

RAPPORTEUR'S REMARKS by Dr. Jim Randall

I'D LIKE TO START BY LOOKING AT THIS IDEA OF A VIABLE COMMUNITY. FOR THE PURPOSES OF OUR DISCUSSION THESE HAVE SOME KIND OF SPACE AND PLACE OR TERRITORY ATTACHED TO THEM. THESE ARE NOT 'COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE' OR INTERNET-BASED COMMUNITIES, THESE EXIST IN THE LAND AND THE WATER AND THE PHYSICAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE. BEYOND THIS, ONE PERSON MIGHT BE DEFINING A COMMUNITY ON THE BASIS OF SHARED CULTURAL VALUES AND LANGUAGE (AS JEANNITA WAS DOING) , ANOTHER MIGHT BE BASING IT ON WATERSHEDS (SUCH AS MICHAEL), OR MOUNTAIN RANGES OR TRANSPORTATION NETWORKS OR, IN THE CASE OF THE CURRENT PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT, IT MIGHT BE BASED ON A POPULATION THRESHOLD COMBINED WITH A VALUE OF PROPERTY ASSESSMENT. THERE IS NO RIGHT OR WRONG SET OF CRITERIA. HOWEVER, THE CRITERIA NEED TO MAKE SENSE TO THE CONTEXT AND THE PEOPLE LIVING THERE.

ALMOST EVERYONE IN THIS ROOM HAS PROBABLY LIVED THROUGH SOME FORM OF TERRITORIAL REORGANIZATION. DIANE GRIFFIN TALKED ABOUT THE INCORPORATION OF 5 COMMUNITIES INTO THE TOWN OF STRATFORD. ALTHOUGH MUCH OF THE DISCUSSION IS PLAYING OUT CURRENTLY IN RURAL AREAS, THIS IS NOT AN URBAN VERSUS A RURAL PHENOMENON. IN FACT, HISTORICALLY MOST OF THE CHANGES IN AFFILIATION ARE ASSOCIATED WITH THE GROWTH OF URBAN PLACES AND THE RURAL-URBAN BOUNDARIES OF THOSE PLACES.

FOR ME AT LEAST, THIS QUESTION COMES DOWN TO WHAT IT MEANS TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH A PLACE, AND WHAT WILL IT MEAN FOR

YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THAT PLACE? WHEN PEOPLE ASK, I SAY TO THEM THAT I WAS BORN AND RAISED IN TORONTO. HOWEVER, WHEN I LOOK AT MY BIRTH CERTIFICATE IT SAYS I WAS BORN IN WESTON, ONTARIO. WHEN I WAS GROWING UP, I HAD NO CONNECTION WITH A WESTON BECAUSE IT HAD ALREADY BEEN INCORPORATED INTO THE BOROUGH OF ETOBICOKE. I HAVEN'T LIVED THERE FOR MANY YEARS BUT NOW THE JURISDICTION OF ETOBICOKE IS BECOMING A BIT OF AN ANACHRONISM. OTHER THAN BEING KNOWN AS THE HOME OF THE FORMER MAYOR ROB FORD, IT IS NOW PART OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO, WHICH IS PART OF THE LARGER GREATER TORONTO AREA (GTA). WHAT CAUSED ALL OF THOSE CHANGES? A COMBINATION OF FACTORS; GREATER MOBILITY AND WITH THAT A GREATER DIVERSITY OF PEOPLE, THE NEED FOR PUBLIC SERVICES LIKE FIRE, WATER AND POLICE SERVICE TO EVOLVE IN A WAY THAT MADE SENSE TO A GROWING POPULATION, AND THE NEED TO BUILD AND OPERATE LARGER SCALE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND GATHERING PLACES FOR THE COMMON GOOD THAT WERE IMPOSSIBLE FOR ANY ONE TOWN OR VILLAGE TO AFFORD.

ONE OF THE BIG DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THIS EXAMPLE FROM MY CHILDHOOD AND THE CURRENT CONTEXT IN PEI IS THAT IN MOST CASES WE ARE FACING POPULATION AND BUSINESS DECLINE RATHER THAN INCREASE. SO INSTEAD OF ASKING WHERE TO BUILD THE NEW MEGA-RECREATIONAL CENTRE OR LIBRARY THAT WILL SERVE EVERYONE, WE ARE ASKING, CAN WE AFFORD TO KEEP OUR EXISTING ARENA OR TOWN HALL? EVEN MORE CRITICALLY, AS JEANNITA HAS POINTED OUT, ARE WE REACHING A POINT OF CIVIC BURNOUT IN MANY PLACES WHERE THERE ARE TOO FEW PEOPLE REMAINING TO

FILL THE ROLES ASSOCIATED WITH LOCAL GOVERNANCE AND THE SAME FEW PEOPLE ARE PLAYING MULTIPLE ROLES. IN OTHER WORDS, NOT ONLY IS THE PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE CRUMBLING, BUT THE HUMAN CAPACITY TO SUPPORT THE PHYSICAL STRUCTURES IS ALSO CRUMBLING.

WE HAVE TO TAKE CARE TO COUNTER MISLEADING ASSUMPTIONS REGARDLESS OF THEIR SOURCE. SO IF WE HAVE A KNEEJERK REACTION THAT INCORPORATION OR AMALGAMATION IS GOING TO INCREASE OR DECREASE OUR TAXES, OR IT IS GOING TO MAKE GOVERNING MORE OR LESS EFFICIENT, WE HAVE TO CUT THROUGH THE RHETORIC AND QUESTION THE ASSUMPTIONS. AT THE SAME TIME, FINAL DECISIONS ARE NOT GOING TO BE BASED SOLELY ON SOME KIND OF RATIONAL CALCULATION OF WHAT IS FISCALLY PRUDENT OR ECONOMICALLY EFFICIENT. THEY ARE ALSO GOING TO INCORPORATE OUR LIFELONG EXPERIENCES, OUR HOPES, OUR IMPRESSIONS AND EVERYTHING ELSE THAT IS PART AND PARCEL OF THE MESSINESS OF SOCIAL LIFE.

FINALLY, RYAN SPOKE OF A SHIFT IN THINKING FROM GOVERNMENTS BEING VIEWED AS SERVICE PROVIDERS AND RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES AS CLIENTS, TO A SITUATION WHERE GOVERNMENTS ARE VIEWED AS ACTIVE PARTNERS. IT REMINDS ME VERY MUCH OF THE MANTRA OF A SELFISH PERSON WHO ASKS, "WHAT IS IN IT FOR ME?" I THINK WE ALL RECOGNIZE THAT FOR THE HEALTHIEST AND MOST VIABLE COMMUNITIES, AS IS THE CASE WITH THE HEALTHIEST AND MOST VIABLE FAMILIES, THERE IS A BALANCE BETWEEN PERSONAL GAIN AND RECOGNITION OF WHAT MIGHT BE NEEDED FOR THE COMMON GOOD. THIS MIGHT NOT BE MEASURED IN \$ ALONE, NOR MAY IT BE MEASURED IN OUR LIFETIMES, BUT IT ALLOWS US TO BUILD

A SENSE OF TRUST IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS AS WE ENGAGE IN FURTHER DISCUSSION.