

**THE GENESIS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS: EXPERTS AND
CITIZEN BOARDS IN SULLIVAN COUNTY, NEW YORK**

A Thesis

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of Cornell University for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

by

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BIOGRAPHY

Pierre Clavel was born in New York City, April 23, 1935. He received the degrees of Bachelor of Arts from Haverford College in 1957 (with a major in Economics), and Master of Regional Planning from the University of North Carolina in 1959. He was on the staff of Blair Associates of Providence, Rhode Island, city and regional planning consultants, from 1960 to 1962. He is an Associate Member of the American Institute of Planners, and a member of the Regional Science Association, American Political Science Association, American Society for Public Administration, and the American Sociological Society.

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THE GENESIS OF THE PLANNING PROCESS: EXPERTS AND
CITIZEN BOARDS IN SULLIVAN COUNTY, NEW YORK

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This thesis is a study of planning as expert advice to non-partisan citizen boards—and the means by which this advice is implemented or blocked in a semi-rural county. The major thesis is that in an area of relatively scarce economic resources administrative resources in the form of individuals with the time, training, and experience to use expert advice, and in the form of institutions to legitimize the use of experts, are also scarce. The result is a state of inequality between experts and boards which limits the extent to which experts can be used. Among other consequences of this inequality, local boards dealing with experts seem to experience a sense of inequality for which the major defense is rejection of the expert and reaffirmation of traditional rural institutions. This phenomenon seems most likely to occur with a high proportion of locally oriented board members of generalist status, less likely when board members have specialist status, primarily in industry groups; and it seems related positively to the technical difficulty of the issue, the relative investments of time in the issue by boards and experts, and the relevance of the issue to community action and public scrutiny.

These propositions were derived from a field study of three citizen boards in Sullivan County, New York, a rural county undergoing development in the two major sectors of its economy: the resort and poultry industries. Four case studies constitute the data: (1) an attempt to institute a hotel-room occupancy tax; (2) an attempt to commit the County to

a location for a county airport; (3) an attempt to establish a site for a community college; and (4) attempts of a committee of poultry farmers to settle conflicts with neighboring residents and resort operators concerning the disposal of poultry waste (manure and other material). All of the cases involved citizen boards and problems which were both politically and technically difficult, and for which outside experts were called in for advice.

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

This is a study of experts and citizen boards attempting to deal with important community problems in a rural county. My major thesis is that, among other difficulties, varying types of inequality develop between experts and boards, from which spring many of the obstacles to community acceptance and implementation of seemingly reasonable and wise recommendations.

Perhaps nothing is quite so galling to the expert, the reformer, the advisor, as the failure to implement technically sound solutions to problems. Nevertheless, while many technical fields advise that implementation is important, the problem of implementation remains little understood. Technical fields generally leave implementation to the practitioner's natural ability and to his experience, rather than develop a theory or even generally applicable guides.¹ City and regional

¹A leading administrator who stated this view was Harlow S. Person. He said that while research demanded persons sensitive to theory, and planning required a creative ability to match theory to the problems of practice, implementation was best done by the extroverted pragmatist, with an ability to carry his followers behind his proposals and persuade the reluctant. My objection to this kind of generalization is that it tends to allow the researcher and planner to avoid the problems of implementation, a tendency he may already possess, by hinting that implementation is solely a problem for the charismatic leader. In fact, leaders are only one condition for successful implementation. Another is that plans anticipate and properly evaluate the costs of putting them into effect. This itself is a problem for research and theory. See H. S. Person, "Research and Planning as Functions of Administration and Management," Public Administration Review, Vol. I (Autumn, 1940), pp. 65-73. For the alternate point of view, see Herbert Simon, Donald W. Smithburg and Victor A. Thompson, Public Administration (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1950), Chapters 20-22.

planning shares this omission. While there has been fast development of theory and technique of planning as a technical process, there is less knowledge of the wider planning process, including the period when planners try to implement technical proposals.

Other perspectives from which to view the wider planning process are those of administrative theory and sociological analyses of large-scale organizations. Both owe much to the "ideal type" concept of bureaucratic organization first set forth by Max Weber.² Weber held that modern bureaucratic organization was typified by rational pursuit of activity instrumental to goals set from above. Consistent with this, almost all modern planning thought has focused on developing techniques for finding means to ends set outside the planner's sphere of competence. "Implementation" has often implied a notion that government administration and private interests serve as willing instruments to the goals of planning, when actually they are neither controlled by the planning agency nor in full sympathy with its goals.³

²Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, trans. A. M. Henderson and T. Parsons (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947), pp. 329-341; From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, trans. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 196-264.

³Planners have, until recently, been generally willing to recommend goals or "targets," even though the bulk of their analysis concerns means. More recently, some planners have become disillusioned even with a mere statement of goals. An example is this comment by Alvin Mayne: criticizing plans which start from ". . . what is desired at some future time. . ." he says, "The difficulty with this latter approach is that implementation frequently requires more authority than is generally possessed by the Government. It tends to generate a multitude of decisions laying claim to resources far in excess of available supplies. The result is a misallocation of those resources to the point where inefficiency and loss of output occur. In addition, confusion tends to prevail if the desired model becomes accepted as a forecast and if hopes fail to materialize. Decisions are then made on the basis of fictitious possi-

Partly because such overly simple administrative conceptions have not been adequate, social scientists have modified Weber's model. Philip Selznick, in his study of the Tennessee Valley Authority's attempt to implement a program which had goals set by Federal law, showed how these goals were compromised by TVA's need to bring groups with opposing goals into its administrative system.⁴ Edward Banfield, writing about a study of planning in Chicago, noted that while planning ideally consists of finding rational courses of actions instrumental to some goal, organizations usually avoid too explicit or long-range commitments to goals.⁵ A large body of writing has by now been added in this vein.⁶

There have been studies focusing more specifically on city

³(cont.) bilities." Proceedings of the Seminar on the Contribution of Physical Planning to Social and Economic Development in a Regional Framework (San Juan: Government Development Bank, 1965), p. 38.

⁴Philip Selznick, TVA and the Grass Roots (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1949).

⁵Edward Banfield, "Ends and Means in Planning," in S. Mailick and E. H. Van Ness, eds., Concepts and Issues in Administrative Behavior (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1962), pp. 70-80.

⁶The hierarchical model of social organization in which goals are set at the top has been disputed both for large-scale bureaucracies and for communities. For bureaucracies, see Earl Latham, "Hierarchy and Hieratics: A Note on Bureaus," Employment Forum, Vol. II (April, 1947), pp. 1-6; Peter M. Blau, Bureaucracy in Modern Society (New York: Random House, 1956) and Amitai Etzioni, "Two Approaches to Organizational Analysis: a Critique and a Suggestion," Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. 5 (September, 1960), pp. 257-278. For communities, the hierarchical model has its modern expression in the "power structure" writings, notably Floyd Hunter, Community Power Structure (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1952), though much of the planning literature assumes a more formal hierarchical authority pattern in local government. The hierarchical power structure model is disputed by a number of "pluralist" writers. For an account of the pluralist position see Nelson W. Polsby, Community Power and Political Theory (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963).

planning, largely coming out of this tradition of study of administration and large-scale organizations. Robert Daland, in a provocative article, pointed out obstacles to the realization of planning ideals in the differing professional orientations and roles of planners and city managers.⁷

Alan Altshuler examined the disparity between the professional images planners held of themselves as experts on devising means to ends set by the political system, and the unwillingness of politicians to set explicit goals for them to follow.⁸ The study by Martin Meyerson and Edward Banfield, cited above, has been a major empirical study of the planning process.⁹

This study complements these efforts by examining the planning process in a different environment. It presents data from Sullivan County, New York, a rural area with a population of 45,272 in 1960, under external influence through two major sectors of its economy: the resort and poultry industries. The original supposition for this study was that the obstacles to planning may somehow be different in a rural area from those in urban or bureaucratic situations. But, in fact, the obstacles seemed similar in many ways. This led to hypotheses about the nature of basic attitudes surrounding acceptance or rejection of expert advice by a citizen board and a community. Under somewhat different conditions, these hypotheses find some support both in the urban

⁷Robert Daland, "Organization for Urban Planning: Some Barriers to Integration," Journal of the American Institute of Planners, Vol. XXIII (Winter, 1957), pp. 200-206.

⁸Alan Altshuler, The City Planning Process: A Political Analysis (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1965).

⁹Martin Meyerson and Edward Banfield, Politics, Planning, and the Public Interest (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1955).

situations for which case studies have been reviewed, and in the cases observed in Sullivan County.

It may seem too much to generalize from a study of one county. In fact, the main part of this study, Chapters 2 through 7, focuses on Sullivan County alone and simply documents the conditions under which expert advice was accepted or rejected in several case studies. In addition to this, similarities are discernible between the Sullivan County cases and others, particularly where the data seem to relate to certain well-known theoretical questions. The theoretical relevance of the cases is discussed in Chapter 8. Also, the "problems" in Sullivan County have similarities to those in other places, and this adds to the interest of the Sullivan County case. Chapter 9 outlines a planning approach to problems of this nature, though it does not attempt to prescribe specific policies.

The Theoretical Questions

How can we relate the findings from an investigation of one rural county, with the peculiarities of a dominant resort economy, to a scattering of other case studies of the planning process focusing on middle and large-size cities? Even before any observations or interviews were made, it seemed that the differences would not be in the variables to be identified in the expert-board relationship. These important variables might be such things as the quantity of interaction in the relationship, the rewards expected and gained by the participants, and the techniques available to the expert and boards for influencing one another. Such factors might be expected to be important in the expert-board relationship no matter what setting or what problem. On the other hand, the

differences in setting, such as those between the urban and rural settings, are differences in the givens that affect the expert-board relation. No matter how different the settings, these givens should, in principle, be possible to control. In experimental settings givens can sometimes be physically manipulated by the experimenter. In this study, it is possible to control them only by means of working assumptions.

The following discussion of theoretical assumptions is a checklist of differentiating characteristics, so that these case studies can be compared with others with different givens. I will touch on: (1) the concept of institutionalization of expert decision making; (2) organizational resources and consensus on goals as preconditions for authoritative (institutionalized) expert decision making; (3) a list of several types of settings for expert decision making; and (4) the importance of the boards studied in this thesis, in the Sullivan County setting.

Institutionalization. First, I am dealing with the conditions for regular acceptance of expert advice as a basis for action by some group or community. Regular acceptance implies institutions which justify or legitimize expert advice. A school system, for example, legitimizes teachers; the extension service helps legitimize the county agent. Expert advice is, of course, regularly accepted in "rural" areas of the United States. Our concern is with expert advice applied to community actions; that is, as a factor in collective or "social" decisions. This is related to a concern with "comprehensive" planning as opposed to "specialist" planning (which, in more or less small segments of community life, is much more common).

Institutional Requirements for Expert Decision. Expert advice is

different from other kinds of advice because of the kinds of decision processes it stems from, and this is particularly true when the subject of the advice is complex. Expert advice depends on the use of technical decision processes. I distinguish the technical decision process from other ways of making decisions by its procedure. Its unique procedural characteristic is that goals, alternative choices, and assessments of the probability of events occurring are consciously separated by the decision-maker. This allows him to work on each aspect of the problem separately or to delegate parts to others; when there is disagreement within a group working on a problem, acceptance of the technical decision procedure allows isolation of the aspects on which there is disagreement.

An essential condition for a technical decision process—and hence, expert advice—to have authority and be accepted by those participating, is that goals be agreed on by the participants. Political scientists generally have emphasized the political process of arriving at consensus as a precondition for acceptance of technical decision and expert advice. This requirement is particularly critical in the case of comprehensive planning, since comprehensiveness entails involvement in all the significant parts of a community and thus maximizes the potential of conflict. For consensus, the chief institutional requirements of technical decision processes are political institutions.

Consensus on goals, however, is not the only necessary condition for technical decision processes. Also required are sufficient resources, chiefly time, training, and experience, to employ the techniques and understand them. In this respect, the chief institutional requirement is organization and the ideal example is bureaucracy.

Bureaucracy, it should be clear, requires an environment of large scale, and this is difficult to achieve in rural areas, particularly in government.

The extent to which time, training and experience are required to solve a problem depends on its complexity, the chief determinants of which are probably the time span to be considered, the number of conflicting goals and the technological limits on the available alternatives.¹⁰ A fourth determinant, related to the first three, is the amount of social change involved in the problem (e.g., the number of institutions to be altered). I will refer to this on the "importance" of an issue in Chapter 3.

The Variety of Settings for Expert Advice. Some experts exist in practically all communities, but our concern is with expert advice for social decisions. Thus we are concerned with the processes by which technical decision processes move from a position on the periphery of community life to one where they are institutionalized as legitimate bases for community action. A first step in understanding this process would be a gauge of the variety of institutional settings for technical decision. The Sullivan County situation could then be seen as one case in such a variety of settings, all offering different kinds of obstacles and opportunities for technical decision.

The simplest characterization of the variety of settings for technical decision might use only the two major variables already mentioned:

¹⁰For a statement of the relation of technological complexity to the complexity of the problem-solving process, see Hayden B. May, "Technological and Methodological Advances in Design," (unpublished M. R. P. thesis, Cornell University, 1965).

the degree of consensus on goals, and the resources available to put the technical processes to work. The extremes of these variables jointly produce four types:

1. Consensus, and scarce resources. This might be termed the "rural" situation. Some of the towns in Sullivan County approach this type, but most of the evidence concerns issues facing the county as a whole.
2. Consensus, and plentiful resources. The extreme example is the modern corporation, but few communities approach the corporate environment of technical decision. Some towns and villages in Sullivan County have a stable power structure and have employed experts at a modest scale (for example, village managers). But their decision processes often seem only overtly technical—justifications of positions reached by other means. Similar situations have been reported in medium-size cities in other areas, where a stable power structure uses technical decision on non-controversial, often relatively simple problems.
3. Conflict, and plentiful resources. This is the typical big-city situation. Interest groups and organizations, supported by technical staffs, battle over public policies. Sometimes the experts play key roles in the conflicts, backed by their professional ideologies and associations.
4. Conflict, and scarce resources. This, perhaps, is the typical urban fringe situation, where conflicts arise from the mixture of urban and rural characteristics against the background of a rural government and administrative system. Often, the

conflicts arise from the introduction of new population groups and over issues such as spending for schools and public facilities. In Sullivan County the conflict occurs in a slightly different fashion: there are less "urban" pressures, but there is a great deal of inter-local competition reinforced by the dispersion of major economic activities and by cultural differences among the towns in the county.

The Importance of the Boards. The "fringe" situation described above, of which Sullivan County is one case, is an unstable one: neither rural nor urban, but changing. The general question of how this change occurs and how it is resisted is an important one. This thesis focuses on a part of this question: the role of experts and citizen boards in the general process of change and resistance.

In the process of change, unpaid lay boards, commissions and committees (I will refer to them all simply as "boards") often play a crucial role in rural communities. Changes in the economy probably start the process: they are perceived first as "problems" by the people in the area who, in a variety of ways, search for means to cope with them. The "problem," for example, of quantity home construction might be perceived as "low quality developments." Lacking an obvious way to cope with such a problem, the community, usually through its political body, often turns to outside experts for help. The political bodies seldom hire experts directly, but instead give the problems to lay boards noteworthy not usually as politicians but as men of economic status. These men are asked to make judgments which the political body may then ratify. Usually the boards are largely left alone with a few overt prescriptions as to what they should do. Their behavior, thus

unguided, is free to develop attitudes toward the proposals of the experts. At least ostensibly, there is a potential for change in institutions in the deliberations of these boards. The extent to which the boards exploit this potential is largely worked out in the relationships between the boards and the outside experts they call in.¹¹

¹¹The changes I am focusing on in this thesis are those in political and administrative institutions, since these are most relevant to the problem of implementation of plans. My assumptions concerning the economic bases for such changes are stated in Chapter 8, but only as they relate to the expert-board relationship. More generally, two aspects of the economic and institutional change process are worth noting. First, a major impetus to change in rural communities is the development of economic linkages between local production and distribution operations and national and regional headquarters. This results in a bureaucratization of local communities, both by subordination of control of economic units and by the introduction of personnel with bureaucratic rather than local loyalties, to the local community. For a discussion of this process, see Roland L. Warren, The Community in America (Chicago: Rand McNally Company, 1963).

Second, bureaucratic organization cannot be limited to the bureaucratized economic units alone, but results in a general rationalization of community life. Max Weber was one of the first to see this, the demands of bureaucratic organization being, according to one reviewer: ". . . (1) leveling of social class differences in the interest of the broadest possible recruitment, (2) increased demands for formal education, especially technical and professional as contrasted to liberal education, and (3) destruction of the power, privileges, and prestige of aristocratic and patrician strata." Weber also noted the promotion of a rationalistic way of life. See William Delany, "The Development and Decline of Patrimonial and Bureaucratic Administrations," in Administrative Science Quarterly, Vol. VII (March, 1963), pp. 458-501. The quotation is at page 465. Weber's remarks are to be found especially in The Theory of Social and Economic Organization, p. 340. For an empirical study of the consequences of changes in production processes and technology and the factory for the family system and the development of educational institutions, see Neil Smelser, Social Change in the Industrial Revolution (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959).

CHAPTER II

SULLIVAN COUNTY: AN OVERVIEW

Sullivan County is one case in the array of settings for expert advice. It is the subject of this chapter and of the following case studies, which go into great detail on the particular forms of the expert-board relation set by the nature of the community.

Monticello, the county seat, is eighty miles northeast of New York City, about as far as New Brunswick, Hartford, and Scranton. In the nineteenth century, the county was settled as a farming area, largely by German immigrants; and their descendants still live in the western side of the county, which lies along the Delaware River. About 1900 a second group of immigrants began to settle in the county. These were Jews who wished to leave New York and sought a better life in rural surroundings. The first Jewish settlers turned to farming, without notable success. But they soon found a ready market for a second industry—the resort business. Farm houses were turned partially into boarding houses and, largely carried informally among family groups and cliques, the reputation of the rustic Sullivan County resorts spread in the City.¹

Sullivan County is far better adapted to an economy based on

¹This historical background, and that on succeeding pages, is primarily from word-of-mouth sources and seems to represent a consensus of opinion among those I interviewed. Two recent magazine articles recount this history in more detail, particularly for the resort industry: David Boroff, "Don't Call it the Borscht Belt," New York Times Magazine, May 9, 1965, pp. 48-58; and Mordecai Richler, "Catskills: Land of Milk and Money," Holiday, XXXVIII (July, 1965), pp. 56-63.

scattered resort settlements than it is to one based on farming. The area consists of the southern reaches of the Catskill Mountains, almost all rolling hills and narrow valleys. There are a great many sites with striking, if not unmatched, vistas while the soil is generally not good for farming except on the valley bottoms in some parts of the County. These natural characteristics, combined with a general trend to specialization in agriculture, have resulted in a decline of general farming activity. Dairy and poultry production have been Sullivan County's agricultural specialties, and now the County ranks first in the State in poultry production.

The resort industry has also become more specialized. From farms which took in boarders, many resorts began to concentrate more and more on their guests. Almost all the resorts are still in family ownership, but to varying degrees they have increased in size and added special entertainment staffs and facilities. The original boarding houses and farms became bungalow colonies, usually with a "casino" or general entertainment building. Many became resort hotels, and the largest of these can now accommodate three thousand guests, and is open all year. The Sullivan County resorts now offer golf, swimming, skiing, boating, horseback riding, night-club entertainment and a variety of other activities. Their major appeal has been to a metropolitan New York Jewish clientele, but the resort operators emphasize a growing number of non-Jewish guests and visitors from other parts of the country.

Concentration in Industrial Sectors

In both agriculture and resorts, an increasingly large share of the

business has been going to the larger units. This trend is shown if we compare the number of establishments in each industry with some measure of output over a period of years:

Agriculture ^a (Commercial Farms)	1954		1959			
	Est.	Product ^d	Est.	Product ^d		
Poultry	532	5,686	427	6,341		
Dairy	704	3,236	513	3,813		
Resorts ^b	1948		1954		1958	
	Est.	Product	Est.	Product ^e	Est.	Product ^e
Hotels	315	25,020	543	51,920	376	42,335
Motels, etc. ^c	52	322	101	3,489	123	4,513

This table shows that in agriculture a smaller number of farms has been producing a greater absolute output. In the resort sector, receipts increased relatively more than the number of establishments for hotels from 1948 to 1958 and from 1948 to 1954. The mean of receipts per hotel establishment was \$80,000 in 1948, \$94,000 in 1954, and \$112,000 in 1958. A more recent (1964) report by New York State Department of Labor gives more striking evidence of concentration in the resort industry, showing an increase in the preponderance of large

^aU. S. Census, Census of Agriculture: 1959.

^bU. S. Census, 1958 Census of Business, VI, Selected Services, Area statistics. No. 32, New York, Table 104; 1954 Census of Business, VI, Selected Service Trades, Area Statistics, No. 32, New York, Table 104; 1948 Census of Business, VII, Service Trades, Area Statistics, Table 103c.

^cIn 1948 this category includes only "Tourist Courts." In 1954 and 1958 it included "Motels, Tourist Courts, Trailer Camps."

^dValue of Products Sold, in thousands of dollars.

^eReceipts, in thousands of dollars.

year-round hotels over smaller seasonal ones:²

<u>Hotels</u>	1952		1962	
	<u>Est.</u>	<u>Annual Payroll</u>	<u>Est.</u>	<u>Annual Payroll</u>
Seasonal	366	\$ 5,161,949	292	\$ 5,451,999
Year-round	13	\$ 2,941,240	32	\$ 3,126,222

Statistics for employment and payrolls by industry group show the dominance of the resort industry in Sullivan County. The resorts (including year-round and seasonal hotels, motels and rooming houses) accounted for 31 percent of the annual payrolls and 41 percent of average monthly employment in 1962.³ Agriculture, which has become more capital intensive, produces about one-fourth as much product as the resorts, but only a very small proportion of the employment or payrolls.

Increasing Interdependence

Of major importance is evidence of the complexity and interdependence of the various occupations in the County, since these may be the bases for changes in social and political links. Though difficult to measure in detail, some indication of the extent of specialization can be gained by inspection of the relative growth of occupations. This does not prove complexity, much less interdependence. What we can do is examine changes in each of the eleven occupation groups for which data are available, and attempt to make some qualitative appraisals. From an analysis of each of these groups' percentages of total county employ-

²New York State Department of Labor, Division of Employment, Preliminary Report on the Resort Industry in Sullivan County, 1964, pp. 30, 31.

³Ibid., pp. 25, 27.

ment in 1950 and 1960, the major change seems to be a decrease in the proportion of farmers and farm managers, service workers, managers, officials and proprietors, and laborers; the major increases are in the proportions of professional and technical workers, and clerical workers. If, as it seems reasonable to assume, the groups whose proportions are decreasing tend to be non-specialized occupations while the increasing groups tend to be specialized, then there is an increase in the specialization and complexity of the division of labor in Sullivan County.⁴

Politically Sensitive Issues

Since the later chapters focus on the expert-board relationship and

⁴The changes are indicated in the following table:

Major Occupation Group	Employed, 1950	Employed, 1960	Change in Per- cent of total, 1950-1960
Professional, technical, kindred workers	1158	1822	+ 3.5
Farmers and farm managers	1495	714	- 5.3
Managers, officials and proprietors, except farm	2050	1919	- 1.7
Clerical and kindred workers	1329	1553	+ 2.5
Sales workers	796	997	+ 0.9
Craftsmen, foremen and kindred workers	2598	2565	- 1.2
Operatives and kindred workers	1898	2065	+ 0.2
Private household workers	336	324	- 0.3
Service workers, except private household	2255	2112	- 1.3
Farm laborers and farm foremen	678	397	- 2.0
Laborers except farm and mine	1134	820	- 2.4
Occupation not reported	158	1043	+ 6.3
TOTALS	15,509	16,631	0

These figures are derived from Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, The People of Sullivan County, New York: Trends in Human Resources and Their Characteristics, 1900-1960, Bulletin No. 62-48 (Ithaca, N. Y., 1963), p. 36, citing U.S., Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1950, P-B32, Tables 43, 48, and 49, and Census of Population, 1960, PC(1)-34C, Tables 84, 91, and 93.

since "political" factors are very relevant to this, at this point it is appropriate to note the geographic and economic basis of political values and conflicts.

Economic Development. A very important political value in Sullivan County is economic development which is related to a general concern with economic health. Sullivan County in 1959 ranked forty-fourth out of 59 New York counties excluding New York City in median family income.⁵ In contrast to its neighbor to the north, Delaware County, and Orange and Rockland Counties to the south, Sullivan County had higher proportions of persons over 65 and higher proportions of persons who did not work throughout the year in 1959.⁶

The latter factor is related to the seasonal nature of the resort industry. Not only does the resort employment drop at the end of the summer but, more important for residents of the County, other businesses fall off too. July employment in the resort industry, drawing largely on out-of-county labor, was 4.5 times March resort employment. But other employment was 2.3 times as great in July as in March.⁷

The question of economic health is related not only to incomes, but demands on incomes. In Sullivan County such demands have been particularly noticeable in the public sector, since the resort economy has required increases in public services. Local government expendi-

⁵Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station, The People of Sullivan County, p. 1.

⁶U. S., Bureau of the Census, Census of Population, 1960, Final Report PC(1)-34C, New York, General Social and Economic Characteristics, Table 86; and Final Report PC(1)-34B, New York, General Population Characteristics, Table 27.

⁷New York State Department of Labor, Preliminary Report, p. 26.

tures rose from \$11.4 million to \$17.5 million in the county from 1957 to 1962; \$4 million of the increase had to be borne by property taxes within the County. The composite per capita local tax levy rose from \$146 to \$220 and from \$58 to \$84 per thousand dollars of locally assessed taxable property.³

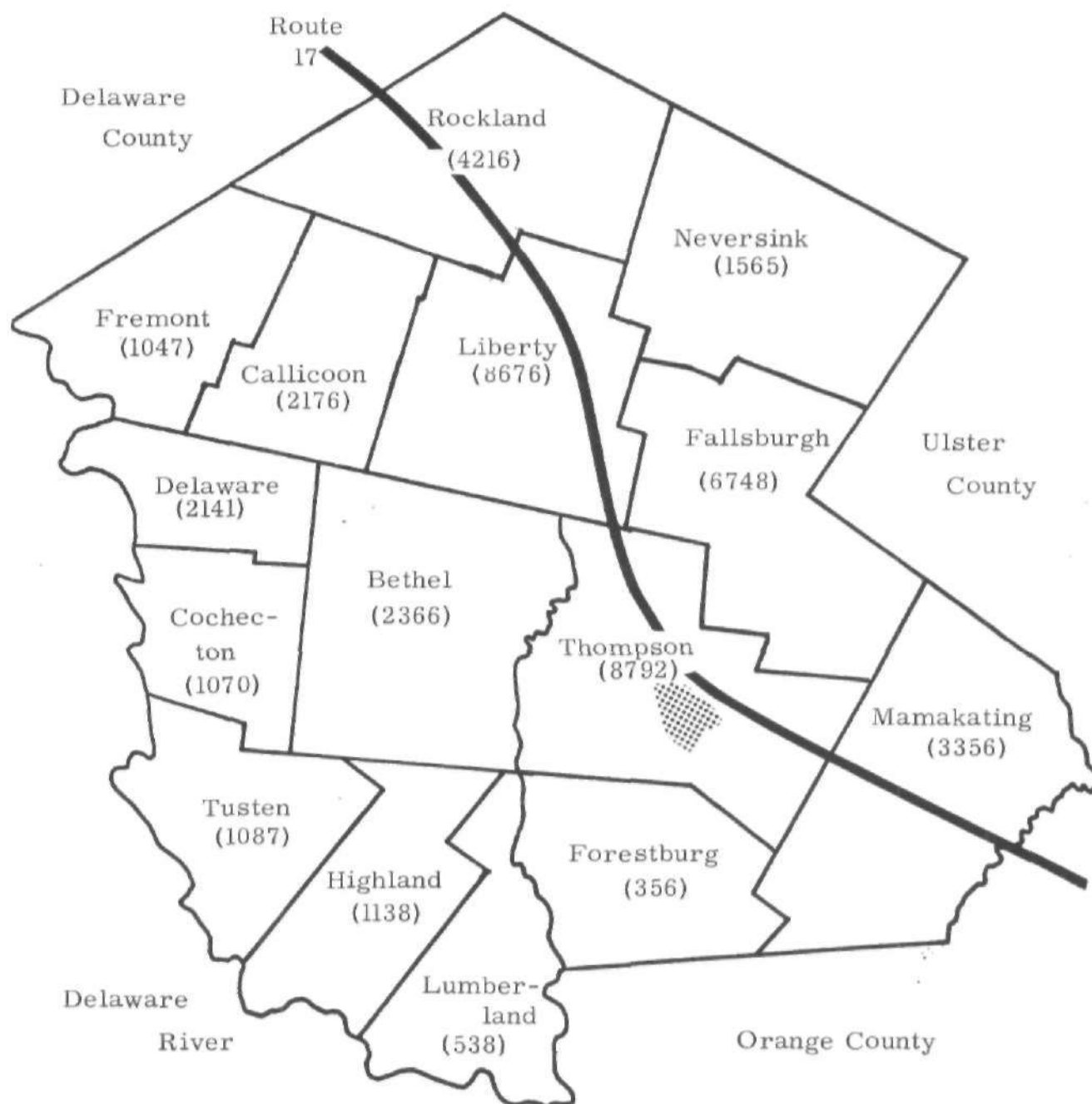
Local Differences. While the issue of economic health is politically important throughout the County, it and other issues affect different towns and villages differently. There is political conflict in Sullivan County, but at present it is an inter-local type of conflict, with conflict between county-wide groups in the background or insignificant. Here, we can profitably shift our attention to the local units within the County.

The accompanying map shows 1960 population for the County's 15 towns. Politically, these figures and locations are revealing: there is no clearly dominant political entity. Liberty, Fallsburgh, and Monticello all lie within the 6000-9000 range. The several towns on the west side of the County, in many issues, make a fourth power center. At the County level (the Board of Supervisors) these four groups contend for public expenditures. Coalitions tend to block a concerting of power by any one group.

Each town has one Supervisor and one vote on the Board of Supervisors. This gives some of the smaller towns a disproportionate amount of power, and in July 1965 a court declared the system of

³U.S., Bureau of the Census, 1957 Census of Governments, VI, No. 30, Government in New York, Table 36; Census of Governments: 1962, VII, No. 30, Government in New York, Table 28; II, Table 21. Per capita estimates are based on straight line interpolations and extrapolations of population, which yielded a 1959 estimate of 43,909 and a 1962 estimate of 46,180.

Population Distribution, Sullivan County, 1960



apportionment invalid and ordered that a temporary weighted voting system giving proportional representation be put into effect on January 1, 1965. But even with the earlier system, the large towns mitigate their under-representation with aggressive partisanship and a better developed administrative organization than the less populated towns.

A brief look at some economic indicators will contrast the towns further. The towns are somewhat specialized by the occupations of their residents. The three major resort Towns of Liberty, Fallsburgh and Thompson, with 55 percent of the County's employed labor force in 1960, had the following percentages of employment in eleven occupation categories reported by the Bureau of the Census:⁹

Occupation Group	Liberty, Fallsburgh, and Thompson Employment as a Percentage of Sullivan County Employment
Professional, technical and kindred workers	57
Farmers and farm managers	24
Managers, officials, and proprietors	63
Clerical and kindred workers	65
Sales workers	59
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers	52
Operatives and kindred workers	45
Private household workers	71
Service workers, excluding private household workers	63
Farm laborers and farm foremen	28
Laborers, except farm and mine	42

The inference to be drawn from this occupational distribution is relatively greater specialization and, perhaps, bureaucratization in the resort towns: the preponderance of managers and officials, on the one hand, and clerical, service, and sales workers on the other. The other

⁹U. S., Bureau of the Census, Census of Population: 1960, Special Table PH-4, Sullivan County, New York. The calculations are mine.

towns have a relative concentration of the craftsmen, foremen, farmers, and unskilled labor occupations.

The industrial sectors in which residents work also tend to be different for the three major resort towns. Again, with 55 percent of the employed labor force, they contain 74 percent of Sullivan County's employment in the census category "other personal services," which is made up primarily of hotels and lodging houses. They also have disproportionate shares of county employment in the following industrial sectors: "communications, utilities, and sanitary services" (65 percent); "wholesale trade" (67 percent); "retail trade" excluding "eating and drinking establishments" (61 percent); "business and repair services" (68 percent); "private household workers" (66 percent); and "public administration" (62 percent).¹⁰

The three major resort towns exhibit family income figures significantly higher than those of the other towns. An (unweighted) average for Liberty, Thompson, and Fallsburg for 1960 is \$ 5500; for the other towns, \$ 4664.¹¹

Some Special Characteristics

In addition to the general survey provided in the preceding pages, it will be useful to note, in more detail, some special characteristics of Sullivan County which are necessary background to the case studies. These are the organization of the resort industry, the tendencies to ethnic and rural-urban conflict, and the organization of the poultry

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid., Special Table, PH. 3.

industry.

Resorts. The resort industry, by reputation and by all the economic indicators, is the dominant sector of the economy in Sullivan County. The County's major "function" for the larger regions of which it is a part is the provision of recreation and vacation facilities and services. In the case studies the interests of the resorts were factors that had to be considered. Their interests have been expressed primarily by two organizations, to the extent that there is any collective action at all. The most highly organized is the Sullivan County Hotel Association. This group consists of about one hundred of the larger hotels. Its membership does not include all of the hotels, but it includes most of the larger ones. The Association's Executive Vice President estimates that about eighty percent of its members are located in the four towns of Liberty, Thompson, Fallsburgh and Bethel.

The Association maintains an office in Monticello, with a full-time Executive Vice President and secretarial staff. Ordinarily, this staff functions primarily as a central information bureau, handling promotional work not carried on individually by its members; and channeling requests for accommodations from individuals and groups seeking, for example, convention quarters. The Association has had a full-time director since 1951.

The Association staff may, on occasion, serve as a means by which the resources of the members, as individuals, are brought to bear on specific problems or political issues. But this is not its ordinary function. The Association, as such, is not considered "powerful" by its members nor, perhaps, even by others in the County. One hotelman described the Association as a "front" available to be mobilized in an

emergency. But the cohesiveness of the hotels itself is sporadic and varies with the nature of the issues faced. What appears to be an "emergency" to one hotel or group of hotels may appear as a windfall to a competitor. Ordinarily, the Association staff does not consider it profitable to attempt to influence County or local policy. It envisions itself as a non-political body. If the hotelmen attempt to influence public policy, it is more likely to be done by individual hotel owners than by the Association as a group.¹²

A second organization representing resort owners is the Sullivan County Bungalow Association. This Association is less centrally organized and staffed than the Hotel Association. It has an Executive Secretary who does not work full time, and seems to act as a federation of locally based organizations with little strength as a county-wide group. The bungalow colonies generally have less power, even potentially, than the hotels. They tend to be smaller, seasonal rather than year-round operations, and often are part-time enterprises. More often than the

¹²This account, like the data in the four chapters which follow this one, is based largely on interviews. Much of the information given in these interviews was passed on with the tacit understanding that its source would not be divulged. In any event, these chapters report my impressions, gained from interviews and other sources, and it is impossible to document these impressions in a complete manner. In general, I have conformed to the following procedure: where the description is common knowledge, I have reported it as fact, with no documentation; where it is not common knowledge but available from published or public sources or from interviews with an understanding that the interviewee was willing to have the information appear in a thesis, I have cited the source or the interview; where the information might prove embarrassing to an interviewee, I have given no citation, though in some cases I have enclosed a word or phrase in quotes if this conveys sentiments held by interviewees, and occasionally I have attributed sentiments or statements to a member of a general class of person such as a "hotelman." In cases of this sort, the reader should regard the evidence presented as impressionistic. There is no intent to give an impression of authoritativeness apart from the plausibility of the case as I have reconstructed it.

large hotel operators, the bungalow operators are part-time residents in the County.

Ethnic and Rural-Urban Differences and Local Rivalries. The resort industry in Sullivan County serves an almost wholly Metropolitan New York Jewish clientele. Most of the resort operators are Jewish as, perhaps to a lesser extent, are proprietors of other services and trades. The Jews have been in Sullivan County since the turn of the century when they began to practice farming and develop resorts, alongside the descendants of earlier settlers who were mainly Protestant farmers of German descent. There remain today cultural differences in values and custom and a sense of identity which distinguish Jew from non-Jew in the County. One is impressed by the extent to which these cultural differences exist together with a general lack of overt ethnic conflict. While some groups are predominantly Jewish and some are predominantly non-Jewish, such groups tend not to be pitted against one another. One man, when questioned about "ethnic bias," said "we've licked that problem here—you never hear anything about it. Maybe twenty years ago, but not today." This statement at least indicates the absence of overt, recognized ethnic conflict. There are, of course, economic penalties for a reputation of ethnic bias in Sullivan County.

On the other hand, in some respects Jews and non-Jews still do not mix. There are no Jews in the volunteer fire companies in many of the towns. The out-of-county feed companies have difficulty competing with the Intercounty Farmers Cooperative, a predominantly Jewish organization, in selling to Jewish farmers. Moreover, areas and whole towns are predominantly either Jewish or non-Jewish. While it is not an open basis of conflict, the ethnic difference must be viewed as

lying in the background, and sometimes it is expressed as a real factor affecting political conflict. Some partisans in the Sullivan County Community College site controversy (see Chapter 5) ascribed "anti-Semitism" as a motive, though many others would probably minimize this factor.

Jewish—non-Jewish differences exist along with rural-urban differences, and they overlap.¹³ Most Sullivan County residents are aware of a "Mason-Dixon Line" dividing the western side of the County from the main resort areas of Fallsburgh, Liberty, and Thompson. In essence, perhaps, Sullivan County is a rural county to which an urban (Jewish) element comes on week-ends in the summer; and "urban" institutions and services are established to serve them. The Jews who run the resorts serve as middlemen between the resort clientele and the apparently rural institutions of the County. The banks, the sources of supply, the political and legal system are different from those in even a middle-size city. Into these within-the-county institutions the Jews seem to have penetrated only imperfectly, and only by adopting the customs of the comparatively rural social system. The resorts, on the other hand, tend to isolate themselves from the community except for their economic demands. Many persons deplore the failure of the resorts to take a "constructive" role in Village and County affairs, and describe them as "islands" not oriented to the local public.

The County Planning Board was established partly to preserve

¹³Still, it is not strictly correct to argue that the urban-rural and Jew-non-Jew differences are equivalent. The poultry farmers are predominantly Jewish, and the Jews originally settled to farm, branching out to bungalows and hotel operations later. Many of the bungalows and hotels still maintain some agricultural operations.

"rural" aesthetic values, as were some local planning boards. In some of these cases the main resort towns were the negative images in mind. In the college site controversy the river towns fought against the Monticello site because it entailed giving up a gift of funds, something a "rural county" could not afford.

Whatever its causes (and certainly the differences just cited are major ones), the fact of conflict among towns and among coalitions of towns is not disputable. This tendency to compete is very great, and it is great in the consciousness of county residents. Local rivalries appeared in the airport-site case and were very pronounced in the college-site case. Monticello and Liberty have been at odds at least since the turn of the century when the present courthouse was the subject of an apparently bitter site controversy. There are "economic" motives for these rivalries, but they seem to be collectively shared by a great many persons in the towns. They are not solely the interests of a few people, such as real estate operators. No matter who profits the most, the whole town can be sold on the desirability of attracting the site of a public facility such as a college or airport. This indicates that the economic motives are buttressed by local pride. Local pride, together with a sense of collective economic competition, may reinforce underlying ethnic and rural-urban differences between the towns. Part of the reason for the intensity of the controversy over the college site was that ethnic and rural-urban differences and inter-local economic competition have occurred together.

The Poultry Industry. The resort industry is Sullivan County's largest by far; the second largest is the poultry industry. It possesses the resources not only of the individual poultry producers, but of the feed

companies including Intercounty and two out-of-county organizations, Ralston-Purina and Agway. In addition it gets the benefit of support from the New York State Agricultural College and the Extension Program which supplies and pays part of the salary of the County Agent.

As with the resort industry, external economic links seem as important to the poultry industry as do its relations with producers, suppliers, and labor within the County. However, the feed companies and the extension program are important factors which integrate the industry and increase its effectiveness in its dealings with other interests in Sullivan County. Intercounty Farmers Cooperative, located in Fallsburgh, is the major supplier and distributor to County poultrymen. In general, the relation of poultry operations to feed companies has become closer with the advent of large-scale operations. Much of the capital to buy the equipment and birds is supplied by the feed companies, and most poultrymen operate under marketing contracts with the feed companies. Under these circumstances the feed company representatives, and those of Intercounty in particular, carry a great deal of weight in the industry.

The Extension Service adds to the cohesiveness of the poultry industry. It has access to experts who can lend authority to poultrymen's efforts to solve problems, and this is a cohesive force when these problems affect the industry's relations with the community (as in the waste-disposal problem, described in Chapter 6). Moreover, the Extension Service has its own expert locally, the County Agent. He has an important role, not simply because of his technical resources, but because he is in a position to communicate ideas as a result of his frequent contacts with his clients. The feed companies also perform this function, of course, but with a more specialized group of clients.

The Case Studies

After this brief statistical and historical overview of Sullivan County, the next four chapters present case studies of expert-board relationships in four issues of county-wide importance. Two of the cases deal with the Sullivan County Planning Board. Two others deal with groups which, while not formally recognized as "planning" bodies, have tried to act as "technical" decision bodies and to influence public policy.¹⁴ These are the Board of Trustees of the Sullivan County Community College and the Sullivan County Poultry Waste Disposal Committee. The Planning Board and the College Trustees are established by law by the Sullivan County Board of Supervisors to deal with certain classes of problems. The Poultry Committee is a much more informal group. It was set up by poultrymen, with the staff assistance of the County Agent, to deal with the long- and short-term problems occasioned by the difficulty of disposing of poultry manure in a way not offensive to neighboring residences and businesses. Though the Poultry Committee differs from the other two, all three boards have much in common.

First, all three found themselves dealing with issues which could

¹⁴From the technical point of view of the planner, it may seem that the decision processes involved in these case studies are so rudimentary, so short-range, that they do not constitute planning at all and are of limited relevance to larger-scale planning programs. "Planning" is generally conceived as involving a more or less complicated contemplation of "courses of action" or chains of actions and consequences, and the courses of action conceived of in the case studies were short. From the point of view of implementing courses of action, however, simpler plans are not irrelevant, so long as their implementation is not routine. The difficulties of inexperienced rural boards and committees with relatively simple decision processes are as germane to the general problem of implementation as the difficulties of far more sophisticated boards and bureaucracies in larger cities with more complex planning efforts.

not be handled in a normal way by the institutions then existing in Sullivan County. In large part, the difficulty was in the complexity of the factors bearing on each case; each board was set up as a more or less "expert" group to study a class of problems and then report to some political authority. "Normal" institutions for handling county-wide problems in Sullivan County are the Board of Supervisors and its special committees. Three of the issues reported in the case studies had a history of indecisive handling in Supervisors' Committees, before referral to the boards. The Poultry Committee arose prior to any County consideration of the problem, more or less as an attempt to preempt consideration of it before any local or county action.

Second, none of the boards was intended to be an expert body only. They were also intended to have legitimacy because they were composed of men of economic and social status, and to some extent "non-political," contrasted with the Board of Supervisors or local political bodies. These two basic differences of the boards from political authorities became bases for differentiation within the boards, with some members playing the high status role, others the expert role. The consulting "outside experts" were more like the latter board members; but generally they were much more expert than any members of the board, and wielded less economic or social status.

Third, in implementing the technical, expert aspect of their roles, each of the boards tried to use technical methods and outside consultant experts. The outside experts were different from most of the board members in the resources they possessed to apply to the problems. With this differentiation, a distinguishable expert-board relationship arose, particularly around questions of implementing expert-proposed

solutions.

The technical problems of the cases studied were (1) the question of whether the County should adopt a tax on hotel-room occupancy; (2) the location of a county airport; (3) the location of the Sullivan County Community College; and (4) the solution of recurrent poultry waste disposal problems and a long-term search for devices to be employed generally to prevent such problems in the future. The first two cases involved the Planning Board; the latter two were dealt with by the College Trustees and the Poultry Committee.¹⁵

¹⁵Over a period of six months, from February through July 1965, I spent a total of about 70 days in Sullivan County and conducted approximately 140 interviews. In the beginning I sought to get an idea of all the major activity that had occurred in the county toward the purpose of (1) planning; (2) the development of professional administration in government; (3) the adoption of regulatory measures; (4) the use of experts from outside the county to solve public problems; and (5) collective action to achieve some end outside of government. After about a month it was possible to identify half a dozen or so issues that might conveniently be written up as case studies. From then on the interviews tended to focus on one or more of these cases.

In selecting cases for intensive research, I was guided mainly by two criteria. First, I selected issues of county-wide importance. This way, the intersectional and rural-urban differences tended to show themselves. Also, at the county level, if the issues had political importance, it was more likely that persons of high status would be involved. Second, I sought cases where boards and experts had actually been in some kind of relationship over a period of time, and where outside experts were called in.

The original intention for this thesis had been to focus primarily on the Poultry Waste Disposal Committee. This committee had been established because of a conflict between poultrymen and neighboring activities, especially resorts. I had planned to compare the situation in Sullivan County with that in similar areas. As the research progressed it seemed desirable to modify the approach and the present form of the study includes other phenomena inside Sullivan County. One reason for this is that it seemed both efficient and relevant to review precedents in Sullivan County which might bear on the form the solution to the poultry-resort issue might take. An additional factor is that the poultry-resort conflict in Sullivan County is in an early stage. There is less of a sequence to compare with other cases in other areas than might be the case with future studies of the problem.

There were many local issues and local planning board activities

¹⁵(cont.) going on during the period of field work, and I absorbed as much of this as I could, attending meetings and interviewing planning board chairmen and members. Some of this information is drawn into the concluding chapters of the thesis.

During interviews, once I began to focus on the four case studies, my main questions were of the form: "What happened?" and "Why did you do that?" or "Why do you think they did that?" That is, there was an effort mainly to discern interaction, and attitudes which may have influenced the form of interaction (for example, resistance vs. acceptance of an action). The interviews were generally mixed with other kinds of research: the accumulation of newspaper accounts and, in some cases, review of written records of various sorts: minutes, letters, memoranda and published reports and proceedings.

CHAPTER III

THE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD AND THE ROOM TAX

The Sullivan County Planning Board was created in 1958 to assist the Board of Supervisors' Committee on County Publicity and Development "in all matters with reference to the improvement, publicity, and industrial development of the county. . ."¹ This capped a period of several years of gestation, during which various semi-organized interests began to make new demands on the county government. These included groups interested in business and industrial development, maintenance of low rural tax rates, provision of new government services and facilities, protection of rural parts of the County from an influx of shoddy construction and urban populations, and conservation of fish and wildlife. The County Board of Supervisors through its Committee on Planning and its Committee on Publicity and Development could meet some of these demands, but it had not the technical capacity nor the time to cope with most of them. When William Pearson came into office as Democratic supervisor from Liberty in 1954, he was named Chairman of the Planning Committee. From then on he pursued the creation of a separate Planning Board. The major impetus came from Title VII of the Federal Housing Act of 1954, which made Federal "701" funds available to local planning boards. Besides chairing the Supervisors'

¹Annual Proceedings of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Sullivan (Monticello, New York), 1958, p. 30.

Committee, Pearson was Chairman of the fifteen-man Planning Board created in 1956 and, ultimately, of the present Board, created in 1958. The Planning Board is handicapped, however. With Pearson as its chairman, it is widely considered a servant of the Board of Supervisors, despite the "non-political" status of most of its members and its attempts to maintain a non-partisan perspective.²

In 1959 and 1960, while the Planning Board was awaiting its "701" funds, it involved itself in two issues which constituted, in retrospect, perhaps its most important opportunities to affect county-wide public policy directly. These issues concerned the room tax and the location of a county airport (discussed in Chapter 4).

History of the Room Tax Issue

The room tax first became a serious political issue in Sullivan County in 1958, when the Supervisors' Finance Committee reported favorably on a hotel-room occupancy tax and several other non-property taxes. It was not originally a "political" issue: no party endorsed it. The Finance Committee Chairman, Joseph Raffa of Neversink, and two of the Committee's other three members were Democrats. But the measure could not easily be supported by the Democratic Party, whose

²See the Minutes, March 17, 1958, Sullivan County Planning Board, Monticello, New York (in the files of the Board). The original members of the present Planning Board were William Pearson; Max Brender, a poultryman from Liberty; Sidney Marks, a civil engineer from Liberty; Manuel Bogner; Milton Levine; Frederick Schadt of Jeffersonville; and Frederick Starck, a long-time advocate of planning from Callicoon. Bogner and Levine resigned before the end of 1959, to be replaced by Ambrose Washington and Ray Pomeroy of Rockland. Two "political" constraints on the Planning Board were that its chairman was appointed by the Supervisors, and its recommendations were not made directly to the Supervisors but to the newly combined Publicity and Planning Committee, of which Pearson was chairman.

strength lay in the resort towns, where opposition to a room tax could be expected. Thus the Democrats, although they had an 8 to 7 majority on the Board of Supervisors, could not command cohesive support for the proposal. The Finance Committee's main chance lay in a bid for "non-partisan" support for the room tax. Essentially this meant (1) establishing the legitimacy of the tax in some non-partisan way, for example through study and by consulting expert opinion; and (2) putting together a coalition of supervisors from towns with relatively weak resort elements, including the predominantly Republican towns along the Delaware River. These, particularly the latter, may not have seemed impossible in 1958. Only three of the fifteen Sullivan County towns are major resort towns. In the other towns, maintenance of a stable property tax rate is a more vital concern, partly owing to the interests of retired persons living on fixed incomes, who view taxes as a major threat. Faced with rising demands for county revenues, some alternative to the property tax seemed desirable.

The campaign for the room tax was carried on primarily by Raffa and his committee. In June, the Committee presented a preliminary report, and in September, with the County Budget Officer citing a \$400,000 increment in revenue needs, recommended that the room-tax proposal be put before the voters in a referendum.³ Faced with resort opposition, the Supervisors refused to call the referendum; but only after an 8-7 vote and extended public hearings and conferences with resort interests held by Raffa.⁴

³Times-Herald Record (Middletown, New York), September 5, 1958.

⁴Sullivan County Board of Supervisors, Proceedings, 1958, pp. 52.

The Beginnings of Planning Board Involvement

The Planning Board took up the room-tax issue in the Spring of 1959. (From its inception, the Planning Board had been concerned with applications for federal planning assistance funds. Throughout 1958 and 1959 it held a series of meetings with town and village governments, hoping to stimulate them to establish local planning programs.) In March, 1959, the Planning Board heard that its application for funds had been rejected. At this point, however, with a "head of steam" and a county budget allocation of \$20,000 to spend over the next two years, it was loath to stop operations, even temporarily. It decided to request an appropriation from the Supervisors for immediate projects, including an aerial mapping job, a preliminary land use policies plan, and a "study and report on finances and administration of taxing units in the county" to be undertaken by Dr. Troy Westmeyer of New York University for the fee of \$2,500 and to be completed by the end of 1959.⁵ Either the whole study or the consideration of a room tax appears to have been attributable to Raffa, either directly or as a result of his previous advocacy of the room tax.

The Planning Board had very little contact with Westmeyer while he was working on his report. Homer Millard, the Executive Director

⁴(cont.) 63, 64, 80, 84, 85, 89.

⁵"...on March 31 the Planning Board discussed this turn of events and decided that planning on a county level would be dead if nothing more were done about it until such time the county might receive a federal grant. It was considered vital to the county's interest no more time be lost in getting a specific program underway to satisfy the area's urgent need for planning." "A Summary of County Planning in Sullivan County," memorandum to the Sullivan County Planning Board, undated (in the files of the Board).

of the Planning Board, did supply Westmeyer with some data, but most of the consultant's contacts were with other officers and departments of the county government. The Planning Board paid little attention to Westmeyer. It was concerned primarily with a review of the aerial photography project coordinated by Robert Weinberg, a New York planning consultant, whom the Planning Board retained as an advisor.

In October, 1959, with a first installment of Westmeyer's report ready for presentation, the Planning Board also began a transition to more formal procedures. Millard had prepared a preliminary set of by-laws which the Board adopted; and it agreed to begin holding regular monthly meetings. Also, toward the end of 1959, the Planning Board made some changes in personnel, adding two new members and replacing a third. The two new members were Lyman Holmes, a bank executive from Monticello, and Benjamin Posner, a hotel operator from Fallsburgh. Until then, the Planning Board had been a combination of Liberty and rural interests. With Posner's membership, just as Westmeyer's report on the room tax was coming before the Planning Board, the resort interests got their first real representation on the Board, and the Board lost a large measure of homogeneity.⁶

⁶My information is not complete on the criteria for appointment to the various boards examined in the case studies. The Planning Board, when it selected its new members, stated that ". . . in this deliberation the board was guided primarily by character and ability and secondarily by selection from various parts of the county." (Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, November 20, 1959.) The first Planning Board had consisted of representatives from each town. The seven-member board established in 1958 probably maximized homogeneity by excluding most of the resort towns, but this was partly the consequence of selecting men who had long had an interest in planning. The resorts, according to most informants, showed little interest in the Planning Board until the threat of the room tax appeared.

County planning, I should add, proceeded apart from village efforts

Westmeyer's Report

The first consideration of the completed report by Westmeyer took place at the Planning Board's January 12, 1960 meeting with the new members present. The report was a two-part document of about sixty typed pages. Part I consisted of a factual account of county revenues and expenditures over the years 1954-1958, along with existing and projected assessed valuations; a list of possible local non-property taxes used in New York State; and a projection to 1964 of county departmental revenue requirements. Westmeyer concluded that "by 1964 expenditures seem certain to rise at least fifty percent above the 1958 level."⁷ He indicated, however, that the county share of this increased tax burden was only about one-fourth of the total tax revenues within the county boundaries. Projecting what he termed an "austere" county budget, he forecast a budget increase from \$3.9 million in 1960 to \$4.5 million in 1964. In addition to these minimal needs, Westmeyer presented a compilation of special projects deemed necessary for the county, including primarily roads and bridges, but also flood control expenditures, additions to county office space, county parks and recreation areas, and a new Sullivan County Community College.

Part II of the Westmeyer Report consisted of an evaluation of alternate methods of financing to meet the County's expected revenue needs and a series of proposals for reorganizing and improving the

⁶(cont.) in Monticello and Woodridge, and from the political organizations of Fallsburgh and Thompson.

⁷Graduate School of Public Administration and Social Service, New York University, A Study of the Government and Finances of the County of Sullivan, State of New York, prepared by Troy F. Westmeyer, 2 parts, October 15, 1959. The quotation is from Part I, p. 4.

county government administration. The first problem was the major focus of attention of the Planning Board and, later, of the Board of Supervisors. Westmeyer considered a sales tax, utilities service taxes, sales levies on specific items such as gasoline or cigarettes or alcoholic beverages, restaurant meals, amusement admissions, a motor vehicle use tax, a tax on automatic vending machines, a surtax on present state income tax, and a tax on lodging for transients (the room tax). He evaluated these possible taxes according to: the equity of the proposed measure; its probable effects on various groups in the community; closely related to the foregoing, its probable ease of getting public acceptance; its ease of administration; and the total revenue that it might bring in. From these criteria, he found some objection to most of the possible new taxes except for the room tax, which seemed the least disadvantageous alternative. To him it was ". . . in fact, difficult to understand why this tax was not utilized by the county long ago."⁸

Westmeyer's arguments for the tax had a common-sense tone. First, he thought the tax would arouse the least possible opposition because the people paying the tax would not be county residents. He admitted that the resort owners might not be enthusiastic, but, "Since they would not pay the tax themselves, but would only be agents of the county in collecting it, and could be compensated for the tax collection activity, they would, in all probability, be cooperative."⁹ Second, he listed other places, especially resort cities with large hotel facilities, that had used the tax successfully: Elmira, Long Beach, New York City,

⁸Ibid., Part II, p. 12.

⁹Ibid., Part II, p. 13.

Atlantic City, and the State of Vermont. Third, he estimated that revenues from a two-percent room tax would bring in between \$770,000 and \$936,000 annually in the years 1960-1964. This was more than enough to meet the expected county expenditure increases over the next five years. Westmeyer proposed that half of the room tax revenues be used to replace or reduce somewhat the county property tax, the other half to augment the county budget.

The rest of Part II of the report listed a variety of proposals for improving the county government. Westmeyer proposed a professional county administrator, the transfer of many town functions to the county, a professionally trained county planning staff, the institution of a capital budget and program or performance budgeting, improvements in reporting by the county departments and the Board of Supervisors, and a detailed administrative survey of the operation of the county departments. These proposals received little attention by either the Planning Board, the Board of Supervisors or the public in the controversy that arose over the room tax proposals and the support thus given those supervisors and others in the county favoring adoption of that measure.

The Planning Board took up the report, specifically the room tax proposal, at its January 12th, 1960 meeting. According to the Planning Board's Minutes, Millard

"...pointed out that the Planning Board had the choice of either accepting or approving the report. Accepting it, he explained, meant that the Board considered the workmanship acceptable while approving it meant that the Board agreed with the recommendations contained therein. No distinction between acceptance and approval was made at this time for the reason that Mr. Posner immediately made objection to the report's figures for probable revenue for a room occupancy tax. He asked how NYU obtained these figures and the director replied that the County Finance Committee had compiled

them from data supplied by the County Publicity and Development Committee. This data, he said, was based on an estimate very carefully worked out on the basis of such information as was available from hotel, bungalow colony, motel, rooming house and apartment owners. Mr. Posner replied that a tax would be uncollectable from such properties as could be rented for six months and that a true estimate of hotel occupancy would run perhaps slightly more than fifty percent of the finance committee's estimate. He described hotel facilities and how they would affect the net rate for lodging alone. He said that hotel executives such as Paul Grossinger, Milton Kutsher, and Sam Dan could help this board to arrive at a more accurate estimate.¹⁰

Westmeyer, in arriving at his estimated room tax revenue of \$770,000 to \$936,000, quoted data from a 1950 report, which he had modified. This report had been prepared by Millard as Publicity Director for the Finance Committee just prior to the Supervisor's final tabling of the room-tax proposal in 1950. One major attack on the Westmeyer Report is on the accuracy of Millard's figures for total available rooms. The figures had been supplied by the Hotel Association, among others, for publicity purposes. Every available room, no matter how attractive, may have been listed. The total number may never be filled, or if it is, only on peak weekends in July and August.

The Planning Board, after hearing Posner's objections, was unable to decide whether or not to approve Part Two of the Westmeyer Report. Posner had effectively cast doubt on the potential revenue from the new tax. Schadt

. . . said he would object to any Planning Board approval of the tax recommendation as long as there existed any reasonable question about potential revenue from a room occupancy

¹⁰ Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, January 12, 1960, p. 2.

tax."¹¹

Max Brender, on the other hand, had argued in favor of the room tax, and he responded to Schadt's statement by saying that ". . . any statement of a tax potential could only be an estimate, and that it would therefore be subject to criticism."¹² Then, according to the Minutes,

. . . Mr. Pearson and Mr. Holmes both expressed the opinion that under the circumstances we should not approve the report, but that we should merely pass it on to the Board of Supervisors. To this, Mr. Brender added the statement that it is not the province of this organization to say how the people should be taxed.¹³

The Planning Board then decided merely to submit the report to the Sullivan County Board of Supervisors with a covering letter stating that "this is not a report of the Sullivan County Planning Board and it is not to be construed as necessarily reflecting either the opinions of individual members or an endorsement of the recommendations therein by us as an organization."¹⁴

The Supervisors, however, rather than acting upon the report or rejecting it, referred it back to the Planning Board and also to the Finance Committee, at its January 18, 1960, meeting.¹⁵

At the next meeting of the Planning Board on February 10, 1960, the Board established several committees, including one on "Govern-

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., pp. 2-3.

¹⁵Sullivan County Board of Supervisors, Proceedings, 1960, p. 20.

ment (Taxes and Administration)," consisting of Schadt, Posner and Holmes. According to the Minutes, the Director explained:

That the Government Committee had been created because of the fact that the Board of Supervisors had referred the Westmeyer Report back to this organization for further study, as well as to the Supervisors' own Finance Committee. Although this produced some consternation, Mr. Brender acknowledged that it is the Planning Board's responsibility to study the Westmeyer Report and arrive at some conclusions which can be put in the form of recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.¹⁶

Schadt's committee on government met a number of times over the next few months. Its efforts were, according to Schadt, "frustrating."¹⁷ Nevertheless, the committee took a number of constructive steps to reengage itself with Westmeyer and question him on his procedures and his conclusions, in order to gauge the validity of his recommendations. The committee members met with Westmeyer at Paramus, New Jersey, on May 11. At this meeting they questioned him closely and then invited him to visit the county and talk with various hotelmen to see if any evidence could be presented to him which would make him change his opinion.

Posner questioned Westmeyer most closely. He had been disturbed that the consultant, in doing his research, had spoken primarily only to the County Budget Officer and to Millard; and not to any hotelmen, on whom the burden of the tax would fall. To Posner, a "scientific evaluation" meant perhaps a score of investigators spending weeks or months on the scene. Westmeyer's report, to him, had the status of

¹⁶Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, February 10, 1960, p. 2.

¹⁷Interview, Frederick Schadt, May 12, 1965.

a personal evaluation.¹⁸ During their April 25th meeting, the committee felt that even Westmeyer, when told of the source of the original room capacity estimate, seemed to back down from his proposal.¹⁹ The committee reported: "All three members of the committee reported that Mr. Westmeyer was very cooperative, anxious to substantiate or correct his estimate, and that he impressed them as being a very capable and sincere person."²⁰ But Westmeyer refused to back down from his proposal in writing, and his tour of the county, escorted by the Hotel Association, members of the committee, and various hotelmen, provided them with no encouragement. At the June 8th meeting of the Planning Board, Mr. Holmes, as a committee member, stated that

he felt Westmeyer would make no changes in his room tax recommendation unless he were impelled to do so by the discovery of factors which would effect a drastic change in his viewpoint.²¹

The Planning Board and its committee, while unable to obtain a change of heart from Westmeyer, could not find in their own minds authoritative arguments in favor of the room tax. The objections made by the hotels, and by their representative, Posner, were sophisticated and showed a familiarity with the hotel industry which the others on the Board did not have the expert knowledge to refute, even had they suspected that the hotelmen's arguments were biased.

¹⁸Interview, Ben Posner, May 17, 1965.

¹⁹Interviews, Frederick Schadt, May 12, 1965; Ben Posner, May 17, 1965.

²⁰Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, May 11, 1960, p. 2.

²¹Ibid.

In addition to their argument that the room tax could not in fact bring in the amount of revenue that Westmeyer had forecast, the hotel operators made other objections to the tax. Most important, they felt it would be disastrous for business. Structural changes in the resort economy had favored a very few of the larger hotels. The smaller ones had been in a decline. To survive at all they needed to make large capital investments. Those who had done so were understandably uneasy. They felt that much of their appeal was to an older, diminishing generation of a specific ethnic group. Also, a part of their appeal was in their lower prices compared to other areas. A room tax, they said, would "kill them." Their argument that "they know best" what will hurt them was difficult for a layman to counter.

Second, the resorts argued that it would be difficult to draw the line on what rooms should be taxed. Should the tax apply only to hotels, or also to bungalow colonies and motels?

Third, they argued that the room rate on which the tax would be computed did not represent a true picture of the actual cost of lodging. Instead, under the American Plan used by Sullivan County resorts, it was a charge for an entire package of services offered by these resorts: meals, the golf course, the swimming pool, and many other services. Therefore, only a part of the room rate should actually be taxed if there was to be a room tax.

Fourth, they believed that, contrary to Westmeyer's anticipations, the room tax would be extremely difficult for the resorts to sell to their customers. Since it was a tax only upon resort customers, it would be considered discriminatory by these customers in a way that a sales tax would not.

External Demands for a Planning Board Decision

While Schadt's committee and the Planning Board were finding it impossible to come to a conclusion on the room tax, the Board of Supervisors' Finance Committee had been preparing to introduce the room tax again. Schadt's committee received a request from Raffa for a report on the room tax by the end of the week of June 3, 1960, when the Finance Committee was scheduled to meet. Schadt stated to the Planning Board that

. . . his committee had been unable to complete its studies of the Westmeyer Report in any phase including the Report's recommendation of a room occupancy tax. He said he was aware of the Finance Committee's interests in an expression of opinion by the Board regarding that tax, but that progress in its study had been impeded by Dr. Westmeyer's vacation and a recent illness.²²

The Planning Board as a "committee of the whole" continued to debate the Westmeyer Report, both at that meeting and at a subsequent special meeting on June 22nd called partly for the purpose of discussion of the room tax prior to the Supervisors' final deliberations on the subject for that year.

In the absence of authoritative evidence for or against the room tax, or a consensus among themselves on the issue, the Planning Board members found themselves with several divergent opinions. Some thought it desirable that the Board take a position on the room-tax question. They acknowledged but minimized the arguments made by others on the Board that fault could be found with the recommendations of experts such as Westmeyer. For example, in the Minutes for January

²²Ibid., June 3, 1960, p. 2.

12th, 1960, the following exchange is recorded:

Mr. Brender said he favored a room occupancy tax after much deliberation, because it was the most equitable of all possible new forms of taxation, and that it would result in advantages to the hotels if they would cooperate. Mr. Schadt said he would object to any Planning Board approval of the tax recommendations as long as [there] existed any reasonable question about the potential revenue from a room occupancy tax. Mr. Brender remarked that any statement of a tax potential could only be an estimate [and] that it would therefore be subject to criticism.

But it was Brender's opinion that the Planning Board should not try to act as experts themselves. Their time was too limited and attempts to evaluate technical details would result in interminable discussion.²³

The following comments by Brender at the Planning Board's June 22nd meeting illustrate his position:

We were told to make a report on taxation. We would have done it at the last formal meeting except for the fact that additional information was requested from the consultant. Now that he has given us his opinion, which is unchanged from the original, his report is our report, and we should simply approve it.

It is impossible for me to set myself up as an expert in this field. If I were in the same position on a personal matter, I would hire someone with ability, and then evaluate his report. If it is felt our consultant's report is incorrect, we should hire another and then either accept or reject the new one's report.²⁴

Other members of the Board felt the need of exhaustive research support before making a recommendation on such a matter as the room tax. Posner emphasized the need for scientific study before recom-

²³Interview, Max Brender, April 13, 1965.

²⁴Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, June 22, 1960.

mending a measure as important as a room tax.²⁵ Schadt, as the preceding pages have shown, seems also to have felt the need for more exhaustive study by the Planning Board.

Beside these opposing views of the best possible action, there were other underlying conditions which nearly precluded the possibility of a decision. The custom of the Board was, in every case possible, to strive for unanimity on an issue before disposing of it. Planning Boards generally do not have vital interests in the subjects they consider. They do not see themselves as political bodies but as being somewhere above the fray. Possibly only Posner on the Planning Board really opposed the room tax; the others perhaps thought it more important to keep the friendly atmosphere of the Board than to settle the issue by taking a vote and abiding by a majority decision.

The effect on the Board of the "power" of the hotels has also to be considered. There is no evidence in interviews or on the various public records to indicate direct attempts to influence the Planning Board, except through Posner's appointment. On the contrary, the Planning Board was notable for its lack of resort representation; if anything, it represented the rural towns. Moreover, it was more or less insulated from outside pressures, even with Pearson as its chairman. Still, most people in the county have economic interests in the continued health of the resort industry. The hotelmen's arguments that the room tax would be economically harmful had to be given great weight, whatever their technical validity.

²⁵Interview, Ben Posner, May 17, 1965.

There is also evidence that the Board felt that it was neglecting other important matters. At its June 8th meeting, the following notes occurred in the Minutes:

The Director remarked that the report had been in the hands of the committee for about four months; that he deplored the fact that the room tax and airport issues had overshadowed everything else in the Westmeyer and Weinberg Reports respectively. That there was much more work for all committees to do on other report aspects, and that if we do not resolve the room tax issue plus making recommendations emanating from various suggestions in both the Westmeyer and Weinberg reports this Board could be subject to public criticism for such inaction. Mr. Schadt stated that conclusive action on the Westmeyer report could not be based on only four months of study, and that in fact the nature of the problems involved could well require interminable study. There was no dissent to this opinion, nor to others voiced in the same vein, and it was the general consensus that Mr. Schadt's committee has an assignment of the most difficult nature.²⁶

At the September 16th meeting of the Board, Holmes stated that the committee on government administration had "in his opinion lost time by concentrating on the room tax question even though it had gone into some study of government administration."²⁷ One of the things the Board and the committee on government most wanted to get on to was the rest of the Westmeyer report, apart from the section dealing with the room tax.

The Supervisors Again Take Up the Room Tax

Immediate pressure for a definite stand on the room tax was removed from the Planning Board when, on June 30th, a Finance

²⁶Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, June 8, 1960, p. 3.

²⁷Ibid., September 16, 1960, p. 3.

Committee's resolution proposing that the room tax be the subject of a referendum on the November ballot was defeated by a vote of 12 to 3. Only the three Democrats on Raffa's committee voted for the proposal. With some important exceptions, the political forces which produced this rejection of the room tax operated outside the Planning Board. An account of them, however, may give a basis for judging the extent to which the Planning Board might have had a role in the resolution of the issue.

Raffa, whose committee began study of the Westmeyer report in January, after the Planning Board had passed it to the Board of Supervisors the first time, apparently thought the room tax had a good chance of passing in 1960. Westmeyer, whom the Planning Board had commissioned to report on a room tax in the first place, had produced a favorable recommendation. There was still hope in the spring of 1960 that the Planning Board would decide to endorse Westmeyer's report. The vote to table the room tax referendum, in 1958, had only been by a margin of 8 to 7. And at that time party-line opposition to the room tax by the Republicans had not developed.

A further factor in favor of the room tax was the stratagem the Finance Committee ultimately adopted of making its resolution not for enactment of a room tax itself but for a referendum on the room tax to be placed in the November election. By June 20, 1960, Raffa's Committee was reported as "racing the clock in an effort to bring the proposed referendum to the floor. If the referendum is not passed by July 1, it cannot be placed on the November ballot."²⁸

²⁸Times-Herald Record (Middletown, New York), June 20, 1960.

Other factors, however, had been working against the room-tax proposal during the spring of 1960 and since the Supervisor's vote in September, 1958. Most important, perhaps, the opponents of the room tax had had time to cultivate support outside of the three or four towns where the largest resorts were located. Among those who had or could be convinced that they had vital interests in the defeat of a room tax, the most outspoken opponent of the room tax had been the Hotel Association. Its director, Ben Kaplan, was in a position to do research and formulate factual arguments against the room tax and to communicate these to other potential opponents of the room tax. For example, to counteract Westmeyer's argument that New York, Atlantic City, Elmira and the State of New Hampshire had successfully enacted room taxes, Kaplan could argue "In Binghamton, Buffalo and Syracuse local governments have rescinded or rejected the tax because of its detrimental effect on the hotels."²⁹

Apparently, between 1958 and 1960, the arguments of the Hotel Association and other resort spokesmen in the primarily resort towns had an effect on small hotel operators and bungalow colony owners in other parts of the county. The resort interests staged no mass meetings in 1960 comparable to the ones in 1958. According to Kaplan the resorts did not want a great deal of publicity on the room-tax controversy, feeling that widespread knowledge that the room tax was being considered in Sullivan County would hurt their image.³⁰

Against the evident opposition to the room tax by the resort

²⁹Ibid., June 23, 1960.

³⁰Interview, Ben Kaplan, May 13, 1965.

interest, there is no evidence of either vocal or behind-the-scenes support for the room tax. In fact, one of the curious things about the progress of the room-tax proposal in 1960 is the absence of active public support. The proposal seemed a product of Raffa's committee alone and except for its possible role in engineering the County Planning Board's involvement with the Westmeyer report, the Supervisors' Finance Committee seems to have taken few overt steps to cultivate public support for a room tax. No citizen's committees formed. In contrast to its actions in 1958, the Committee did not hold public hearings. An editorial in the Middletown paper on June 30th, the day of the Supervisors' vote, noted that

the Committee has thus far failed to lay a firm groundwork for a room tax. It has not shown that a reappraisal of property would not bring in the needed revenue through real taxes. It has not suggested a way of testing the effect of a room tax. It has not attempted to survey vacationer's attitudes toward the tax and it has not related the revenues from the levy to the advantages it could accrue from it.³¹

It is conceivable that had the resorts carried on a publicity-seeking campaign against the room tax, other public support of the room tax might have appeared in response; but the resorts did not carry on such a campaign.

Moreover, as far as newspaper coverage is concerned, the room-tax issue remained dormant until shortly before the Supervisors' vote. Newspaper coverage in Sullivan County is generally sporadic and part-time. In 1960 the Middletown Times-Herald Record, the only newspaper with county-wide coverage, made no reference to the room tax until the

³¹Times-Herald Record (Middletown, New York), June 30, 1960.

20th of June. By that time the question of a room-tax referendum was largely resolved. While the Record's first headline read, "County Room Tax Showdown Likely," a day later it had to report, "Room tax referendum seems unlikely this year."

Perhaps the critical factor working against the room tax was the position taken by the Republican minority of the Board of Supervisors. The minority leader ". . . branded the proposed tax 'discrimination against the hotel industry. This is a tax that would hurt the only major industry in the County. . .'"³² Raffa charged partisanship. He

. . . said the death blow was applied to the proposed referendum when Republican members of the board decided to inject "politics into a non-partisan issue." There were a number of Republicans on the Board, ". . . who said they were for the referendum a few weeks ago," Mr. Raffa charged. "They were suddenly instructed to vote in a solid block against the proposal."³³

Raffa later was reported as saying that the room-tax proposal "was killed by the pressure of the resort industry. . . The hotel people have pressured wherever they could," he charged, "and as long as this pressure exists it will be impossible to pass it."³⁴

But what seemed excessive pressure to the supporters of the room tax seemed legitimate opposition to the resort operators. According to a newspaper account,

All the resort operators questioned denied exerting undue or excessive pressure on the County Supervisors to kill the

³²Ibid., June 20, 1960.

³³Ibid., June 30, 1960.

³⁴Ibid., June 15, 1962.

referendum. Mr. Parker said, "We've had a loud voice in this issue but there have been no nefarious deals or excessive pressure." Mr. Grossinger said the Supervisors represented hotel owners as well as other constituents and it is only right that we have kept this case before the Board. The Hotel Association representative, Mr. Kaplan, said that protests by Supervisor Oscar Will (D., Callicoon) were unfounded. "Sure I had a drink with Mr. Will at the Monticello Raceway a couple of nights ago." Mr. Kaplan said, "Sure, we had a nice conversation on the subject but that is no reason to say we put pressure on him."³⁵

Finally, the failure of the Planning Board to endorse Westmeyer's report was a factor in the defeat of the room-tax proposal. Two Democrats, who ultimately voted against the referendum, made statements to the press that they would make up their minds how to vote after they heard the Planning Board's recommendation.³⁶ One Republican who switched from support of the referendum to a negative vote cited the lack of a Planning Board endorsement as his reason.³⁷ Three votes, however, would not have made the difference in the outcome. Probably a news story assessed the Planning Board's importance to the outcome accurately: "The failure of the Planning Board to take favorable action on a room tax removed the last ray of hope for approval of the referendum this year. No other influential support can be expected from outside the Board of Supervisors."³⁸

In the years since 1960 the room-tax proposal has failed to come to the floor of the Board of Supervisors. Posner and Schadt have

³⁵Ibid., June 23, 1960.

³⁶Ibid., June 21, 1960.

³⁷Ibid., June 30, 1960.

³⁸Ibid., June 24, 1960.

resigned from the Planning Board and since then the Planning Board has gone on record as favoring a room tax, but nothing has come from the proposal. Raffa, feeling opposition too strong, has declined to make another bid with the proposal which he still supports. He now feels that opposition to the room tax is most strong among those bungalow operators and small hotel owners who are hardest hit by the economic difficulties of the resort industry. Most observers feel that these resort operators will in time leave the industry. At that time Raffa feels there may again be an opportunity to propose the room tax.³⁹ The Hotel Association remains unified in its opposition. The consensus is that the room tax is one of the few significant examples of cohesive action by the Sullivan County resort industry.

³⁹Interview, Joseph Raffa, May 13, 1965.

CHAPTER IV

THE COUNTY PLANNING BOARD'S AIRPORT PROPOSAL

When, in 1960, the Sullivan County Planning Board proposed a location for a county airport, it made its most significant attempt to exert a direct influence on county policy. At about the same time, it tried and failed to make a recommendation on the question of a hotel-room occupancy tax, which had been referred to it by the County Board of Supervisors. Later, with some success, the Planning Board recommended the acquisition and development of state and county park lands, and the establishment of a county park board. Though the establishment of some new park lands is pointed to as one of the major achievements of the County Planning Board, these new public lands were paid for by state or local funds, not by the County, and they seem to have impinged little on the vital interests which opposed other planning measures. The question of a county airport site, in contrast, affects in important ways the most important sector of the Sullivan County economy: the resort industry. The story of this controversy illustrates the schisms within the resort industry and how this can reinforce a pattern of conflict among the towns in the county. Also, unlike the room-tax case, the question of an airport site location was one on which the Planning Board was able to work effectively with its consultant and arrive at a consensus on a recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.

Unlike the room tax, which became a dead issue after its defeat in 1960, the question of the airport location has remained more or less

alive. Although the Planning Board has retired from the fray, deliberations are still being continued today. Some informants say "Sullivan County will never have an airport," and others have indicated that the Board of Supervisors never seriously considered appropriating construction money, regardless of the site. Still, newspapers and official records as well as interviews indicated that, over a period of years, enough people have considered the airport enough of a possibility that a large quantity of time and effort have been expended in advocacy of one course of action or another.

Background

The establishment of airports and scheduled commercial air service has been promoted by resort and business interests in Sullivan County for several decades. Local support for a county airport stems generally from a belief that an airport and scheduled air service will produce economic development. Some parts of the resort industry have seen an airport as directly increasing the attractiveness of their facilities for large conventions and for increasing their accessibility to far-off population centers. Others have cited the various advantages and conveniences of quick air service to residents of the county.

Local interests in an airport are complemented by the interests of Federal and state agencies and the airlines. Mohawk Airlines, a regional local service carrier connecting upper New York State and New York City, New England, Canada and the Midwest, has held a franchise in Sullivan County since shortly after World War II, in the form of a "certificate of convenience and necessity" with the Civil Aeronautics Board of the Federal Government. The CAB has regulatory authority

over airline routes and airline entry into a market. Mohawk's unused franchise has been a temporary one, granted for periods of about three years. Each renewal has required a hearing before CAB at which testimony from the airline and from local groups and public bodies, including the County Board of Supervisors, has been taken.

The Federal Aviation Authority is concerned with the planning and administration of a Federal airport program by which matching funds are made available to communities for airport planning and construction, at sites approved by the FAA. Periodically the FAA has earmarked funds for Sullivan County airport construction. Its deadlines for county action, either to match the federal appropriation or lose it, have been stimuli for proposals dealt with by the Board of Supervisors.

Finally, the Bureau of Aviation, in the New York State Department of Commerce, has played a role in the Sullivan County airport-site controversy. This Bureau has supplied speakers in support of airports at Sullivan County functions. It also supplies some technical advice to local communities.

Advocacy of the Liberty Site

An account of the development of local interest in a Sullivan County airport and in scheduled air service can best begin with the construction, in 1946 and 1947, of the Grossinger's Airport, officially renamed the Liberty Airport, just east of the Town of Liberty.

Grossinger's is one of the two largest resorts in the county. The other is the Concord in South Fallsburgh. These two resorts lead the way in Sullivan County in providing the best possible facilities including golf courses, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, skating rinks, ball-

rooms and night clubs. More than most of the other resorts in the county, they host such large-scale proceedings as conventions, corporate meetings and group vacations.

Members of the Grossinger establishment produced practically the only recorded support for a county airport from the period when the Liberty field was built until about 1960. (The dominant spokesman was Milton Blackstone. Informants refer to Blackstone as much as to Grossinger's when discussing the advocates of the Liberty site.) The actions of Blackstone and Grossinger's, from the time of construction of the field until the present, appear to have been oriented towards obtaining financing for the enlarging of the field to accommodate the equipment necessary for scheduled air service and to improve it for private planes. In addition to continued public argument of the value of the airport to the local economy and as a convenience for the resident population, they took a number of steps to obtain, or to make it easier to obtain, public funds to improve the Liberty field.

First, in 1952 they obtained CAB approval of a franchise for Mohawk Airlines to operate scheduled passenger service to Sullivan County at the Liberty field. This entailed conditional approval of the site by the Civil Aeronautics Authority (the forerunner of the FAA). The condition was that substantial improvements in the field be made, including lengthening the runways for commercial aircraft. But possession of the Federal franchise was an important resource in later attempts to gain public backing for the county airport proposal. It added credibility and relevance to whatever statements might be made in favor of a county airport.

The original 1952 franchise expired in 1958. While the CAB was

attempting to determine whether to renew the franchise, local supporters of the airport cited its possible loss as a reason for county action to make possible the building of the airport.

The Liberty Airport Authority used a second factor as another lever in its attempts to promote county support: the procedure used by the CAA, and later the FAA, in granting matching funds to local governments for airport development. The "carrot" of a large Federal grant was thus available if the County would appropriate airport funds. Efforts to obtain local financing for the Liberty site were fruitless despite these devices. In 1956 the Board of Supervisors refused to match a Federal allocation of \$315,000 for improvements to the site, with only the Liberty and Fallsburgh supervisors in support of the measure. Blackstone succeeded in forming the Liberty Airport Authority (LAA) in 1957, but this group had difficulty raising funds. It was only in 1959, after opposition had been expressed by the Supervisors, that it was able to get state enabling legislation empowering it to seek public financing from Liberty and contiguous towns. But by this time, county apathy toward the Liberty Airport had turned, in some cases, to opposition. A new supervisor, Ralph Meyer, had been elected in Thompson, and upon taking office said: ". . .if a County airport were located at the Grossinger Airfield we may as well put the courthouse up on blocks and move it there also."¹

Advocacy of Competing Sites

Perhaps as a reaction to the successful effort to expand the power

¹Times-Herald Record (Middletown, New York), January 12, 1960.

of the LAA, positive efforts to establish claims for alternative airport sites in other parts of the county arose at the end of 1959. The opposition to the LAA in the town of Thompson was not only the result of unwillingness to commit county money, but also, probably, a competitive desire not to see an airport in Liberty. According to a "Memo on Airports" circulated to the Planning Board by Planning Director Homer Millard,

Sidney Orseck, former owner of the Monticello Airport was opposed to a County airport in Liberty. . . . The Grossinger family was opposed to development in the Town of Thompson. Other towns and resort interests were comparatively inarticulate.²

By early 1960, the Monticello Chamber of Commerce had organized a "Tri-County Airport Study Committee" to investigate joint financing of the airport by Orange, Sullivan and Ulster Counties. This was the first of several groups or individuals who, starting in 1960, began to advocate sites in Sullivan County as alternatives to the Grossinger's field. In January, 1960, the Monticello Chamber of Commerce asked the head of the State Bureau of Aviation to speak on a possible airport site in the Bloomingburg area, at the southern border of the county. It also asked the President of Mohawk Airlines, Robert Peach, "if the line would be willing to operate for a field in Sullivan County other than the Grossinger Airport."³ By March 1960, LAA had sponsored a committee of 16 Liberty residents to promote joint Liberty, Thompson and Fallsburgh

²Sullivan County Board of Supervisors, Publicity and Development Committee, "Memo on Airports," March 16, 1960 (in the files of the Sullivan County Planning Board).

³Ibid.

sponsorship of an airport.⁴ On February 2nd, Blackstone, speaking to the Liberty Lions Club, cited information from Robert Peach of Mohawk Airlines, saying that "Mohawk Airlines would be unwilling to serve Sullivan County with scheduled flight service unless an airport is located near the resort area."⁵ This countered the Monticello group's proposal for an airport on the Orange-Sullivan County border.

In the next few months Fallsburgh began to promote sites. An electronics firm, interested in a Sullivan County location, proposed to finance, jointly with the County, an airport in Fallsburgh. This proposal met a "cool reception" with the Supervisors' Publicity and Development Committee, since it entailed a county-imposed financing scheme: either a room tax or a sales tax. Some of the Supervisors felt that a room tax should not be used for such a narrow purpose. Others were willing to institute a room tax if the hotels would support it. The resorts, however, argued that they had ". . . been singled out to subsidize an airport [which] would not only benefit their business but practically guarantee the manufacturing industry for the county."⁶ Subsequently the Town of Fallsburgh explored the possibilities of financing the airport, but this apparently fell through.⁷ Behind all of this inter-town competition and mutual vetoing of sites, according to several observers, was the unwillingness of Grossinger's to support a Monticello or Fallsburgh site; the unwillingness of the Concord to support a

⁴Ibid.

⁵Times-Herald Record (Middletown, New York), February 3, 1960.

⁶Ibid., April 4, 13, 1960.

⁷Ibid., April 14, 1960.

Liberty site, and the unwillingness of the smaller hotels, who had little hopes for convention business, to support the airport for the sake of the few large hotels.⁸

Planning Board Involvement

Initially, the County Planning Board did not appear to be particularly interested either in determining the desirability of an airport or in selecting a site. In the spring of 1959 the Board learned that it would, for the time being, be unable to get "701" financing for a large-scale county planning program. It outlined a three-part interim program, to be financed solely out of county funds, which would include a land-use study to be undertaken by Robert C. Weinberg, a New York City planning consultant. There was no mention of the airport site. When Weinberg began his research, however, in the spring of 1960, the Planning Board had the subject of "transportation" high on its agenda, and Blackstone prevailed on it to include an airport site in the study. Consequently, a good part of Weinberg's report was devoted to an analysis of alternative sites.

Weinberg presented a draft of the section of his report dealing with airport sites at the April 13, 1960, meeting of the Planning Board. The report, after considering five alternative sites, ruled out three, presenting two alternative recommendations to the Planning Board. Ruled out were the Grossinger's and the Monticello sites, and one other. Weinberg selected two as equally appropriate: one called "Tri-town" in the southwest corner of Liberty near Thompson and Fallsburgh; the

⁸Interviews, Paul Grossinger, June 23, 1965; Albert Somit, March 22, 1965; Jack Levine, May 13, 1965.

other at Wanasink Lake in Thompson which the Planning Board referred to as the "Glen Wild" site.

Weinberg's criteria of selection were simple enough for a layman to apply, yet original in that they had never been used before in Sullivan County: he used several more or less measurable "standards" or yardsticks: cost of construction, accessibility to the main population centers, and conflicts of air traffic landings and take-offs with noise and safety requirements of neighboring activities were the major ones. He then judged each site by these yardsticks. The Monticello site had major conflicts with surrounding residential areas, particularly if runways were to be lengthened. The Grossinger's site seemed to be too expensive compared to the others. Others were ruled out on grounds of inaccessibility: this was not difficult since they were not near the Quickway (Route 17).

Weinberg's effort was labeled "preliminary." Site evaluations can of course be done with varying degrees of thoroughness and cost: the object is to spend just enough time on such evaluations as is necessary to determine that the differences between sites is sufficiently large so that an incorrect evaluation is improbable. What Weinberg did achieve was sufficient discrimination among enough sites, by criteria that the Planning Board could agree with, so that the Planning Board was satisfied that it would not be worth while to spend more time and money on more exhaustive investigation. Indicating agreement with Weinberg's report, one member commented that:

He was very gratified that this Committee has received from Mr. Weinberg unbiased opinion on all of the sites that have been publicly suggested so far and particularly because the Planning Board can concentrate on the study of sites that are

entirely practical for County airport development.⁹

The Planning Board then contacted Fletcher Ingals, an FAA engineer, who visited Weinberg's two sites and commented in a letter that even though the Grossinger's field already had FAA certification, this would not rule out a better site. While favoring the Glen Wild site from a "site development point of view" (i. e., construction costs) he thought Tri-Town to be better located geographically.¹⁰ On another occasion, he endorsed the workmanship of the Weinberg analysis very strongly.¹¹ The Planning Board, at its May meeting, chose the Tri-Town site, basing its recommendation on the Weinberg report and ". . . because of its more central location with reference to the resort industry."¹²

Reactions to the Planning Board's Recommendation

The Planning Board's endorsement of the Tri-Town site was a setback for the Liberty Airport Authority. Blackstone went before a Liberty group and "stated his doubt that Mr. Weinberg or his staff are qualified to make such recommendations."¹³ From Monticello, too, came attempts to amend the Weinberg report. Lee Lord, Manager of the Monticello Airport and a former airlines pilot, had written Weinberg requesting that he correct his report and include an endorsement of the

⁹Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, April 3, 1960, p. 2.

¹⁰Letter, May 4, 1960 (in the files of the Sullivan County Planning Board).

¹¹Letter, June 8, 1960 (in the files of the Sullivan County Planning Board).

¹²Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, May 11, 1960, p. 3.

¹³Ibid., June 8, 1960, p. 1.

Monticello Airport. The Planning Board refused to accept Lord's arguments and reaffirmed the Tri-Town site recommendation.¹⁴

At its June 8th meeting, despite the favorable evaluations of the Tri-Town site by Weinberg and Ingals, the Planning Board felt that, even granting the condition of a favorable engineering report, a recommendation that the County acquire a site and begin construction of an airport "could not possibly be accepted by the Supervisors at this time. . ."¹⁵ The Board then proposed a resolution for introduction by the Supervisors' Publicity and Development Committee proposing the County pay for an engineering survey of the Tri-Town site.

Pearson convened that Committee on June 13th and there, apparently unexpectedly, the Planning Board's request met defeat. According to one account,

A majority of members would not go along, principally because they could not recommend spending County money on private property. They suggested that options be obtained first, but did not suggest how or by whom. Therefore, a resolution prepared for introduction by that Committee never came up before the Board of Supervisors.¹⁶

The Planning Board had been caught in a dilemma. On the one hand, its reasoned arguments could be discredited by citing the need for more "technical engineering studies. On the other hand, the Board of

¹⁴Ibid., July 13, 1960, p. 1.

¹⁵Ibid., June 8, 1960, p. 1.

¹⁶"County Planner's Newsletter," No. 4, June 15, 1960 (in the files of the Planning Board). Pearson had prepared a letter to be delivered to the Supervisors with the Publicity Committee's resolution stating that the proposed engineering survey was requested solely to resolve the site location question with no implication that the County would be committed to expend funds for the airport. This ploy was, of course, unsuccessful.

Supervisors could argue that even engineering studies constituted a commitment to the airport that they did not want to make. It is worth noting that in contrast to its problems with the room tax, the members of the Planning Board itself felt little conflict or indecision on the question of an airport site even without detailed engineering studies. They felt it was a much more clear-cut issue. To them the terrain of the Grossinger's site was obviously prohibitively expensive to develop for commercial aircraft.¹⁷

Final Developments

Through the rest of the summer of 1960, a number of other developments took place in the airport controversy. In June, the New York Port Authority had made public a proposal for a jet-port at Pine Island in Orange County. Millard met with the Port Authority in New York on June 22nd and reported to the Planning Board that evening. Both the Tri-County Airport group in Monticello and Ben Kaplan of the Hotel Association were reported taking the position that the Pine Island jet-port solved the County's airport problem.¹⁸ By the time of the Planning Board's July 13th meeting the possibility of anything coming of the Tri-Town site recommendations was growing dimmer. One member, accepting the unwillingness of the Supervisors to finance an engineering survey in the Tri-Town site, proposed that the towns of Liberty, Fallsburgh and Thompson

should get together to consider how they might share the cost of an engineering survey. He said that just prior to this

¹⁷Interview, Sidney Marks, May 13, 1965.

¹⁸Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, June 22, 1960, p. 1.

meeting the Supervisors of the three townships had met in Mr. Millard's office to consider this very matter and that they had agreed as follows:

That the Hotel Association should be asked to advance the money for a survey on the basis that it would be reimbursed by the three townships when and if the survey proved favorable and the three townships thereafter agreed to joint financing of an airport. Mr. Pearson said that in as much as the Hotel Association had indicated certain hotels might be willing to participate in airport financing, such hotels might be approached successfully through the Association.¹⁹

Another, however, successfully argued that the Planning Board should reject hotel financing of the airport engineering survey, first because

if the request was not successful it would be all the more difficult to get Supervisors of three townships to endorse financing of the project on a tri-town basis. . . . [And second,] if the hotel men should agree, they would use their financing of a survey as an additional argument against a room tax, if that issue arises again.²⁰

The Planning Board then decided to ask the State Bureau of Aviation to inspect and render an opinion on the Tri-Town site; and to

. . . request the Board of Supervisors and Boards of the Towns of Liberty, Fallsburgh and Thompson to finance an engineering survey of the Tri-Town site, subsequent to a favorable report from the State Aviation Bureau, if and when received.²¹

Apparently no further support from the towns or the Supervisors

¹⁹Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, July 13, 1960, p. 1.

²⁰Ibid. The Executive Vice President of the Hotel Association explained the resorts' position: they feared that support of an airport would "box" them into a position of support for a room tax.

²¹Ibid., p. 2.

was given to the Planning Board's proposals. The failure of the Board's efforts for the Tri-Town site ended serious efforts by that body to promote airport development. According to Planning Board Minutes the Director, on July 13th,

said that due to the absence of any interim report on the Westmeyer Report [on the room tax, another issue which concerned the Planning Board at that time] and the refusal of the Publicity and Development Committee to recommend the appropriation of funds for an engineering survey of Tri-Town, he felt completely frustrated. . . .²²

There is no further record of discussion by the Planning Board on the promotion of the Tri-Town site that summer. Blackstone was apparently arranging hearings with the FAA for certification of the Liberty site; the Planning Board declined to send a representative to those hearings. In the fall, the County's master planning studies, which had been applied for earlier through the "701" program, were begun by the NYU team. The Board's attentions were diverted from policy questions with any potential for immediate impact. Since 1960, the Planning Board has taken little action toward the establishment of a county airport on any site. The major initiative has been by the Liberty Airport Authority, which sought financial commitments from the Board of Supervisors at the beginning of 1962 and again in the spring of 1963, with no success. The Planning Board gave no support to the Liberty effort, citing the prior necessity of examination of the Tri-Town site. In 1964 the Planning Board gave the airport a low priority in its capital improvement program recommendations.

²²Ibid., p. 3.

In 1964 the Supervisors set up a special Citizens Advisory Committee on Airports, which is now considering three sites including the Liberty field, but not the Tri-Town site. This Committee is carrying out engineering studies using county personnel. The Planning Board is not involved in this latest site study.

CHAPTER V

THE SULLIVAN COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE SITE

The controversy over the location of a permanent site for the Sullivan County Community College flared into the open early in 1965. It revealed sectional, ethnic, social, and political differences within the county, often dramatically. It was the most bitter controversy in decades in Sullivan County.

What is interesting is that, for eighteen months prior to massive public exposure of the conflict, the site question was dealt with privately (or semi-privately) by the College's Board of Trustees, who attempted to use reason, bargaining, and finally expert advice in selecting a site. The following account focuses on this attempt at "technical" solution of what was always, potentially, an emotionally charged sectional conflict. Necessarily, the background of the issue in the immediately preceding years, as well as the eventual resolution of the conflict (so far as this has occurred), will be briefly presented.

Background

Interest in obtaining a two-year community college for Sullivan County dates back to the late 1950's. New York State, at that time, began administering financial and other aid to counties desiring to establish community colleges. The State offered to match any donations by individuals or local governments; and contribute to tuition and operating expenses for institutions accepted as part of the State University system

by the Board of Trustees of the State University of New York (SUNY). Interest within the County centered in a citizen's committee sanctioned by the Board of Supervisors.¹ During the period from 1957 to 1962 this committee succeeded in gaining commitments of support within the County, and official sanction and financial support from the State.

The interest in a community college had several bases, and the nature of these affected the controversy over sites that later was to develop. An article in the Middletown Record's February 27, 1962 "Progress" edition summed up these interests:

The reasons to push for a community college were as many as they were varied.

To some, it may have been a matter of prestige. Others saw a boost for the economy, an increase in business.

A college in the county might also serve to stem the exodus of young men and women.

But, apparently the strongest impetus was simply a sincere belief in education.

A perception of the economic value of a community college was evident from the beginning. One local newspaper columnist said in 1957

¹The Supervisors set up a three-man lay committee and a Supervisors' Committee in 1957. See Sullivan County Board of Supervisors, Proceedings, 1957, pp. 81, 104, 105. The members of the Supervisors' Committee were Ralph Coddington (Thompson), William Pearson (Liberty), Henry Furk (Cochecton) and William Cairns (Mamakating). The lay committee consisted of Frederick Starck (Callicoon), Louis Blumberg (South Fallsburgh), and Henry Paul (Livingston Manor). Blumberg is Superintendent of Fallsburgh Schools and Paul is Superintendent of School District 1, including much of the southern half of the County. In 1960 the Supervisors created a new, larger committee. See Sullivan County Board of Supervisors, Proceedings, 1960, pp. 167-8. The members appointed were: Fred Starck, Henry Paul, David Panebaker, Frank Devlin, Joseph Carol, Paul Grossinger, Sidney Sussman, Milton Kutcher, Raymond Parker, Bernard Wiess, Lazarus Levine, Daniel Lamberti, Dr. David Sprecher, Dr. Eugene Ross, Judge Sydney Foster.

that

The best part of this community college idea is that such an institution could be put in the Western part of the county where something is needed to boost the economy.²

There was sentiment that the college would be "good for the County" economically, but probably this sentiment was at least matched if not overwhelmed in many cases by the idea that it would be "good for the town."

There was some support from the resorts, also on economic grounds. One resort operator on the citizen's committee noted that ". . . the community college would mean a terrific boost to the hotel industry."³

Through the end of 1961 the college committee managed to subordinate in the public consciousness the question of a site to the larger question of whether there would be a Sullivan County Community College at all. In January, 1961, Chairman Frederick Starck of the Committee urged citizens of the county to "make every effort to avoid a site hassle which might pit one section against another and interfere with the maximum push to get a college. . . ." And both Starck and Milton Kutscher of the committee said that ". . . any discussion of sites now is premature." They emphasized that the site would be selected by the Board of Trustees of the college, should one be granted Sullivan County.

²Bulletin Sentinel (Monticello), August 27, 1957.

³Bulletin Sentinel (Monticello), December 20, 1960. But the Hotel Association and most individual hotelmen did not join in efforts to put the college in any particular section of the County. One hotelman saw the college-site issue as one he "couldn't win" on, a tax liability if it came to his town.

Meanwhile the committee would have nothing to do with sites, and all site proposals would be turned over to the Board of Supervisors.⁴

Restraint on the site question dissipated as the steps necessary for state approval progressed. The committee's report to the Board of Supervisors recommending the establishment of a community college was presented and immediately unanimously endorsed on the 19th of December, 1961. This Supervisor's endorsement made formal the application to the state, and for the next several months there was nothing to do in the County, with respect to the community college, but wait. During this period, talk about the site began to increase. At the December 19, 1961, Supervisors' meeting, according to one newspaper account, "The site question was in the back of the minds of some members. . . ." A west-county supervisor asked if the report of the lay committee implied that a site had already been chosen.

Board Chairman Mortimer Michaels quickly assured him that no site had been selected, that it was a hypothetical statement and the question of site selection should be avoided at the present time.⁵

In January, 1962, a columnist noted that

. . . the location of the community college, if one comes to Sullivan, is occupying a great deal of speculation about the county. . . Many around Monticello. . . are hoping it can go near that village. . .⁶

⁴Bulletin-Sentinel (Monticello), January 31, 1961.

⁵Ibid., December 26, 1961. Supervisors' Proceedings, 1962, p. 92.

⁶Ibid., January 23, 1962.

Later in the spring, the New York State Board of Regents amended its master plan to include Sullivan County, thus accomplishing a further step toward a full commitment by the State. On May 1st, a local paper noted that "Now that a community college seems a bit more likely you can look for the infighting on a site to become more intensive."⁷ In June, there was speculation that Loomis, the location of a former veteran's hospital near Liberty, would be considered as a college location.⁸ At the end of June, the State Board of Regents formally amended the State's Master Plan for Education to include Sullivan County Community College, and Liberty Supervisor William E. Pearson, chairman of the Supervisors' Education and Community College Committee, invited "anyone with a proposed community college site for Sullivan County" to submit it immediately to his committee. Pearson said,

We want to be all ready with the site (or sites) to propose to the Sullivan County Community College Board of Trustees and the college president as soon as these officials are named and organized. . .

The newspaper account further indicated that

. . . The site question is expected to become a big issue in the county in the coming months. It has been played down because of the need for cooperation to get the proposed college in the state's master plan.

Now that this has been accomplished, proponents of the sites near Liberty, Fallsburgh and Monticello can be expected to go

⁷Bernard Wiess, Address to Board of Supervisors, February 11, 1965 (in the files of the Sullivan County Community College).

⁸Bulletin-Sentinel (Monticello), June 12, 1962.

all out in an effort to get the college located near their villages. . .⁹

A week later a paper headlined "PROPOSALS FOR COLLEGE SITE LAGGING." No new site proposals had come to light but it appeared that a good deal of preparatory work was going on. Pearson said that a citizens committee was at work in the Village of Liberty. Mortimer Michaels "indicated that he would be getting phone calls from each of the six villages in his township with site proposals." Narrowsburgh was still interested in pushing its site. Other sites were mentioned but the Supervisors

gave the impression that those with sites (or expecting to propose sites) were handling the situation cautiously.

It appeared that one reason this is so is because those looking for prospective sites do not want to tip their hands so property owners can up their prices. . .

Chairman Michaels at this time, however, noted that he felt the site question was "a little premature." The news item noted:

The college will be a terrific economic boost to the whole county, but, of course, it will mean most to the community or communities in its immediate neighborhood.¹⁰

By the end of August, 1963, there were reports of several site proposals in the making in Liberty and Fallsburgh though no specific offers had been made by these towns.

Perhaps they are awaiting definite approval of the proposed

⁹Ibid., July 3, 1962.

¹⁰Ibid., July 10, 1962.

Sullivan college. The state university Board of Trustees may take final action on the community's application in September.¹¹

In September, Pearson noted "Plenty of sites suitable for the community college in the Liberty, Harris, Bushmill area. . ." and ". . . said that there was a site committee working in the Liberty area. . ."¹² By October, a newspaper reported that

between 25 and 30 college sites have been proposed to the community college and education committee of the Board of Supervisors, . . . only site publicly offered for the college is the Narrowsburgh airport site. . .¹³

Naming the Trustees

With approval of the college by the State's Education Department in September 1962, the County Board of Supervisors, which had a Democratic Party majority of one, was faced with the necessity of appointing five college trustees. These, with four trustees to be appointed by the Governor, would have sole power to investigate and select sites for the college, subject only to a veto by the Supervisors. It was immediately apparent that sectional and political party representation on the Board of Trustees would be a major issue. It appeared that Mortimer Michaels of Fallsburgh, Democratic Chairman of the Board of Supervisors, might be a candidate for appointment to the Board of Trustees. Whether there was any chance that the Supervisors might unanimously appoint "non-partisan or non-sectional" figures as trustees, is doubtful. But

¹¹Ibid., August 28, 1962.

¹²Ibid., September 18, 1962.

¹³Ibid., October 2, 1962.

Michaels' appointment apparently aroused attempts to counteract his political power on the Board of Trustees.

Reports heard over the weekend were that the Republican minority of the County Board was holding up on submission of names for the five trustees to be appointed by the Board of Supervisors because of the political aspects of the possible Michaels appointment.

Among reports was one that Republicans would insist on appointment of an equally important political figure on their side of the fence (to the Board of Trustees) such as Monticello Mayor Luis de Hoyos.

There were also reports that some leading Republican attorneys at Monticello were interested in getting on the college board. . .

It also was learned that another possible appointee to the college board has political connections. This is Max Rubensahl of the Town of Neversink who is a Democratic Committeeman from that Township. . .¹⁴

There apparently was speculation that the move to name Michaels was a way to "head off possible naming of Liberty Supervisor William E. Pearson, chairman of the Supervisors' Education and Community College Committee. . ."¹⁵ Pearson had been prominent in previous activities to get a community college, but his sectional representation was for the Town of Liberty.

This maneuvering apparently occurred together with many demands from the localities for representation.

In addition to the reports of political implications and the prospective appointments, reports are heard that virtually

¹⁴Ibid., October 30, 1962.

¹⁵Ibid.

all large groups in the county are demanding representation.¹⁶

The Supervisors' responses to these pressures occurred under the shadow of subsequent appointments to be made by Republican Governor Rockefeller. It was reported that "the Governor has. . . left politics out of his appointment to such boards. . . ."¹⁷ It could still be argued that the appointment of a Democratic chairman of the Board of Supervisors to the Trustees invited the Governor to make a counter move if local Republican pressure was brought to bear.

When the Supervisors met to appoint the trustees in November, 1962, the Republicans did not dispute Michaels' appointment. Instead, they disputed the appointment of Neversink Democratic Committeeman Max Rubenzahl. They were defeated on two votes, by party-line majorities of 8 to 7.¹⁸ The locally appointed men were: Frederick Starck, Callicoon, one of the original leaders in the drive for the college; Miles R. Ellison, Liberty, President of the Community National Bank (later Marine Midland), in Liberty; Max Rubenzahl, poultryman and Chairman of the Neversink Central School District School Board; Mortimer Michaels, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors; Bernard Wiess, Monticello lawyer and former Special County Judge. Michaels and

¹⁶Ibid.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Through a parliamentary maneuver the Republicans were prevented from exerting pressure to swing the vote of C. Albert Sharkey, a Democrat from the Delaware River town of Highland. The Republicans unsuccessfully attempted to place in nomination the name of Mrs. James McGough, a popular resident of Sharkey's township, in place of Rubenzahl, Sharkey later proved to be a weak link in the 8-7 Democratic majority on the Board of Supervisors on site issues due to his residence in the western part of the County.

possibly Rubenzahl are the only "political" figures in this line-up. But all five had definite "sectional" interests.

Governor Rockefeller's appointments were delayed until April of 1963. They were: Luis de Hoyos, Republican Monticello Mayor; James Burbank, Narrowsburg; Edward Albee, former assemblyman and Roscoe businessman; Harold Gold, Fallsburgh businessman. De Hoyos is a strong Republican political figure in Sullivan County, perhaps the leading Republican power in the area. Again, however, sectional interests are predominant among the gubernatorial appointees.

With the appointment of the four trustees by the Governor the Board of Trustees was complete. The Monticello columnist noted

It ended a long and politically bitter struggle and one which was entirely unnecessary from both the Democratic and Republican standpoint. The time for action is at last at hand.¹⁹

Liberty elements were angry. An unofficial statement from members of the Liberty Businessmen's Association said

This organization believes the principle of fair representation was badly served by the Governor in his selection of four trustees for a Sullivan County community college.

They also objected to over-representation of Fallsburgh and Thompson, with two trustees each. Liberty had been given only one.²⁰

The College Trustees Consider a Permanent Site

Preliminaries. The Trustees organized on March 10, 1963.

¹⁹Bulletin-Sentinel (Monticello, New York), March 5, 1963.

²⁰Ibid., March 12, 1963.

Bernard Wiess of Monticello was elected chairman. One of Wiess' first acts was to secure the Trustees' approval that meetings would be held in executive session and that releases to the press would not be made by individuals but would be made by the Board as a whole, through Wiess. In the spring of 1963, the Board's time was largely devoted to obtaining a temporary site in South Fallsburgh, hiring a college president and staff, and getting under way with a curriculum so as to accept students the following fall. The question of a permanent site was first discussed at a meeting on June 20, 1963. By that time, a great many sites had been proposed. At its July 11th meeting, the Board was able unanimously to eliminate 39 of the 57 proposals that had been received at that time. During that summer, the Board made visits to various other community colleges in the State, but it agreed to postpone visits to inspect the sites until "... detailed proposals were submitted by the towns of Liberty and Fallsburgh."²¹ By early October, the Trustees had received site proposals from Liberty (Ferndale), Thompson (Dillon, just outside Monticello), and Fallsburgh (South Fallsburgh). The Trustees then voted to make inspection trips to the five major sites that had been offered at no cost. These included Dillon, Narrowsburgh, Ferndale, South Fallsburgh and Harris (between Liberty and Monticello).²²

In November, largely for public relations purposes, the Trustees held a public hearing on all sites offered for purchase. Only 7 of the large number of original site proponents (most of which had been private parties) appeared at the hearing, and the Trustees subsequently

²¹Bernard Wiess, Address.

²²Ibid.

eliminated all of these.

Thus by December, 1963, the Trustees were considering only sites offered by committees representing the various towns. There had been a transition from a situation where individuals were hoping to reap private gains, and perhaps prestige for their towns, by submitting sites to the college for sale, to a contest among public or semi-public bodies representing localities, offering free sites with a package of utilities and services. At this time such groups had formed in at least Fallsburgh, Monticello, Liberty and Narrowsburgh. From then on these groups acted as intermediaries between any private parties and the Board of Trustees. Instrumental or at least contributing to this transition was the Trustees' decision to eliminate all but those sites offered free. This, according to one trustee, was where they made their mistake, because it encouraged localities to compete with one another to produce the best free site.²³

The sites that were, at one time or another, considered seriously by the Trustees (in the period from November 1963 to February 1965) are shown in the accompanying map. They are listed here briefly, although some did not appear until the end of this period.

²³ Much of this case study is reconstructed from interviews with participants in the site issue on July 7 and 8, 1965. These were Richard Greenfield, Bernard Wiess, Max Rubenzahl, and Frederick Starck. I also gained a great deal of information from other observers in Sullivan County, in other interviews, on other occasions, some of which is included in this account.

From all of this, I have pieced together the account which appears here, for which I am responsible, not my specific informants. In the few cases where statements appear in quotations, they are illustrative, rather than authoritative, and specific sources are withheld. Written documents, where used, are cited in full.

Ferndale (Liberty). Located south of Liberty within sight of Route 17.

Loomis (Liberty). Located north of Liberty, site of a former Veterans' Hospital. Site is bisected by a power line right of way.

Lochmor (Fallsburgh). Located near the Village of Loch Sheldrake in Fallsburgh.

Loch Sheldrake (Fallsburgh). Near the Lochmor site. Offered in the spring of 1965.

Rossal (Bethel).

South Fallsburgh (Fallsburgh). In the village of South Fallsburgh, the site consists partly of an elementary school used as the temporary college site.

Dillon (Thompson). Just north of Monticello.

Harris (Thompson). A site on Route 17 midway between Monticello and Liberty.

Major Site Proposals for Sullivan County Community College



Narrowsburgh (Narrowsburgh). The site of the Narrowsburg Airport on the Delaware River.

White Lake (Bethel).

Deadlock Over Sites

The Trustees' investigations, through the end of 1963, failed to produce a consensus or even a bare majority for any one site. This dilemma, which had been hanging over the heads of the Trustees since they first began consideration of a permanent site, became obvious at their December meeting when, with the sites offered privately for sale rejected, the number of sites still remaining for consideration had been reduced to a handful. At this meeting several informal votes were taken where the Trustees stated their preference in order. The voting split on sectional lines, with no one site getting more than four votes. One Trustee remembers that it was apparent to all that sites around Liberty had the first choice. Sites in Fallsburgh had second choice, Monticello last. But it is certain that Liberty could have commanded no more than four votes: the support of Starck from Callicoon, Albee of Roscoe, Rubenzahl of Neversink, and Liberty's Miles Ellison.

According to one observer it is questionable whether any of the Trustees really thought a decision on sites by consensus was possible:

The Board was afraid to come to grips with the site in 1963. Site selection was a game to avoid a selection. No one really thought there could be a site by consensus. . .

Perhaps, says this observer, some trustees entertained a "romantic notion" that by inspection they might find a site so good that everyone could agree on it.

What happened in fact was that the Trustees found a great many good sites for the college. Later reports by consulting experts emphasized that differences among the best sites proposed in the county were slight and some of the sites judged relatively less desirable were in fact better sites than some actually chosen for community colleges in other counties. This made it more difficult for individual trustees to forget about economic and other benefits to their individual towns. A sense of obligation to a local constituency was probably more or less present among all the Trustees.

With the deadlock apparent at the end of 1963, two approaches seem, in retrospect, to have been available to the Trustees. One was continued bargaining, using new arguments and pressures or combinations of old ones, in an attempt to forge a majority for one site. The second alternative was to call on a, so far, unused decision-making resource: the authority of outside experts. This was the course favored by the Monticello trustees, particularly Chairman Wiess. Some of the four trustees who had favored Liberty sites felt that Wiess, seeing no support for a Monticello site, was attempting to bring in extraneous arguments to tilt the balance of power in his direction. But Wiess was able to argue on several grounds for the retention of outside assistance. First, the State University of New York (SUNY) staff had had experience with community colleges in other areas. Second, a deadlock did exist. Finally, the Trustees would want to retain an architect for the college anyway and his advice on sites might uncover new bases for agreement

that had not yet been perceived by the Trustees. According to Sullivan County Community College (SCCC) President, Richard Greenfield, who sat ex officio with the Trustees, the Monticello trustees "didn't know what sites the architect would favor."

In December, 1963, the Board of Trustees agreed to seek opinions on sites from SUNY and to interview firms for retention of an architect. The Liberty group, however, never agreed to accept the authority of outside experts as anything more than advice in making up their own minds. Rubenzahl, for example (while noting that Wiess had said, soon after the Trustees were appointed, that it would be necessary to hire an architect) never agreed that an architect would be necessary for site selection. Starck emphasizes that the Trustees, as far as he was concerned, hired site architects only to advise. He reserved the full responsibility for his own decision.

It seems apparent that the argument for using an architect to help in site selection was clouded in some Trustees' minds by suspicion that the Monticello trustees were advocating it for partisan purposes. Rubenzahl points to the beginning of 1964, when the argument for retention of an architect was made, as the point when sectionalism first became obvious on the Board of Trustees. Starck notes that it was at this point that the Trustees got into a "tremendous argument." For Starck, the problem started when "one of the other groups" wanted to eliminate any site which did not receive a vote in the series of informal ballots that apparently went on at the end of 1963 and early in 1964. Starck felt this was a "calculated strategy." He insisted that he had a preference order for sites, he wanted to be able to vote for his first choice without eliminating his second and lesser choices. He felt that

the procedure of eliminating the sites would work definitely to the advantage of one group.

Meanwhile, having received the consent of the Board, Wiess instructed Greenfield, who was acting as executive secretary of the Board, to send a letter to SUNY asking Executive Dean Paul B. Orvis and architect Otto Teegan to "visit some proposed sites so that the Board may benefit from the State University's views on the various alternatives."²⁴ Orvis and Teegan, after several postponements due to inclement weather, visited with the Trustees the Narrowsburgh, Harris, South Fallsburgh, Dillon, Ferndale and Lochmore sites on March 19, 1964. After the tour, the representatives of SUNY and the Trustees informally agreed upon four site criteria which eliminated the South Fallsburgh, Harris and Narrowsburgh sites. These were

1. That the site should be reasonably close to the center of population and geographical center of the County.
2. That there should be a minimum of 100 acres of open land.
3. That the site should be free of existing substantial buildings.
4. That there should be no unusual problems of terrain, soil drainage or bisecting public roads.²⁵

At its next regular meeting the Board "agreed to eliminate the South Fallsburgh, Narrowsburg and Harris sites in light of criteria that had been suggested by the State University officials."²⁶ At this point, in

²⁴Letter to Mr. Paul B. Orvis, Executive Dean, State University of New York, December 18, 1963 (in the files of the College).

²⁵Wiess, Address.

²⁶Ibid.

March of 1964, the Trustees were still deadlocked on sites. The Monticello trustees at that time favored Dillon; Starck, Albee, Rubenzahl, and Ellison still favored Ferndale in Liberty; the Fallsburgh trustees favored Lochmore; and Burbank still held out for Narrowsburg. At this point the Trustees were virtually unanimous on the desirability of hiring an architect. They agreed to interview a number of firms.

The attempt to narrow the choices down by use of the state officials went on although there were other signs that some trustees did not take the effort as authoritative. In February, Ellison noted that time was running out on site options and proponents of the various sites were getting concerned about the delay in picking one. But the Trustees agreed to await the visit by Orvis and Teegan.²⁷ In April, the Trustees formally adopted the site criteria agreed on in the meeting with Orvis and Teegan, but with dissenting votes by the Fallsburgh trustees who opposed the 100-acre minimum.²⁸

In May, Frederick Starck introduced a new factor in the discussion of sites that was to prove of major importance in future bargaining. This was the possibility of a \$500,000 gift by Grover Hermann, a native of the western part of the county and Starck's brother-in-law. Since the State of New York matches any local contributions toward community colleges, the gift had an impact of a million dollars. The gift and later details of the conditions attached to it were revealed in a climate of mystery and, to some extent, supposition. The Trustees themselves,

²⁷Board of Trustees of Sullivan County Community College, South Fallsburgh, New York, Minutes, February 20, 1964 (in the files of the College).

²⁸Sullivan County Community College, Trustees, Minutes, April 16, 1964.

in a number of cases, received communications from Hermann only indirectly and verbally through Starck. They often had to request of Starck that the offer and various conditions be sent to them in writing. The original conditions of the gift were either unclear as presented, or misinterpreted by trustees with specific site interests. In May,

. . . a news release was published, mentioned that Mr. Hermann had given the \$500,000 to the college as a gift for the building program, mentioning that the gift contemplated that the site would be in a country site in the approximate geographic center of the county over 150 to 200 [sic] acres in size and convenient to all residents.²⁹

The first written confirmation of Hermann's offer came in a letter from Hermann to Starck dated June 1st, which Starck presented to the Board. In the letter, according to Wiess, the conditions were

. . . provided his views on the location of the college and the type of the architect hired were met.

His letter stated that the primary interest was in serving the Delaware Valley rather than western Sullivan although he accepted the need for considering the centers of population. He suggested a location in the general vicinity of Briscoe, Kauneonga Lake-Whitelake area as being one that would satisfy him as an ideal site could be found there. He also mentioned in his letter that person of the caliber of Edward Durell Stone would be excellent as an architect. . .³⁰

In the ensuing summer of 1964, the Trustees agreed to hire Stone as the college architect. On July 30th, Stone and his son, Edward Durell Stone, Jr., whom Stone retained as a consultant on site matters, visited Sullivan County. With the Trustees, they inspected the Dillon,

²⁹Wiess, Address.

³⁰Ibid.

Lochmore and Ferndale sites, and two more which had been added: White Lake in Bethel and Loomis in Liberty.

After the inspection trip, the Trustees and the architects met. During the inspection Stone, Sr., had, in conversation, expressed a preference for the Loomis site. Stone, Jr., when this happened, emphasized that it would be premature, before reviewing the site brochures, to express a preference at that time. When pressed he said that if anything he would favor the Dillon site. In September, following the unanimous recommendation of the Trustees, the Board of Supervisors agreed to retain Edward Stone, Jr., on behalf of his father's firm, to make a site evaluation report. The report, dated September 21, 1964, concluded that

The Dillon site is the unanimous first choice of all personnel from the architects' office and from his office—with the Loomis very close as second choice (assuming the removal of power lines).³¹

Stone presented a map with this report but no detailed analysis.

On September 29th Grover Hermann visited the sites. Hermann, in a verbal report to Greenfield, stated that he preferred the Loomis site to Dillon. He was pleased with the retention of Stone as an architect, however. He wanted to avoid dictating to the Board and said that he hoped that the Board would make a wise choice. He did not specifically veto the Dillon site.

At this point there was some sentiment among the Trustees that Stone's survey was insufficiently detailed. Some had hoped that Stone

³¹Ibid.

would use a point rating system in evaluating the sites. In October, Stone, Jr., prepared a more detailed report incorporating a point rating system and a brief discussion of the differences among sites on each characteristic rated. The report noted that the ratings were based upon four sources: field investigations, brochures submitted by sponsors of the sites, the Sullivan County Master Plan, and guide lines suggested by the Educational Facilities Laboratory. The characteristics for which differential point ratings were given were the following:

I. Physical Properties

- A. Size and shape
- B. Flexibility and expansion potential
- C. General aesthetic character
- D. Vistas and views

II. Location and Environs

- A. Accessibility
- B. Relation to community services
- C. Protective zoning
- D. Land use and environs
- E. Cultural and educational amenities
- F. Recreational facilities
- G. Housing for faculty and staff

III. Physical Development

Site preparation

In his earlier report Stone had indicated that in many respects all the sites were equal. On each of the characteristics for which he rated differences, he rated each site on a scale of one to ten. In no case did he rate a site on any characteristic less than six. Among four of the six sites inspected there was a predominance of nine and ten ratings. There were only ten eights and one seven. Dillon came out best with a cumulative rating of 125 but Loomis had 122, Lochmor had 114 and Ferndale 115. The report again concluded that Loomis was a close second to

Dillon if power lines were removed. If these sites proved unacceptable the Lochmor or Ferndale sites were recommended as alternates.³²

Stone made no attempt to differentiate in the weighting among the characteristics. He apparently made no attempt to secure agreement from the Trustees upon the characteristics and their relative importance before doing his survey and report. In communications with the Trustees he tended to play down the importance of the point system.³³

While Stone, Jr., appeared ready to accept Loomis at least as a close second choice, perhaps reflecting the intuitive opinion rendered by his father on their first visit, other expert opinion began to swing toward Dillon. At the suggestion of Dean Orvis of SUNY, Jack Fitzgerald, the State Architect now serving in place of Teegan (who had retired), made an inspection of the sites. This was on October 22nd. Fitzgerald in a subsequent memorandum agreed with Stone except that he would have eliminated Loomis altogether

due to the major problem of having to relocate the power lines, and also because it is not in as good a location to serve the center of population as some of the others.³⁴

Fitzgerald was present at the October 22nd special meeting attended by Stone, Jr., and had expressed substantially the same comments personally to the Trustees. At that point Stone expressed no disagreement.

³²Edward D. Stone, Architect, and Edward D. Stone, Jr. and Associates, "Site Analysis: Sullivan County Community College," October 21, 1964 (in the files of the College).

³³Letter to the Board of Trustees, Sullivan County Community College, November 18, 1964 (in the files of the College).

³⁴Memorandum to Board of Trustees, Sullivan County Community College, October 26, 1964 (in the files of the College).

Now a reaction came to the Dillon site and to the architects' advice. On November 3rd, at a special meeting, Starck read a letter from Hermann opposing outright the Dillon site.³⁵ Hermann apparently said that in spite of the Stone report he favored Loomis and saw a lot wrong with Dillon. To this letter Starck added verbally the information that Hermann would also endorse the Ferndale site.

It is not clear whether, even then, all the Trustees were ready to believe that Hermann was vetoing the Dillon site. Wiess again questioned whether Hermann's gift was conditioned on the acceptance or rejection of any specific site. Michaels urged a delay on sites so the test borings could be made on Loomis, Dillon, Ferndale and Lochmor. The Liberty coalition however was pressing for a vote on the Loomis site. Rubenzahl, stating that it was appropriate for the Board to act on site selection, presented a resolution for the Loomis site. A motion was tabled five to four. Burbank voted with the Liberty group but Albee of Roscoe declined, in this case, to join and supply the necessary majority.³⁶

Various criticisms of the architect's report and recommendations were made. A November 3rd letter from Greenfield to Edward D. Stone, Jr., reported that "as I see it the Board hopes for a very detailed exhaustive site analysis, including a highly defined point evaluation system utilizing a great many criteria."³⁷ There was also concern among

³⁵Sullivan County Community College, Trustees, Minutes, November 3, 1964.

³⁶Ibid.

³⁷Letter to Edward D. Stone, Jr., November 3, 1964 (in the files of the College).

the Trustees that Edward Durell Stone, Sr., had not participated in the architects' recommendations. (It was Stone, Sr., who had originally favored Loomis the previous summer.) In a November 5th letter to Stone, Sr., Greenfield noted that

Unfortunately the Board did not feel that a definite decision could be made because many members expressed a desire for more information in the material obtained in your report. They felt that more detailed data could best be obtained via a meeting with you and Mr. Stone Jr.³⁸

Subsequent to the November 3rd meeting several trustees submitted questions in writing to be passed on to Stone, Jr., based on their review of his October 21st site analysis. Most of the questions dealt with specific items on the site rating point system. Stone, Jr., in a reply noted

It should be strongly emphasized that the rating chart is only a minor part of the site selection analysis. The greatest value of such a chart is that it formulates guidelines for orderly analysis and comparison of site characteristics.³⁹

He answered each question in some detail. In most cases he presented well-considered answers. The request for Stone, Sr.'s, presence resulted in a letter from Stone, Sr., to Greenfield noting that although he had not been able to attend the meetings he had been very much involved in the work. He noted that with respect to Edward Stone, Jr., "I have conferred with him on the site analysis to date and I am in

³⁸Letter to Edward D. Stone, November 5, 1964 (in the files of the College).

³⁹Letter to the Board of Trustees, Sullivan County Community College, November 18, 1964 (in the files of the College).

complete agreement with his findings and recommendations."⁴⁰

On December 17th, it finally became clear that the Hermann gift would not be available for the Dillon site. The Trustees received a letter from Hermann which definitely stated that his gift was available "only if those involved agree to a Loomis site at an early date."⁴¹ Michaels, perhaps hoping for a compromise, moved approval of the Lochmor site. An alternative strategy won, however, when the Board agreed to reopen consideration of the Bethel site, after which Michaels withdrew his resolution. So matters stood in deadlock through the months of December and January. Monticello Mayor de Hoyos was away on business and the Board agreed to defer a final vote until he returned.⁴²

In January, Greenfield had been in consultation with Orvis, Fitzgerald and Stone, getting their reactions to the last-minute changes in the various sites. The Rosall site in Bethel had been almost doubled in size and in frontage on Route 17B. The Trustees also wanted the architects' reactions to the Loomis site if the power lines crossing the site were relocated. Greenfield conferred with Orvis and Fitzgerald on January 29th, when the State representatives said that they would recommend neither the Rosall nor the Loomis sites to the State University Board of Trustees, due to their location away from the center of population. Relocation of power lines at Loomis, therefore, was no longer a

⁴⁰Letter to Richard Greenfield, President, Sullivan County Community College, November 17, 1964 (in the files of the College).

⁴¹Sullivan County Community College, Trustees, Minutes, December 17, 1964.

⁴²Ibid.

factor. Orvis stated that he would approve any of three sites named by Stone: Dillon, Ferndale or Lochmor. Fitzgerald felt that the Dillon site was "fairly superior." His second choice was Lochmor, Ferndale was third. Orvis favored Lochmor "in terms of setting, real and potential facilities, the park buffering protection, etc."

Greenfield also spoke to Stone, Jr., who again stated that Dillon was clearly superior but he declined to make any further statement on Loomis without careful study. A message from Stone, Sr., indicated that "with the power lines removed from Loomis they could not recommend its disallowance." However, he did recommend Ferndale over Loomis.⁴³

At a special meeting on February 1, 1965, with de Hoyos present, the Trustees finally selected the Dillon site. By this time the Trustees had been able to reach a consensus (backed by the threat of a State veto) on the recommendations of the experts that the Loomis and Rosall sites should be eliminated due to their off-center locations. This was done early in the meeting without dissent. The Trustees then, by a 7 to 2 vote, decided to remain in session until a site was selected that day. They had before them three sites: Ferndale at Liberty, Lochmor in Fallsburgh, and Dillon in Thompson.⁴⁴ Except for the trustees from the western part of the county, whose towns were disqualified because of location, there was one site for each of the major groups.

The initial voting resulted in the following tally: Ferndale, 4

⁴³Richard Greenfield, Memorandum to the Board of Trustees, Sullivan County Community College, January 29, 1965 (in the files of the College).

⁴⁴Wiess, Address.

(Ellison, Rubenzahl, Starck and Albee); Dillon, 2 (de Hoyos and Wiess); Lochmor, 2 (Michaels and Gold); Bethel, 1 (Burbank). After a caucus, Burbank, apparently seeing that Bethel would get no support, threw his vote to Dillon. According to Wiess his switch was "on the merits." It could of course be argued that the Dillon site was locationally advantageous to Burbank's town of Narrowsburgh. At this point the voting was as follows: Ferndale 4, Lochmor 2, Dillon 3.

Then, after a long series of ballots and caucuses, the Fallsburgh trustees switched to Dillon, giving it the five votes needed to win.

The Reaction from Liberty

In Liberty and other parts of the county the reaction to the Dillon selection was organized and strong. At the next Board of Supervisors meeting, on February 11th, held to consider the Trustees' recommendation, Liberty and Dillon backers appeared in great numbers, so that the meeting had to be transferred to a high school auditorium. Mortimer Michaels, who was Chairman of the Board of Supervisors (as well as a trustee) indicated that the Supervisors would hear all arguments and communications from each side. The meeting lasted all afternoon and late into the evening. Chairman of the Trustees Wiess was the first speaker. He spoke for almost an hour. After recounting some of the history of the Trustees' deliberations and emphasizing heavily the architects' recommendations, he began to list some of the Dillon site's advantages over the others. He mentioned the good record in Monticello in planning, zoning and urban renewal. He mentioned the advantages of having the college nearer the population center of the county in Monticello, and the stores and services there in the village.

Mrs. Dorothy Silverman, who several years earlier had led a successful campaign for a referendum on the village manager system in Liberty, headed a citizens committee against the Dillon site. In contrast to Wiess, Mrs. Silverman's presentation was brief. She presented the Supervisors with over 8,000 petitions collected in the previous few days. Against Wiess' arguments on expert judgment she argued representation: whatever the experts say, the people wanted no part of Dillon and her petitions backed her up. Subsequent speakers including a delegation of Liberty clergymen argued against the race track and the crime rate in Monticello. They emphasized that Sullivan County, a "rural county," could not afford to ignore and reject Hermann's million-dollar gift, not available if the Supervisors picked the Dillon site. The Monticello backers discounted the race track as an influence. It would be in operation mainly in the summer months when school was not in session and even then only at night. The Monticello group countered Liberty's clergymen by sending forth as speakers three clergymen of their own. Against the arguments that the race track would be a bad influence, the Monticello backers urged that "morality begins in the home." Against the argument that the county could not afford to lose Hermann's gift, they argued that "if you really want to have a college you have to be ready to pay."

At the Board of Trustees' next regular meeting, February 18th, the Liberty trustees moved that the Dillon site resolution be rescinded. Michaels and Gold of Fallsburgh, citing the public outcry against Dillon, switched their votes away from Dillon and the Dillon site was rejected by the Trustees. Thus the county was again without a decision on a site for the community college.

The Fallsburgh trustees, who had been unsuccessful with the Lochmor site, now proceeded to put together a parcel of land adjacent to it in the Village of Loch Sheldrake. In late April, Ellis M. Rowlands, Director of Community College Planning for SUNY (he had replaced Fitzgerald) visited the Loch Sheldrake site. In his report he noted that some of the sites with the lowest priority in Sullivan County are superior to sites that have been considered best for community colleges in other areas. He concluded "It is our opinion that Dillon site near Monticello and the Loch Sheldrake site are outstanding."⁴⁵

The Fallsburgh trustees, unlike the supporters of the Monticello-Dillon site, were able to win support from the Liberty faction. Partly this was because the Loch Sheldrake site was clearly located near the Liberty village and relatively inaccessible from Monticello. Moreover, the Liberty group, including members from rural, western and northern areas of the county, were perhaps as much anti-Dillon as they were in favor of any particular site. Loch Sheldrake was perhaps the least undesirable of the two alternatives.

At the June meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the Monticello group was able to engineer a reprisal against Liberty. Miles Ellison, the only Liberty trustee, was due to end his term on June 30th. Apparently under the leadership of Monticello's Republican Mayor Luis de Hoyos, six of the seven Republican supervisors with two Democrats from the river towns, substituted James Evers, Superintendent of School in Highland, for Ellison, and thus eliminated Liberty's

⁴⁵Copy of a letter to Paul B. Orvis, Executive Dean, State University of New York, April 30, 1965 (in the files of the College).

representation on the College Board of Trustees. A key factor was Evers' residence in a Democratic township on the Delaware River. This made it difficult for Albert Sharkey, a Democratic supervisor, to vote on party lines.

Just before Ellison's term expired, the Trustees met in a special meeting to accept the Loch Sheldrake site. What the Supervisors, who have the power to veto but not propose sites, would do was not clear as of mid-July 1965. The Trustees, by accepting deed to the site as a gift, may have forced the hand of the Supervisors more than if they had left the acceptance of the property to the legislative body. However, as the conflict has progressed there has never yet been a consensus on any site. Majority votes for one site have, so far, led only to change by maneuvering and regrouping of forces as new factors enter the situation.

CHAPTER VI

THE POULTRY WASTE DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

Unlike the issues recounted in the preceding chapters, the poultry problem does not revolve around a course of action argued in a partisan and public fashion in the county government. Its subject is a series of private disputes, between poultrymen and neighboring businesses and residents, where implications for private interests and public policy have emerged slowly and imperfectly over a period of years. The "non-political" nature of the issue has been partly due to the operations of an industry-oriented "board," the Sullivan County Poultry Waste Disposal Committee.

The basis of all the disputes has been poultry-manure disposal, particularly the odor, pollution, and psychological effects suffered by neighboring residents and businesses. These effects have been particularly intense during the summer months, since some of the neighboring activities have been resort operations—small hotels and bungalow colonies. Many resorts have long kept chickens, and a measure of farm activity has always added to the rustic charm of the Catskill resort area. The tension has come from a shift to large-scale operations by some poultrymen starting in the 1950's. This was made possible by a technological development whereby tens of thousands of birds could be kept in one building in cages. With this development and with a general drop in egg prices, large-scale operations became the only way one could survive in the poultry industry. Cages were introduced in a score or more

of poultry farms in the late 1950's and the early 1960's, and several very large-scale "floor" operations developed.¹ Figures change rapidly and are hard to verify, but a preliminary survey in 1965 indicated that the twenty-five largest operations in Sullivan County all had over 20,000 birds each, with 70,000 to 100,000 being more typical. Three operators owned between 200,000 and 300,000 birds.²

The problem of manure disposal has been made difficult both by the increased concentration of birds and by the method of waste disposal. The cage operations require cleaning very frequently. Moreover, the droppings are not mixed with sawdust or shavings as in the older "floor" operations and hence are much more liquid and volatile. In addition to the inevitable technical problems of waste disposal in the cage operations some producers, preoccupied with maximizing egg production, have neglected housekeeping activities that might have received more attention in the older type of operation. The result, in some cases, has been a continual stench around the new poultry houses. At a

¹The account of the poultry problem in this chapter is reconstructed primarily from interviews with public officials, poultrymen, and other residents of Sullivan County. In only a few cases have I cited these interviews for specific information, and except for these cases the authority for statements in this chapter is mine, not my informants. The persons interviewed are the following: Alfred H. Beck, Allan Sommer, Dr. Paul Ellis, Dr. Sol Dombeck, Dr. Edmund Rumble, Dr. H. Edward Miller, Dr. Felix Schwartz, Bernard Rosenberg, Abe Deutsch, Lazarus Levine, Stephen Oppenheim, Earle Wilde, Dewey Carr, Morris Gibber, Albert Cohen, Lawrence Batinkoff, Norman Nosenchuck, Bertram Mead, Lawrence Stier, and Curt Norbeck. In addition, interviews conducted primarily on other cases shed some light on the poultry situation. Robert Linton of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Cornell University, made available the results of his interviews dealing with other aspects of the poultry problem.

²Survey conducted by Robert Linton, Department of Agricultural Economics, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

minimum, there are periods when unpleasant odors are produced as the manure is removed from the coop. On occasional hot summer days, the odors may not dissipate normally and may drift as far as five miles, according to some residents.

Some of the poultry operations are located close to bungalow colonies or other resorts. A complicating factor making for conflict, in the early 1960's, may have been the declines in trade for the smaller bungalow colonies. But the pattern of disputes cannot be viewed as wholly a resort-poultry conflict of economic interests. The large hotels have not been involved at all until recently, and then in a very moderate way. The most vociferous resentment against poultry operators has come from apparently part-time resort operators and residents.

The pattern of conflict is similar in many cases. The poultry operator and nearby residents are "neighbors," who expect that the offending neighbor will act in good faith to correct the offense. With time, patience is exhausted and third parties, including public officials, are called in. At some point, the neighbor of the poultryman calls a lawyer and, with negotiations and public agencies unable to stop the offense, he goes to court.

The threat of adverse precedent in the courts was a major impetus for the Poultry Committee's establishment. This threat occurred for the first time in Sullivan County in 1960, when two bungalow operators in the Town of Thompson sought an injunction against the neighboring poultry farm owned by Samuel, Marvin, and Emanuel Fradkin.³ The case

³Interview, Lazarus Levine, Liberty, New York, June 18, 1965.

was in process for several years. During this time others in Sullivan County became aware of the poultry problem. Even many of the bungalow operators, who had previously tolerated the floor operations, began to identify odors as obnoxious and harmful to business. A number of new disputes came to light, and at least two of these went to court.⁴

One result of the general anxiety about poultry waste disposal was increased pressure upon the County Agent, Earl Wilde. The pressure came in the form of calls, both from poultrymen wanting to know what to do about their problems with their neighbors, and from bungalow operators and others who were offended by the poultry waste. At the same time, the Fradkin case had implications that were of serious concern to the agricultural leaders of the county. They were particularly fearful that, should a legal precedent be set against Fradkin, an avalanche of similar suits would be instituted by resort interests. But they felt that even if they should win, the publicity would cost them dearly. They seemed to sense a potential wave of litigation and perhaps even restrictive public regulations.

The non-poultry agricultural interests in the county are primarily dairymen. Their operations and ethnic backgrounds tend to differ from those of the poultrymen, who were mainly Jewish. Nevertheless, the poultrymen were able to argue that if precedents are set against the chicken business, the dairy business would be next, because the dairymen had also had their problems with manure disposal. Thus, by 1961, the key agricultural leaders were in agreement that "something had to

⁴Interview, Stephen Oppenheim, Monticello, New York, June 18, 1965.

be done."

With Wilde's encouragement, a Poultry Waste Disposal Committee was established. It included several poultrymen as well as other agricultural leaders and representatives of the feed companies (who had a stake in the success of the poultry farms, the cage operations in particular). Wilde was the chairman. The Committee first met in the fall of 1961. It is important that the membership of the Committee consisted of the leading poultrymen and other agriculturists. "Leading" to a large extent means "successful," and even though some successful poultrymen might have had some disposal problems, those on the Committee could not generally be accused of running sloppy operations.

The Committee had both long-range and short-range objectives. For the long run, it sought technical advice on economical ways to solve the problem of disposing the poultry manure. It requested help from Cornell University; in addition, it sought the best advice it could find, from the feed companies and from various sources throughout the nation. A large number of potential solutions were set forth. An interest in technical solutions to the manure disposal problem has continued throughout the life of the Committee. For the short run, the Committee's role evolved as one of a particular kind of public relations, whose effect was to mute individual conflicts as they arose.

Inadequacy of Existing Institutions

The Committee is filling a gap where a new technology has resulted in strains in neighborly and intra-community relations, and there are no institutions available to deal adequately with these strains. The existing institutions include, as a first line of defense, simply

neighborliness. There were also the local authorities—the town boards, planning boards, and health officers—and state agencies including the Board of Health and the Department of Conservation. Another institution is private litigation in court, and this will be treated in a separate section of this chapter.

Neighborliness. The deterioration of neighborly relations between the poultryman and neighboring residents or resorts is perhaps an agonizing process for both sides. In most cases, there is the precedent of a generation or more of living as neighbors with no conflict. There may have been some odors, but the neighbors have accepted these as unavoidable consequences of the farming operation, from which perhaps they also receive special benefits. (Farmers, particularly if they are somewhat diversified, can offer a number of services to rural residents and resorts. Manure itself makes grass grow green. Farmers also, if they keep cattle, will often cut hay, and with their machinery they are in a position to do numerous favors for home-owners and businesses nearby.) Neighbors, consequently, are reluctant to complain to poultrymen. They only do so under what they consider extraordinary provocation, usually referring not just to "odors" but to "an unbearable stench," which makes living almost impossible, sometimes to the point of causing nausea and sickness. Even then the normal procedure is for the neighbor to go directly to the poultryman in hope that he will, like a good neighbor, do something to remedy the situation. In almost every case the poultryman responds with some kind of action or with promises of action. The result, then, is usually a temporary easing of the situation, even if the poultryman does nothing. There is in any case a

tendency for complaints against poultrymen to be extremely sporadic. They almost never occur except during the summer and then only upon specific provocation. In most cases these provocations—usually odors—last only a few days. When the odor stops, the complaints stop.

The poultrymen are, of course, often operating under constraints which make it difficult or impossible to meet their neighbors' demands. Once a poultryman has installed the cage system it is costly to recon-vert to a floor operation. Moreover, it is probably true that the general pressure for low margins and high volume has forced the egg-producer to look for internal economies of scale rather than for friendly and day-to-day relations with his neighbors and the community. Rather than hire local help, for example, many of the larger poultrymen have employed lower-waged Puerto Ricans and Negroes, causing anxiety among the neighbors. The specialization of the modern egg-producing farm also makes the poultryman less able to help his neighbors in other ways. He does not need hay and he does not possess varied equipment to lend out.

It appears that even in those cases where poultrymen concern themselves with relations with their neighbors they now have to do this consciously rather than in the natural course of their business. But even this could be attempted only by the wealthier and better-managed poultry operations. There is a feeling, prevalent among some poultrymen, that most of the poultrymen's problems with neighbor relations stem from poor management of a few operations. Of course this makes sense. There continue to be stubborn cases, however, of poor management; in some cases even the best management practices cannot overcome the disadvantages of sunk cost in unfortunate locations or

unworkable manure-disposal systems.

Town Health Officers. When an offended resort operator or resident feels that personal consultation with a poultry operator has failed, his next action is likely to be an appeal to local authorities. This generally means either a town board or local health officer—a practicing physician who serves part time. Complaints may go directly to the health officer or directly to the supervisor or other member of the town board, in which case it may be referred back to the health officer.

But the health officer's ability to cope with the poultry odor problem is severely limited. One reason for this is the very limited applicability of the state and town health and sanitary regulations. No towns at present have ordinances dealing specifically with poultry or other manure. The Town of Thompson has a prohibition against dumping, intended for rubbish and garbage. Fallsburgh has a similar provision. The dumping is in fact one cause of poultry odor but it is only one of several. Moreover, a prohibition against dumping on private land can have effect only if one or several public dumping grounds are provided. An attempt to solve the manure dumping problem in Thompson—by providing public dumping grounds—failed when it was demonstrated that the liquid poultry manure could not be adequately covered over with gravel. The gravel always sank to the bottom and the poultry manure rose to the top. Second, the health officers serve as consulting experts to the town boards rather than as enforcement officers. Thus, they would be able to make a judgment whether a given behavior violated some standards set forth in a health or sanitary ordinance, but they are not available to answer all complaints or to make inspections to see that the regulations

are enforced. This authority rests with the town boards.

The Towns of Fallsburgh and Thompson have in addition to the health officer a sanitary inspector who can function as an enforcement officer. Upon receiving complaints the sanitary inspector can visit the offending poultry farm, make inspections and, if warranted, issue a summons to the poultryman to appear before the town board. In addition, the inspector may suggest specific actions to be taken by the offending poultryman—for example, spreading lime on manure deposits. The Sanitary Inspector in Fallsburgh receives an average of perhaps ten complaints a year, either directly or referred to him through the Supervisor. Most of these complaints refer to two or three "problem" poultry farms in the Town of Fallsburgh to which he makes repeated visits.⁵

Under existing local regulations and existing technical knowledge about the control of manure odors, few people hold high hopes for complete elimination of the poultry odor problem as it occurs in existing poultry farms in Sullivan County. The most that can be hoped for, in most cases, is some reduction in the odors and control of the timing of poultry manure handling operations and their resulting odors, to avoid the hottest days and the peak tourist week ends.

Town Boards. Most of the serious poultry-odor producers have appeared before their respective town boards to answer complaints. The town boards, like the health inspectors, are limited to the legal remedies that exist in their town ordinances. They do, however, speak with authority as the elected legislative body of the town and are empowered to act as boards of health. They have, ultimately, the authority to

⁵Interview, Bernard Rosenberg, June 23, 1965.

write new regulations, potentially punitive to the poultry industry, and they have used this power, at least as a threat, with some effect in the past. Their ordinary procedures, as health boards, are to consult with the poultryman, to ask him to take some measures to alleviate if not completely solve the problem. Ordinarily they gain at least temporary compliance.

In a few cases, complaints against poultrymen have been brought before town boards not by one or two individuals but by larger groups representing communities or neighborhoods, sometimes organized as committees. This has occurred in the Villages of Woodbourne and Woodridge in the Town of Fallsburgh. There is no evidence yet that these committees have ever formed the semi-permanent status that some of the other citizens' committees, on other issues in Sullivan County, have achieved. Nevertheless, it is at least arguable that these committees present a more potent political threat to the poultrymen than do individuals appearing before the board. This is a difficult point to establish. Individuals, of course, vary in their influence before any town board. The formation of a committee, and the arrival of large numbers of protestors at a town board meeting, may only reflect frustration at the possibilities of individuals' achieving action. On the other hand, such groups make the formulation of more general, as opposed to specific, case-by-case remedies seem more legitimate. These general measures may take the form of laws and ordinances prohibiting specific kinds of activities by poultrymen, or even regulating location of new poultry farms.

It is significant that where such groups have appeared they have been composed at least partly of residents of the area near the poultry

farm. Residents obviously have a different kind of stake in the poultry problem than do bungalow operators. The bungalow operator, if he gets complaints about the odor from his guests, faces a problem in doing business. He himself may be willing to tolerate the odors and his major problem is to pacify his guests. Some of his complaining may be only "going through the motions" in order to show the guests that he is "doing something" to solve the problem. On the other hand, if the odor problem causes him to lose clients or tenants, and if his business deteriorates over a period of years, he can claim a very real economic damage. This is a private damage to one sector of the economy. The solution to this problem may be sought in court. But what is involved is a private law suit for damages rather than an attempt to levy general restrictions on poultrymen. Moreover, when the bungalow operator's business is restored, the grounds for his complaint are taken away, even if odors persist. Furthermore, the bungalows as a political force are weakened by the fact that many of the owners are only part-time residents in the county. The Bungalow Association does not appear to be a potent political force at the county level, and probably not at the local level, in most cases.

The political power of groups of residents affected by poultry odors is probably greater. One informant mentioned a particular case as potentially very important, "because the people who complained were residents. They had built very expensive homes and they're not going to let an investment be hurt."

What worries the poultrymen is that individual conflicts between poultrymen and neighboring residents or resorts may be transformed into a "political" issue where generalized measures are proposed. The

courts, of course, are one line of defense against punitive regulations but they are slow and uncertain and they are a different category from the private litigation that has been the only legal action so far. Meanwhile, the towns have been experimenting with various legal techniques. Fallsburgh has been attempting to draft a poultry ordinance. Both Fallsburgh and Thompson have been considering zoning ordinances which would restrict the construction of new poultry operations to specific areas. This would make existing operations, outside the poultry zones, "non-conforming uses" with restrictions on expansion.⁶ The difficulties of administering such regulations in these towns, where government tends to be on a rather personal, first-name basis, make such ordinances very unpredictable in their effects; and this may be one reason for apprehension on the part of the poultrymen.

Even the mere fact that regulation is being considered has had effects on the poultrymen, however. In Liberty a resort operator, unable to get a poultryman to alleviate conditions on a neighboring farm, asked the Town Board for an ordinance to prohibit cage operations and to prohibit the transportation of manure on public roads. An ordinance was subsequently drawn up, not as punitive as this, but prohibiting dumping, transporting, and spreading of manure in the summer months and requiring the use of covered trucks. Even this amount of regulation may not have been workable: it required, for example, "effective means" to control odors during transportation or dumping of manure, a

⁶These ordinances, while generally acknowledged to be in preparation, were not available for review in 1965.

difficult thing for a regulating board or officer to establish.⁷ The proposed ordinance got opposition from the poultrymen. Wilde appeared before the Town Board saying the ordinance would ". . . put the poultrymen out of business." The ordinance was not enacted, but the Town Attorney terms it "an effective non-enacted ordinance."⁸ As a result of the proposal, the Poultry Committee put pressure on Liberty poultrymen to control their operations. It was an important part of Wilde's argument to the Town Board that the poultrymen were "doing something" about the problem.

State Agencies. Local authorities and individuals with complaints against poultry operations have had recourse to state agencies on occasion. Since it has no health agency, Sullivan County comes under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Health in Middletown. Neighbors of poultrymen have called in the State health engineers but the results were unsatisfactory. From the standpoint of those requesting help, it appeared that the agency either was not interested or had no authority to cope with the problem. The Department of Health feels that there are no adequate regulations to deal with the poultry problems. Moreover, as engineers, the Department personnel are frustrated by the lack of technical means for either setting standards or taking constructive steps to solve the problem.⁹

⁷"Town of Liberty Animal and Poultry Manure Ordinance," 1963 (proposed; in the files of the Town Attorney).

⁸Interview, Alfred Beck, June 18, 1965.

⁹Interview, Bertram Mead, N. Y. State Department of Health, Middletown, N. Y., February 10, 1965.

A second state agency to which poultrymen's neighbors have turned is the Department of Conservation. This Department is responsible for enforcing game conservation laws as well as for restricting certain specified practices such as stream pollution, which may do damage to fish. It has a vociferous constituency in sportsmen's groups, some of which are active in Sullivan County. The Department of Conservation, however, showed little interest in problems of poultry odors or even of alleged pollution, except in cases where dead fish could be found.

Apart from very occasional cases of dead fish in streams, there is little indication of serious interest on the part of either of these agencies, or other state agencies, in the problem of poultry waste disposal, at least in the perceptions of Sullivan County inhabitants. Participation by these agencies has, in at least one case, been occasioned by letter-writing campaigns by the neighbor of a poultryman.¹⁰ This activity even got a response from the Governor. But sustained regulatory activity by the State has not appeared.

Inadequacies of the Legal Process

The public and political response to the poultry odor problem occurs against the background of unsatisfactory or inconclusive results of private litigation in the courts. In Sullivan County, private suits for damages or injunctive relief would perhaps be a more natural course of action than recourse to public agencies, if it could be done within the means of those seeking relief. As it is, however, attempts to achieve damages or injunctions in poultry odor or pollution cases have proved

¹⁰Interview, Allan Sommer, June 17, 1965.

exceedingly difficult. As a result, there has been what seems to one attorney a "surprisingly small amount of litigation in poultry cases."¹¹ Neighbors of poultrymen have in many cases "called a lawyer." This act may, in fact, have a great deal of symbolic importance, since it marks an end of informal neighborly relations. The settlements, however, are arrived at informally in most cases, not in court.

The critical difficulty in achieving judgments against poultry operations, in cases of odor or water pollution, is that of establishing the facts in the case. No objective tests of the existence of odors have ever been introduced into Sullivan County courts. Testimony about the existence of odors can be countered by contrary testimony that no odor exists. Moreover, the sources of odors are difficult to identify. A poultryman can always claim that an odor came from some other location. The case of water pollution is almost as difficult. While tests of water can be made, tracing the source of the pollution is difficult. In the cases of both water pollution and odor, whatever objective tests are possible, they have not been widely employed within the county. Moreover, a certain amount of difficulty in coping with specialized legal cases, such as air and water pollution, is perhaps the rule among lawyers in Sullivan County. This is an area where most clients have limited resources and where most law practices are general rather than highly specialized.

The case of *Deutsch v. Fradkin* illustrates the difficulties of legal

¹¹Interview, Stephen Oppenheim, June 18, 1965. Only the three cases mentioned above, footnotes 3 and 4, have actually gone to court. For much of the legal background in this section, I am indebted to Oppenheim. The responsibility for these statements, however, is mine.

action against poultrymen. Even though an injunction was granted, the case can hardly be considered to have come to a satisfactory end for the bungalow operators affected. In the winter of 1961, a feed company financed the Fradkin Brothers in changing from a floor to a cage poultry operation. The operation provided for the dumping of the manure into a pit eight feet deep at one end of the poultry house. A bungalow colony was located very close to the poultry house on one side, and another was on the other side at a distance of about a quarter of a mile. The nearest bungalow owner, Abe Deutsch, immediately noticed strong odors emanating from the pit. By July of 1961 his tenants had complained repeatedly and Deutsch concluded that the Fradkins did not mean to remedy the situation. He presented, through a lawyer, papers seeking a temporary injunction against spreading or dumping manure on the poultrymen's premises. Later in the summer, the injunction was granted. The case got some newspaper publicity and other poultrymen and agriculturalists in the area, including three feed companies, became concerned that a precedent would be set encouraging suits against other poultrymen. At this point, the Fradkins retained a second law firm, which in turn retained a lawyer, experienced in poultry cases, from another part of the state. The Fradkins then gave Deutsch notice that they intended to appeal the case. At this point it became clear to Deutsch that the cost of fighting the appeal would be quite high. His lawyer gave him an estimate of \$10,000 and suggested that as an alternative he might attempt to get a settlement from Fradkin, making permanent the conditions of the temporary injunction. The settlement finally agreed on incorporated suggestions made by the Poultry Waste Disposal Committee, which Wilde had set up the previous summer.

There were appeals for financial assistance to fight the case further on both sides. The Fradkins appealed, apparently not successfully, for financial help from the Poultry Committee. The extent to which they were actually aided either by other individuals or by the feed companies is a matter of conjecture. It is possible, however, that they were able to present the prospect of financial backing, should the case go to court for further litigation, even if this potential never had to be tested.

Deutsch, on the other hand, felt he had no allies. He went to the Hotel Association, and the Association's Executive Vice President went before the Thompson Town Board. Deutsch himself went before the Town Board, even before having a lawyer. He said that the Fradkins were summoned, but there was no legal remedy available. The Health Officer came around to visit the Fradkins' farm, but apparently "nothing happened." Deutsch also called the operator of a large resort nearby, apparently with no substantial results. At one point, however, the Fradkins started construction of a new poultry house near this resort's golf course and, after Deutsch called the resort operator, "the equipment was out of there the next day."¹²

Like the Fradkin case, the case of E and D Estates vs. Marcus ended in a settlement out of court. A bungalow operator about a quarter of a mile away from the Marcus poultry farm claimed that his business was being hurt by odors and stream pollution caused by the Marcus Farm. Marcus' legal resources were apparently quite adequate to fight the case. He was able to thwart the motion for a temporary injunction and arrange a settlement with the bungalow operator, on the condition

¹²Interview, Abe Deutsch, June 17, 1965.

that in return for specified changes in practices on the poultry farm the suit for a permanent injunction would be dropped. Even though neighbors continue to complain persistently about the Marcus operation, the suit apparently has been dropped. This might be due in part to the fact that the bungalow colony's business, since the court appearances in 1963, has revived to its former level. Another possibility is that Marcus, even by running a somewhat offensive operation, is satisfying the bungalow colony's business interests; by letting his operations become more offensive, Marcus could ruin the colony again. The colony needs the poultryman's good will, and perhaps the modus vivendi established by the settlement is more attractive than the possible fruits of a drawn-out court fight.

The Poultry Waste Disposal Committee

The Poultry Waste Disposal Committee, established by County Agent Wilde and members of the poultry industry during the Fradkin case in 1961, has been in the background of most of the cases of conflict between poultrymen and their neighbors. In many cases it has played a prominent role. Its influence has come into play at various points in the conflict in cases of varying severity. But the Committee has always remained in the background, letting the settlement be formally sanctioned by legal settlement—by a town board or health officer, or by informal agreement between the poultryman and his neighbor. Until 1964, the Committee made few written proposals of terms of settlement. During the summer of 1964, when Committee activity reached a peak, it made written recommendations in a dozen or so cases in the form of letters to the parties to the dispute or the official agencies involved.

The Committee's usefulness rests partly on the fact that it possesses a virtual monopoly of technical knowledge about poultry operations. At any stage in a conflict the complaining parties—the health officers, the town board and other officials—continually face the question: "How can the poultryman modify his behavior to alleviate the problem, short of discontinuing his business?" The offending poultryman may or may not have the answer, but by the time the dispute reaches a stage where some third party is called in, confidence in his estimates has usually ended. Solutions proposed by persons not familiar with the poultry industry, however, are equally unconvincing. The number of schemes proposed is very large, but none has proved workable. One poultryman, who had been dumping in deep pits, was asked to cover the manure with gravel. The poultryman obliged; but the gravel sank to the bottom of the pit, displacing the manure which then began to flow toward the neighbor's property. There have been plans to incinerate, compost, or feed the manure to livestock, all of which have proved too costly or undesirable for other reasons. The Town of Thompson's plans to apply zoning to poultry operations met with the argument that it was going to force the farmers out of business. The Liberty Poultry Ordinance met with the same argument.

In this situation, the Committee's obvious claims to technical knowledge lend it some weight. It can claim, at least, to know how any farm can be brought up to standards of good management. Even though this may not be enough to solve the problem, it may alleviate it, and it gives the offended neighbor confidence that something is being done for him. Given an unwillingness on the part of the neighbor, or at any rate the town board, to seek overtly the elimination of the poultry farm, such

steps have proven at least temporarily useful. They have resulted in compliance, at least temporarily, by the poultryman and at least temporary cessation of attempts to seek redress by the neighbor. At any stage in the conflict, no matter what the formal agency involved, there is always some pressure felt to compromise to end the dispute. The proposals of the Committee tend to satisfy this pressure.

It is not technical competence alone that gives the Committee a measure of effectiveness. The Committee has striven to maintain an image of being above the interests of individual poultrymen. It is an elite, rather than a representative, group of poultrymen.¹³ It can claim to exert some influence over individual poultrymen, although some individuals have refused to accept mediation by the Committee. The representation of financial interests on the Committee, the source of capital by which most poultrymen have installed cage operations, must carry some implicit weight with poultrymen. Potentially such representation may be a constraint on the Committee also. The sources of capital have a stake in the financial success of individual operators, and it is conceivable that individual success can conflict with the goal of satisfactory handling of the manure outside the chicken house. This is difficult to assess, since the feed companies and banks are naturally reluctant to discuss any overt, or covert, policies or "strings" attached to financing

¹³The Committee membership included (in mid-1965) the following agriculture and business leaders: Lawrence Batinkoff, Arthur Tuttle, Morris Gibber, Max Brender, and Walter Lagerway, poultrymen; Albert Cohen, President of Intercounty Farmers Cooperative Association; Curt Norbeck, Agway Feeds; Ernest Morris, Purina Feeds; Miles Ellison, President of Marine Midland Community Bank in Liberty; Edward Chardavoyne, Production Credit Administration; Dewey Carr, a dairyman; and Herman Reinshagen, a truck farmer.

poultrymen. Certainly the overall success of the industry would be in the interests of the financiers, and this demands the keeping of conflicts below some level which would be disruptive—that is, productive of legislation which would hurt the industry.

The operations of the Committee seem to have been guided by a consciousness of the need to appear impartial. Wilde insisted, for example, on a rule prohibiting any member of the Committee from sitting in judgment of his own case. There has been only one case where a member of the Committee has been involved in a conflict; the Committee has taken no action on that case.

Very important to the operation of the Committee has been the presence of Wilde as a communications link to all parts of the agricultural industry in the county—with close contacts with sources of expertise and prestige at the New York State Agricultural College and at Cornell University. The Committee members cannot be in contact with more than special segments of the industry. As extension agent, Wilde can legitimately devote time to the Committee. Because of his position, he learns when poultry operations cause problems and he can keep in touch with the actions taken to solve them. Most other committees and boards at work in Sullivan County have no agent in such a position to channel information. It is difficult to see how the Poultry Waste Disposal Committee could process more than a fraction of the cases it does without the County Agent's participation.

Members of the Committee tend to depreciate, in interviews, their contribution to solving the "poultry problem." They characterize their activities as temporary expedients, and they point to the formally

authorized agencies and officials who mediate the disputes. For technical solutions, they point to the universities and industrial research departments. Moreover, the Committee has avoided publicity about its activities or about poultry conflicts. Beginning with the Fradkin Case, it felt that publicity could only hurt the industry by encouraging larger numbers of lawsuits and by stirring up support for public regulations such as zoning. To a remarkable extent it had succeeded in avoiding publicity prior to 1965. This situation is a result partly of the nature of news coverage and reporting in Sullivan County, which makes possible mutual "understandings" between news sources and local weekly newspapers as to what shall be published. Local officials and organizations have no such rapport with the only local daily, the Middle-town Times-Herald Record, in neighboring Orange County. But the Record's coverage is sporadic in purely local affairs, and little news of poultry problems has been reported in that paper.

The Committee's informal approach to settling conflicts case-by-case emphasizes a restoration of "neighborly relations." This approach was followed in the Fradkin case. A subcommittee was appointed to visit the Fradkin's farm and, also, to talk to the offended landowners nearby. It is important that neighborly relations had existed between Deutsch and Fradkin for a long time before the dispute which resulted in a court fight. Deutsch had apparently lost faith in his poultryman neighbor with the changes in the Fradkin operation over a period of years. Still, the Committee's problem was one of repairing these relations rather than beginning anything anew. They arrived at a series of recommendations for changes in Fradkin's operation that would make it

less objectionable to Deutsch. On the other hand, they tried to explain to Deutsch the nature of the poultry operation so that he would understand when odors did occur they were "necessary." Certainly one of the major effects of the Committee's action was to project the concern of the agriculturists and to give the offended parties the idea that something was being done about the nuisance.

The Poultry Waste Disposal Committee's worst fears, that through an adverse legal precedent a large number of private suits and perhaps punitive public policies would be instituted, have not been realized. This event has been averted, at least partly, by the actions of the Committee in several dozen cases over the last four years. In none of these, though litigation began in some cases, was a final settlement dictated by court order. The Committee was always able to arrive at some compromise solution and somehow to persuade the offended party not to carry on his suit.

But the poultry manure disposal problem in Sullivan County was, in 1965, far from resolved. The Waste Disposal Committee itself considers its present measures temporary expedients only. It hopes for some kind of permanent technical solution to the problem of disposing of the manure. A few, like Wilde, look to Cornell and others for more adequate administrative solutions than now exist. They do this with what appear to be mixed emotions. Their present method, through the Committee, appears to maximize the potential of the traditional ways of solving problems in Sullivan County, in dealing with this new problem resulting from the changing structure of both the resort economy and the poultry industry. No one knows how long the Committee's present

measures, emphasizing public relations, and maximizing neighborliness and understanding among the conflicting activities, will suffice. More drastic threats than court actions are now pending in the proposed zoning ordinances for Thompson and Fallsburgh. A few poultrymen continue to cause problems that the Committee cannot deal with. The potential solutions of a regulatory nature are, on the one hand, simple but almost confiscatory of the poultry industry. This is what happened in the case of the original proposed Thompson zoning ordinance. The possible administrative alternatives include the use of conditional permits or performance standards, or the use of detailed criteria for planned poultry development districts. These seem to require administrative and technological capacity far beyond the abilities of either the local planning boards or the Poultry Waste Committee, even if that Committee could be legally empowered to administer them. The present situation can be summed up by noting that a dilemma still exists for the agricultural interests. They can continue to live with the existing administrative forms, at a risk of a reaction via political measures restricting them in a way they do not desire. On the other hand they could support an administrative solution to the problem, requiring paid professional administrators, at the cost of relinquishing their traditional forms of political power. This might entail a significant change in the political system of Sullivan County.

CHAPTER VII

THE OBSTACLES TO IMPLEMENTATION OF EXPERT PROPOSALS

This chapter summarizes the case studies with particular attention to expert-board relations. It will focus, however, on more than the interaction of boards and experts. Also relevant are the behavior of the boards before and after the experts are on the scene, and the relations of the boards with the community. The statements in this chapter are confined to descriptive generalizations, and avoid explanations based on theories developed elsewhere.¹ In essence, these generalizations describe "obstacles" to expert authority. The first part of the chapter deals with factors that are largely internal to the boards and the expert-board relationship: "internal obstacles." These are, generally, the inequalities that arise between experts and boards and the related undermining of the technical grounds of expert authority. The second part of the chapter deals primarily with the processes by which external factors in the community inhibit the boards, usually through checking some types of innovation.

¹Although all the generalizations are suggested by the evidence of the case studies, all are more or less tentative. Some are based on evidence in two, three, or all four cases. Others are based on only one case, but stated as generalizations because they seem quite plausible. Others, still more tentative, are noted because they seem to be implied by the cases even though there was no direct evidence. These are indicated in the text by such qualifying terms as "it seems that," "apparently," and "possibly."

Internal Factors

The boards often seemed reluctant to rely, or to appear to rely, on expert advice. In three cases they undertook a period of independent research prior to hiring experts with, at most, informal, unpaid-for advice. The SCCC Trustees spent several months surveying sites before calling outside advisors. The Poultry Committee spent a great deal of time, individually and as a group, investigating proposed solutions to the waste-disposal problem. The Planning Board, before Weinberg was hired at the beginning of 1960, had met with several town boards to promote planning and it had met sporadically to consider the extent of the County's problems and to receive reports on the status of its applications for 701 funds. In general, the first outside experts to be called in were those who would come at no expense. One obvious reason for this is that to commit money to an outsider confers a degree of authority on him and takes away some from the board, for his recommendations can be repudiated only at a cost.

The Resources of the Boards. It is useful to think of the expert-board relationship as a process of exchange, where each makes demands of the other, makes commitments to the other, and actually exchanges goods, services, or psychic support with the other. What each party has to exchange are his particular resources.

From the point of view of the expert, the resources of the board are funds, promises of future contracts, information and confidence in the expert's ability. The expert needs all of these things and he will expend his own resources in order to get them. Funds are of obvious importance; in each case but that of the Poultry Committee, they were a

major part of the expert-board relationship. Promises of future contracts (implicit, for example, in a request that an expert help prepare an application for federal funds) were involved in the Planning Board's and the SCCC Trustees' dealings with consultants. Weinberg later received a role in the county-wide "701" plan and the Stone firm's college-site selection services were a prelude to architectural design work.

Confidence and information were also necessary for the experts to do their work. The importance of confidence is clear from two cases where it was withheld. In the room-tax case, Westmeyer's proposals lacked weight partly because the Planning Board had not developed confidence in Westmeyer. In contrast, Weinberg seemed to have a much stronger commitment from the Planning Board, including the promise of a future contract. Though SCCC Trustees gave consensus backing to Edward Durrell Stone, Sr., as the college architect, they did not extend this to Stone, Jr., and this weakened Stone, Jr.'s site recommendations. The Poultry Committee spent no funds for outside experts. It did, however, hear the advice of public experts, mainly representatives of the Agriculture College at Cornell University. What kinds of resources were supplied to them? There was no obvious commitment by the Poultry Committee. But the Cornell experts did have prestige from a long history of previous such contacts with agricultural groups and they value their tradition of service. In return for this, the University enjoys the support of most rural and agricultural interests in the state. By merely asking the Cornell experts in, the Poultry Committee was adding a little to the prestige of Cornell by showing "confidence" in Cornell. This had at least one revealing ramification: it enhanced the position of the agricultural agent, who was in a special position to use

the Cornell resources to help the agriculturalists in Sullivan County.

Local information was indispensable for Westmeyer, Weinberg and the SCCC site advisors. In the early stages of each of these research efforts the main flow of resources was from board to expert, at the cost of a great deal of time and effort from board members or other local sources.

Resources of Experts. The initial commitment of resources by the boards implies that the boards will receive something in return. The expert is understood to be ready to provide various contracted-for services and other things to the board. The specifics of what the expert shall do are usually worked out gradually (contracts, when used, are relatively vague). In working out the specifics, the boards first perceive what great inequalities exist between them and the experts in the realm of technical knowledge.² But the differences between board and expert (and thus, the dimensions along which inequality is perceived) occur on at least two fronts. The expert might be asked to supply such resources as information and analysis that the boards themselves did not have the time, training or experience to provide. He might, in addition, be asked to use his personal influence, or that of his position and profession, to help settle a conflict within the board or a difference of opinion between the board and other elements in the community. In the first case, the inequalities of resources between the expert and the

²The proposition that board members had a sense of inequality with experts is more tentative than most in this chapter. Few of the board members I interviewed mentioned such a feeling, and the notion that it exists is my responsibility, something I inferred from the interviews. The existence of unequal resources for technical decision, on the other hand, seems obvious.

board might be very great. In the second case, the expert can often be equal or at a disadvantage.

The obvious function of the expert is to provide "research" personnel, facilities and technique that the boards themselves do not possess. Weinberg, for example, conducted a tour of alternative airport sites, scanned topographic maps, and with his office staff he put in a good number of hours that the Planning Board could not spend. More important, he devised a set of criteria for judging the sites which the Planning Board members might not have thought of by themselves. Weinberg knew, from experience elsewhere, that his criteria included most of the important considerations that a community might want to consider, or might later regret not considering. This knowledge was almost routine to Weinberg; for the Planning Board, devising such criteria and testing each site would have been a first experience.

Westmeyer, similarly, provided time and expert knowledge to the room-tax question. The nature of the knowledge he supplied was probably further removed from "common sense" and the experience of the Planning Board than Weinberg's. The assertion that the experience of other localities, with a fiscal measure involving administrative reorganization, would apply to Sullivan County was probably a more difficult proposition for the Planning Board to accept or verify than Weinberg's assertion, for example, that "aircraft approaching over residential areas would be found undesirable."

Edward D. Stone, Jr., provided the SCCC Trustees with research on several proposed college sites using a "point system" which evaluated a number of factors, presumably by relating each to similar attributes of the other sites in Sullivan County and other sites in other locations.

The essential operation was one of factoring the attributes of a site and evaluating each one separately rather than evaluating the site as a whole. Stone, Jr., possessed experience for this task (he had seen more sites and more colleges than the Trustees); also he knew a great deal about the consequences of each site characteristic for the possibility of solving satisfactorily subsequent building design problems.

The Cornell experts possessed a great deal of knowledge of the technology for handling chicken manure. This knowledge did outrun that of most people in Sullivan County. The Poultry Committee, on the other hand, because of its specialized background, was probably in a good position to cope with its experts, compared to the other groups. Narrowness of orientation probably decreased the sense of inequality of resources in two ways: it was easier for the poultrymen to cope with specialized subject matter in their field; second, they could feel allied with "their" experts against the disparate interests threatening them.

Obviously, the experts were asked to provide much more than the technical services just described. The airport case is again instructive. The Planning Board, had it spent the time, could probably have conducted the analysis that Weinberg did. But it would not have been confident in its conclusion. It needed someone with experience to support it—tell if something had been overlooked. Thus what Weinberg supplied was, once the Planning Board accepted his technical work, authoritative support. This was very important to the Planning Board, since it was facing an outside source of pressure to pick the Grossinger's site.

Westmeyer, similarly, was supplying support for the room-tax partisans in the county; and his report seemed to some extent to rely on his status as an expert rather than a full, reasoned exposition of his

analysis in the Sullivan County case. (Such an exposition would have been very difficult and lengthy, given the complexity of the argument.) The Stone, Jr., site-evaluation report relied openly on the expert's "judgment" on each site characteristic. Moreover the Trustees, in asking specifically for the use of a "point system," were probably looking for the support such a technique might promise as much as for the reasoning entailed in it.³

Conflict. In the SCCC site case and the room-tax case, conflict in the community was reflected within the boards. The Planning Board avoided internal conflict in the airport case, as did the Poultry Committee. While the SCCC Trustees carried out their first investigations of sites, they avoided conflict for a time; even giving one observer the impression they were playing an elaborate game, stretching out the preliminary investigations of sites so as to avoid hard bargaining over what town would get the college. But even then a (covert) process of consultation was going on between individual trustees and their constituencies. The conflict was already in the open before the state experts and the Stones were called in. In the case of the room tax, the conflict within the

³That support might be something separate from reasoning and technique is implicit in these remarks. While a technical analysis by itself may provide support (as, perhaps, in the airport case), expert support may also come simply from an opinion backed only by the experts' reputation and status, plus some device, perhaps, like the point system. Thus it is conceivable that boards (and factions on boards) can demand technical resources, support, or both. It is also possible that these two kinds of contributions which experts make may conflict as well as complement one another. Acceptance of an expert's recommendations may, for example, be due to the expert's support function rather than his rational analyses. Too much in the way of analysis may expose expert-board inequalities at some discomfort for some boards, and consequently reduce the expert's support value.

Planning Board occurred after Westmeyer presented his report, on Posner's appointment as a member. In both cases conflict seemed preordained with the nature of the appointments to the boards. Posner was certain to be sensitive to the interests of the resort industry, and the Trustees certain to think of their own towns.

A note might be added here about the manner in which these conflicts took place. Both were more or less secret for a time, kept within the group. In both cases there seems to have been some ambivalence, if not outright embarrassment, that the conflict should occur at all. There was willingness to postpone a decision rather than let any faction lose. That is, there was an unwillingness to force a decision by means other than consensus. In the case of the room tax, the result was that the Planning Board made no recommendation until long after the Supervisors had ceased actively to consider the issue, and Posner and Schadt had left the Planning Board.

Conflict and the Expert-Board Relationship. Conflict in the board seems related to the expert in two ways: it may possibly be reinforced by expert-board inequalities; and it results in controversy over expert status at the expense of attention to expert argument.

It seems possible, from the evidence of the case studies, that expert-board inequalities reinforce divisive tendencies within the boards. The Monticello faction of the SCCC Trustees would have been in conflict with the rural trustees even if no experts had been called in. But it is plausible to argue that the technicalities of expert procedures in site selection were relatively novel, difficult to follow, and lacking in authority to the rural trustees, who had little past experience in using

experts. The Monticello trustees, on the other hand, had a professionally-trained village manager deeply involved in putting together a site proposal, and they were disposed to use experts. The inference from the cases is that conflict is reinforced because, though the boards are, as a whole, unequal to the experts, one faction may be less unequal than others. (The manifestation of this in the data, however, is not primarily in unequal abilities to understand expert arguments, but rather in unequal tendencies to accept expert procedures as authoritative.)

The room-tax case gives some support to this argument. Certainly, some members of the Planning Board had more experience in working with experts than others, and this may have been a factor causing some to be more disposed to accept Westmeyer's report than others. (Posner's efforts to discredit Westmeyer seem to contradict this. However, industry representation was an overriding factor in Posner's actions.)

A second respect in which conflict is relevant to the expert-board relationship is its effect in changing the demands boards make on experts: particularly, to weaken the merits of expert arguments as each faction attempts to establish or discredit expert status and authority, and thus capitalize on expert support. The initial demands from the experts in the two cases where conflict developed were for information and technical knowledge. But the experts' analyses, when produced, served only as foci for board conflict. Westmeyer singled out the arguments for the room tax and thus gave Posner and the hotel interests specific points to argue against. Stone, Jr., and the state experts, in narrowing down the number of acceptable sites, focused the conflict as one among the three major towns. By formally eliminating the

Narrowsburg, Bethel, Loch Sheldrake and Loomis sites they enabled the conflict to narrow temporarily to a Monticello vs. Liberty fight. Also, by listing site criteria and evaluating them by a point system, they brought specific issues of conflict before the Trustees.

In an atmosphere of conflict, the experts' technical arguments became irrelevant to the boards, who focused on the non-technical bases of expert authority. When Posner attacked Westmeyer's conclusion in the room-tax case, it was not so much because of his technique as it was because of his procedures: he hadn't talked to the right people; or his motives: he had his reputation to protect and couldn't back down. Kaplan did some research and cited some contradictory evidence. But this did not refute Westmeyer's technical argument completely. The major arguments against Westmeyer were not technical, but pertained to who he was and how he worked. Stone, Jr.'s position was undermined on similar grounds: a disagreement with Stone, Sr., on the first site inspection trip; and the fact that he had not been the architect hired by the Board nor did he have clear authority to evaluate sites.

Thus it appears that, in these two cases where the board was in conflict about what it wanted the expert to investigate or recommend, there was an initial tendency to seek the consultant's technical resources, but an ultimate rejection of these resources, accompanied by arguments against the expert's status and procedures. Also accompanying the rejection was "sniping" at the expert's technical arguments. Thus, Kaplan's partial refutation of Westmeyer's assertion that the room tax had met with success in other localities, and a few attempts to discredit the college architects' point system or particular judgments on some criteria. But this kind of criticism was not

accompanied by positive attempts to counter the consultant's arguments with a new technical analysis. Even when Starck hired Teegen to do a second, private site analysis after Stone, Jr., had recommended the Dillon site, Teegen gave an opinion, not a technical argument.

These attempts to evaluate technical arguments were a terrific drain on the time of the boards. The result was a drain on the consultants' time as well, until the experts, originally called in to solve a technical problem, became figures in intra-group conflict. They attempted to resolve the conflict by supplying new information or support for one side or the other, but really only supplying endless detail as foci for the conflict.

Expert Strategies. The expert is faced with conflicting demands from his board. This is perhaps most obvious when the board is in overt conflict itself. But even when it thinks it is in agreement it may place demands on the expert which can only partly be met. How these demands conflict and how the expert meets them can perhaps best be described in terms of alternative strategies for the expert in dealing with the board.

First, the expert has the choice of either emphasizing an appeal to his status as an expert or trying to establish the validity of his recommendations through technical argument. The first was probably more nearly approached by Westmeyer and some of the experts called in by the College Trustees. On the other hand, all the experts made some use of technical argument; and, of course, expert status depends to a large extent on the ability to make such arguments. The question is how much they relied on specific technical arguments in their relations with

the boards. Weinberg, in contrast to the others, was able to present his technical argument in more detail and with more effect to the Planning Board. The poultry experts were technical in their discussions with the Poultry Committee. Two things seemed to be responsible for this: first, there was consensus on the aims of the boards in these cases; second, it was less difficult for the boards to marshal the resources to cope with the technical arguments. In both the room-tax and the college-site cases, the problems were relatively difficult, and the inability of the boards to cope with the technical arguments may have kept the consultants from making many. A third factor is also relevant: the costs of technical analysis for the consultant. Most contracts were small in Sullivan County, and it would be much more desirable, from a cost standpoint of the consultant, to rely on "experience" and opinion or judgment, than attempt to find original data and make a thorough analysis.

A second strategy choice has to do with the extent of interaction with the boards. Interaction represents a cost to the expert and, potentially, a strain on the boards. A satisfactory relationship is difficult to achieve. The consultant on retainer could afford to go slowly in this process; but the expert under contract to produce had either to push a large amount of data and technique at his board, or perhaps be faced later with the charge that he had "by-passed" them. The latter consequence happened to Westmeyer; the college architects may have presented too much detail to the Trustees in the series of site evaluation reports. Another consequence of presenting too much detail might be a feeling of apathy on the part of the boards.

A third strategy choice has to do with an emphasis on the

consultant's product, contrasted with the process of continuing consultant advice. Both strategies can be executed well or badly and perhaps the ideal, from the board's standpoint, is to have both undertaken at once and done well. But limitations in resources (contract funds and personnel) tend to force the consultant to make a choice. Weinberg, given a modest problem, apparently filled both roles satisfactorily. Westmeyer emphasized product, as did the college architects. The Cornell experts were not consulted on a scale to allow them to do much of either: their general program (not confined to Sullivan County) provides both product and process.

These strategies seem to be more or less related to one another in practice. For example, the appeal to technical argument, low interaction with the board, and a product orientation probably occur together more often than not, and the opposite ends of these three continua probably occur together as well. But such a correspondence is not necessarily the case.

How External Factors Influenced the Boards

The boards were influenced by external factors, both by overt means and by limitations on the kinds of proposals the members were equipped to consider.

Overt Control of the Boards. The Board of Supervisors exerted overt control of the Planning Board and the SCCC Trustees by appointing members, pressing these boards to adopt issues, and rejecting attempts by the boards to dispose of issues.

By appointing Posner to the Planning Board the Supervisors assured resort representation and probably conflict on the room-tax

issue. In the case of the SCCC Trustees, the Supervisors' appointments (five of the total nine) helped assure a sectional split, as three of the five later formed a nucleus of the anti-Monticello faction. In another way, the appointment power was an influence: appointees were likely to be men of relatively high status who conformed to community norms and precedent. Sullivan County has its innovators, but they usually do not serve on county-wide committees and boards.

Adoption of issues was not a question before the boards, once they were established. The newness of the boards was important in this respect. The SCCC Trustees and the Poultry Committee were set up with their issues specifically mandated. The room-tax and airport-site problems were almost the first activities undertaken by the Planning Board, and it had no way to avoid them. Thus an important internal process—that of deciding whether to take up an issue at all—is largely lacking in these cases. It is performed instead by the community, usually the Board of Supervisors. The Poultry Committee has avoided this influence by remaining a special interest group.

Attempts to dispose of issues are most obvious in the two cases involving the Planning Board. In the case of the airport, the Planning Board supported Weinberg's proposal for the Tri-town site and advocated its further consideration to the Board of Supervisors. They found no support. The Supervisors' Publicity Committee felt that the specific measure proposed—an engineering survey to make sure the chosen site was feasible—would commit the County actually to build the airport, something they were not willing to do.

The Planning Board made two attempts to dispose of the room-tax issue. After a first reading of the Westmeyer report, the Planning

Board tried to send it to the Supervisors with no recommendation, only to have it given back to them. An obvious demand was made of the Planning Board, that it give some consideration to the issue—something the Supervisors were not willing to do. Later, when the Planning Board failed to make a recommendation after study, the Supervisors were ready to let the issue die.

In general, the efforts of the groups to dispose of issues can be viewed as attempts to conclude relations with the community first opened when the issue was adopted. Rejection of the Planning Board's attempt to dispose of the room tax indicated that demands by the community had not been met. The second time, when the Planning Board again failed to make a recommendation, it at least had supplied the opponents of the room tax with the argument that a body of distinguished citizens had spent considerable time on the issue without agreeing that it was a wise measure. This of course was supplied at some cost to the Planning Board. But the costs in terms of community esteem were probably less great in Sullivan County than they would have been in a situation where problem-solving ability was more highly valued—say, in the case of a professional planning staff.

Other Mechanisms of Influence. Whatever overt controls were exerted on the boards, the more important fact is that to a very large extent the boards were insulated from other political bodies; the more pervasive community influence operated through the members' attitudes. This insulation, on the one hand, came from the more long-range nature of the boards' issues (in contrast with issues handled by the Supervisors) and from the fact that few citizens and news media bothered to follow

their activities. Press coverage is very sporadic in Sullivan County. Where moderate interest in a board's activities exists, the news can usually be managed through the use of press releases. Even the SCCC Trustees had a long period when the pressure for information was minimal.

A second factor in the insulation of the boards is that they themselves valued it highly and helped maintain it. (The local planning boards, in positions somewhat analagous to the county boards of the case studies, unsure of the technique and legal intricacies of their tasks, prefer to exclude outside participation in their meetings until they "know what they are doing.") None of the county boards regularly held meetings open to the public, nor did they encourage observers during the period when the data for the case studies were gathered.

Within the boards, thus insulated from community attention for long periods, a process of stimulus and response goes on between board members, and between board and expert. Community stimuli are considered, perhaps analyzed and assessed in detail and in the light of further stimuli from the expert. In general, the boards could recommend almost any course of action they could make an authoritative case for. At least two kinds of constraints can be hypothesized. First, though the community did not specifically define how the boards should deal with their problems, there might have been tacit agreements about ways the groups should not deal with them. There is no conclusive evidence on the existence of such proscriptions in the case studies, and they seem to be vague and weak at best. In the case of the room tax, for example, there was no explicit "rule of the game" prohibiting a tax on the county's major industry. No one was sure at the outset that some such

arrangement could not be devised.

A second kind of constraint was the number of ideas of courses of action that seemed to have a chance of succeeding. Where were the boards to get their cues in defining their problems? Local precedent seemed the dominant source, pervading the attitudes of board members. External sources—state and federal agencies and outside experts—had always to take these into account. Board organization insured this situation by stressing representation of local citizens. The members brought their own knowledge of local precedent and consulted other local people in defining the problems before them. Only the poultry committee deviated from this pattern, since it had representation from two out-of-county feed companies. The cues from the state and federal agencies often came only after the boards were set up; in any event they had less chance to be heard. The main sources of outside ideas were the representatives of the Bureau of Planning of the New York State Department of Commerce, various planning consultants, officials of the State University of New York, and the Cornell agricultural experts. The County Agent represented a more or less permanent link between the poultry group and the Cornell experts. The executive secretaries of the Planning Board and of the SCCC Trustees, on the other hand, were not in a position to pass on outside cues very often. The situation was quite different from much problem-solving in urban situations, or at state and federal levels of government, where bureaucracies, whose staffs have lines of communication to professional organizations, often make policies.

The result was a situation where the only basis for internal board strategy in dealing with problems was precedents which had received

community consensus in the past. In fact, a dependence on precedent did seem a major attitude among board members—but a qualification needs to be made. The boards showed a great tendency to "innovate" in technical matters, and to search for "technical solutions" to the problems with which they were confronted.⁴ The Poultry Committee sought technical solutions to the manure disposal problem. The room tax seemed, until collection measures were contemplated, a technical solution to the revenue problem. The site evaluation efforts in the airport and college-site cases were attempts to solve, technically, the respective site-location questions.

Precedent dominated when the proposed solutions began to appear to threaten existing institutions. Despite possibilities for new administrative institutions that were suggested at various times in the cases, the boards avoided a frank avowal that problems entailed such changes. They were reluctant even to conceive of their problems as problems of institutional change. Change was always at best a "given," an external factor, to be comprehended, perhaps, but not consciously initiated. No one was willing to be responsible for instituting change consciously.⁵

⁴A "technical" solution to a problem implies changes in techniques and means, without alterations in the institutions which define the problem. Thus devices like deodorizers and lagoons threaten no changes in the institutionalized privileges of the entrepreneur, while administrative control does.

⁵Experts, of course, had different resources, and different attitudes from the boards. They were often the sources of innovation. But these differences tended to be nullified in practice. One reason is a tendency for experts to focus wholly on "technical" solutions, thus having only accidental roles as advocates of institutional change. Westmeyer's role was probably accidental in this sense, and his report seemed to assume the institutional changes involved either did not exist or could easily be coped with locally.

There was, of course, an equilibrium of existing institutions. The room tax threatened a change in the relation of the hotels to the public sector in the county, where the hotels would be subject to a new and unfamiliar form of regulation and accounting. The consequences of such a change were perhaps more frightening to the hotels (and the Planning Board) than the quantitative impact of the new tax. The defeat of the room tax preserved a kind of equilibrium between the inarticulate interests of property tax payers and the resort sector of the economy.

The airport-site proposal threatened the balance between the large and small resorts, between the resorts and the property tax payers, and perhaps even between the two or three major potential beneficiaries who, because of the site location, stood to benefit unequally. The half-hearted attempts to devise a scheme relating the room tax to the airport as a financing device represented, perhaps, an additional threat—an institution which, used once, could be used again. Its advantages, moreover, would be spread unequally, or at best, the fairness of distribution of its advantages would be unpredictable.

The college-site controversy really was the focus for a struggle over economic dominance, which Monticello desired and which several other localities opposed. Technical decision procedures threatened to help the Monticello interests, and so they were opposed, too.

The poultry conflict concerns three interests: the poultry industry, the resort industry, and increasingly, home-owners and neighborhoods. Here the relationship among the three groups is being threatened by concentration in the first two and by a quantitative increase in the third. As in the other cases, an institutional innovation (zoning), proposed to solve the problem, represents another kind of threat.

Summary: A Natural History of Issue Development. There are obvious dangers in moving from a series of generalizations, themselves tentative, to an even greater generalization concerning the sequence in which phenomena of issue development occur. Essentially what such a generalization attempts is to relate the phenomena of the case studies to time, and time is perhaps too crude a variable. Nevertheless, bearing in mind these reservations, the following general sequence can be suggested:

1. A problem arises which existing institutions such as the Board of Supervisors find difficult to resolve. A board adopts the issue and considers it independently, for a time, in isolation. Conflict may appear in the board here, or later.
2. At some point an expert may be called in and begins to apply technical analysis to the problem. This can entail various degrees of interaction between expert and board, a "product" or "process" approach.

At this point the expert is neutral, and the expert-board relationship revolves around the technical analysis. Information may approximate an equal flow both ways as the expert gathers data. Policy implications of the expert's work are unclear, the time for action is far off, board isolation is high, and whatever inequalities in time, training, and experience exist between expert and board, they are not a matter of concern.

3. With time, the isolation of the boards tends to diminish, resulting in an increase in the more overt forms of community influence. One symptom of this is the beginning of

newspaper coverage and, sometimes, news leaks. Once secrecy is broken, the "problem" gives the appearance of escalation. Various interests begin to take positions in public, and the Board may feel pressed for a decision. Now, the policy implications of the expert's work may become very important to the boards. Also, inequalities become important if the expert makes a policy proposal that all or part of the board finds difficult to accept or one which will arouse opposition in the community; for it will be embarrassing to have to support or to argue against a technical argument for board members who are not used to them and who do not have experience with them.

4. Whether or not experts have previously been called in in their technical capacity, a process of calling in various kinds of third parties to conflicts begins, emphasizing their support capacity. If experts are already on the scene, their function is transformed from the technical to the support function. At various points in the case studies this support function was carried on by Westmeyer, the college architects, Mohawk Airlines, Grover Hermann, the Cornell experts, and others. The main characteristic of the support function is not that it is always intended solely as support, but that it is always used primarily for support.
5. With technical argument available on all sides of a conflict, serving primarily as support for contending parties, the technical merits of expert advice tend to be dampened. One way this happens is that with conflicting technical advice available,

each new expert proposal adds to rather than lessens the uncertainty before the boards and other non-technical parties. This uncertainty may even help legitimize compromise.

6. Frustration and apathy develop as the boards are unable to implement or even agree on expert advice. Attempts to dispose of the issue may fail, however, unless this can be done at no expense to other institutions such as the Board of Supervisors. If the board admits defeat, then the Supervisors can fail to act at little cost. The governing principle seems to be the minimization of disruption in the centrally important community institutions such as the Supervisors, even if the boards have to suffer.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SENSE OF INEQUALITY: FURTHER EXPLANATIONS

The analysis of the preceding chapter yielded descriptive generalizations which amount to a list of obstacles to the implementation of expert advice in the rural fringe situation described in Chapter I. What possibility is there that from these generalizations we can proceed to the beginnings of an applied theory of the obstacles to the implementation of expert advice? This would help reduce the present inadequacy of conception of the implementation process in planning and other technical fields.

Such an enterprise, based on the case studies in the preceding chapters, would be highly speculative since there has been no opportunity to test hypotheses except by reexamination of data and impressions gained before the hypotheses were made. Moreover, there are many themes in social science relevant to the generalizations of the preceding chapter, and to bring them all to bear, eclectically, would take many more pages than I want to write. However, it would be possible, I think, in one chapter to demonstrate how one of the generalizations of Chapter VII can be related to other theories: that is, the sense of inequalities in technical resources which I attributed to the boards in the preceding chapter. This "obstacle" to implementation may be a strategic one, particularly in rural fringe areas. In these areas political conflicts over the goals of public policy occur together with a scarce resource base, which makes the inequalities of local boards with outside experts

particularly great.

This chapter consists of three parts. First is a series of working assumptions about community structure and its influence on the variables of the expert-board relationship I want to examine in detail. Second are hypotheses concerning the expert-board relationship which seek to explain some of the obstacles to implementation pointed out in the preceding chapter. Third is a brief comparison of the Sullivan County data with a small sample of expert-board relationships in an urban setting.

Working Assumptions

The following statements are assumptions which I am asking the reader to accept as "givens," or parameters, so that we can focus on the expert-board relationship and its inequalities. They are, I think, not controversial; at least they are plausible, and I do not want to give much space to them here. They are necessary since processes such as the relations of experts to boards are influenced by other things, including both the nature of their motivations (assumption 1) and their external relations with the surrounding social organization—in this case, the community (assumptions 2-4). They set the context for the variables discussed later, so the reader can compare the expert-board relationship in Sullivan County with that in other contexts.

Motivation. The members of the boards described in the case studies went through a great deal of time-consuming and sometimes frustrating effort, often with little result. What rewards, then, did they receive? If rewards are motivating factors, then the nature of the rewards received or expected should be an important factor determining the form

of the expert-board relationship.

My first assumption is that the board members were motivated by a desire to maintain or increase their status. I define high status as a position where others perceive a person as valuable or potentially rewarding to them, and are willing to give him, in return, esteem or such tangible rewards as business or political support.¹

Two other motivating rewards might have been present: the contribution to self-esteem resulting from participation on the boards, and the satisfactions of self-expression at the meetings. Both of these rewards can surely be identified in the board proceedings; my only argument is that they are generally not as crucial as status in motivating expert-board behavior relationships. This thesis does not explore the possible case of the expert or board member who, motivated by self-esteem in conflict with the demands of status in his community or profession, devises an unorthodox and perhaps unpopular, but nevertheless wise, course of action. The approach here is consistent with a concern with obstacles to the implementation of expert recommendations, though it does not touch on some other things the expert or board member needs

¹For the sake of brevity, this statement jumps over a body of propositions to one that seems significant for the argument of this chapter. A more basic statement is Homans': ". . . we shall use status to refer to the stimuli a man presents to other men (and to himself). . . to refer to what men perceive about one of their fellows." The kinds of stimuli which Homans is referring to ". . . include the kinds of reward he receives, . . . the kind of activity he emits, and anything else about him, like the kind of clothes he wears or the kind of house he lives in, provided these stimuli are recognized and discriminated by other men." See George C. Homans, Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1961), p. 149. My definition goes on from this to assert a willingness on the part of others to exchange esteem and other resources with a person of high status. This, also, is supported by Homans, especially, pp. 145-153.

to make wise decisions.

The Community. My second assumption is that status can be thought of as a quantity: the amount of rewards other persons will offer in exchange for the resources status signifies. This quantity, moreover, can be related to the richness of the source of status—the others who perceive a person.² There is thus an economy of statuses in a community, so that each person has a net worth, which is drawn up or down as rewards are exchanged. In fact, this "status economy" can be viewed as partly reducible to the common-sense notion of an economy. I define status with regard to general resources: a person has resources that others want and need and in return for which they give him approval and esteem and ultimately, status. The resources which confer status may be money, property, information, votes, inherited position, the ability to grant social approval.

Of course, these resources are not all things that are commonly thought of as produced and distributed by the economy. But all are employed in exchanges among people, and if we can discern changes in the things usually regarded as "economic"—such as money, property, labor, and capital—then we can make rough statements about the other kinds of resources. For example, property may be worth esteem, but if a person loses property, he has less to exchange for esteem.

²E. P. Hollander describes status as credits which can be accumulated, drawn upon, and used up. He describes these credits as ". . . an accumulation of positively disposed impressions residing in the perceptions of relevant others. . ." See "Conformity, Status, and Idiosyncrasy Credit" in E. P. Hollander, ed., Current Perspectives in Social Psychology (New York: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 429. The article appeared originally in Psychological Review, Vol. LXV (1958), pp. 117-127.

Because of this, we can assume that the distribution of status is partly reducible to the economy, that is, the distribution of the more tangible forms of wealth.

My third assumption concerns the sources of status, the others who perceive a person as potentially rewarding. As long as we consider only one homogeneous group, status is gained by producing stimuli which are commonly perceived in the group, and there is no room for differentiation of criteria of ranking. This of course is a rare situation. Normally, the sources of status are more or less differentiated groups within the larger community, and high status with one group may not be accompanied by high status with another group.³ As a result, the individual seeking status may have to choose: he can ignore the differences among groups and see the community as essentially undifferentiated, homogeneous; or he can orient himself to only one group, and be a specialist. Thus, my third assumption is that a person's status can vary along a continuum of generality-specialization. A generalist is perceived as potentially rewarding by many different kinds of other persons, in many different occupations, and the rewards offered him come from a variety of sources, perhaps everyone in the community. A specialist is perceived primarily by one kind of other person, perhaps only one occupation or industry group, and his rewards come primarily from that group.⁴ Most persons fall somewhere between these two extremes.

³Perhaps a reasonable view is that status has some value across group lines and without this, the larger community would not exist; but that this inter-group status tends to be imperfectly communicated, or discounted somewhat by members of other groups.

⁴This distinction between generalist and specialist, which I am applying to sources of status, overlaps Robert Merton's well-known

A fourth assumption links status type to the amount and distribution of wealth in the community's economy. This has consequences for (1) the resources of specialist fields, (2) the resources available to generalists, and (3) the conditions under which specialization can occur at all.

First, for the specialist, the rewards of status are limited to the resources available in that specialty. But some specialties can offer more rewards than others, and the economic rewards available in one industry can roughly be measured and compared to those in another. In general we may assume that conditions for high reward potential include

⁴(cont.) discussion of cosmopolitan and local influentials, "Patterns of Influence: Local and Cosmopolitan Influentials," in Robert K. Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, Rev. and enl. ed. (New York: The Free Press, 1957), pp. 387-420.

Merton adopted these terms from ". . . Toennies' well-known distinction between Gemeinschaft (localistic) and Gesellschaft (cosmopolitan)," and noted their essential similarity to typologies used by Simmel, Cooley, Weber, Durkheim and others. Merton describes his types this way:

The chief criterion for distinguishing the two is found in their orientation toward Rovere [the local community]. The localite largely confines his interests to this community. Rovere is essentially his world. Devoting little thought or energy to the Great Society, he is preoccupied with local problems, to the virtual exclusion of the national and international scene. He is, strictly speaking, parochial. Contrariwise with the cosmopolitan type. He has some interest in Rovere and must of course maintain a minimum of relations within the community since he, too, exerts influence there. But he is also oriented significantly to the world outside Rovere, and regards himself as an integral part of that world. He resides in Rovere but lives in the Great Society. If the local type is parochial, the cosmopolitan is ecumenical.

Merton was concerned mainly with describing the behavior of the two types of influentials over the whole spectrum of community life while I am relying on a hypothetical relation of the types to sources of status in the economy, and I speculate later in this chapter about "possibilities of isolating roles" and "tendencies to perceive the institutional consequences of issues," that Merton does not mention. The quotation above is on p. 393.

the production of a large share of community wealth and a position of centrality in the social relations which involve other groups in the community. Thus, industries which export may offer high status if they produce a large share of community wealth and if they buy or sell and offer employment to many other industries and individuals in the community.⁵

Second, for the generalist the resources of one group are no limit. Rather, the limit is the community itself, unless the generalist can extend his activities to other communities. This is difficult to do because of the time and energy it takes. It is difficult because of the sheer communication problem across the territorial expanses separating communities, and because it is difficult to know people in the large spectrum of roles the generalist plays, in more than one territorial community. If a person desires to exchange for resources outside a limited territory, it is much easier to specialize.

Third, opportunities to specialize probably do not occur at all except in relatively large communities with interaction among the parts, that is, among the particular industrial sectors.

In Sullivan County, the economy seems to exert a definite influence on the kinds of status people seek by limiting the available resources. A person in Sullivan County can strive for high status within

⁵Though he does not mention "status," Amos Hawley hypothesizes that "...business and industrial units may exercise control over the sustenance process long before it reaches the particular community. Their power derives largely from the fact that they are the mediators of the community's external relations." Human Ecology: A Theory of Community Structure (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950), p. 229.

his town or within one of the two major industries, poultry and resorts. With respect to status, a person can be a local generalist and be limited by the resources of other persons in his town, or he can be an industry specialist, limited by the resources of other people in his specialty. There are almost no generalists of county-wide status.

Moreover, the local generalist path to status probably seems most promising to most persons in Sullivan County, even though it may not lead to status throughout the county. In Sullivan County towns, leaders tend to play diffuse roles. If a person is well regarded in one field, he is often well regarded generally, and most people of high status in their communities carry on a variety of different functions. There are few specialists. This may be because the economy of the county is relatively unspecialized, most economic activity occurring at the local scale, with no one town dominant and performing specialized "central place" functions for the rest of the county, and with relatively little interaction between the towns. Until recently, very little specialization was required for the two major industries, agriculture and resort operation, and each unit was oriented to its town and its metropolitan clientele. At the town scale, little specialization is possible. Among the professions most are generalists. A lawyer, to do well in law, must handle a variety of types of cases, meet a large number of people and, perhaps, become well regarded in various non-professional functions such as politics. A poultryman sells eggs to a hotelman partly because he is liked by the hotelman, or grew up with him, or is of the same religion. This sample of instances is small, but there is little to contradict the picture. Probably economic success depends more on how good a general reputation a person has than on his expertise, since his functions

do not require expertise.

The Inadequacy of Representation of Interests Explanations

From these working assumptions we can derive the preliminary hypothesis that persons have a predisposition to conform to the norms and expectations of the groups to which they owe their status. Thus, local generalists support the interests of their towns, and industry specialists support the interests of their industrial groups. However obvious, it is best to mention this explanation of expert-board behavior first so that we can focus on those aspects which it does not explain.

The prevalence of local generalists among the SCCC Trustees, supporting the interests of their towns, seems to explain most of the internal conflict which marked that board. It is difficult to point to a Trustee who might be called an industry specialist, and probably the trustees were chosen because they could be trusted to defend local interests. A trustee certainly stood to lose prestige in his town if he appeared to compromise, and he had much to gain if he landed the site for his town.

But this leads to the question of why the local economic interests were expressed so sharply and persistently, leaving the Trustees no way to legitimize a compromise to their local constituencies. This seems to exceed what common sense would call the rational pursuit of local interests, and so requires some explanation other than the "representation of interests" hypothesis cited above. We could resort to an explanation external to the expert-board relationship: the sharpness of the conflict seems to be associated with concurrent economic, rural-urban and ethnic differences among the towns. This explanation focuses

on the sources of status in the community. Another kind of explanation might look at the mechanisms of status rewards and costs within the boards: this is the main focus of this chapter.

In another case, local economic interests, while conscious and loudly championed, seemed to have little effect on board deliberations. This was the airport-site issue, where the Planning Board was able to insulate itself somewhat and make a choice with the consultant's help. Why should the choice be relatively painless for the Planning Board when the Trustees were unable to legitimize any choice? Some of the explanation is in the relative weakness of local advocacy of sites, the feeling that the choice would not be consequential since an airport was not likely to be constructed in any location, and in the fact that the Planning Board was not composed entirely of local generalists. Nevertheless, the difference between the two cases can also be viewed as a difference in the mechanisms by which board members maintain or gain status in the expert-board relationship.

Similarly, industry representation may explain Posner's opposition to the room tax, and it may explain the very existence of the Poultry Committee. But it is to the workings of status gain and loss within the boards that I now want to turn, hoping for a different order of explanation of the lack of decision and the rejection of expert advice that so often happened in the case studies.

Hypotheses

One conclusion I drew from the case studies was that varying degrees of inequality appeared in the expert-board relationship. This inequality occurred along the dimension of resources for technical

decision processes: time, training, and experience.⁶ For the board members, all influential or at least high status members of their own communities, their lack of technical decision-making ability when faced by the expert presented an incongruent situation. They possessed authority with their peers locally, but on the issues in which they were directed to work with the expert they were not competent. The hypotheses suggested in the following pages argue that the reward implications of this inequality (as motivating factors for the board member) can be expected to depend on a number of characteristics of the expert-board relationship and a number of externally set "givens."

In presenting these variables and their relationships, I will first present them in concise form, then elaborate them. A concise summary is perhaps best effected by simply listing the variables with their hypothesized relationships:

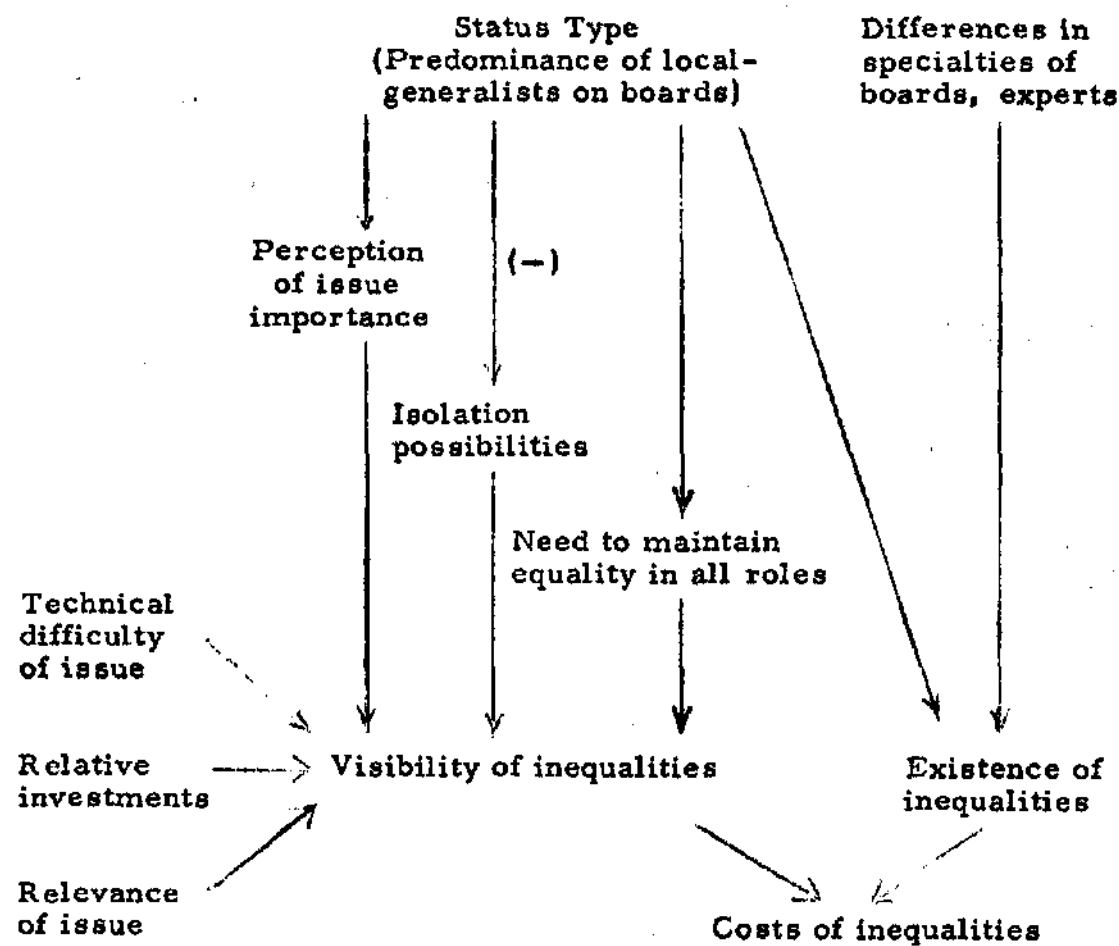
1. Costs of inequality for board members depend on
 - a. the existence of inequalities
 - b. the visibility of existing inequalities to the board member and to others.
2. The inequalities between board members and experts depend on
 - a. the difference between the specialties of experts and board members
 - b. the extent to which local generalists predominate on the

⁶I am not, in this chapter, dealing with the dimension of expert status and ability to provide support mentioned in the previous chapter. Nor do I examine the consequences of the sense of technical inequality for the tendency to emphasize support over the experts' technical function beyond the analysis of the preceding chapter.

boards.

3. The visibility of inequalities depends on
 - a. need to maintain equality in all roles
 - b. availability of possibilities of isolation of roles to board members
 - c. board member's perception of importance of the issue
 - e. relevance of the issue to community action
 - f. technical difficulty of the issue.
4. Availability of isolation possibilities depends on the extent to which industry specialists predominate on the boards.
5. Perception of issue importance depends on the extent to which local generalists predominate on the boards.
6. Need to maintain equality in all roles depends on the predominance of local generalists on the boards.

These variables and their hypothesized relations are shown in the accompanying diagram:



The following exposition begins with what seem to be the relatively "independent" variables, tracing each one through in turn to the major dependent variable: the costs of inequalities to board members.

Status Type. Whether a board member is a local generalist or an industry specialist, and which type predominates on a board, seems to have a pervasive conditioning effect on the ultimate costs of inequalities felt by board members; and it operates through at least four intervening variables. In general, the costs of inequalities can be hypothesized to be higher for local generalists.

One reason for this is a relatively direct one: industry specialists are likely to be less unequal in fact, to their experts, than are local generalists. This is particularly true if the experts are in the same specialty as the industry-specialist board members. This situation characterized the Poultry Committee, in contrast to the other two.

More commonly, inequalities are apt to be quite pronounced. Industry specialists still are less apt to feel great costs in such a situation. First, the status of local generalists seems to depend somewhat on an ability to maintain relations of equality, if not superiority, with outsiders on all fronts, in all roles.⁷ The industry specialists, on the other hand, are less likely to suffer a loss in status from a recognition

⁷This statement does not mean the local generalist actually seeks out any relationship at all with outside experts (he may avoid them); merely that when placed in such a relationship, he seeks to maintain equality.

The variable "need to maintain equality in all roles" relates this analysis to a concept which has received treatment elsewhere, which I am not reviewing here. See Gerhard E. Lenski, "Status Crystallization: A Non-vertical Dimension of Social Status," American Sociological Review, Vol. XIX (August, 1954), pp. 405-413; George Homans, ibid., especially Chapter 12.

of inequality in one role, since their status stems from a specialty. The best illustration of this contrast may be the industry specialist's occasional desire to restrain himself to high policy, and allow the expert authority over "details." In the Planning Board's discussion of the room tax one member (an industry specialist) argued:

It is impossible for me to set myself up as an expert in this field. If I were in the same position on a personal matter, I would hire someone with ability, and then evaluate his report. If it is felt that our consultant's report is incorrect then we should hire another and then either accept or reject the new one's report.⁸

The reaction of the local generalists to experts was often a rejection of the expert's arguments; more important, it was a rejection that obscured the inequality on technical matters. There was a lot of carping at details, criticism of the expert on non-technical grounds. This occurred in the Planning Board against Westmeyer as well as with the anti-Monticello faction of the SCCC Trustees. Probably the need to be equal in all roles varies positively with the visibility of the expert-board inequalities to the board members and others. Thus status type affects cost of inequalities through two intervening variables: the need to be equal in all roles, and the visibility of the relationship.

Two other intervening variables can be hypothesized, helping to

⁸Sullivan County Planning Board, Minutes, June 22, 1960. Since the generalist-specialist distinction was made after the interviewing for the case studies took place, I have no independent criteria for determining who is a generalist, who is a specialist. My impressions, nevertheless, are consistent with my hypotheses. It seems to me that the SCCC Trustees are predominantly local generalists, the Poultry Committee is made up of specialists. The Planning Board is probably a mixture: it did, in 1960, include a hotelman and a poultryman. Obviously, the hypotheses in this chapter could not be tested without more interviewing than the case studies are based on.

explain the joint effect of status type and visibility on the cost of inequalities. One of these is the availability of opportunities to isolate roles (and hence, reduce the visibility of inequalities), which is greater for the industry specialist. Unlike the generalist, others notice the expertise of the expert in his specialty and forgive his lack of participation in other roles. They can say "he would be good at it if he had time." The specialist himself can believe this too. A poultryman, for example, may have high status among poultrymen because of his success in using techniques suggested by experts, and this status may extend outside of the specialized poultry circle to the community. Whatever inequalities exist between poultryman and expert, they are not obvious to others. On non-poultry matters, the specialist may be able to apply the same attitude as in his business. While free from a need to appear to be an expert, he is nevertheless equipped through experience to work well with experts.

A second intervening variable between status type and visibility is the importance of the issue. The importance of an issue means the number of institutional changes it entails. We can range issues in importance from those which involve only minor changes to those which seem to mean a change in the character of a whole community. The SCCC site issue is important because it implies the potential symbolic and economic dominance of Monticello in the county and this would be an important change from the sectional balance that now exists. A college established with town support but no attempt at county sanction, on the other hand, does not have this importance, and such an effort has occurred, in fact, in Fallsburgh. The variable, "importance," seems to be a major factor in the reluctance to innovate cited in the preceding

chapter.

It may be that generalists are more sensitive than specialists to the institutional importance of issues. This should be true at least in Sullivan County, where intra-industry institutions are less important than community institutions. Generalists would be more inclined than specialists to sense violations of community precedent and customs that would offend people; and so they are more inclined to avoid even unconscious pressures to changes in institutions. Generalists meet more people in a wider range of roles in the local community than do specialists; and they view these people as friends, primarily; they tend not to distinguish friendship from business contacts or customership to the extent specialists do. Because of this, they are sensitive to the interests these varied contacts have in preserving precedent and custom.⁹ Because they have many contacts, they hear of threats to precedent and learn to anticipate them. These generalizations seem to me to be plausible, though the evidence in the case studies is sparse. It is my impression that such perceptions of violations of precedent were obstacles in the minds of Planning Board members to attempting to implement a room tax (which would have required self-policing by the hotels or else some kind of county regulatory activity); or to suggest commitment of room-tax revenues by the Supervisors to some project benefiting the resorts. (This was suggested, for example, as a solution to the

⁹Another way to say this is that local generalists use a wide set of criteria in determining issues, some of them quite particularistic (e.g., judging an aspiring builder's subdivision by the fellow's "reputation" locally); experts and specialists may disregard some of these criteria as irrelevant, while generalists see them as crucial. But the function of the particularistic criteria may be to maintain certain existing institutions.

airport financing problem).

Three other independent variables besides status type can be hypothesized as factors influencing the costs of inequalities for board members. These are the technical difficulty of the issue, the relative investments of time and other resources in the issue by board and expert, and the relevance of board deliberations to community action. These, too, probably operate by making the board's activity more visible.

Technical Difficulty. Probably the more difficult a problem is, the more obvious the inequalities become, and the costs of inequalities increase. The airport-site study did not require a recognition of technical inequality by the Planning Board because Weinberg presented it in a simple manner and because the issue was fairly clear. The room-tax argument was more complex, and this certainly contributed to the conflicts between Westmeyer and the Planning Board. Because he could not make a clear case simply, Westmeyer had to resort to judgments the members were not equipped to evaluate technically. Since they could not make this evaluation and since there was strong opposition to the room tax by one Board member, they were in an embarrassing position and ultimately refused to act at all.

Investments. Inequalities in resources invested in a problem may make even more painful the recognition of inequalities in dealing with the technical aspects of an issue. Thus, the greater a board member's investment of resources in an issue relative to the expert, the greater the cost of recognizing inadequacy in dealing with it. For the local generalist particularly, and to an extent all the board members, a major

resource available for dealing with the problem was time. With a low time investment (when a person has just begun to study a problem) it is easier to admit relative inadequacy than when he has spent a great deal of time and has nothing to show for it, while the expert presents him with technical information and difficult reasoning. If the expert, on the other hand, invests a great deal of time in the problem and if he makes this obvious by spending the time in the presence of the board, then the effect of investment of board time may be counteracted. The inequality is diminished.

Relevance. The greater the relevance of board deliberations to the outcome of an issue in the community, the greater are the costs of perceiving inferior technical ability relative to the expert. In the airport-site case, the Planning Board's deliberations had relatively little relevance to the eventual commitment of community funds and Planning Board prestige to the actual construction of an airport. The Board may have been hopeful, but this issue does not compare in immediacy with one like the SCCC Trustees site decision. One of the things that increases with relevance is the exposure of board members and, with this, the chance that their status will be affected. With increasing attention being paid to the board's actions, lack of understanding of expert procedures may become embarrassing as it is threatened with public view. And lack of sympathy with expert procedures may be forced to the surface as the board member has either to defend the expert or maintain a neutral or negative stance before his neighbors.¹⁰

¹⁰It can be argued that a distinction of "relevance" from "importance" is too fine a distinction to make and that the data do not show

With the concept of relevance, as with investments, time comes into play. With the passage of time on an issue, both the investment of resources (including time) and the increasing relevance of the expert's procedures and technical resources to board member's status may work in concert to force the reality of his inequality upon his consciousness.

Big City Examples

I reasoned, in Chapter I, that the obstacles to implementation of expert advice in big cities would be different from those in rural or urban fringe areas. Moreover, I argued that the differences would lie not in the nature of the variables affecting the expert-board relationship, but in "givens" outside this relationship which affect the values of the variables. I have not attempted to do more than identify these variables and givens, and my main reliance is on the data in the case studies of issues in Sullivan County. Nevertheless a brief review of case studies done in large cities seems worth while to check the analysis of the preceding pages and, particularly, my tentative assertions that the variables and givens identified have some generality outside Sullivan County. I am going to rely primarily on Meyerson's and Banfield's study of the attempt to plan for the location of public housing sites in Chicago, supplemented with comments on several other urban planning case studies.¹¹

¹⁰(cont.) decision-makers making this distinction. In fact, I am not certain that the distinction is a valid one. But there is an impression, at least from the interviews focusing on the airport-site issue, that high importance was somewhat cancelled out by low relevance. As I conceive it, relevance operates as a discounting mechanism toward importance. The analogy is to the investor who evaluates the "importance" of some future state of affairs, then discounts it by its remoteness (lack of relevance) either in space or time.

¹¹Meyerson and Banfield, Politics, Planning and the Public

The most obvious difference between the Chicago and Sullivan County environments is in one of the givens: the relatively large scale of the Chicago economy and the resultant plentifulness of resources and opportunities for status specialists to rise to positions of leadership. We would expect, therefore, to see a greater proportion of "industry specialists" on the equivalents of the Sullivan County boards. In fact, this is the case, so far as I can tell from Meyerson and Banfield's account. In their case study, the group analagous to the Sullivan County boards was the five unpaid commissioners of the Chicago Housing Authority (CHA) and the experts were the CHA staff. The categories "local generalist" and "industry specialist" obviously do not imply the same roles in Chicago as in Sullivan County. But if "local" in Chicago means the neighborhood or ward rather than the entire city, then there were no locals on the CHA. Most of the commissioners in fact were either industry or interest group representatives, but the latter ". . . only if it comprised a sizeable sector of the population" (such as Negroes, labor, small businessmen, or Catholics).¹² One commissioner, a labor leader, sometimes appeared to speak only for his particular union and was criticized for it. This was the member who seemed least aware of the technical arguments of the CHA staff, the most like the Sullivan County "local generalists" in this respect.

The predominance of industry specialists, however, did not prevent the fact and the perception of inequalities in decision-making resources compared to their staff to affect the CHA. The commission-

¹¹(cont.) Interest, pp. 42-51.

¹²Ibid., p. 50.

ers were served by a full-time staff of four or five top advisors on the public housing site issue, in an organization numbering six hundred. The staff was apparently very important to the commissioners, and this appears to have had some cost for them:

The advantages of the staff in its dealings with the commissioners were that it consisted of full-time employees, that it was intimately acquainted with the situation, that its members were in close contact with each other, and therefore able to act in concert, and that it had detailed and often technical knowledge that was indispensable. It was inevitable therefore that the staff would decisively influence the making of some of the most important policies, and it was inevitable too, that this would be resented by some of the commissioners.¹³

It appears from this that while the resources of the CHA Commissioners were greater than those of the Sullivan County boards, the resources of the experts were at least as much greater, so the inequalities still existed.

One aspect of the resulting behavior of the CHA commissioners closely paralleled the behavior of the Sullivan County Boards: the tendency to refuse to leave the "details" of policy execution to the experts. Policy was never clearly defined, according to Meyerson and Banfield, and the staff could never tell prior to a meeting whether the commissioners would mix into the technical details of staff work. One commissioner, apparently an industry specialist (he was chairman of the board of a national steel company), proposed a stricter separation of functions, just as has one of the Sullivan County Planning Board members in dealing with the room tax, and with the same futility:

¹³Ibid., p. 48.

Sykes, the commissioner with the most administrative experience, suggested, . . . that the Board confine itself to the determination of general policy, leaving all other matters to the staff with the understanding that if it did not administer the Board's policies satisfactorily it would be dismissed. This suggestion was warmly approved by the staff. The commissioners, however, apparently preferred to act as they had been acting.¹⁴

This comparison seems to imply that the proportion of industry specialists does not by itself determine the outcome of board-expert relationships. Inequalities between board and expert can still occur, and "interference" with expert functions can still occur (not necessarily as a result of inequalities).

Thus far the behavior of the Chicago board seems similar to that of the Sullivan County boards, despite the greater resources available in Chicago and the predominance of industry specialists. There are differences, however. First, the constraints imposed on the board from outside operated differently. In Sullivan County the boards were limited in conceiving and approving courses of action, not so much by explicit prohibitions, but by a lack of resources to conceive courses of action that could be carried out. Experts played a relatively minor role, submitting proposals which the boards then had difficulty evaluating. There was little chance that, finding an expert's recommendation unsatisfactory, a Sullivan County board could come up with an alternative by itself; nor did it usually have the money to retain the expert to produce an alternative recommendation. In Chicago, on the other hand, the

¹⁴Ibid.

staff experts were more numerous and on hand permanently.

Second, to the extent explicit prohibitions operated, in Chicago they operated through interest groups; in Sullivan County primarily through localities. The result was competition among interest groups in the first case, competition among towns in the latter. (In Sullivan County, even where broad interests were participants in an issue, they were able to make their appeal through the more pervasive inter-local rivalries.) In Chicago there were local (ward) vetoes on public housing-site proposals, but these were expressed through the city council, not the CHA.

Third, the pattern of interest group-based competition in conjunction with relatively extensive use of experts may mitigate the sense of inequality between experts and boards, as together they face pressures from competing groups or agencies with their expert-board leaders.

Fourth, in the inter-interest group competition situation, a major conflict with the expert seems to arise from the supra-local (or inter-specialty) generalist, not the local generalist. (In Chicago, the local generalists were on the city council, thus not the immediate clients of the experts.) Meyerson and Banfield and other writers reveal a tendency for experts to fix on goals and exaggerate their legitimacy by devising elaborate policies and plans supposedly instrumental to these goals. Experts, however, do not always foresee the unintended consequences of these instruments and opposition arises as generalists do come to foresee these consequences.¹⁵ Sullivan County, however, does

¹⁵Thus Meyerson and Banfield observed that though planners and housing partisans might view a housing policy as an "intrinsic" end, worth public support for its own sake, others viewed it as instrumental

not possess many generalists of county-wide status.

¹⁵(cont.) to other ends such as racial desegregation. Webb Fiser noted in 'Urban Renewal in Syracuse' that while urban renewal tended to be promoted as an end, attempts to move ahead with urban renewal stirred up other issues such as the alignment of an expressway, school board attempts to get renewal land, a long-standing feud with the mayor, and embarrassing revelations of deficiencies in city assessment practice and public works programming. See R. T. Frost, (ed.), Cases in State and Local Government (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice Hall, 1961) pp. 337-350. Alan Altshuler suggested in a case study that a site decision by a hospital committee in St. Paul was affected not primarily by the technical arguments of planners, but by fears on the part of the highly respected chairman of the commission that one of the sites might result in an organizational arrangement requiring changes in the existing practices in hiring interns and that, because of circumstances apart from the technical arguments, he had doubts that some members of the community would believe that a decision to build at the proposed site had been arrived at honestly. None of these factors had been included in the planners' arguments. See Altshuler, The City Planning Process: A Political Analysis, Chapter 3.

CHAPTER IX

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS

What are the uses of this analysis and of the hypotheses of the preceding chapter? I will try to answer this from the standpoint of one kind of practicing expert—the planner. A planner generally tries to solve two related problems. First, he must determine the appropriate scope of the system within which he will work: what the variables are, how they are related and how they change in time, and how they are to be measured. Second, he must choose some optimum state of the system to determine the direction policy should take. This thesis does not attempt to do all of this for Sullivan County. Instead, it has used this particular locale to generate data and hypotheses which might add a small amount to what planners know about semi-rural planning problems in general.

The Scope of the System

Previously, planners have begun with knowledge of some aspects of the physical environment, together with such "economic" and "social" causes and effects as they or other social scientists have been able to trace. This may be viewed as an essentially static, often only a spatial dimension of the total environment in which planning takes place. Another aspect of the planner's concern is best referred to as the process dimension, which includes not only the system for which the planner is planning, but also the planner or planning agency. This

dimension contains a fast developing theory which I referred to in Chapter I as the theory of the "technical" planning process.

It is in the extension of this technical planning process to the problem of implementation—dealing with non-technical persons—that this thesis is concerned. The preceding chapters have suggested some additions to the planner's system. Chief among these are the notions that inequalities in resources may act as obstacles to effective expert-board relations; that these are at least partially the result of a predominance of local-generalists on the boards; and that they are intensified by the difficulty, importance and relevance of the issue, and the relative investments in the issue by boards and experts. This kind of knowledge, problematic as it is, seems to me to be an addition to the present knowledge of implementation.

Of course, the variables identified in Chapter VIII are only a small part of the knowledge planners ought to have about implementation. At least four kinds of deficiencies can be mentioned. First, there could be a great deal more verification of the propositions. Second, the analysis, undertaken here for a semi-rural county, could be extended to other similar areas and to other types of communities: the big city, the corporation or public bureaucracy, and the rural community.

Third, and very important, planners ought to consider more aspects of the political system than are touched on in this thesis. In the preceding chapters, the existence, function and even the composition of the boards are taken as given. In reality, the events in the boards took place within a context of political institutions. Even in Sullivan County it is possible to argue that the "real" obstacles to planning occurred not in the boards but in the manner in which board positions

were filled, in the extreme decentralization of county government, and in the lack of a developed administrative system. Not considering the political context of the expert-board relationship could lead to considerable distortion in recommendations for action. For example in the case of recruitment, an obvious recommendation, if the larger context is ignored, would be a policy of appointing primarily industry specialists to the boards. In fact, this might be a very bad policy, since the overall proportion, in Sullivan County, of local generalists to industry specialists would stay the same. The boards then might lose whatever legitimacy they now have. Moreover, specialists present problems of their own, notably a tendency to ignore consequences of proposals for other specialties. Some kind of generalist is probably needed for the boards to maintain their own general status.

Finally, planners ought to place their own actions—situations such as the expert-board relations described here—in a context of long-term social change. Knowledge of social change processes or, failing this, even an orientation toward this kind of process, would be an improvement over the present situation, where the planner usually has a static conception of society plus the notion that his proposals could accomplish changes for a better situation.

Directing Policy

Planners have to recommend action, no matter how limited the scope of their knowledge. Some guidelines are possible, even with the limited number of factors that have been considered in this thesis. First, we now have a sense of the administrative and technical limitations of the boards in their present institutional context. Second, we

can infer some possible changes in institutions.

Limitations of the Boards. Perhaps the most obvious conclusion to be drawn from the first seven chapters of this thesis is that, in the present context, the administrative and technical potential of the boards is extremely limited; much more so than the professional practices of the experts and the policies of state and federal programs seem to assume. The experts often acted as if the boards were equipped to implement fairly complicated programs in all their administrative details. This is especially true where experts take a "product" approach. Even where the boards were asked only to endorse a proposal as a broad policy, the effect was the same since no endorsement could be made effective by a board unless it could also convincingly spell out the consequences.

Experts vary in the extent to which they leave the burden of working out the details to the boards. Among city planners, there is a fairly widespread ideology that "planning is not a product, but a process," and many plans contain the recommendation that a full-time staff member or at least consultation on a continuing basis be incorporated into the government. Such recommendations are often not instituted. One reason may be that the administrative structure required to administer the plan cannot be foreseen by the boards or the community beforehand. The institutional ramifications of a full-time professional in a rural government may seem more frightful by far than a particular physical improvement, or even a fiscal institution such as a room tax. Experts may, if they are particularly experienced, possess considerable knowledge of how proposals can be instituted. But this is usually "practical" knowledge that cannot readily be transmitted, or even used, by the less

experienced members of a consultant's staff.

More often, experts may be bound by the views of their specialties so that, whatever their experience, it is out of touch with the kinds of community needs that generalists feel. Particularly, this should be the case in a semi-rural community where there are no specialized local associations, nor individuals, to serve as mediating factors between the innovations of the expert and the ultimately generalist perspectives of most people in the community. At present the boards are in this mediating position, but they are not equipped to perform the function adequately.

Under the circumstances, probably the only expert-board relationships that can produce an increase in local political and administrative skills are those that consist of specialist boards and similarly specialized experts (as in the Poultry Committee); and those which are primarily educational in purpose. The latter, however, would have to seem to deal with important issues to be able to recruit members. Through wise leadership it would attempt action only on issues where it could win until its skills and influence develop. This kind of situation seems unlikely to occur in Sullivan County, since important issues do exist; and there are no alternative institutions to cope with them while the boards are learning. Thus the Planning Board was unable to avoid the issues thrust upon it; and the SCCC Trustees were destined for a destructive conflict as soon as they were created.

Institutional Changes. A second direction to which public policy might orient itself is that of changes in the institutional environment of the expert-board relationship. Opportunities for action affecting political

institutions occur from time to time, not only in direct attempts (as in reapportionment, or a campaign to institute a village manager) but also in "economic development" actions, such as proposals to build an airport, improve roads and bridges, or put a community college in an economically advantageous location. The latter actions are important because they can affect the balance of economic exchange in a county and this, in turn, can affect the balance of political power.

From the analysis of the preceding chapters, certain changes in the economic system in Sullivan County do seem possible. Even though these are not central to the expert-board relationship, it is relevant to point out these possibilities here. At present, a major characteristic of the economy of Sullivan County, aside from resort domination, is its apparently local scale. The resorts are enclaves: they do business with a metropolitan clientele, and they parcel out trade and jobs to the local economy. The resorts compete with one another politically, on occasion, by mobilizing a tendency of all politics in the county to operate as inter-local competition. This happened in both the room-tax and the airport cases. The poultry industry operates, perhaps to a greater degree than the resorts, at a county rather than a local scale. Economic links occur across town or sectional boundaries to the feed companies, primarily the Intercounty Farmers Cooperative, located within the county. But the poultry industry does only a small fraction of the business that the resorts do and does not draw very heavily on other sectors of the local economy. All other sectors of the economy are local in scale. This characteristic, noted in the preceding chapter, is the basis for the observation that there are few opportunities to develop status as an industry specialist in Sullivan County. This being the case,

the obstacles to expert advice, deriving from a high proportion of local generalists, are bound to occur regardless of the particular political institutions in effect.

It is worth asking what the potentials for change in this situation are, and what the consequences of such changes would be. A possible change would be a shift from a locally based economy to one of county scale or larger, where the major economic units are not local scale enterprises but those that tap a larger market and operate in a more specialized manner. What would be the conditions for and the consequences of such a change? The most obvious condition for specialized, county-scale enterprises to arise, is a central city. The chief obstacle to this, so far, has been that Sullivan County has primarily a resort economy, one that is dispersed in its locale so that no one town has been able to dominate the others.

The present trend toward concentration in the resort industry probably has favored the three largest resort towns. It is possible that with the increased size of resort operations a market for specialized services is appearing which might stimulate the growth of an urban center near this resort concentration. Any large-scale state or federal recreation development program is likely further to concentrate the locations of Sullivan County resort activity, favoring, perhaps, one of the major towns over another.¹ But there is no way to tell whether these things will occur.

A second condition might be the rise of a second county-scale

¹The most likely possibility at this point seems to lie in the proposed water resource development at Tocks Island, on the Delaware River, which will create a lake reaching up to the southern portions of Sullivan County.

industry to balance the resort sector. Again, there is no way to know, from the data collected for this thesis, what the potential is that this can occur. In general, it seems just as likely that Sullivan County will go on the way it has, with a basically intra-local basis of economic life, with the resulting political competition among towns, as that a different pattern will emerge.

The consequences of a change such as is described above are, however, interesting to speculate about. The result might be a shift from the typical "fringe" or semi-rural political system to the "urban" system noted in Chapter I, with competition among groups with conflicting purposes, backed up by adequate organizational resources (and resources for expert decision-making). As a first consequence of such a change, more opportunities for industry specialist status might occur, together with an increased legitimacy for industry specialists in community affairs. This might make it more likely that persons of county-wide status could rise in Sullivan County, starting from a specialist base. Second, development of county- or larger-scale economic sectors can result directly in the development of administrative resources in the public sector as demands for specific public service improvements are made by these powerful private interests. Any sector that developed into large units requiring the retention of executive personnel in the county would press particularly for schools and public safety. If more than one major supra-local sector arose, competition between them might produce increases in public administrative organization: this may, in fact, be the outcome of the Poultry Committee's efforts.² Such

²A joining of forces between the resorts and the poultrymen seems at least as likely as an open conflict of the sort that took place in the

an increase in the public administrative sector might occur in the form of a change in the form of the county government—to the county executive form, for example. If this should occur, a concentration of organizational resources might occur, and the present role of the boards would change. Many of their functions would be taken over by locally-based professionals within the county or local government. The boards might remain, each one with its resident expert to advise it. Their adversaries would be other boards, or state or federal agencies, not each other nor their experts. The situation might more nearly approximate the urban situation described in the preceding chapter.

An alternative to this is more active intervention in local affairs by state agencies. State-operated economic development functions, a more assertive policy toward higher education, such as the location of community colleges, or more power for the state health authorities to deal with problems such as the poultry waste issue, would take matters out of the hands of local authorities altogether. The boards, in either case, would lose their roles as policy bodies, but the influx of organizational resources would fill the existing void in the boards, which often makes them powerless. The net effect might be to increase, not decrease, their authority and their weight with the community.

²(cont.) room-tax and college-site cases. One reason for this is that the present basis for conflict is one not of localities but of industries, and both industries have the beginnings of continuous, staffed organizations. These organizations are more likely to see the long-run economic advantages of inter-industry peace than to entertain romantic notions of one side "winning," such as can grip the towns. They, more than any other groups in Sullivan County, will be prepared to seek new institutions in the interest of long-run economic advantages. They may do this, it is true, in reaction to "threats" posed by reactionary or radical elements in the county: punitive local ordinances or damaging publicity makers.

Either kind of development seems to me to be preferable to the present situation, if only because the present institutions cannot deal with experts and complicated issues, and these issues are bound to arise repeatedly as the County faces pressures to modernize and urbanize.

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