union. Clerical workers were in a union that included crane operators (the IUOE), something that became a problem when it came to paying union dues. Despite making considerably less, clerical workers paid the same deductions. When they attempted to have their dues reduced the male (crane operator) workers outvoted them. A third worker talked about how her union was reluctant to do anything to help individual women members. She found that she had to

pressure her shop steward to get his help in becoming a full union member. She had doubts that any issue related to gender would be adequately dealt with by her union.⁹⁷

Several women also complained of harassment and safety issues in the camp. As incentives for employees to stay within the camp, the HEA provided a tavern, health clinic, swimming pool, sauna, whirlpool, weight room, games room, TV rooms, a softball diamond, recreational programming and religious services, all on site. Women were housed in all-female dorms or in trailers, each with their own room but with communal washroom facilities. Despite the conveniences, many women found the camp a threatening environment. While fifty-one per cent of women respondents reported they were happy with the camp, others complained they did not feel safe. Several women asked for female security guards and maintenance women to oversee the women's dorms. One woman complained of running into the male security on the way to the washroom in her pajamas while others complained of male security doing room checks without knocking first. Several women also expressed concern over walking from the parking lot to the bunkhouses at night. After the camp committee received complaints about shift workers walking to the parking lot at the end of their shift, security walked them to their vehicles.⁹⁸

When asked by WITT if they had any advice for new female employees, many women reported that dangers were not just from men, but also from other women. Many

⁹⁷ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 36-37.

⁹⁸ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 41-2; ODC files, box A-Z, Meetings – Camp Committee, 26 March 1996, 25 May 1995, 24 August 1994 and 18 December 1991.

warned women to be conservative, watch their backs, dress appropriately, and to avoid the tavern unless with a group. Others talked of the need to keep friends to a minimum and to avoid gossip sessions. One woman worker reported that a female co-worker who wanted her job began spreading rumours around the camp area about her, rumours that quickly spread. After informal complaints to the ODC site representative, the victim was moved to another women's trailer but after the rumours followed her there she approached the HMDC about living offsite but they refused. Upon learning the details of her situation, they recommended she report the harassment to her union. When she went to the ODC for support, she was disappointed when they told her that she was part of a family and that everyone needed to get along. Many women warned of the camp rumour mill, one woman suggesting women not have any male friends, as the camp gossips would turn it into an affair.⁹⁹

Women also complained of the predominantly male culture found in the camp. One woman commented on the need for a women's only place, one where "we're not monitored by 2,000 men constantly. The effect is a fishbowl. Everywhere you go someone is watching you... I'd love to go swimming but I'm not going to go over there with a bunch of men staring at me. I don't want... to be put on display."¹⁰⁰ Another women noted that "When there are only one or two women and a hundred men it's very intimidating," a statement referring specifically to the use of recreational facilities but also apt to describe life on the site. Other women complained of the long walk in the kitchen where 1500 men were all staring and making comments about the women. She

⁹⁹ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 27, 39.

stated "at least 60 per cent of the men do make comments and even after three years I find it difficult to go into the kitchen... I'm not just speaking for myself. I know a lot of the girls who won't go to eat in the kitchen until one of us gets off and can go with her..."¹⁰¹

Another woman talked about the problems of entering the dining hall, which she described as:

one of the most daunting experiences I've ever had... you're walking in there with generally a thousand men sitting there and you have to walk up to line up and I was always very aware that probably twenty of [them] were watching you walk... It's like the longest mile... you could hear the cover being placed on the plate just so they could have a good gander. I used to say 'my God, where do they come from,' I mean, they haven't been locked up for the last six months and haven't seen a woman for six months. I think it's construction mentality; all of a sudden they start thinking like Tarzan.¹⁰²

This construction site mentality was a very masculine mentality, a mentality in which women were not always welcome, particularly women working in non-traditional areas.

Women employed several strategies to cope with living and working in an overwhelmingly male dominated space. Many women kept their doors open in their off hours so that they could gather around and talk. Over these evenings, women attempted to figure out how to do things differently, how to approach situations, and how to strategize. In one instance, the women discussed whether or not to go to a harasser's supervisor, whether that would do any good, and what consequences that action would have. The women also discussed what effect their complaints would have on other women trying to get work at Hibernia. Other women read, listened to music or watched television in their rooms to relax. It is clear that the women's dorm was a place of refuge.

¹⁰⁰ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 44.

¹⁰¹ WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 26.

A common complaint, however, was women had no common area to meet in. Other residents complained of men (or in some cases women) staying in women's bunkhouses. Two residents were given a 30 day camp suspension for having their boyfriends (also workers on site) spend the night; two others were given warning letters. Many women complained that some men were even living with their girlfriends in the woman's room.¹⁰³

Conclusions

As Newfoundland has modernized, women's roles on construction sites have undergone significant changes from the 1960s to the 1990s. On the earlier projects in the late 1960s and early 1970s, women were largely engaged in traditional paid employment – clerical/office, nursing, teaching, and retail – or in meeting the needs of wage workers in the home. In the mid-1970s women slowly began entering non-traditional jobs in the construction field, bolstered in part by the example of U.S. pioneers operating under affirmative action programs. While women were still more likely to be found in traditional occupations on construction sites in the 1990s, dozens of women also achieved gains unheard of twenty years before. In addition to becoming apprentices in construction trades, a few women also achieved “foreman” status and managed male workers. All was not easy for women in non-traditional jobs at Hibernia, and many women complained of sexual and other forms of harassment. Despite the problems with Hibernia, it served as a stepping stone into a previously unobtainable industry. With the end of construction, and a return to high levels of construction unemployment, many women who had managed to

¹⁰² WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 45.

¹⁰³ ODC files, box A-Z, Meetings – Camp Committee, 26 March 1996, 25 May 1995 and WITT, *Women, Employment Equity...*, 28, 42.

gain a toehold in the construction industry found themselves on the outside once again. New construction projects have not included affirmative action programs and the most recent offshore oil construction project – Terra Nova – did not provide the same level of employment as Hibernia.

Chapter Nine: The Costs of Industrial Construction: Occupational Health and Safety in Newfoundland¹

Under the best of conditions construction is a high-risk industry. In the United States only mining (26.8 deaths per 100,000 workers) and agriculture (22.8 per 100,000) ranked higher than construction in work-related deaths by industry in 1996. Construction workers faced a work-related death from injury rate of 13.9 per 100,000.² In Newfoundland in 1996 11,036 construction workers suffered lost time accidents, with nine fatalities as a result of work-related injuries. The Newfoundland and Labrador Building and Construction Trades Council (NLBCTC) reported that for every serious or disabling injury there were 10 minor injuries, 30 property damage accidents, and 600 incidents with no visible injury or damage, yet each having the capacity to produce serious injury or damage.³ In the rush to modernize, several construction workers paid the ultimate price while on the job. In trying to construct Churchill Falls, Come by Chance, and Hibernia many workers were injured and some have lost their lives.⁴

¹ My thoughts on occupational health and safety benefited from a trip to the Center for the Protection of Workers' Rights (CPWR) in Washington, DC. The CPWR is the research arm of the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Department. This trip was made possible by a doctoral grant from the Institute of Social and Economic Research.

² This rate showed considerable variation among trades, with ironworkers facing the highest death rates at 96.5 deaths per 100,000, followed by labourers at 42.7, roofers at 37.2, electrical workers and operating engineers at 19.8 per 100,000. Plumbers were much lower at 7.8 per 100,000 workers. The ironworker rate was the highest of any single occupation. More labourers were killed at work than ironworkers as labourers greatly outnumbered ironworkers in the labour force. U.S. figures from CPWR, *The Construction Chart Book: The U.S. Construction Industry and its Workers* (Washington: CPWR, 1998), 31-2.

³ "Hazardous Workplace – Exercise Due Diligence," *Safe Times*, 1, 1 (Winter 1999), 6, and Presentation by Bill Parsons, Executive Director NLBCTC to Employers' Council Spring 1998 Conference, St. John's, 23 April 1998. *Safe Times* is the journal of the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association.

⁴ Unlike Churchill Falls where accident reports survived in the archives and Hibernia where the union maintained safety records, little information has survived on occupational health and safety practices at Come by Chance.

The dangerous nature of industrial construction was compounded by the additional health and safety risks which accompanied the often isolated workplaces, extended periods away from family and friend support networks, shift work, and long hours. Workers on remote sites were particularly vulnerable to pressure to increase production as living in work camps, most without family, left the workers with limited social networks.⁵ Other factors such as washing up facilities at remote sites also affected health and safety as workers who failed to wash up before coffee or meals potentially inhaled toxic substances from their own hands into the food as well as inhaled toxic substances from the nearby work sites.⁶ Construction workers, particularly on large-scale, live-in projects, also faced particular problems based on the overtly masculine identity of their occupation. Rugged masculinity has the potential to breed a disregard for health and safety rules seen as either "unmanly" or unnecessary. As Craig Heron found for steelworkers "ever-present danger could breed fear in some steelworkers, but for many, it posed the challenge to prove their manhood. Among the committed men in the industry, there was (and still is) a masculine pride in their ability to face the gates of hell."⁷ For many construction workers building something out of the wilderness and conquering nature fostered their masculinity.

Several factors influenced construction occupational health and safety, including environmental and organizational factors and health and safety practices. Environmental factors include government regulations, economic conditions, social conditions, industry

⁵ James L. Weeks, "Health and Safety Hazards in the Construction Industry," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-5.

⁶ Weeks, "Health and Safety Hazards in the Construction Industry," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-7.

⁷ Heron, *Working in Steel*, 50.

type, and geographic location.⁸ Organizational factors vary from administrative philosophy, the nature of organization, and the kind of work, to employee characteristics. Health and safety practices range from adequate training and education, safety communications, incentives for health and safety, disciplinary rules and policies, to safety planning and programs.⁹ Contractors could use engineering controls, environmental controls, or provide personal protection gear to maintain a safe work site. Engineering controls included substituting a less hazardous material or altering the process causing the hazards while environmental controls included using exhaust ventilation systems to capture fumes and dust. Personal protection gear, including hard hats and respirators, was generally used when engineering and environmental controls were too costly.¹⁰ This chapter examines occupational health and safety on the Newfoundland industrial construction industry from the 1960s to the 1990s, focusing on Churchill Falls and Hibernia.

⁸ Who was in charge of occupational health and safety can be a crucial element in its success. Work on the British and Newfoundland offshore oil industry has begun to address these issues. Charles Woolfson, John Foster, and Matthias Beck, *Paying for the Piper: Capital and Labour in Britain's Offshore Oil Industry* (London: Mansell, 1996); Sue Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations in the Newfoundland Offshore Oil Industry Since the Ocean Ranger Disaster in 1982," *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy*, 10, 1-2 (2000), 117-165; and Robert Nishman, "Through the Portlights of the Ocean Ranger: Federalism, Energy, and the American Development of the Canadian Eastern Offshore, 1955-1985," MA thesis, Queen's University, 1991. There is also a growing body of historical work on Ontario's occupational health and safety from the legislative perspective. See Eric Tucker, *Administering Danger in the Workplace: the Law and Politics of Occupational Health and Safety Regulation in Ontario, 1850-1914* (Toronto: UTP, 1990); Michael Piva, "The Workmen's Compensation Movement in Ontario," *Ontario History*, 67 (1975); and Vivienne Walters, "Occupational Health and Safety Legislation in Ontario," *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, 20 (1983); Lorna Hurl, "Restricting Child Factory Labour in Late Nineteenth Century Ontario," *Labour/Le Travail (L/LT)*, 21 (1988).

⁹ Sudhir K. Saha, "Assuring Workplace Health and Safety: A Study," Paper presented to Newfoundland and Labrador Employers' Council Conference, St. John's, April 1998.

¹⁰ Personal protection puts the onus for safety on the individual worker. Workers needed to be trained in the use of personal protection to be effective, and the equipment must be fitted to each worker.

Occupational Health and Safety at Churchill Falls

Construction workers, especially on Churchill Falls, were drawn from a wide variety of backgrounds. Only a fraction of those at Churchill Falls had worked on industrial construction projects previously. This had the potential of increasing accidents, as new workers were often unfamiliar with the hazards in construction. Many construction projects, including Churchill Falls, also faced weather extremes and work that was carried out in inclement weather and at night. To help mitigate risks, CFLCo and the main contractor Acres Canadian Betchel (ACB) maintained full-time safety engineers, a fire department and underground rescue teams. While the owner and main contractor both tried to promote a safety culture, including safety tips in the local newspaper, the large number of subcontractors on site made it difficult to ensure a safe work environment was maintained. For many subcontractors and ultimately for the contractor, the priority was on finishing on schedule and on budget.¹¹

Accidents were a regular occurrence, especially in the project's early years. The site's highest accident rates were in 1968. In response, ACB augmented its field accident prevention program in 1969. CFLCo held eleven safety meetings in 1969, including three on site, while ACB held additional safety programs for its subcontractors. Accidents resulting in lost time dropped by 30.4 per cent, down from 46 per million person hours worked in 1968 to 32 accidents per million in 1969. Improved lost time rates were achieved despite a doubling in person hours from 5 million to 10 million. Despite the improvements, fatalities remained high. In 1969 there were eight fatalities on site, two caused by electrocution, one due to a vehicle falling off the Lake Orma Bridge, and the other five were traffic fatalities, three due to collisions. Another fatality occurred on 26

August 1970 when an earth-moving machine struck Joseph Crawley. The week prior to the fatality, the government safety inspector temporarily shut down part of the site when he found 18 men working too close to dynamite charges. Work resumed after the dynamite exploded. In addition to the fatalities there were several fires in 1969, including one which resulted in the loss of the Bridge Camp cookhouse and subsequently to a review of fire policies.¹² Many workers faced additional safety risks due to the nature of their jobs. Electrocution, for instance, was a risk facing electricians and labourers at much higher rates than other workers. On 26 June 1969 an electrical worker climbed a 35-foot pole to measure the conduit distance. According to the safety report out of "carelessness", due perhaps to fatigue or a lack of training, he ended up placing his belt around the pole instead of between the transformer and the pole. When the metal buckle touched the transformer line he suffered an electrical shock and burns to his hands and his body. He was off work for a month recuperating.¹³

Churchill Falls combined both mining and construction, including blasting into the rock face followed by the hauling, loading, and dumping of rock, activities which had the potential to lead several occupational illnesses. The highest exposure to industrial diseases in construction comes from jobs with high exposure to chipping, hammering, drilling, crushing, loading, hauling or dumping rock; from blasting concrete or masonry; using silica sand; and sawing, drilling, hammering, grinding concrete or masonry.¹⁴

¹¹ CFLCo, *The Churchill Falls Power Development Management and Construction Equipment*, 5.

¹² See "Fatal Accident Didn't Cause Shutdown," *ET*, 26 August 1970 and NAC, MG 28, III, 73, volume 40, 400.015. CFLCo files. Construction Report for 1969, 1-4 for accident reports.

¹³ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, volume 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of Accident, 26 July 1969.

¹⁴ Unlike accidents, which received considerable attention, if only after they happened, little attention was paid to construction's industrial diseases. Michael Quinlan, "The Toll from Toil Does Matter: Occupational Health and Labour History," *Labour History*, 73 (November 1997),

Construction workers' exposure to hazards differed dependent on their trade, their work site, and their location. Several illnesses have been linked to construction work including silicosis (sand blasters, tunnel builders, and rock drill operators); asbestosis (insulation workers, steam pipe fitters, and demolition workers); bronchitis (welders); and neurological disorders (painters). From World War II until the 1970s, construction workers were exposed to high asbestos levels in fireproofing, roofing, flooring, pipe and boiler insulation, and cement sheet products. Since the mid-1970s workers have been involved in asbestos removal, now known to cause asbestosis, lung cancer, and mesothelioma (cancer of the chest or abdominal cavity lining).¹⁵ Exposure to any one hazard was generally intermittent but recurrent and included primary hazards from their own jobs and bystander hazards from nearby areas.

In their attempts to dynamite rock face, many workers were injured. In August 1969 a worker drilled into a loaded hole to try and remove an obstacle preventing the dynamite from going all the way into the hole. The drilling ended up causing the dynamite already in the hole to explode, propelling shrapnel into the three workers. The dynamiter ended up with lacerations in both feet, a broken heel, and a puncture wound in

10. Tracking occupational illnesses is difficult. Construction workers are highly mobile, moving from job to job, employer to employer, and across Canada and the U.S. in search of work. Frequent job turnover made it necessary for workers to remake safe working relationships on each project. As many construction workers took other employment during slack periods, it was difficult for workers to demonstrate that their exposure came from their construction employment. The subcontracting system also made it increasingly difficult to assign liability to any one employer. Weeks, "Health and Safety Hazards in the Construction Industry," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-2.

¹⁵ Weeks, "Health and Safety Hazards in the Construction Industry," 93-3 and CPWR, *The Construction Chart Book*, 44. For more on occupational diseases see Elliot Leyton, *Dying Hard: the Ravages of Industrial Carnage* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1975, reprinted 1988); Rick Rennie, "The Historical Origins of an Industrial Disaster: Mining, Working Conditions, and Government Policy in St. Lawrence, Newfoundland 1933-1939," Paper delivered to the Canadian Historical Conference, Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities, Sherbrooke, June 1999; and

his left flank. The second worker suffered a compound fracture of his right knee, a fractured left heel, and lacerations to his foot and forearm. The airtrack operator fractured his leg above the ankle. Ironically, in May 1969 a safety supervisor was injured in an explosion that embedded a 3-inch nail into his calf and embedded another nail into the thigh of the assistant safety supervisor. The explosion occurred when the two men were trying to dispose of old powder by burning it.¹⁶

Underground construction brought with it its own health and safety risks. Tunnelling and laying pipes for sewers, electrical conduits and telephone lines were part of everyday life at Churchill Falls. One miner, Anthony Tapp from the Gaspé, suffered bruises and contusions after a cave-in at Churchill Falls. Another worker, an experienced miner, was struck by loose rock which knocked him onto a platform below. He suffered a spinal injury, a broken shoulder, broken ribs, a severe contusion to his arm, a blocked artery and severe lacerations on his legs. He was immediately flown to St. John's.¹⁷

Underground construction also brought with it exposure to occupational hazards, crystalline silica dust, cement dust, noise, vibration, diesel engine exhaust, chemical vapours and oxygen-deficient atmospheres.¹⁸ To deal with the dust, workers would often go for a quick coffee break. While photos from the *Churchill Falls News* and from the archives show workers wearing hard hats, none of the pictures, even those of miners,

Robert Storey and Wayne Lewchuk, "From Dust to DUST to Dust: Asbestos and the Struggle for Worker Health and Safety at Bendix Automotive," *L/LT*, 45 (Spring 2000), 103-140.

¹⁶ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of Accident, 12 May 1969.

¹⁷ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports. Report of Accident, 14 July 1970 and 31 January 1969.

¹⁸ Bohuslav Málek, "Health Risks of Underground Construction Work," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-8.

show workers wearing dust masks or ventilation equipment.¹⁹ Before employees started work, each had a pre-employment medical examination, with particular attention paid to occupational diseases and injuries. Screening out workers with medical conditions was one of the ways management dealt with occupational hazards.

Many of the injuries at Churchill Falls came from the equipment and tools that workers used daily. Workers at Churchill Falls worked with hand, power and pneumatic tools in the course of their workday.²⁰ Each class of tools brought with it its own safety hazards. Hand tools, for instance, brought with them the hazard of the worker being struck by a piece of the material being worked on, including eye injuries. Accidents involving equipment were generally from accidental start-ups and losing one's balance during use. For instance, one worker was seriously injured when he attempted to repair a bulldozer. The heavy-duty mechanic sat on the bulldozer track as he attempted to fix the connection across the starter circuit. The bulldozer started in reverse, trapping Raymond White between the track and the frame. White was carried along the track under the bulldozer's fender before being thrown clear. His supervisor climbed on the moving dozer and turned it off. White suffered multiple leg fractures and was expected to lose both legs above the knees. As his prognosis was poor, his wife was flown in from Corner Brook, and a surgeon was brought in from Goose Bay.²¹

As construction mechanized, it has become increasingly noisy. Noise was particularly dangerous to workers' health and safety as in addition to the potentially serious hearing problems, it also impaired workers' abilities to communicate. Hearing

¹⁹ "How's Business, Mr. Scarabelli," *Churchill Falls News*, 20 September 1969 and NAC, Churchill Falls Collection, 1984-246, photographic collection.

²⁰ Scott Schneider, "Tools," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-33.

loss also increased the risk of other injuries, for example, when a worker could not hear approaching vehicles or warning signals. Engines on the countless cranes and vehicles on site, continuous winches, power tools, and explosives all added to the noise level at Churchill Falls. On 24 October 1969 an employee was seriously injured as he repaired the conveyor system. While André Gagnon was inspecting the conveyor belt the auger was started and his arm was cut off to six inches below his shoulder. Excessive noise in the area prevented Gagnon from hearing the all-clear order and the foreman had failed to ensure Gagnon was clear of the machinery. Fortunately for Gagnon a quick thinking employee applied a tourniquet to his shoulder and he was airlifted to hospital. Gagnon had only been working on the site for three months at the time of the accident but had been a millwright for 15 years. The accident report blamed workers' looser safety standards after lunch for the incident.²² In this case rather than putting in machine guards to prevent this type of accident, the worker and working conditions – noise – were blamed.

Less than a week later there was another accident involving a conveyor belt. A foreman-rigger, Marcel Fournier, suffered a compound fracture and lacerations that left his left arm practically severed. Fournier had attempted to remove a soil build-up on the conveyor belt by hitting it with his hammer. The hammer got caught between the roller and the belt taking Fournier's hand in with it. Another employee immediately stopped the conveyor. Fournier's arm was amputated below the elbow and he was sent to a Montréal hospital to be closer to his family. The contractor later recommended that

²¹ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of accident, 20 October 1969.

²² NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of accident, 24 October 1969 and CPWR, *The Construction Chart Book*, 40.

repairs only be done once the machinery was turned off. On 7 August 1970 an oiler for contractor Foundation-Lundrigans was oiling the rear of a backhoe when he knelt on the counterweight. When the backhoe swung around it crushed his foot. Despite wearing safety boots his right foot was amputated.²³

Many of the accidents were on the project's 300 miles of roads. On 9 June 1969 the Northern Express bus carrying five passengers and bus driver Eugene Lalonde ran into a washout on Main Road. Unable to stop, the bus crashed, leaving the driver with a fractured humerus (shoulder), broken nose and contusions. None of the passengers were hurt. Management blamed speed and carelessness for the accident.²⁴ On 8 September 1970 a belly dump driver for Mannix, Henry Pynn, attempted to pass a water truck. As he started to pass the water truck he saw oncoming traffic and drove the truck off the road, jumping clear before it crashed. Pynn suffered a severe head laceration and chest pains. On 18 October 1970 two trucks collided, with one of the drivers suffering a broken leg and other minor injuries.

In a one-week period in 1970 for which the accident reports have survived intact, several accidents caused lost time. The first reported accident involved carpenter Fraser House who was struck by a piece of pipe that fractured his rib. House's injury was the result of a blasting accident which hurled a 300 pound rock 110 feet in the air before it crashed through the wall of the carpentry shop, knocking over a pipe which struck House. House was off work two days with the injury. Another worker, serviceman L. Aubuchon injured his back while lifting a heater from his pick-up truck on 17 October. Also on 17

²³ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of Accident, 7 August 1970.

²⁴ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports, Report of Accident, 9 June 1969.

October a labourer crushed his index finger when he caught it in the handle of a concrete bucket. On 19 October there were two reported accidents, jackhammer operator Harland Blackmore was struck in the head by a bucket of concrete, and welder Joesph Boivin had the tip of his thumb amputated while he was working on a bulldozer. Carpenter Thomas Conner complained of chest pain after being struck by rebar on 20 October. On the 21 October, labourer H. Hoban fell into one of the penstock tunnels, severely lacerating his rectum. Welder David Bray received welding flash in both eyes when he welded a part on 22 October without proper eye gear. Other injuries on 22 October included a labourer who stepped on a nail, a carpenter who was struck in the eye by a wedge, a loader operator who fractured his ankle after he fell off his loader, and a serviceman whose leg was crushed between two oil drums.²⁵

Shift work and regularly scheduled overtime also had implications for occupational health and safety at Churchill Falls. Work weeks were 54 hours a week until 30 June 1970 when, as the project switched gears, hours dropped to 48 per week. Workers worked a variety of rotations to make up their 54 hours, most commonly a nine-hour day, six days a week.²⁶ Extended workdays, including the 10-12 hour shifts regularly worked at Churchill Falls, allowed employers more efficient usage of equipment and facilities, but also increased health and safety risks. Research into the offshore oil industry has linked higher accident rates with both total hours worked in a

²⁵ NAC, MG 28, III, 73, vol. 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports.

²⁶ Memorandum, 15 October 1970 and Weekly Lost Time Accident Summary, 24 October 1970.

Sunday and holiday work was paid a premium of twice basic pay. Any time over 54 hours was paid at 1.5 times basic pay. Shift differentials for evening shifts were 20 cents an hour and an additional underground allowance was paid to all workers except miners working underground in the period prior to the completion of concreting or rock-bolting. CFLCo, *Churchill Falls Power Project Collective Agreement*, 30 October 1967, 21-22.

day and weeks on rotation.²⁷ This has potential implications for work sites like Churchill Falls where workers worked regular overtime shifts in addition to working six days a week, many for the length of the project. While the labour and management system and the safety culture on the site also influenced safety, it is likely that as workers became overtired or overexerted that their accident rates increased.

In early projects such as Churchill Falls the frontier nature of construction, particularly in remote areas was stressed as the reason behind the industry's reputation for being a dangerous occupation. On more remote projects, some accidents were viewed as the cost of doing business. Many of the accidents at Churchill Falls could have been prevented had workers received more adequate safety training, particularly new workers, and had management ensured safety regulations were followed. Guards on the equipment, for instance, would have prevented several of the serious accidents. Few of these changes were put into place prior to the start of the next major construction project, the Come by Chance oil refinery.

Occupational Health and Safety at Come by Chance

As refinery construction began, John Lawrence, director of safety with the Workmen's Compensation Board (WCB) accused the province's construction industry of indifference and complacency towards industrial accidents. While construction had the highest accident rate of any industry in Newfoundland, the WCB saw little indication that contractors were interested in improving their safety record. Lawrence was upset that

²⁷ See for instance, A. Alvarez, *Offshore* (Boston 1986), 28; and Mark Shrimpton and Keith Storey, *Long Distance Commuting: Mining and Hydrocarbon Industry Management Issues* (St. John's: ISER 1991), 11. See also Shrimpton and Storey, *Social, Psychosocial and Cultural Aspects of Health and Safety in the Offshore Oil Industry* (St. John's: ISER, 1993), Shrimpton and Storey, *Work-related Stress in the Newfoundland Offshore Oil Industry* (St. John's: ISER,

most contractors did not even attend the Newfoundland Industrial Association and Workmen's Compensation annual meetings.²⁸

Given the poor labour relations climate at Come by Chance, it is not surprising that several of the strikes listed unsafe working conditions as their cause. Complaints about bunkhouse conditions were given added urgency on 25 December 1970 when a fire broke out in one of the bunkhouse trailers. Blamed on careless use of a cigarette, the fire caused considerable damage to the trailer and injured one fire fighter. In July 1973 Brian Beresford was killed after fire ravaged the bunkhouse he was sleeping in early Sunday morning. Beresford, an electrical apprentice, had worked on site for less than a month before he was killed. Other workers were fortunate that the fire occurred over a long weekend, as only ten out of the eighty men normally resident in the bunkhouse were there when the fire broke out. The other nine workers escaped the burning bunkhouse with the aid of the on-site fire department.

The barracks Beresford slept in was completely levelled in the fire; two nearby bunkhouses were also damaged. In the aftermath of the fire several workers claimed fire protection devices in the bunkhouses were inadequate, including missing and broken fire extinguishers. Several workers complained the bunkhouses were firetraps, including one worker who stated "Take that fire the other night. The whole place went up in less than a minute. One of the boys had to race the fire down the hall."²⁹ Members of the plumbers and pipefitters, boilermakers and ironworkers unions joined electricians in walking off the job the day after the fire to protest safety conditions in the bunkhouses. All but the

1991), and Shrimpton and Storey, *Workers in Remote Areas: the Petroleum, Mining and Forestry Industries* (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 1995).

²⁸ "Construction Industry Accused of Indifference Towards Accidents," *ET*, 17 May 1971, 12.

²⁹ "Fire Commissioner Probing Fatal Fire at Refinery Site," *ET*, 10 July 1973.

electricians returned to work the following day; the electricians returned the day after. While no cause was given, the fire commissioner ordered that a night watchman be stationed in each bunkhouse from 10 p.m. to 8 am. The watchmen were required to punch time clocks at regular intervals to ensure they remained awake. The fire commissioner also recommended that automatic sprinklers be installed in each bunkhouse.³⁰

Fires continued to plague Come by Chance. In November 1973 six workers were sent to hospital for burns after a leaking propane line caused a flash fire. According to a worker the fire began after propane leaked from a line connecting a lunchroom heater to the nearby propane tank. When one of the men lit a match to start the heater the resultant explosion injured six workers. The workers suffered burns to their faces and hands.³¹ Fires were quite common on construction sites. A fire in December 1970 worried the Churchill Falls safety officer as it required using a crane to douse the fire. The firemen had great difficulty handling the high-pressure hoses on the frozen platform at 120 feet in the air in 20 degrees below Celsius weather. Water was brought from a tanker at the airport as all the water lines near the site had frozen. The safety officer believed a heater being used to keep the freshly poured concrete from freezing set fire to a tarp before spreading.³²

³⁰ "Work Resumes at Refinery... but 300 stay off job," *ET*, 11 July 1973. Procon agreed to install additional fire lines and pumps but still faced questions as to why none of these precautions were taken prior to the fire. An editorial in the *Evening Telegram* demanded to know how the fire commissioner with only two inspectors and two stenographers could carry out fire inspections across the province. See "Night Watchmen Man Refinery Bunkhouses," *ET*, 12 July 1973 and "Reducing Fire Hazards," *ET*, 14 July 1973. To prevent fires at Hibernia, smoking in bed was not allowed. Several workers were suspended from camp for smoking in their rooms; one worker caught smoking in bed was evicted. Other workers were given suspensions from camp for burns to their bedding. For more on camp rules see chapter 7.

³¹ "Six Injured in Flash Fire at Come By Chance," *ET*, 24 November 1973.

³² NAC, MG 28, III, 73, volume 71, file 8. CFLCo files. Safety Accident and Fire Reports. Inter-office memorandum, 25 December 1970 and Francis Hardy, "Cranes," in *Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety*, 93-39.

Occupational Health and Safety Act

In the late 1960s and early 1970s nickel miners in Sudbury, and uranium miners in Elliot Lake, Ontario called for occupational health and safety legislation. The upsurge of interest in occupational health and safety was tied in part to the development of a more militant labour movement and to the growth of an environmental movement in Canada. Canadian demands for improved occupational health and safety regulations were also influenced by the 1970 passage of the U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Act. In 1973 Saskatchewan passed Canada's first occupational health and safety legislation. Newfoundland introduced its first Occupational Health and Safety Act in 1978 after heightened publicity around an asbestos mining strike in Baie Verte. Baie Verte was one of Newfoundland's first occupational health and safety strikes. Throughout the strike the union pressured the government to introduce an occupational health and safety act that would allow workers the right to monitor health and safety levels.³³ Prior to the Act's passage, occupational health and safety for most workers, with the exception of miners, was under the Workers' Compensation Act. Miners, mill and smelter workers were covered under the *Regulation of Mines Act* (1952) and the *Mines (Safety of Workmen) Regulations* (1957).³⁴

³³ Baie Verte workers went on strike after management refused to put its promises of a dust level reduction into writing. High levels of asbestos-related diseases, including various cancers, asbestosis (scarring of the lungs), and other respiratory illnesses, and the death of one worker, convinced the United Steelworkers that a clean up was necessary. Union officials had also recently learned that employer Johns-Manville was facing several lawsuits in the U.S. for withholding knowledge on the effects of asbestos exposure. Martin Saunders, Gerry Dwyer, and Jane Mercer, "Asbestos Miners at Baie Verte 1978," in Gloria Montero, *We Stood Together: First Hand Accounts of Dramatic Events in Canada's Labour Past* (Toronto 1979), 228, 233-4.

³⁴ Newfoundland and Labrador, *The Workmen's Compensation Board Accident Prevention Regulations*, 1969 (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1969), 3; Newfoundland, *The Regulations of Mines Act*, 1952 (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1952) and *The Mines (Safety of Workmen) Regulations*, 1957 (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1957). Amendments were made in 1975 and 1979.

The Act set up an occupational health and safety division in the Department of Labour. Employers were required to ensure the health, safety and welfare of workers while employees were required to take reasonable care to protect their own safety and that of other workers. Employers were also required to provide the necessary equipment, systems, and tools for a safe work site and to provide occupational health and safety training to both workers and their supervisors. Workers were responsible for using safety equipment. The Act also provided for committees to monitor the health and safety, to identify unsafe working conditions, hear occupational health and safety complaints, and promote health and safety education programs (c23, s37). Committee meetings were to be held a minimum of once every three months during regular working hours.³⁵

The Act gave health and safety officers the power to inspect workplaces without notice and to conduct investigations into any workplace illness or accident (c23, s24). Officers could also forbid the use of any tools or equipment that were not in safe operating conditions or did not meet regulatory standards (c23, s28). Health and safety officers also had the authority to issue stop work orders. The new legislation also gave worker representatives the right to accompany health and safety inspectors during their inspections. Workers were also given the right to refuse unsafe work and to be informed of occupational hazards. The Department of Labour's division of occupational health and safety also established a medical registry for hazardous occupations. Workers in designated occupations were required to undergo medical examinations as requested.³⁶

³⁵ Newfoundland and Labrador, *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, 1978 (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1978), c23 s5-6.

³⁶ Newfoundland and Labrador, *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations* (St. John's: Queen's Printer, 1979), 7-10, 13-6, 24-5 and *An Act Respecting Occupational Health and Safety in the Province* (Occupational Health and Safety Act), c28, s9, amended 1999.

Safety and Hibernia

By Hibernia's start, safety was beginning to move beyond the "band-aid" approach, which dealt with accidents predominantly after the fact, to a more preventative program. Unlike Churchill Falls and Come by Chance which happened back to back, Hibernia occurred two decades years later. In the intervening 20 years several unions pushed occupational health and safety at the bargaining table.³⁷

At the start of construction, the Hibernia Management and Development Company (HMDC) released its overall safety policy which stated that compliance with safety policy was a condition of employment. HMDC also required that every decision made on site consider safety along with technical, cost, quality and other considerations.³⁸ In January 1991 the HEA (Hibernia Employers Association) set up a three-tier safety system made up of contractor committees, site specific committees, and the Bull Arm Construction Site Master Committee. Major contractors set up their own occupational health and safety committees. There were five site-specific committees, one each for the camp, drydock, back cove, topsides, and deep-water site. The site-specific committees were to meet a minimum of once a month. The Site Master Committee was set up as a resource to contractors and site committees and was to meet every three months. It had the responsibility of setting management safety policies.³⁹

³⁷ In the mid-1980s workers in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan (pulp and paper), Toronto (sewer workers), Oakville (autoworkers), and Brampton, Ontario (aircraft workers) staged wildcat strikes over unsafe working conditions. Heron, *The Canadian Labour Movement*, 149-51.

³⁸ ODC files, Safety File, B.D. Kimberlin, President, HMDC, "Safety Policy: A Message on Safety From the President," March 1992.

³⁹ ODC Files, box: A-Z, file: ODC Meetings. Occupational Health and Safety Committee – PASSB, November 1992 and Letter from Terry O'Reilly (HMDC) to Dan Whalen and Len Dooley (ODC site reps) 10 January 1991.

Under the HMDC's safety policy, workers' were responsible for refusing unsafe work and for speaking out when they witnessed unsafe acts. Line managers set safety goals, minimum safety standards, and were required to appraise each worker based on safety adherence. They were also expected to ensure that proper training, equipment, materials and safe work practices were in place. Through their safety policies, managers hoped for several outcomes. First they wanted to reduce the traditionally high rate of work place injuries in construction thereby lowering workers' compensation costs and reducing absenteeism due to injuries. Second, management wanted to increase productivity levels. Third, they wanted employees to take a greater role in ensuring their own safety and the safety of their fellow workers. Managers hoped that by creating safety committees and making each employee responsible for safety would help workers exercise discipline over their fellow workers' safety habits.⁴⁰

In the first year of operation there was considerable confusion over who was responsible for safety and the ODC and HEA corresponded regularly to determine how often inspections should be done and who was responsible for carrying them out. The ODC recommended committee members carry out weekly inspections of their work areas and be vested with the power to deal with any pressing issues. It also pressed for short "tool box" meetings at the start of each shift, and for a weekly 15-20 minute safety committee meeting to keep workers abreast of the dangers in their areas.⁴¹

⁴⁰ This is similar to what Heron found for steelworkers in the 1920s. Heron, *Working in Steel*, 104-5.

⁴¹ ODC Files, box: A-Z, Safety Committee File. Joint Occupational Health and Safety Meeting, 11 December 1991; and file: ODC Meetings. Letter from Dan Whalen, Site Representative to Terry O'Reilly, HMDC, 17 January 1992.

The ODC organized monthly supervisors' meetings to discuss serious incidents, to co-ordinate work between trades, and to post warning notices of dangerous work. The chair of the November 1992 meeting, Jim Wynne, expressed grave concerns about the number of near misses and accidents on site. Wynne blamed the high accident rate on a lack of safety awareness and poor worker safety attitudes. To reduce lost time accidents (LTAs), he stressed the importance of foreman in ensuring the safety of workers, ensuring rules and regulations were enforced, and correcting unsafe working conditions. Four main programs were put in place to increase safety awareness: new hire orientation, tailgate safety meetings, and supervisor and OHS committee meetings. Many union members were also concerned that the safety committees were not more informed and involved in accident reports. While an earlier supervisors' meeting introduced a disciplinary action system to deal with safety violations, it became clear that foremen were reluctant to issue safety violations. Many foremen worried that if they issued safety violations to workers of a different trade, it would cause friction between the trades.⁴²

Despite the importance placed on safety at Hibernia, it had both a higher incident (near miss) and higher lost time rate than the general construction industry. Hibernia's incident rate, for instance, was higher than the general construction industry's rate in every year but 1996. The early years were the most incident prone; in 1993, Hibernia's incident rate was double that of the industry (see table I). As a consequence, in early 1993 a safety training blitz was undertaken to train all supervisory personnel in Line Management Safety Training. This program consisted of four training modules to give line management working knowledge of inspections, hazard recognition and control, job

⁴² Even at Hibernia most of the foremen were just that, men. ODC Files, box: A-Z, Safety Committee File. "Supervisors' Loss Control Monthly Meeting," 4 November 1992.

and task analysis, and accident investigation.⁴³ In 1994 Hibernia's incident rate dropped to 9.63 per 100 workers, a figure still considerably higher than the industry average of 6.86. In 1995 Hibernia's figure again dropped again, but it was not until 1996 that the project had a lower rate than the overall industry, which was likely due to a smaller, more experienced staff.⁴⁴

Table 9-I: Incidence Rate Per 100 Workers: Bull Arm and Industry as a Whole

<u>Year</u>	<u>Bull Arm</u>	<u>General Construction Industry</u>
1993	13.75	6.62
1994	9.63	6.86
1995	8.43	7.59
1996	5.92	6.59

Newfoundland, Department of Labour, Occupational Health and Safety Division.

Hibernia made up a large proportion of the construction industry's lost time accidents. In 1993 Hibernia accounted for almost one-third of the industry's lost time accidents, a figure that rose to just under half of all LTAs in 1994 and 1995 before dropping back to one-third in 1996 (see table II). Workers at Hibernia were off work for an average of 5 weeks in 1993, a figure that rose to 15 weeks in 1994 before levelling off at 12 to 13 weeks in 1995 and 1996. While 5 weeks was much lower than the industry

⁴³ "Workplace Safety," *Hibernia News*, 15 June 1994, 19.

⁴⁴ In Hibernia's wake, the construction incident rate dropped to 5.31 in 1997 and 5.36 in 1998. Bill Parsons, presentation to Employers' Council Spring 1998 Conference, St. John's, 23 April 1998; Sue Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations in the Newfoundland Offshore Oil Industry Since the Ocean Ranger Disaster in 1982," *New Solutions: A Journal of Environmental and Occupational Health Policy*, 10, 1-2 (2000), 137; and NLBCTC, "From the Box to Blue Sky Thinking," Presentation to *Securing Our Future Together: The Renewal Strategy for Jobs and Growth Forum*, St. John's, 11 January 2000.

average of 11 weeks, 15 weeks was higher than the 1994 average by three weeks, and higher than the 1995 average by two weeks.⁴⁵

Table 9-II: Construction Lost Time Accidents: Bull Arm and Overall Industry

Year	Bull Arm	Construction Industry
1993	178	623
1994	356	764
1995	395	817
1996	263	631

Figures from Parsons, Presentation to the Employers' Council, Spring 1998.

Interviewed following the project's completion, Bill Parsons (president of the NLBCTC) lamented that the ODC had not pushed for a more effective health and safety program from the outset.⁴⁶ Parsons was unhappy with the HMDC for introducing a new safety incentive program in November 1994. For each week a team was without a medical lost time injury, each worker accrued a five-dollar credit. With continued safe performances workers could redeem their rewards for products such as leather jackets. Wayne Pardy, who conducted health and safety training courses for the ODC, warned of the dangers of incentive programs, stating that incentive programs led to an underreporting of accidents, not necessarily fewer accidents. Rather than giving gifts for not having accidents, Pardy suggested the company to focus on accident prevention. Many union leaders agreed, worrying that offering prizes for accident free periods was causing considerable dysfunction in the safety system.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Parsons, Presentation to the Employers' Council, Spring 1998.

⁴⁶ Cited in Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations," 137.

⁴⁷ "GMT initiates General Safety Incentive Program," *Hibernia News*, 30 November 1994; ODC files, box A-Z, file: ODC Meetings. "Minutes, ODC Meeting," 6 February 1996, Hotel

Parsons was also unhappy with the large number of contractors involved in the project, something which made it difficult to assign safety responsibility. As Hart pointed out "the diffusion of accountability and responsibility resulting from increasingly more complex operator-contractor relationships was identified as a significant problem by the Ocean Ranger Commission of Inquiry. At Bull Arm this had apparently resulted in low levels of commitment to safety."⁴⁸ Parsons blamed this more on the nature of the offshore oil industry than the construction industry, stating that "they have no stake...they just come in, get the work done at the lowest possible cost and move off."⁴⁹ The shifting number of workers and contractors made communication difficult.

To cope with the high accident rate, in June 1994 a new orientation focusing on safety was put into place. The safety program focused on new hires, as the possibility of a new employee having an accident in their first month of employment was thirty times greater than that of a two-year employee.⁵⁰ The Topsides Hook-Up safety manager stated, "the majority of accidents happen to new people on site. It has been proven in industry that apprentices usually get injured as opposed to journeymen. You can sometimes attribute that to people being over eager in trying to assist and show that they know something."⁵¹

Newfoundland and "Minutes, ODC Meeting," 8 July 1996, Terra Nova Lodge; and Letter from Pardy and Associates, Safety Management Training and Consulting to Derm Cain and Bill Parsons, Re: Health and Safety Committee representative training, 31 January 1996. For more on the problems of underreporting with safety incentive plans see Charles Woolfson, John Foster, and Matthias Beck, *Paying for the Piper* (London: Mansell, 1996), 371-2.

⁴⁸ Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations," 136-7.

⁴⁹ Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations," 137, citing interview with Bill Parsons, President, NLBTC, 21 July 1998. 2.

⁵⁰ "Workplace Safety," *Hibernia News*, 15 June 1994 and "GBS Safety Line," *Hibernia News*, 19 October 1994.

⁵¹ "Topsides Hook-Up Team Improves Safety Record," *Hibernia News*, 14 June 1995.

To help meet safety challenges in 1995 the ODC asked the HEA and the government for an additional on-site safety representative. In their request to the HEA the ODC noted that in January, February and March 1995 there were 110 LTAs, which translated into 1.22 workers injured every day. This was up from 1994 when an average of one worker left the site injured per day. After consultations with the HEA, which opposed the idea, the Minister of Labour turned down the request, indicating that there was no need for an additional representative.⁵² Throughout 1995 the ODC complained that there still had not been any formal training for occupational health and safety committees on inspections or accident investigations and that the HEA/HMDC was negligent in its failure to share accident data. Under the OHS Act, any accident resulting in serious injury or death or with the potential to cause serious injury had to be reported to both the assistant deputy minister (Occupational Health and Safety, Department of Labour) and to on-site worker health and safety committees. Union representatives complained that this rarely occurred. Without access to investigation reports it was difficult for health and safety committees to work towards accident prevention. In 1996 the ODC implemented training on the Occupational Health and Safety Act for union representatives. Many of the representatives commented that this training should be required for all workers on site and was something union leaders should have received at the start of the project.⁵³

⁵² ODC files, box A-Z, file: ODC Meetings. ODC Summary, Joint ODC-HEA-HMDC Meeting, 24-25 May 1995, 6-7 and Joint ODC-HEA-HMDC Meeting, 15 June 1995. The ODC met with Tom Murphy, Rex Gibbons and Joe O'Neill to discuss safety concerns, productivity and labour relations on site.

⁵³ ODC files, Letter from Pardy and Associates, Safety Management Training and Consulting to Derm Cain and Bill Parsons, Re: Health and Safety Committee representative training, 31 January 1996.

In its *Annual Report*, the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission reported that construction workers were most likely to suffer from back injuries, followed by wrist and hand injuries, neck and shoulder injuries, and knee and ankle injuries.⁵⁴ In every year of Hibernia construction, lost time injuries involving the lumbar spine far outnumbered other lost time accidents. This is not surprising as over 50 per cent of all Newfoundland construction injuries involved back injuries, most caused by overexertion from lifting and falls. Management treated the risk of falls quite seriously, especially after two workers were killed in the early years of the site.⁵⁵ In May 1992 a sheet metal worker fell to a lower level and in September 1993 a labourer fell from scaffolding. Two ironworkers were fired after they failed to meet the company's fall protection policy, endangering their lives. After the union intervened, the workers were

⁵⁴ A painter with PASSB, for instance, was off work for over 46 weeks after he fell injuring his knee. In 1992 10 workers reported LTAs from walking or climbing, six from working with structural metal bars, and three from working with pipefitting valves. In 1993 50 workers reported LTAs from working with structural metal bars, 31 from walking or climbing, and 14 from laying flooring. In 1994 89 workers reported lost time accidents from working with structural metal bars, 69 from walking and climbing, and 17 from machine related injuries. In 1995 95 workers reported lost time accidents while walking or climbing, 75 from working with structural metal bars, and 16 from outdoor work. Worker's Compensation Commission, *Bull Arm Site Lost-Time Accident Statistics*, 1992 to 1995. Of the overall Newfoundland construction LTAs, 28.9 per cent resulted from contact with structures and surfaces, 25.1 per cent resulted from striking or being struck by parts and materials, 20.5 per cent resulted from bodily motion (lifting, contact with objects, falls), and 5.9 per cent involved tools and equipment. See WHSCC, "General Characteristics of Injury," and "Incident Rate of Injury," Research Briefs; "Ten Year History: Rate Code 403"; and "Statistical Data Overview," *Annual Report 2000* at www.whscc.nf.ca/pubs/publications.htm. The remaining 19.7 per cent were from other sources.

⁵⁵ The most common leading causes of death on U.S. construction sites were falls (31 per cent), followed by transportation accidents (27 per cent), exposure (19 per cent), and contact with objects at 18 per cent. Ironworkers, roofers, and labourers faced far greater incidents of death by falls. Falls also accounted for a large proportion of time lost accidents. Figures do not include other category. CPWR, *The Construction Chart Book*, 31-2, 36. In 1992 there were 22 lumbar spine lost time accidents, 47 in 1993, 116 in 1994 and 113 in 1995. Newfoundland and Labrador, Worker's Compensation Commission, *Bull Arm Site Lost-Time Accident Statistics*, 1992 to 1995; and Hart, "Safety and Industrial Relations," 137.

given suspensions instead.⁵⁶ In one of the longest LTAs at 47 weeks, a boilermaker with NODECO suffered a spine injury after falling off one of the walkways. After falling from a ladder a NODECO boilermaker was off for 43 weeks with multiple injuries while a PASSB labourer injured his lumbar spine and was off work for 45 weeks. One labourer, who slipped on the ice and fell off a fifteen foot embankment permanently injuring his back, was pleased that PASSB and Workers Compensation retrained him for a job in the tool centre. PASSB also allowed the worker to come back part time until he was capable of returning to full-time work.⁵⁷ Given the short-term nature of the construction project, however, getting workers back to the site did not always work out.

On the first full year of Hibernia, labourers had the highest rate of lost time accidents (18), followed by carpenters (10) and sheet metal workers (7). By 1993 structural metal workers had the highest number of lost time accidents (48), followed by boilermakers (39), labourers (23), and carpenters (17). In 1994 boilermakers had the highest number of lost time accidents (105), followed by labourers (92), carpenters (41) and welders (24). Structural metal workers saw a reduction of their accident numbers to only 13. In 1995 labourers – the most populous group on site at peak construction – had the highest number of lost time accidents (139), followed by boilermakers (67), structural metal workers (42) and carpenters (23). Chefs and cooks, material handlers, surveyors, cleaners, and other workers had among the lowest accident rates.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ ODC Files, Box: 1995 Grievances, "Employee Reprimands Etc." and Newfoundland, Department of Environment and Labour, Occupational Health and Safety Division.

⁵⁷ "Loyalty and Cooperation Enabled Injured Workers to Return to Job," *Hibernia News*, 30 November 1994.

⁵⁸ Newfoundland and Labrador, Worker's Compensation Commission, *Bull Arm Lost-Time Accident Statistics, 1992-1995*. Smaller subcontractors Cahill State accounted for 3 LTAs, FGA Consulting Engineers 2, Freyssinet/DSI-JV 2 LTAs, and Greens Service Station 1 LTA. WCC, Records of Fatalities and LTAs at Bull Arm, January-December 1995. As of July 1995

Many contractors attempted to keep safety at the forefront for their subcontractors and workers. In the wake of a significant increase in eye injuries, memos exhorted subcontractors and workers to remember that protective eye wear was mandatory. Other memos reminded subcontractors that they must report all chemical hazards to medical services and the Safety Department. Another reminder went out telling subcontractors not to leave loaded blasting holes unattended even if the holes were not primed. In a December 1991 safety meeting another blasting safety issue was raised as many workers were not clearing the area when blasting occurred. Other memos informed subcontractors that they were required to conduct incident investigations for all accidents, even minor ones.⁵⁹

A NODECO safety poster reminded workers to "Beware of Unguided Missiles." It asked what weighs 175 pounds and can go from zero to 55 km/h in a tenth of a second: spinning, ricocheting and smashing through anything (and *anyone*) in its path? Answer: a compressed gas cylinder with a broken valve. To avoid missiles, workers were told to follow the instructions on the Material Safety Data Sheet for the safe storage, handling and use of compressed gas. Furthermore workers were advised to store cylinders in a well ventilated area, away from ignition sources, to secure cylinders upright, to keep the

NODECO had the highest number of workers on site at 2695 (2594 men, 101 women), followed by PASSB with 835 workers (802 men, 33 women), and Major Offshore Catering with 191 workers (113 men, 78 women). NODECO employed operating engineers, structural ironworkers, labourers, rebar workers, camp attendants/caterers, secretaries, and teamster/warehouse workers, among others while PASSB employed plumbers and pipefitters, painter/fireproofers, welders, sheetmetal workers, structural ironworkers, labourers, secretaries, caterers, and teamsters, and MOC employed cooks, catering staff, safety officers, clerical staff, bartenders, camp attendants, and general helpers.

⁵⁹ ODC Files, box: A-Z, file: ODC Meetings. "Memo," 17 October 1991, 24 September 1991, and 29 July 1991; file: Safety Committee. Joint Occupational Health and Safety Meeting, 11 December 1991; and File: ODC Meetings. Letter from Gerry Ford, Senior Safety Inspector, NODECO to all Subcontractors, Re: Accident/Incident Reporting, 4 November 1991 and Memo from M. Hennebert, NODECO Project Manager to All Subcontractors and NODECO Employees.

protective caps over the valve at all times, to transport cylinders in an upright position, and to not let grease or oil – even on workers' hands – near oxygen cylinder controls. Another NODECO memorandum offered safety representatives show and tell safety tips to use when addressing workers. The tips ranged from having workers count off 60 seconds and explain that in that period a full five quarts of blood are pumped through the body. Losing just one quart, which could take as little as fifteen seconds, could be fatal. This tip was to remind workers that quick action is a must when an accident victim is bleeding severely and to remind workers of the importance of first aid training. Another tip suggested bouncing a rubber ball and explaining that the human body, unlike the ball, does not bounce when it hits the ground. In a less graphic manner, workers were also warned about the health effects of noise and the importance of wearing hearing protection, and about the effects of dust and the need to wear purifying respirators.⁶⁰

Hibernia was equipped with a physician and a senior occupational health nurse on duty seven days a week, twelve hours a day. Two nurses also staffed the on-site medical clinic open Monday to Friday. Other RNs were spread around the site, with four at the GBS and one at Topsides. An emergency medical attendant was also on site, as was a first response team of fifty workers trained in first aid. In 1995 the site also added a fast marine rescue team to the topsides pier to deal with anyone who fell into the water. Volunteers staffed the marine unit with seven people on each shift trained to operate the rescue boat, to deal with first aid and hypothermia.⁶¹

⁶⁰ ODC files, NODECO File, Safety Department, Safety Reminder, "Beware of Unguided Missiles," 15 October 1991 and Safety Department, "Show-and-Tell Safety Talk Tips," 5 October 1991.

⁶¹ "Fast Marine Rescue Team Now on Duty at Topsides Pier," *Hibernia News*, 12 July 1995.

Workers were encouraged to report any safety problems to their foremen. Foremen were to solve the problems or refer them to their supervisors. If there was no action, the foreman was directed to take the issue to the area shop steward and to the ODC co-chair of the site safety committee. In the event that worker safety was endangered, a foreman had the authority to issue a stop work order. While all workers on the GBS site were to hold five minute safety meetings at the start of each shift, a 15 minute weekly meeting, and a forty minute monthly meeting, one worker reported that no meetings were held in the marine division. After receiving a safety complaint, a safety inspection team, including ODC and HEA representatives from the site safety committee, were sent out to investigate conditions.⁶²

Workers at Hibernia received warnings for many safety violations. One worker was given a written reprimand for failing to wear safety glasses while cleaning the barge with a two-inch water hose. The incident was also cited as a safety violation as the job required two men to operate the hose under such water pressure and there was only one worker at the task. Two carpenters received safety citations after they were caught tying off their line without safety clips on either end. Another worker was suspended for three days after his supervisor deemed that he had put himself at risk of a fall over 3 metres by failing to use required safety restraints.⁶³ In several instances workers attempted to use safety violations as a way to negotiate disciplinary charges against them. One worker caught sleeping on the job warned his manager that he would be putting in a safety complaint. He claimed management should not have allowed him to work alone in the

⁶² See testimony by Wayne Power, UA shop steward and co-chair of the site safety committee, cited in *Arbitration 96-072*. Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 28 January 1996, 19.

⁶³ ODC files, box: 1995 Grievances, file: Employee Reprimands etc. "Warning of Safety Violations," 9 March 1996 and 9 May 1996 and "Suspension," 5 March 1996.

first place, thereby trying to force his supervisor to trade off his violation (a firing offence) for one he claimed management had made.⁶⁴ Another worker facing firing for fighting wondered if his firing was due to his habit of raising safety violations rather than to the incident in question. He repeatedly raised safety violations with his shop steward and the ODC, including reporting several close calls and an instance where the blast foreman put tape over a safety switch on the door so the operations would not shut down when someone opened the door. The worker also spoke up in safety meetings, reporting alarm systems not working, tools left lying around the site and other violations.⁶⁵

In another case, a worker who had been fired blamed his dismissal on his constant complaints about safety violations. The worker, a labourer, employed in the marine division complained that language difficulties (a Dutch crew) made operating the positioning winches on the crane extremely dangerous. He also complained of being forced to use unsafe scaffolding rigged for painting in the ship's hold, to paint in an improperly ventilated area, and of not being provided with adequate safety equipment. The safety team found no serious safety violations in its investigation but suggested that if the workers were having difficulties breathing in the hold, that they wear protective masks, which they then provided. The labourer and two operating engineers had repeatedly asked their foreman for proper breathing equipment, good gloves, safety shields, ear muffs and safety glasses, only to be told that "They won't give Harvey's Offshore [the contractor] anything."⁶⁶

⁶⁴ *Arbitration 96-086*. Subject: Wrongful Dismissal, Arbitrator: D. Alcock, 30 September 1996.

⁶⁵ *Arbitration 94-096*. Subject: Dismissal, Arbitrator: W. John Clarke, 21 September 1994, 17.

⁶⁶ *Arbitration 96-072*. Subject: Discharge, Arbitrator: Leslie Harris, 28 January 1996, 16.

In 1993 Newfoundland lost time construction accidents cost \$2,240,550, a figure that rose to \$3,233,490 in 1994 before peaking at \$3,858,707 in 1995, not coincidentally Hibernia's peak year of construction. Figures dropped to \$3,796,011 in 1996 and dramatically declined to \$1,162,028 in 1997, the year Hibernia wrapped up. Direct costs included medical costs and indemnity payments. This does not include indirect costs such as lost time by injured workers and others involved in accident follow-up (fellow workers, supervisors), damaged goods, clean-up times, schedule delays, training new employees, overhead costs, legal fees, and increased insurance costs. On average indirect costs exceeded direct costs at a 4:1 ratio.⁶⁷ The British Health and Safety Executive (HSE) estimated that construction accident costs were equivalent to 8.5 per cent of the tender price.⁶⁸

While many industry stakeholders were quick to blame the accident rate on the high-risk nature of construction, training in occupational health and safety did not occur on a wide-spread basis until the mid-1990s. In the mid-1990s labour unions and contractors increasingly began to recognize the need for more health and safety training and established the Construction Industry Forum, out of which sprang the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association (NLCSA). The NLCSA took responsibility for developing health and safety standards for union and non-unionized construction. Starting in January 1999 the NLCSA's certificate of recognition program was mandatory for contractors bidding on government funded projects.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Presentation by Parsons to Employers' Council Spring 1998 Conference, St. John's, 23 April 1998. Figures from February 1998.

⁶⁸ Britain, Health and Safety Executive, *The Costs of Accidents at Work* (London: HMSO, 1993), cited in Woolfson et al., *Paying for the Piper*, 411.

⁶⁹ "Case Study: Construction Sector in Newfoundland...", 5.

In January 1996 the NLBCTC, the NCLRA, several contractors associations (home builders, road builders, mechanical contractors), and several professional organizations (NOIA, Association of Professional Engineers, Association of Architects) submitted a joint proposal to the government requesting the creation of a Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association (NLCSA). Stakeholders proposed an industry-funded association that would help bring about a culture shift in thinking about safety. The proposed association's goals were to reduce injuries and save lives, reduce costs associated with workplace accidents, increase profits, maintain compliance with regulatory bodies, and establish ownership of loss control programs. The joint proposal developed when they did in part due to the recent decline in construction markets, increased threats of competition, particularly from the underground economy, high financing charges for equipment, lower profit margins, and increasing operating costs, taxation, insurance, and legal costs. While stakeholders acknowledged that there was little they could do about some of these factors, they felt they could reduce workplace accidents and injuries.

In 1995 the construction industry owed \$9,700,000 in direct assessment premiums to the Newfoundland and Labrador Compensation Commission.⁷⁰ For each insured dollar in injury and illness costs (medical compensation costs), Derhorski Veritas Association (DVA), a leading health and safety risk assessment company, found that an additional \$5 - \$50 of uninsured property damaged costs (damage to buildings, tools, and equipment,

⁷⁰ Merit Contractors of Newfoundland and Labrador *et. al.*, "A Proposal to Establish a Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association," January 1996, 2-3. In June 1999 the Workers' Compensation Commission was changed to the Workplace health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC). Newfoundland's compensation program determined its annual assessment rates by industry on the basis of present and future costs of the industry's past accident experience.

product delays, legal expenses, expenditure of emergency supplies, interim equipment rentals, and investigation time) was spent. Companies were also paying out another \$1 - \$3 on lost time wages, hiring and retraining of replacements, overtime, extra supervisory time, clerical time, decreased worker output upon return, and loss of business or goodwill. This meant that the 1995 construction industry figure of insured costs (9.7 million) would range from a true cost of between \$67.9 million to \$494.7 million.⁷¹ Bill Parsons, president of the NLBCTC, found the rates for the construction industry as a whole, not just Hibernia, were high, something he blamed on inadequate accident prevention programs, a lack of compliance and safety audits, and on the fact that for many the construction industry was an employer of last resort.⁷²

To reduce costs brought about by a poor safety record, stakeholders recognized that they needed fundamentally to change the basic philosophy of how the construction industry operated. They acknowledged that for health and safety programs to work, they must be developed by contractors and workers, and that regulatory bodies must recognize them. The proposal recommended following the safety program developed by the Alberta Construction Safety Association and followed by the Nova Scotia Construction Safety Association to bring down accident rates. Alberta's program consisted of an employer certification program including completion of four modules on safety basics/principles of loss control, safety auditing, leadership for safety excellence, and safety orientation. Certification required employers to demonstrate that staff were trained in Workplace Hazard Materials Information Systems, First Aid, Transportation of Dangerous Goods,

⁷¹ Frank Bird, Jr. and George L. Germain, *Loss Control Management – Practical Loss Control Leadership*, cited in "A Proposal to Establish a Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Safety Association," 4.

⁷² Presentation by Parsons to Employers' Council Spring 1998 Conference.

Traffic Control, Confined Space Entry, Construction Safety Officer, and Trenching and Scaffolding. Once staff met all those requirements, employers had to pass a safety audit. To encourage Nova Scotian contractors to participate in the program, the Nova Scotia government required all firms bidding on government funded construction projects to demonstrate that they had or were in the process of obtaining the certificate of recognition. Under the Newfoundland proposal, stakeholders asked for joint certification by the NLCSA and the Department of Employment and Labour Relations. By using the program already in place in Nova Scotia, contractors in Atlantic Canada hoped to benefit from a standardized safety training program. To pay for the NLCSA, stakeholders asked the Workers' Compensation Commission (later renamed the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission) to collect a 3.5 per cent levy on behalf of the NLCSA.

The Newfoundland government agreed and created the NLCSA in November 1996. The NLCSA's mandate was to provide proactive safety programs and services to the construction industry and to help build a healthy and profitable industry. Its aims were to reduce work-related injuries and fatalities, to reduce the financial and human costs associated with work-related accidents, to reduce workers' compensation assessment rates, to improve industry profits and efficiency, to provide awareness on health and safety regulations, to help companies manage effective loss control programs, and to assist members in dealing with sexual harassment in the workplace.⁷³ When asked why safety training had recently become a high priority for the construction industry, the

⁷³ For more information on the NLCSA see www.nlc.ca.com. In adding a half-day sexual harassment component to its certificate of recognition training program, Newfoundland was following the lead of the Ontario Labour Relations Board which deemed sexual harassment as a health and safety issue. See NLCSA, *Safe Times*, 1, 1 (Winter 1999), 1. Sexual harassment training included an understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment, guidelines for

president of McNamara Construction, one of the largest civil engineering construction firms in Newfoundland, replied that "unsafe working conditions are costly, and the price is paid with health, time, and money."⁷⁴ While the creation of the NLCSA is a positive sign, it is too early to tell what kind of impact the organization is having on accident rates in the province.⁷⁵

In April 1999 the government amended the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations to address construction hazards which had resulted in serious injuries or fatalities. The first amendment required employers to sample air quality in confined spaces both before workers begin work and while work is being conducted. The second amendment required employers to provide automatic audible reverse warning devices for all powered mobile equipment and to ensure that mobile equipment is free of any unsecured material. The third amendment disallowed the use of safety belts for fall protection, instead requiring full body harnesses. Under the old legislation, experienced workers were exempt from using fall protection systems; the new amendment, however, required all workers to wear fall protection systems.⁷⁶

Conclusions

As construction workers have built Newfoundland and Labrador's industrial base, they have faced a wide variety of occupational health and safety risks, from workplace injuries to illnesses. While construction workers have had to climb scaffolding, use power

developing policies and procedures for handling complaints and for conducting effective harassment investigations.

⁷⁴ NLCSA, *Safe Times*, 1, 1 (Winter 1999), 1.

⁷⁵ The Workplace Health Safety and Compensation Commission reports that the number and duration of construction workplace injuries increased significantly from 1998 to 2000, with many employers seeing an increase in their 2000 assessment rates. See WHSCC, "General Construction," 2 at www.whscc.nf.ca/pubs/publications.htm.

⁷⁶ NLCSA, *Safe Times*, 1, 2 (Fall 1999), 1-2.

tools and other equipment, lift heavy objects such as rebar, and work at great heights or underground, most of these tasks can be accomplished relatively safely if workers are given proper equipment, training, and supervision. Since the 1960s occupational health and safety has become a topic of concern to workers, unions, and contractors. Safety programs in the 1990s were far more effective than those earlier programs. At Hibernia safety was made a part of the site even prior to the start of construction. Recognizing the high costs of an unsafe site, contractors attempted to make a safe work site a priority through training programs, active health and safety committees, and an identification of major hazards on site. Despite all these precautions, accidents still occurred, in part because of the shifting numbers of contractors on site at any given time and the constant turnover of workers.

Conclusion

This thesis examined three of the larger construction projects in Newfoundland, the Churchill Falls hydroelectric generating station, the Come by Chance oil refinery, and the Hibernia offshore oil platform. I chose these three projects because the government accorded each a critical importance to the province's industrial development. In turn, each of the projects was promoted as *the* way to modernize. Exploiting Newfoundland and Labrador's water potential, "cheap power" from Churchill Falls was to create jobs, foster spin-off development, and to turn Newfoundland from a resource dependent economy to one based on secondary manufacturing. In the early 1970s, the provincial government switched its focus to creating a petrochemical industrial complex. The government hoped that the refinery would supply raw materials to the petrochemical complex, which would in turn manufacture finished products. In the 1980s and 1990s offshore oil was to be the engine of economic growth. With the creation of an offshore oil industry, the government envisioned becoming the Alberta of eastern Canada. While none of these projects has yet brought the desired results, each one created thousands of jobs in its construction phase and added a considerable boost to the province's economy.

I chose to study the construction industry as it was a necessary precursor to any industrial development. Before a single manufacturing plant could be built, before roads could link the province, and before hydro-electric projects could provide the power necessary to attract outside industrialists, a construction workforce had to be put in place and taught the rhythms of industrial work. In the Newfoundland government's view, modernization was the key to a diversified economy. The government believed that by infusing the economy with capital, technology, entrepreneurial leadership, and the "right" attitude, the province would create a more diversified economy.

The government has played a central role in promoting industrialization in Newfoundland. My thesis demonstrated how and why the Newfoundland government encouraged and supported modernization between the 1960s and the 1990s. Choosing modernization (and industrialization) as its economic development path shaped the way the government dealt with many aspects of Newfoundland society. As Miriam Wright found, "In Newfoundland, the industrial vision of development shaped the way the people thought about the problems of the fishery and limited the range of solutions."¹ While Wright was talking about the fishery, her comments are appropriate for the government's land-based modernization programs as well. As my work demonstrated, modernization programs went far beyond the fisheries.

My work is the first to study these three projects within the larger framework of the government's modernization program. While other works have studied modernization, the literature has largely focused on the fisheries and the role of the government and local élites. In addition, my study is the first in the local historiography to single out these projects as important. While several authors have noted the projects, they have not recognized how central they were in previous governmental development agendas.² Studying an individual project also makes it more difficult to discover the

¹ Miriam Wright, *A Fishery for Modern Times: the State and the Industrialization of the Newfoundland Fishery, 1934-1968* (Don Mills: Oxford, 2001), 156.

² Several authors have examined individual large-scale projects, including *Come by Chance* and *Hibernia*. These works, however, focused more on the political or environmental impacts of these projects than on the larger economic development framework. See, for instance, Jason Churchill, "Political Pragmatism and the Failure of Confederation: Newfoundland's Struggle to Develop its Hydro Resources in Labrador, 1952-1988," MA thesis, University of Ottawa, 1997, John McKnight, "The Political Economy of Environmental Regulatory Policy: the Case of *Come By Chance*," MA thesis, MUN, 1996, and Susanne Ottenheimer, "Fish and Oil don't Mix': Power Relations at the Bull Arm Construction Site, Trinity Bay, Newfoundland," MA thesis, MUN, 1993.

underlying economic development patterns. My work charts state support for modernization over a thirty year period and through several changes in government.

While none of these modernization programs has succeeded in meeting its promised benefits, Newfoundland after 1997 is a much different place than Newfoundland in 1949. With industrial expansion, new forms of employment began to take shape. By the early 1980s Newfoundland's workforce more closely mirrored its provincial counterparts, especially those with strong resource sectors. Workers whose previous employment was in resource extraction such as fishing, logging, and mining found themselves employed on large-scale projects under new working conditions. Newfoundland's growing infrastructure and the bureaucracy needed to oversee it led to the development of a large service sector, including clerical and professional occupations. Women workers largely staffed these new service positions. With the labour unrest of the 1970s, many previously unorganized workers entered unions, including public sector workers and workers involved in the fishery, both fish plant workers and deep-sea trawler crews.

While my work focused on industrial construction in Newfoundland, many of my findings have broader applicability. Exploring how government plans to trigger economic development worked in practice is something much of the modernization literature ignores. Much of the Newfoundland historiography is dominated by the question of why the province failed to develop along the North American model.³ Rather than debating the problematic conceptualization of modernization or starting from a negative position (why it did not develop on the North American model), my work examined what happened on the development that did occur.

My thesis describes what happened to workers when they were employed on these projects and how they responded to new work routines, employers, and conditions. Few workers accepted these conditions on the terms offered by employers, choosing to put forward their own demands, on wages, decent housing conditions, unionization, and numerous other issues. Much like the new labour historians of the late 1960s, my work wanted to explore the totality of workers experiences, at least on the work site. My work also attempted to put a human face on the workers, by putting names to workers as much as was possible.⁴ In some ways my work followed conventional labour history or industrial relations writings, for instance, the chapter on strikes. Had this remained a more conventional labour history, it would have focused on an individual union (or employer), their organizing drives, and bargaining strategies. Much of the work on construction unions has done just that, focusing on the carpenters' or electricians' union over a one hundred year period.⁵

Construction workers' experiences were only unique in the continued instability of their employment. In many other ways their experiences largely mirrored other resource workers and early factory workers. Much like Heron's steelworkers and

³ See chapter one for the various explanations of Newfoundland's underdevelopment.

⁴ In most instances if workers names were identified in the public record I used their names in my work. One exception to this was in the chapter on pilfering. Arbitration records are a matter of public record but given the nature of many of the offences and the recent nature of Hibernia, I chose not to apply any identifiers to the workers.

⁵ See, for instance, Raymond Robertson, *A History of the Iron Workers, 1896-1996* (Washington 1996); Walter Galenson, *The United Brotherhood of Carpenters: the First Hundred Years* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Grace Palladino, *Dreams of Dignity, Workers of Vision: A History of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers* (Washington: IBEW, 1991); Ian McKay, *The Craft Transformed: An Essay on the Carpenters of Halifax, 1885-1985* (Halifax: Holdfast Press, 1985); Gerry Berkowski, Ed Reed, Nolan Reilly, Doug Smith, eds., *All That's Made of Wood: the story of Local 343 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners* (Winnipeg: Manitoba Labour History Series, 1995); and Ben Swankey, ed., *Building British Columbia: a History of Union Carpenters 1883-1978* (Vancouver: Carpenter Pensioners' Association, 1979). Much of the work was commissioned by the unions.

Radforth's bushworkers, construction workers in Newfoundland had to deal with new technology and skill requirements, a segmented labour market (skilled workers brought in from outside the province), tough measures to ensure maximum productivity, and a dangerous working environment. Establishing an industrial construction industry in Newfoundland was not easy. Owners and contractors building these large-scale projects had to contend with poor weather conditions, isolated work sites, a lack of available materials, and workers with little construction experience. To build such large-scale projects required employers with access to large amounts of capital and able to withstand several years of spending prior to realizing a profit. These capitalists in turn hired general contractors to oversee their projects and subcontractors to carry out the day-to-day work. The bidding system meant that subcontractors rarely hired workers long-term and were constantly forced to submit the lowest bids possible to win tenders. This resulted in economic insecurity for most construction workers, forced to move between jobs and sub-contractors to make a living. To date little research has been done on what impact such economic insecurity has had on workers. While we know that many workers moved between industries (often from the fisheries to construction) during economic downturns, little historical research has been done on its impacts on workers. Another area requiring further research is the impact long periods of seasonal unemployment had on workers and their families.

With these new industrial projects, workers whose previous employment was in resource extraction, such as fishing, logging and mining, found themselves employed on large-scale projects under new working conditions. Workers were drawn to construction by external factors such as high unemployment levels and a lack of other job options,

government promotion of construction, and the increasing provision of construction training programs. While construction offered workers higher than average wages, it also meant significant periods of time away from their families and periods of seasonal and cyclical unemployment. Given the short-term, and often seasonal, nature of construction projects, employers had to find ways to attract workers. While skilled workers and supervisors were often recruited from outside the province, other workers were recruited locally. Construction employers and contractors subsequently patched together an industrial management system somewhat reminiscent of woods workers and other remote workforces but specifically geared to meet the needs of industrial construction.

Moulding the new workforce to achieve maximum productivity was a challenge for contractors. Employers alternated between incentives ("the carrot approach") and punishments ("the stick approach") to try to manage their workforces. To encourage workers to take jobs in industrial construction, a variety of welfare capitalism programs were implemented on many large-scale projects, including housing, sports and recreation programs, and company newspapers. Despite these incentives, workers brought their own priorities to each site, ones that had the potential to diverge quite widely from those set by their employers. Workers' priorities included improving or at minimum maintaining their income levels, controlling the rate of production as much as possible, and ensuring that they were treated with a level of respect and fairness. When workers' interests differed from their employers' attempts to maximize production and profits, conflict often resulted.

Conflict included everything from high turnover rates and absenteeism to withdrawing labour. Striking has been one of the most prevalent forms of worker-

management conflict in construction and was one of the few ways workers at Come by Chance had of attracting their employer's attention. Repeatedly workers complained that they were unable to meet with managers to discuss concerns or that when they met with managers their grievances were not addressed. Rather than defensive or rear guard action, these strikes offered workers a sense of collective identity, gave them a voice, and allowed them to make demands of a system which was normally unresponsive to their needs. Work stoppages were a way for workers to redress the power imbalance in modern industry, which puts most of the power in the hands of management. As a project with considerable government financial backing, Come by Chance was constantly under media attention. Workers took advantage of the media and government attention to put forth their own agenda, one that included higher wages, better working conditions, and being treated with respect. While the walkouts often occurred in the heat of the moment, as spontaneous protests, other on site strikes were more carefully planned and executed.

Government and capitalists used a wide variety of tactics to cope with strikes in the 1970s. Governments responded by turning to an old standby, the royal commission or investigative body. By appointing an investigative committee, the government could be seen to be taking action even if it had no intention of following the committee's recommendations. Having a series of investigative committees allowed the public to feel the government was doing something and allowed workers a forum for their complaints. Commissions also gave the government concrete suggestions on how to improve labour relations, should the government choose to implement them. The government implemented few of the recommendations, but some contractors and unions included them in their collective agreements. Governments also had at their disposal several tools

to regulate the marketplace. In the mid-1970s the Newfoundland government joined the federal program of wage and price controls in an attempt to help control inflation. When inflation returned, governments at both levels turned away from Keynesian responses to the crisis towards a tight money policy involving privatization, downsizing, and a reduction in workers' rights. With increasingly long unemployment lines, construction workers began to turn away from the strike.

Employers had their own arsenal of tactics to the union challenge of the early 1970s. They pressured government for area wide certification and for multi-trades bargaining. With the recession of the early 1980s, when the number of new projects slowed and contractors were struggling to survive, many contractors turned to double-breasting and increasingly tight regulation of their workforces. By the start of Hibernia, employers, contractors, unions, and the government had all agreed that the site would employ a no-strike, no-lockout policy. When workers attempted to launch a wildcat strike – the method which construction workers had used on the Come by Chance project – 60 workers were suspended and the union was forced to pay a \$20,000 fine for failing to control its workers.

Hibernia's collective agreement put strict limitations on workers' abilities to assert their own needs; everything from behaviour at work to life in the camp was explicitly spelled out. The HEA regulated almost every aspect of life on the project, from penalties for everything from insubordination to tardiness. Construction workers who held onto the idea of themselves as self-directing, independent workers were in for a surprise as they reached Hibernia where all infractions were recorded in a database. Each job was measured in the computer for how long it should take. Workers who did not meet

the computer's time frame were threatened with disciplinary action. Each time workers entered and left the site, their cars were liable to be searched for unauthorized removal of goods. Drinking, long a fixture in many construction workers' lives, was closely regulated, only to be done in the on-site tavern, only for a three-hour period each night, and only beer and wine were available. A select group of workers chose to risk their working relationship by turning to theft of company time and property. Pilfering is an area where relatively little research has been done. Considerable work remains to be done examining the moral economy of pilfering and examining how pilfering differs by occupation.

My work continues the recent trend in Newfoundland labour history of broadening out from institutional labour histories and research on the fisheries. My work has benefited from work by Sutherland, Botting, and Rennie whose case studies (logging, mining and domestic service) have focused on the social and economic impacts of economic development.⁶ Labour history, both in Newfoundland and Canada, has largely ignored the construction worker and expressed even less interest in women construction workers. While more and more works are examining the gendered nature of different occupations, few scholars have examined the overtly masculine nature of construction. By the time of Hibernia, women were slowly increasing their numbers in construction. Women's roles on construction sites have undergone significant changes from the 1960s to the 1990s. On the earlier projects in the late 1960s and early 1970s, women were

⁶ Dufferin Sutherland, "'We are only Loggers': Loggers and the Struggle for Development in Newfoundland, 1929-1959," PhD thesis, Simon Fraser University, 1995; Ingrid Botting, "'Getting a Grand Falls Job': Migration, Labour Markets and Paid Domestic Work in the Pulp and Paper Town of Grand Falls, Newfoundland, 1905-1939," PhD thesis, MUN, 2000; and Rick Rennie, "Mining and Industrial Disease in St. Lawrence, Newfoundland, 1921-1935," PhD thesis, MUN, 2001.

largely engaged in traditional paid employment – clerical/office, nursing, teaching, and retail – or in meeting the needs of wage workers in the home. In the mid-1970s women slowly began entering non-traditional jobs in the construction field, bolstered in part by the example of U.S. pioneers operating under affirmative action programs. While women were still more likely to be found in traditional occupations on construction sites in the 1990s, dozens of women also achieved gains unheard of twenty years before. In addition to becoming apprentices in construction trades, a few women also achieved “foreman” status. All was not easy for women in non-traditional jobs on the Hibernia project, and many women complained of sexual and other forms of harassment. Despite the problems with Hibernia, it served as a stepping stone into a previously unobtainable industry. With the end of construction, many women who had managed to gain a toehold in the construction industry found themselves on the outside once again. New construction projects have not included affirmative action programs and the most recent offshore oil construction project – Terra Nova – did not provide Hibernia’s employment levels.

As construction workers built Newfoundland and Labrador’s industrial base, they faced a wide variety of occupational health and safety risks, from workplace injuries to illnesses. While construction workers have had to climb scaffolding, use power tools and other equipment, lift heavy objects such as rebar, and work at great heights or underground, most of these tasks can be accomplished relatively safely if workers are given proper equipment, training, and supervision. Since the 1960s occupational health and safety has become a topic of increasing concern to workers, unions, and contractors. Safety programs in the 1990s were far more effective than those earlier programs and in the case of Hibernia safety was made a part of the site even prior to the start of

construction. Recognizing the high costs of an unsafe site, contractors attempted to make a safe work site a priority through training programs, active health and safety committees, and an identification of major hazards on site. Despite all these precautions, accidents still occurred, in part because of the shifting numbers of contractors on site at any given time and the constant turnover of workers.

To avoid repeating mistakes of the past, we need to think more critically about the path of economic development. Large-scale projects along the lines of Churchill Falls, Come by Chance and Hibernia have not been the panacea the government hoped for. Research such as mine offers some insight into earlier developments, what has succeeded and what has failed, and provides some guideposts for future projects. My research also shows that the choice of large scale projects was not “natural” but was rather a complex historical process involving the interaction of government, capital and workers. Newfoundland’s economic development was also strongly influenced by the province’s particular historical context, its entrance into Confederation (providing an influx of funds), its resource-rich status, its high unemployment levels, and the determination of its politicians.

Many questions remain about what shape Newfoundland’s industrial projects will take. While Hibernia was relatively successful, especially when compared to the earlier Come by Chance project, not all the participants were happy with its results. With the awarding of the Terra Nova floating production storage offloading (FPSO) vessel contract it became clear that contractors did not intend to follow the Hibernia model. Terra Nova’s labour relations model followed more of a manufacturing style labour

agreement than a construction project.⁷ As such, the collective agreement included flexible work practices, a one union concept (of building trades unions), and insisted on local and international representation on the union executive. Rather than enhancing stability and productivity, the Terra Nova contract has resulted in challenges before the Labour Relations Board, work stoppages contrary to the no strike/no lockout commitment, lower than anticipated productivity rates, and wages significantly below those paid to Hibernia workers.⁸

PCL Industrial Constructors were awarded the principal contract for fabricating, assembling, and installing the topsides portion of the Terra Nova FPSO at the Bull Arm facility. In April 1997 PCL signed a collective agreement with the Newfoundland and Labrador International Building Trades Petroleum Development Association (PDA), the new super-union overseeing the project.⁹ In February 1998 Terra Nova was granted Special Project status under the Labour Relations Act. Not all the unions were happy with PDA taking the lead in negotiations and signing the collective agreement. Both the International Union of Operating Engineers (local 904) and the Construction General Labourers, Rock and Tunnel Workers Union (local 1208) filed certification applications with the Labour Relations Board announcing their intentions to certify workers on the Terra Nova site. While their applications were eventually denied in January 1999, the applications created uncertainty on the project and created divisiveness among unions.

⁷ Like Churchill Falls and Hibernia, Terra Nova was declared a special project under section 70 of the Labour Relations Act. Unlike Hibernia where the Gravity Based Structure and some of the modules for the topsides facilities were built on site, the floating production storage and offloading vessel used for the Terra Nova project was constructed in South Korea and shipped to the Bull Arm to be mated with its module pieces (two built in Scotland, four at Bull Arm).

⁸ For more on this see Morgan Cooper, *Labour Relations Processes on Offshore Oil and Gas Fabrication and Construction Projects* (St. John's, 2001). Cooper was hired by the Minister of Environment and Labour to undertake this report.

Many of the unions were upset that the international representatives, and not local representatives, had taken the lead role in contract negotiations, particularly when the resulting collective agreement led to lower wages and other benefits as compared to Hibernia and to a blurring of trade lines.¹⁰

Despite the no-strike/no-lockout clause in the collective agreement, workers engaged in several work stoppages, including walkouts in March 1999 (368 hours) over a jurisdictional dispute, in July 1999 over travel allowances (8000 hours), in November 1999 (2384 hours) and in June 1999, both over jurisdictional disputes (52,805 hours).¹¹ Poor labour relations on site were attributable to several factors including worker dissatisfaction over wages. Workers were also upset over the lack of a travel allowance, and the absence of a jurisdictional dispute mechanism. Further troubles developed out of PDA's inability to act effectively as a single union and its lack of measures for exerting control over its constituent members. Combined with PCL's attempts to manage labour relations from outside the province (shades of the Come by Chance project), and communications problems between PDA and PCL, labour relations were fractious.¹²

Terra Nova's labour relations problems and the government's intention to carry on with new large-scale projects (Voisey's Bay, the Lower Churchill, White Rose and

⁹ PDA replaced the ODC as the super-union representing building trades unions.

¹⁰ Cooper, *Labour Relations Processes...*, 12. The contract had to be readjusted in April 2000 to cover hook-up of the FPSO. With the renegotiation, workers received a 10 per cent wage increase, an overtime rate increase from one and a half to double time, and an attendance bonus of five per cent of gross for workers who showed up for all scheduled time in a four week period. In exchange workers agreed to a six-day work week, working ten-hour days.

¹¹ Cooper, *Labour Relations Processes...*, 26.

¹² Cooper, *Labour Relations Processes...*, 15. One problem with wages was that the original compensation package was based on inappropriate bench-marking in relation to local, regional, and national rates, resulting in lower rates. When the collective agreement was signed, economic conditions in Newfoundland were quite poor causing the PDA to agree to lower wage rates. With the economic upsurge by the start of the construction, many workers felt the wages were inadequate.

several other offshore oil and gas projects) led the government to establish a review of labour relations processes for major construction projects in September 2000. Chaired by Morgan Cooper, the report recommended that future large-scale projects provide for wages benchmarked to building trades rates, binding mechanisms for jurisdictional disputes, and flexible work practices. Whether or not these recommendations will be implemented (the first two were in place for Hibernia, the third was tried without success for Terra Nova) for future projects is at this point unclear. What is clear is that to mount a successful construction project additional factors must be addressed, including employment equity and occupational health and safety programs. It is also clear that the Newfoundland government needs to examine its development trajectory and to determine if large-scale projects are the method it wants to continue to follow.

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Appendix 1:

Major Construction Projects in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1950s-70s

Year	Project	Field
1950-1966	Roads, 2090 miles new road built, 859 miles road paved, 2125 miles of road rebuilt	Roads and Highways
1954	Grace Hospital enlarged	Health
1956	Thermal generating station, St. John's Harbour	Electrical power
1958	Agnes Pratt facility opened as boarding home	Health
1959	Carol Lake project	Industrial
1960	Nurses Residence added to Grace	Health
1961	New MUN campus opened	Education
1961-2	Central NF Hospital opened in Grand Falls	Health
1962	St. Clare's Hospital enlarged	Health
1962	Wabush Mines begins	Industrial
1963	Construction of 11 trade schools completed	Education
1963	Rural electrification project begins	Electric power
1963	Add nurses residence to General Hospital	Health
1963-4	Old MUN campus converted to College of Fisheries	Education
1964	Bay d'Espoir power development begins	Electric power
1965	School of Nursing in Corner Brook	Health
1965	Bell Island hospital completed	Health
1965	Hoyles home completed	Health
1965	Trans Canada highway completed	Roads and Highways
1965	MUN new construction – education, chemistry/physics, TSC, residences, church colleges, Marine Science research laboratory all begun	Education
1966	ERCO project begins	Industrial
1966	Fort Pepperell hospital refurbished	Health
1967	Churchill Falls project starts	Electric power
1967	St. Clares Hospital enlarged	Health

Year	Project	Field
1968	Holyrood thermal generating station construction begins	Electric power
1969	Western Memorial Hospital (CB) expanded	Health
1970	St. John's arterial built	Roads and Highways
1970	Labrador Linerboard construction begins	Industrial
1971	CBC oil refinery begins construction	Industrial
1972-8	196 miles road built, 1318 miles road rebuilt	Roads and Highways
1973	Health Sciences construction complete	Health
1975	Hinds Lake hydroelectric project begins	Electric power
1976	Escasoni retirement home started	Health
1979	Upper Salmon hydroelectric power project begins	Electric

Appendix 2: Churchill Falls Time Line

1953: Incorporation of the British Newfoundland Corporation (Brinco).

30 June 1958: Incorporation of the Hamilton Falls Power Corporation.

1 October 1965: The Hamilton Falls Power Corporation was renamed Churchill Falls (Labrador) Corporation (CFLCo).

13 October 1966: Signing of Letter of Intent for sale of power to Hydro-Québec.

Autumn 1967: Start of advance into rock towards area of underground powerhouse.

August 1968: Powerhouse area reached.

12 May 1969: Signing of Power Contract with Hydro-Québec.

13 May 1969: Closure of Churchill River's natural course at North Rapids and routing of river's flow through Lobstick control structure openings.

15 May 1969: Signing of First Mortgage Bonds Purchase Agreement.

July 1970: End of excavation work.

1 July 1971: Official closing of Lobstick control structure gates to begin filling of the Smallwood Reservoir.

6 December 1971: First commercial delivery of power produced by units one and two.

1 May 1972: Start of power delivery under long-term contract with Hydro-Québec.

Summer 1972: Completion of units three and four.

December 1974: Completion of installation of all eleven units.

1974: The Newfoundland Government bought controlling interest of CF(L)Co.

1975: Transfer of Newfoundland Government's controlling interest to Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro Corporation.

9 March 1998: Newfoundland Premier Brian Tobin and Québec Premier Lucien Bouchard announced that Newfoundland and Labrador Hydro and Hydro-Québec will commence formal negotiations to develop the Churchill River in Labrador, and related projects in Québec.

15 December 1998: A Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) signed between Québec and Newfoundland. Cancelled spring 2000 after Québec withdrew from the deal.

Appendix 3: Hibernia Developments, 1963-1995

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
1963	Federal Government gives out exploration permits for waters off Canadian East Coast. By 1965, 100 million acres granted for exploration.
1965	Mobil given exploration permit by Federal Government. Smallwood upset, claims offshore for Province. Province passes <i>Petroleum & Natural Gas Act</i> and issues own exploration permits. Seismic tests show large oil deposits.
1967	Supreme Court of Canada rules that British Columbia does not own sub-sea resources off its coast.
1973	Premier Frank Moores sets up Offshore Petroleum Industrial Advisory Council which does preliminary work into the requirements and consequences of offshore oil but is inactive by the mid-1970s.
1977	Provincial Government releases a "White Paper," later the <i>Act Respecting Petroleum and Natural Gas</i> , outlining policies regarding petroleum development and establishing the Provincial claim to the offshore. Province establishes new crown corporation, Newfoundland and Labrador Petroleum Ltd.
1979	Hibernia P-15 discovery well drilled by Chevron Canada. Strikes oil. Prime Minister Joe Clark promises Newfoundland that offshore resources will be treated as if they were onshore.
1980	Further drilling begins. Nine wells drilled to delineate Hibernia field between 1980-1984. Hibernia discovery announced. Provincial government sets up Offshore Petroleum Impact Committee.
1981	Federal government passes bill C-48m this bill specified a national energy policy and clearly stated the Federal Government's ownership of offshore resources.
1982	<i>Ocean Ranger</i> , the world's largest semi-submersible drill rig, capsizes and sinks in major winter storm, all 84 crew lost.

- 1982 Prime Minister Trudeau refers ownership of offshore resources to Supreme Court of Canada. Premier Peckford declares provincial day of mourning.
- 1983 Newfoundland refers case to Newfoundland Supreme Court which rules against Newfoundland's ownership claim. Supreme Court of Canada agrees to hear Federal claim.
- 1984 Supreme Court of Canada rules that subsea resources off the coast of Newfoundland and Labrador belong to Canada.
- 1985 Mobil Oil leads Hibernia partners in submitting Development Plan.
- Atlantic Accord* signed. Long-term agreement between the Federal and Provincial governments on joint management of offshore development.
- Joint federal and provincial Hibernia Environmental Assessment Panel established to review Hibernia Development Project.
- 1986 The Provincial Cabinet exempts the Gravity Based System at the Hibernia site as exempt from EIS procedure. Construction to be controlled by an Environmental Protection Plan.
- Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board gives approval to both Hibernia Development Plan and Hibernia Benefits Plan, subject to a number of conditions.
- World oil prices crash, delaying construction proposal.
- 1987 Pre-project employer-employee agreement to enable non-union companies to participate. Accept 5 year no strikes or lockouts.
- 1988 New negotiations start on project that now has \$5.2 billion price-tag.
- Government of Canada and Government of Newfoundland and Labrador sign the Hibernia Agreement.
- Government and industry (Mobil, Gulf, Chevron and PetroCanada) sign *Statement of Principles*.
- 1989 GBS site to be located in Great Mosquito Cove, Trinity Bay.
- 1990 Canada-Newfoundland Offshore Petroleum Board (CNOBP) issues Hibernia with 25 year production licence.

Offshore Development Act passed in House of Assembly.

Sign Hibernia Agreement. Award contract to build GBS.

Federal Government passes legislation guaranteeing \$1 billion financing and a further \$1.6 billion in loan guarantees to Hibernia project.

Gulf Canada indicates plans to sell up to half its 25 per cent stake in Hibernia.

1991 Locals angered over jobs going to unions, threaten violence and to block roads into project.

Bull Arm construction site completed.

Lack of trained workers with engineering skills, may have to import workers from outside Canada.

1992 Gulf Canada withdraws from Hibernia Consortium, later absorbs \$300 million loss on investment.
Construction slows.

GBS Dry dock completed. Commence GBS construction but put on hold.

1993 Gulf's share taken over by Murphy Oil (6.5 per cent), Mobil (5 per cent), Chevron (5 per cent) and the Federal Government (8.5 per cent). Ends speculation that project might be canceled.

Update costs and reserves. Now 615 mbbbls up from 525 mbbbls in 1990. Cost estimated at \$15 billion, down 21 per cent from 1990 estimates.

Module fabrications begin.

Import iron workers from outside Newfoundland.

90 complaints filed with Nfld Human Rights Commission over alleged job discrimination at Hibernia.

Labour and management arguing over certification of draftpeople, go to court over whether or not Labour Relations Board has jurisdiction over Hibernia.

1994 Pour concrete for GBS base raft structure.

Announce \$1 billion cost overrun. Platform to cost \$5.8 billion and 2 tankers and oil storage terminal to cost \$400 million.

HMDC transfers a contract from Marystown shipyard to Saint John, N.B. because doubtful Marystown can get the work done on time.

GBS towed out to deep water construction site.

First slipform operation completed.

1995

Illegal wildcat strike at Bull Arm site over overtime and work schedules by 400 PASSB workers. Union pays fine of \$20,000, several workers (rumoured as many as 65) suspended for one week.

Module at Bull Arm completed, 2nd Module arrives from Italy.

1996

GBS complete, topsides complete.

Record numbers of grievances being brought to arbitration.

Petro-Canada sells 5 per cent of its stake in Hibernia to Norsk Hydro.

1997

GBS and Topsides mating completed in February.

Christening ceremony on May 9th, featuring Chretien marked by fisheries protestors.

Tow-out to Hibernia site to happen between May 23rd and early June depending on weather. Tow out to take 10 days to reach location.

Fisheries protestors discussing floating blockade.

First drilling to start August, first oil to be struck in December.

1999

Planned peak production of oil.

2015

Production ceases.

Appendix 4: Strikes at Come by Chance

Employer	Union	Start Date	Return to work	Number of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason	Industry	Workers involved
NF Refining	USA	22/09/93	23/09/93	85	85	Illegal	Worker suspension	Man-petroleum	Various
Lundrigan's	LIUNA	03/08/71	04/08/71	395	400		in support of 12 dismissed workers	construction	Labourers
Procon	Various union, (AFL-CIO/CLC and ind)	08/01/72	09/01/72	367	370	illegal	Employees fired, fighting/drinking in camp	construction	Various construction
Procon	UAPP, Structural Iron Workers	01/03/72	10/03/72	700	5600	illegal	Employer decision to shut-down for bad weather	construction	Pipefitters
Procon	IBB	11/04/72	15/04/72	230	460	illegal	Dispute over size of stevedoring crew	construction	Stevedores
Procon	Various unions	19/07/72	26/07/72	1100	4950		Dismissal of 40 workers for coffee break violation	construction	Construction crafts
Procon	IUOE	26/07/72	28/07/72	542	1084	Illegal	internal problem in IUOE	construction	Operating engineers
Procon	UAPP	08/08/72	18/08/72	350	3150	Illegal	not reported	construction	Pipefitters
Procon	IBB, SMWIA	30/10/72	05/11/72	130	480	Illegal	not reported	construction	Boilermakers, sheetmetal
Procon	UAPP	16/11/72	20/11/72	350	1050	Illegal	not reported	construction	Pipefitters
Procon	Various unions (AFL-CIO/CLC and Ind)	13/04/73	25/04/73	848	6780		return of workers	construction	Various
Procon	IBEW	11/02/74	12/02/74	130	130	Illegal	not reported		Electrical
PRC	IBEW	15/08/74	07/09/74	21	330	Legal			Electrical
Procon and Subcontractors	IBEW	02/06/71		12	3652	Illegal	Elec on prov-wide dispute, affects site - pickets	construction	Surveyors
Procon and Subcontractors	Ironworkers, UBJCA, IUOE, Teamsters, LIUNA, Rigger	14/09/71		131	7616	Illegal	camp accom and travel allowance	construction	Various
Procon and Subcontractors	IBB, Welders	06/10/71	12/10/71	58	2900	Illegal	travel allowance, IBB not signatory of agreement	construction	Boilermakers and welders

Employer	Union	Start Date	Return to work	Number of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason	Industry	Workers involved
Procon and Subcontractors	IBB, UBJCA, IUOE, UAPP, Teamsters, LIUNA	05/11/71	20/11/71	185	8262	Illegal	Want room and board or allowance, IBB not signator	construction	Boilermakers, other trades
Procon and Subcontractors	UAPP, Ironworkers, LIUNA, Boilermaker, UBCJA, IUOE	14/02/72		76	2936	Illegal	shut-down for bad weather	construction	various
Procon and Subcontractors	IUOE	28/06/72	30/06/72		22520	Illegal	Worker fired for union activity	construction	IUOE 28, 29, all crafts 30th
Procon and Subcontractors	LIUNA, Teamsters, Surveyors	03/08/71		15	2922		unemployed pickets outside CBC	construction	various
Procon	IUOE	01/06/72		80	360	Illegal	Not reported	Construction	Operating Engineers
Procon	IBB, UAPP, Ironworkers	01/06/72		800	4000	Illegal	Not reported	Construction	Various
Procon	IUOE	01/08/72		80	160	Illegal	Not reported	Construction	Operating engineers
Procon	IBEW	01/09/72		15	90	Illegal	Not reported	Construction	Electrical
Procon	Bridge and Iron Workers	01/11/72		90	1350	Illegal	Not reported	Construction	Iron workers

Appendix 5: Strikes in Construction

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
building trades contractor	St. John's	Carpenters	31/08/49	23/10/49	600	10300		For new agreement with higher wages
Contractor	Corner Brook	UBCJA	16/06/51	19/06/51	36	70		for increased wages and reduced hr 60 to 54 week
Building Trades Employers Assoc.	St. John's	UBCJA	17/09/51	03/10/51	600	6100		rates of wages
Contractor	Logy Bay and Redcliffe	Building Trades	29/05/52	31/05/52	500	750		Wages
Fraser Brace Terminal Constructors	N/a	unorganized	30/05/52					wages
Carpenters	St. John's		25/03/54	19/04/54	60	1170		Protesting dismissal 4 carpenters for insufficient cause
NF Engineering and Construction	Corner Brook	UBCJA	14/04/54	28/04/54	75	860		Protesting employment of mainland carpenters
Building Trades Employers Assn	St. John's	Bricklayers Union	30/10/54	06/12/54	17	420		wages to prevailing rate
Road construction workers	Corner Brook	Road construction workers	15/08/55	08/09/55	130	2600		union recognition, increased wages, reduced hrs.
labourers	St. John's	labourers	13/08/56	28/08/56	175	2100		For new agreement, wages, reduced hours

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
McNamara Construction Co.	Gander	Intern'l Brotherhood of Teamsters... (AFL-CIO/CLC)	17/09/57	23/09/57	125	625		working conditions and layoff of some employees
JA Jones Construction	Stephenville	IUOE, UBCJA, IBEW, IUBAC	10/03/58	14/03/58	375	1500		Bargaining rights
St. John's Building Trades Association	St. John's	UBCJA	18/08/58	21/08/58	120	300		Wages
Pentagon Construction	Carol Lake, Lab	Baie Comeau Building Trades Council	05/09/60	07/09/60	400	1000		wages, hours
Pentagon Construction	Carol Lake, Lab	Baie Comeau Building Trades Council	24/09/60	26/09/60	500	500		union recognition
Pentagon Construction	Carol Lake, Lab	Baie Comeau Building Trades Council	20/10/60	22/10/60	500	750		return of workers
GM Gest Construction	Lab City	IBEW	16/02/63	21/02/63	104	420		Wages
Foundation-Lundigran	Bay d'Espoir	Unorganized	14/10/65	18/10/65	575	990		Changes in swing shift every 2 weeks
Foundation-Lundrigan	Bay d'Espoir	Unorganized	20/03/66	22/03/66	140	280		Wages
Lundrigan's Ltd	various locations	Unorganized	14/07/66	15/07/66	225	230		wages, hours

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
Lundrigan's Ltd	various locations	Unorganized	14/09/66	19/09/66	300	900		wages, hours
Two Construction contractors	Long Harbour	Structural Iron Workers	23/08/67	28/08/67	100	260		hiring workers from out of province,
Construction Contractors		UBCJA	10/04/68		80			recognition, overtime, holidays, vacation
NLCA	St. John's	LIUNA, Bricklayers	05/04/71	30/04/71	250	4500		not reported
Electrical Construction Assoc	St. John's	IBEW	13/04/71	17/08/71	200	17600		not reported
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	IBEW (surveyors)	02/06/71		12	3652	Illegal	Electricians on prov-wide strike
Kingston Assoc Construction	Stephenville	UAPP	09/06/71	09/08/71	200	8200		Wages
McNamara Industries Ltd	St. John's	IAMAW	21/06/71	06/07/71	125	1250		Wages
Various contractors	Stephenville	Boilermakers, Ironworkers (AFL-CIO/CLC)	29/06/71	02/07/71	225	300		Grievances over camp food and accommodation
McAlpine of NF	Stephenville	UBCJA	20/07/71	21/07/71	1044	1040		Wages
Lundrigan's Ltd	CBC	LIUNA	03/08/71	04/08/71	395	400		in support of 12 dismissed workers
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	LIUNA, Teamsters, Surveyors	03/08/71		15	2922		unemployed pickets outside CBC
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	Ironworkers, UBJCA, IUOE, Teamsters, LIUNA, Rigger	14/09/71		131	7616	Illegal	camp accommodations and travel allowance

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	IBB, Welders	06/10/71	12/10/71	58	2900	Illegal	travel allowance, IBB not signatory of agreement
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	IBB, UBJCA, IUOE, UAPP, Teamsters, LIUNA	05/11/71	20/11/71	185	8262	Illegal	Want room and board or allowance, IBB not signator
Procon	CBC	various unions	08/01/72	09/01/72	367	370		Several employees fired for fighting and drinking in camp
McAlpine Construction	Stephenville	Various unions	12/01/72	13/01/72	300	300		not reported
McAlpine Construction	Stephenville	IUOE	07/02/72	09/02/72	68	206	Illegal	overtime pay
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	UAPP, Ironworkers, LIUNA, Boilermaker, UBCJA, IUOE	14/02/72		76	2936	Illegal	Employer decision to shut-down for bad weather
Procon	CBC	UAPP, Structural Iron Workers	01/03/72	10/03/72	700	5600	illegal	Employer decision to shut-down for bad weather
McAlpine Construction	Stephenville	UAPP	30/03/72	11/04/72	200	1550		working conditions
Procon	CBC	IBB (stevedores)	11/04/72	15/04/72	230	460	illegal	Dispute over size of stevedoring crew to be used
Procon and Subcontractors	CBC	IUOE	28/06/72	30/06/72		22520	Illegal	Worker fired for union activity during working hrs
Procon	CBC	Various unions	19/07/72	26/07/72	1100	4950		Dismissal of 40 workers for coffee break violation

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
Procon	CBC	IUOE	26/07/72	28/07/72	542	1084	illegal	internal problem in IUOE
Procon	CBC	UAPP	08/08/72	18/08/72	350	3150	Illegal	not reported
Procon	CBC	IBB, SMWIA	30/10/72	05/11/72	130	480	Illegal	not reported
Procon	CBC	UAPP	16/11/72	20/11/72	350	1050	Illegal	not reported
Procon	CBC	Building trades	13/04/73	25/04/73	848	6780		return of workers
NCLRA		SMWIA	07/01/74	11/02/74	116	2900	Legal	Not reported
McNamara Construction	St. John's	IAMAW	18/02/74	18/02/74	85	85	Illegal	Not reported
NCLRA		UBCJA	22/04/74	25/04/74	35	30	Illegal	Not reported
Becker Mechanical Construction (Health Sciences)	St. John's	IBEW	17/02/75	18/02/75	24	24	Illegal	Not reported
Becker Mechanical Construction	St. John's	UAPP	18/03/75	03/04/75	74	888	Illegal	Not reported
NCLRA	various locations	IUBAC	20/05/75	19/06/75	400	5600	Legal	Wages
AE Hickman Co	St. John's	LIUNA	10/06/75	13/06/75	21	63	illegal	Not reported
Lundrigans Ltd	Corner Brook	LIUNA	10/06/75	10/06/75	12	12	illegal	Not reported
NCLRA and Mechanical Const Assn	province wide	UAPP	17/06/75	22/09/75	900	57600	Legal	not reported
NCLRA	Churchill Falls	IBEW	26/06/75	28/06/75	110	220		Suspension of 11 workers and lack of safety
Pitts Engineering Construction Eastern Ltd	St. John's	LIUNA	17/11/75	20/11/75	58	174	Illegal	Not reported

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
Collavino Brothers Construction	Holyrood	Construction, General Labourers	30/06/77	30/06/77	47	18	Illegal	Not reported
Collavino Brothers construction	Holyrood	IAMAW, IAIW	01/07/77	05/07/77	47	47	Illegal	Not reported
GBS Construction Co	Carbonear	UBCJA, Construction and General Labourers	24/04/78	01/05/78	15	75	Illegal	Not reported
NCLRA	various locations	IBPAT	19/06/78	30/06/78	200	1800	Legal	wages
Lundrigans Ltd	Corner Brook	LIUNA	10/07/78	10/07/78	50	25	Illegal	Not reported
NCLRA	Eastern NF	UBCJA	27/07/78	13/09/78	930	31620	Legal	wages
NCLRA	Corner Brook	IBEW	14/08/78	24/08/78	120	960	Legal	not reported
NCLRA	N/a	IBEW	24/08/78	15/09/78	30	480	Legal	Not reported
Easteel and McNamara Ltd	St. John's	IAMAW	01/06/79	29/06/79	160	3200	Legal	wages
Lundigrans and Easteel (Data Centre)	St. John's	building trades	06/06/79	07/06/79	100	100	Illegal	Site picketed for using steel from striking plant
Construction Contractors	Holyrood	Building trades	19/06/79	20/06/79	240	240	Illegal	jurisdictional dispute
NCLRA	St. John's	IBEW	26/05/80	11/08/80	300	16500	Legal	not reported
NCLRA	Various locations	UAPP	04/06/80	11/08/80	450	21600	Legal	wages, union security
NCLRA	Various locations	building trades	04/06/80	11/08/80	1480	71040		respecting picket lines
Pelleys Enterprises	Springdale	IBEW (linesmen)	23/07/80	24/07/80	17	17	legal	Not reported
Bakers Construction	Corner Brook	IBEW (linesmen)	23/07/80	26/08/80	18	432	legal	Not reported

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
Dover Construction Ltd	N/a	UBCJA	15/07/81		12	60	illegal	protest hiring practices
Sintra-Viking Joint Project	Bay D'Espoir	LIUNA, other trades	15/03/82	22/03/82	135	675	illegal	Preferential hiring
NCLRA	Province-wide	UAPP	16/08/82	12/10/82	200	7833	legal	Wages
NCLRA	Province-wide	all trades	16/08/82	26/08/82	2500	18750	sympathy	Respecting picket lines
NCLRA	Province-wide	UBCJA (millwrights)	27/08/82	12/10/82	18	555	legal	Wages
NCLRA	Various locations	Iron Workers	20/09/82	12/10/82	300	1910	legal	after reject contract offer
Seaboard Construction	St. John's	UBCJA	10/06/83	13/06/83	66	33	illegal	protest by laid-off workers
McNamara-Wimpey Northern Joint Venture	Cat Arm (Hydro Project)	LIUNA	08/07/83	18/07/83	206	1373	legal	Wages
NCLRA	province-wide	all trades but UBCJA	12/08/86	15/09/86	1800	41400	Legal	double breasting, wages
Atlas Maritime Construction	Cartwright	IUOE	24/08/86	28/08/86	40	114	Legal	wages
Marco Construction	St. John's	Iron Workers	15/01/87	28/01/87	52	468	legal	Working with non-union people
NCLRA	province wide	all construction unions	22/01/87	23/01/87	1800	1800	illegal	Protesting hiring practice at CBC
Becklin Construction	Hope Brook	LIUNA, IUOE	04/11/87	11/11/87	400	2000	illegal	Protesting transportation
Walken Enterprises	Mount Pearl	UBCJA	02/05/88	08/12/88	5	749	Legal	wages
Stokes	St. John's	UBCJA,	29/07/88	08/08/88	150	900	Illegal	jurisdictional dispute,

Management Ltd.		LIUNA						work assignment
NCLRA	province-wide	Iron Workers	17/07/89	27/09/89	200	10800	legal	Wages
NCLRA	province-wide	other trades	17/07/89		130	6690	legal	Sympathy/ iron workers picket line
NCLRA	province-wide	IBEW	20/07/89	05/09/89	200	6200	legal	Wages
NCLRA	province-wide	various unions	20/07/89	05/09/89	570	13464	legal	hiring practices
A&P Construction Ltd	Greenspond	LIUNA, IUOE	14/05/90	18/05/90	12	290	Legal	Jurisdiction of work
Stokes Devel Corp	St. John's	LIUNA	13/07/90	19/07/90	6	21	illegal	Jurisdictional dispute
Stokes Devel Corp	St. John's	other construction trades	13/07/90	19/07/90	80	280	illegal	Respecting picket lines
Rocca Construction Ltd (RCMP building)	St. John's	LIUNA	05/08/91	06/08/91	50	50	legal	Subcontracting
Rocca Construction Ltd (RCMP building)	St. John's	LIUNA	13/08/91	29/08/91	50	600	legal	Subcontracting
Gildart Construction (Offshore Steel Fabrication)	Marystown	LIUNA	29/08/91	04/09/91	100	150	legal	union recognition
Hibernia Employers' Assoc	Bull Arm	ODC	16/01/95	16/01/95	400	142	illegal	Sympathy
PCL Industrial Constructors	Bull Arm	PDA	12/07/99	14/07/99	400	571	illegal	Not reported

Employer	Place	Union	Start of Strike	Return to work	# of Workers	PDL	Type of strike	Reason for strike
PCL Industial Constructions	Bull Arm	PDA	12/07/99	14/07/99	300	214	illegal	Not reported
NCLRA	St. John's	SMWIA	12/10/99	15/10/99	35	105	illegal	Not reported

Appendix 6: A Snapshot of Women Workers at Hibernia

April 1995: Employment by PASSB, Nodeco and Offshore Catering examined. Combined make up 89 per cent of all unionized workers on site. Approximately 5 per cent were female, 95 per cent male.

PASSB, 847 employed on site, 828 men, 19 women (2 per cent)
Job break down for women: 1 labourer, 12 secretaries, 1 caterer, 2 painters/fireproofers, 1 structural Ironworkers, 2 teamster/warehouse.

Major Offshore Catering, 161 employees, 91 men, 70 women (43 per cent)
1 second cook, 7 clerical, 1 safety, 4 bartenders, 1 head waiter, 41 camp attendants, 1 head camp attendant, 9 general help, 2 sandwich makers, 2 third cooks.

NODECO, 2187 employees, 2097 men, 90 women (4 per cent)
7 structural workers, 5 labourers, 4 rebar workers, 9 camp attendants, 1 surveyor, 59 secretaries, 5 teamster/warehouse

July 1995: Nodeco, PASSB and Major Offshore Catering make up 88 per cent all unionized employees. Combined 6 per cent women.

NODECO, 2695, 2594 men, 101 women (4 per cent)
Women: 2 operating engineers, 6 structural ironworkers, 8 labourers, 17 rebar workers, 9 camp attendants/caterers, 3 Comm. Officers, 52 secretaries/clerks, 4 teamster/warehouse.

PASSB, 835, 802 male, 33 female (4 per cent)
Women: 1 pipefitter, 2 welders, 1 sheetmetal worker, 2 labourers, 13 secretaries, 1 caterer, 2 painter/fireproofers, 9 structural ironworkers, 2 teamsters

Major Offshore, 1919, 113 men, 78 women (41 per cent)
Women: 1 second cook, 7 clerical, 1 safety officer, 4 bartenders, 1 head waiter, 53 camp attendants, 1 head camp attendant, 6 general helpers, 2 sandwich persons, 2 third cooks.

