

CHAPTER 8

SENSE OF CHANGE

i. Analysis of Sense of Change:

a. Introduction:

One's view of the present is affected both by one's view of the past and by one's view of the future.¹ Similarly, present sense of place is affected both by one's view of the past² and by one's view of the future. The sixth fundamental component of sense of place, sense of change, may involve either awareness of actual past loss (as in a place that has been physically changed or destroyed or a childhood place that exists only in memory) or fear of future change or loss. Both the actual or potential change may heighten attachment to and appreciation of a particular place.

The change involved may range from modification of the physical environment (e.g., building a bridge or a new store or an apartment building) or of the social environment (e.g., increasing the population or seeing the middle class replace the working class or

¹Kevin Lynch, What Time Is This Place? (Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1972), p. 124, writes: "Past, present, and future, then, are created together and influence one another...The perception of the present is strongly affected by both past and future and in turn influences what is remembered or foreseen."

²This may be collective (as in Sense of History) or individual (as in Sense of Identity or Sense of Change).

one ethnic group replace another), through to a total destruction or loss of place (e.g., demolishing an entire neighbourhood for urban renewal or paving farmland for an airport or flooding "the wilderness" for a hydro-electric scheme). Sense of place may perhaps exist in the absence of extreme changes,¹ but, where it exists, a strong sense of change may sharpen and make self-conscious feelings of sense of place which were formerly less consciously or less strongly felt.

Some Islanders, of course, have witnessed major changes on the Island. These actual losses (as opposed to threatened losses) have certainly contributed to their sense of change and, in turn, to their sense of place. (As indicated in Introduction: "Toronto's Islanders' Sense of Place", such actual losses may give rise to the most poignant expressions of sense of place.) During the last decade or so (since the last major demolitions in 1968), all Islanders have been under the threat of destruction. This sense of future change or loss is the primary focus of discussion in this chapter.

Relf comments on how stress induced by fear of loss (or experience of actual loss) may sharpen and make evident people's sense of place:

That there has been a relative desacralizing and desymbolizing of the environment seems undeniable, particularly for everyday life. But for many people there may still exist deep psychological links with place, links that only become apparent under conditions of stress. Harvey Cox...suggests that there are many people "who never fully recover" from the loss of "continuity of relationships with places" that results from urban renewal projects; and the not infrequent dramatic attempts by residents and homeowners to resist developers, even though they may have been offered better physical

¹"Place" is fragile and no place remains either in fact or in mind unchanged. There is therefore an element of sense of change in every experience of sense of place.

accommodation elsewhere, are indicative of these deep relationships with place....¹

Suzannah Lessard describes her reactions to the suburbanization of the Oyster Bay, Long Island countryside, which represents a threat to and an increasing loss of both her childhood landscape and an adult place that she cherishes:

One of the results of this habit [of selective perception] is that the bits of landscape I choose to perceive become almost unnaturally sharpened to my eye - are given a vividness that grows in direct ratio to the difficulty of blotting out the new landscape steadily encroaching on my vision. Suburbia, therefore, is, in this context, an ever-tightening frame around the borders of consciousness - not an object of focus in itself but something to look away from, a force that serves mainly to heighten concentration on the landscape it threatens, lending, with

¹E. Relph, Place and Placelessness (London: Pion Limited, 1976), p. 65.

David Lowenthal reflects a similar sentiment when he writes, "People are seldom aware how much place means to them until development threatens to alter or extinguish it, or they are forced to leave it....The virtues of locales become patent when we have to fight to keep them." David Lowenthal, "Finding Valued Landscapes," Progress In Human Geography 2 (1978), pp. 406-407.

And Yi-Fu Tuan, Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977), p. 171 describes how sense of (future) change may enhance sense of place at the neighbourhood level:

Emotion begins to tinge the whole neighborhood - drawing on, and extrapolating from, the direct experience of its particular parts - when the neighborhood is perceived to have rivals and to be threatened in some way, real or imagined. Then the warm sentiment one has for a street corner broadens to include the larger area.

that threat, an added meaning and poignancy to the rapidly shrinking world of which I choose to be aware.¹

Toronto Islanders, of course, have been under the threat of destruction for many years and this sense of extreme change has undoubtedly contributed to their sense of place. Journalist Ron Haggart, writing shortly after Metro Council decided (in 1963) not to delay for a further year the demolition of 21 houses which were scheduled to go in 1964, commented on how this threatened change sharpened Islanders' sensitivity to the special qualities of Island life:

The Islanders, as they like to call themselves, as if there was some ethnic significance to living in the harbor of Toronto, were enjoying themselves [at the wedding], but they performed every quirk of island life like a defiant ritual. All the peculiarities of island life had a special meaning for them on this Saturday because, just a few days before, they had lost what was, in all probability, their last battle.²

This, of course, was not the "last battle" and the remaining Toronto Islanders are still under threat and still locked in combat with Metro

¹Suzannah Lessard, "The Suburban Landscape: Oyster Bay, Long Island," The New Yorker (October 11, 1976), p. 51. She describes the defensive reaction that she has adopted to cope with the progressive loss of this landscape as a kind of perceptual synecdoche:

My compound antagonism toward the suburban incursion has a curious effect on my vision. Today, I can drive through old haunts that have been built up for almost two decades and not see what's there. When I am going past what used to be a favourite bit of countryside, my eye spontaneously practices synecdoche - that figure of speech in which a part represents the whole. I will select an old familiar tree that happens to have been left standing, or a little swatch of abandoned field in the distance, and with it re-create the old landscape, blanking out the rows of houses, the highways, and the shopping centres everywhere in the foreground. Or when a walk in the woods entails awkwardly sneaking through brush around somebody's back yard, my perceptions automatically go into a state of suspension until I pick up the old track.

²Ron Haggart, "For Them Toronto Islands Are No More," Star (September 16, 1963).

Council. Islander Michael Albrecht comments on how this threat of destruction has increased his own love of the Island:

I think that the fact that some people are trying to destroy it probably makes it more agreeable to me, too. The rationale behind that [desire to destroy it] is just so difficult for me to comprehend. It just makes me love this place that much more, the idea that I may not be able to enjoy it forever.

A sense of change may affect each of the other components of sense of place. People's sense of history may be heightened both because they are searching for an anchor in times of stress or uncertainty and because they fear that something they value--their place--might change or even disappear without a trace.¹ They wish to record its history and its existence before it is too late. In the case of the Toronto Island, as discussed in Sense of History, Islanders, inspired in part by the ever-present threat of destruction, have become avid local historians. They have collected stories, maps, pictures, and assorted memorabilia concerning the Island. And in the summer of 1974, a group of Islanders banded together, obtained a government grant, and compiled an Island archive (mostly of photographs and items collected and squirreled away by Islanders themselves). The motivation for forming this group was the imminent destruction of the

¹David Lowenthal, "Past Time, Present Place: Landscape and Memory," Geographical Review, LXV (January 1975), p. 9, comments on this: "Buffeted by change, we retain traces of our past to be sure of our enduring identity." And Kevin Lynch, What Time Is This Place?, op. cit., p. 30 remarks: "Relying on history to maintain coherence and common purpose in moments of stress is a familiar human tendency. The militant interest in black history is its most recent manifestation in America."

community.¹ Jenny DeTolly (who was not a member of the Archive group) comments on how the threat of destruction has strengthened Islanders' sense of history:

Well, I'm sure [there are so many local historians] because the community is under threat and, even though some people feel fairly sure it's going to remain, I suppose they feel it [Island history] is something they should record before it does disappear.

Sense of change may strengthen sense of identity--both individual and group identity. Yi-Fu Tuan comments on this (and on the feeling of sense of place generally):

The sense of place is perhaps never more acute than when one is homesick, and one can only be homesick when one is no longer at home....However, the loss of place need not be literal. The threat of loss is sufficient. Residents not only sense but know that their world has an identity and a boundary when they feel threatened, as when people of another race want to move in, or when the area is the target of highway construction or urban renewal....Identity is defined in competition and in conflict with others: this seems true of both individuals and communities. We owe our sense of being not only to supportive forces but also to those that pose a threat. Being has a centre and an edge: supportive forces nurture the centre while threatening forces strengthen the edge.²

As noted earlier, both Freya Godard and Elizabeth Amer realized how important the Island was to their sense of identity when they were faced with the threatened or actual (but temporary) loss of the Island. Ms. Godard was distressed by the fact that because of the December 11, 1973 Metro Council vote to continue demolishing Island houses, she

¹Metro Council had voted on December 11, 1973 to terminate Islanders' leases on August 31, 1974 and to proceed with the demolition of the houses in order to expand the park. Although this policy has not been carried out, as far as Islanders knew at this time, the summer of 1974 might have been their last one on the Island before their houses were destroyed and the community dispersed.

²Yi-Fu Tuan, "Space and Place: humanistic perspective" in Progress In Geography, vol. 6, eds. C. Board, R.J. Chorley, P. Haggett, D.R. Stoddart (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), p. 243.

would no longer be an Islander; and Ms. Amer realized how important her identity as an Islander was when she was no longer an Islander but living away from the Island for a year. (See Sense of Identity, pp. 166-167.)

Sense of change resulting from an outside threat may draw people together and strengthen their sense of community. This is true from the national scale down to the local scale. Kenneth Boulding comments on the national scale:

It is perhaps the shared experience of danger which more than anything else creates the national spirit. Nations are the creation not of their historians, but of their enemies. France is a creation of Germany, and Germany of France. In the twentieth century the "perishing republic hardening into empire" of the United States is partly the creation of Russia, and the neurotic, aggressive Russia is partly the creation of the United States. ¹ We still await the larger symbolic image which will unite us all.

On a smaller scale, Barry Conn Hughes describes the effect that the proposed airport and new town had on the residents of rural Pickering,

¹Kenneth E. Boulding, The Image (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan Press, 1956), p. 114.

Ontario, who banded together to fight the schemes:¹

We were all caught up in it [the People or Planes group]. Business-suited commuters who worked in the city and farmers just back from doing chores formed close friendships in common cause. Respectable matrons found themselves waving placards. Quiet folk who'd never protested about anything wrote strong letters to the editor. Ordinary people who could never relate to wild-eyed hippies who wrecked computers, could rise up to fight for ordinary things like home, family, community and the good earth. We were determined to participate in decisions that affected those things.²

In the case of the Toronto Island, the sense of threatened change has built upon an already existing and strong sense of community. Nina Kilpatrick discusses this point:

Well, I think having the political situation the way it is ties people more together than certainly they would be otherwise. I

¹The effect of urban renewal (both public and private schemes) on strengthening local communities and drawing residents together in common cause is well-known. Herbert J. Gans, The Urban Villagers (New York: The Free Press, 1962), argues that Boston's West End was not a single neighbourhood or entity to those who lived there (although it might have seemed that way to "outsiders", like urban planners), until the urban renewal scheme was proposed in the late 1950's. Gans demonstrates that, for a variety of reasons, West End residents never did mobilize to fight the scheme effectively (e.g., the leadership of the group opposing the scheme was never accepted by the majority of residents; many residents refused to believe that the scheme would be implemented and therefore did not act, and so on). Although West Enders never became a cohesive group, the outside threat did draw them more closely together (p. 11):

[T]he concept of the West End as a single neighborhood was foreign to the West Enders themselves....Until the coming of redevelopment, only outsiders were likely to think of the West End as a single neighborhood. After the redevelopment was announced, the residents were drawn together by common danger, but, even so, the West End never became a cohesive neighborhood.

Graham Fraser, Fighting Back (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert, 1972), provides a good Toronto example of a community being drawn together--virtually being created--by the outside threat of urban renewal and, compared to the West End and many other cases, being relatively successful in its fight.

²Barry Conn Hughes, "Up Against Ottawa," The Canadian Magazine (April 19, 1975), p. 2.

really believe that probably there wouldn't be the spirit there that there is now. Certainly it would still be a community and people would be helping each other and so on, but just that sort of tenuous feeling in the air really does tie people together a lot more.¹

Sense of change may also heighten sense of environment. People may savour the sights, sounds, smells and other special features of their place all the more because they may lose them. Boyce Richardson illustrates this point in his study of the James Bay area, which was slated to be flooded for a massive hydro-electric scheme:

I awoke at 5:30 the next morning. It was already daylight, and Job and Mary had the fire burning low and were moving methodically as they rolled up their bedrolls, washed, prepared the tea and got the crowded tent in order for the day. When everyone was up, we went off in Job's canoe to check his nets. The day was glorious. The river was unlike any river I had ever seen before, smooth like glass, the clouds and the surrounding trees reflected as if in a mirror. Its beauty on this morning was truly transcendent; everyone was moved by it, perhaps the more so because we knew that a decision had been made in the south to destroy it.²

As noted before, the Goose and Duck newspaper was created (in 1971) in response to the Metro threat to demolish the remaining Island houses and to rally Island opposition to this threat. As David Amer noted earlier (p. 307), one of the functions of the Goose and Duck was to make other Islanders more aware of their environment so that they would fight to preserve it.

Finally, sense of (enforced) change may reduce people's sense of control. It may limit their freedom of action (e.g., by forcing them to leave a place that they would prefer to stay in; or, alternatively,

¹See below "Community Under Siege" pp. 361 ff. for an expanded discussion of this point.

²Boyce Richardson, Strangers Devour the Land (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975), p. 142.

by forcing them to spend enormous amounts of time and energy on defending a place that is threatened) and may emphasize their relative powerlessness to make major decisions affecting their lives. One Islander discusses this limitation, citing one, perhaps surprising, example of how some Islanders' freedom of action might be limited by the outside threat:

I think it [the political threat and uncertainty] also limits the freedom of decision which they [Islanders] could make about their own lives. The idea of pulling out now and moving into the City would almost be a betrayal to the Island cause and so we don't give it any serious thought, even if we wanted to, and I know of certain people who would probably move to Toronto, but they don't want to leave the Island because of the political struggle.... Perhaps one's optimism about life and society in general is reduced through this on-going political struggle where you really can't get optimistic when you see all those yahoos making decisions.

Another major area where Islanders' freedom of action and sense of control have been limited by the outside threat, and the attendant uncertainty about their future, is house repairs and renovations. People are, naturally, reluctant to make major changes to and spend a lot of money on their houses if they are likely to be forced to leave shortly. Many, however, find this state of affairs frustrating and discouraging.¹

In sum, sense of change may generally enhance a sense of place and may significantly influence each of the other major components. The next sections of this chapter discuss, first, the positive effect that the sense of change has had on Islanders' sense of community, and then some of the, often negative, effects the outside threat of destruction has had on Islanders and some strategies Islanders have adopted to cope with the stress and uncertainty.

¹See below, "Housing Conditions", pp. 366-369 for examples.

b. Community Under Siege:

The Toronto Island has been a "community under siege" for many years. While this has undoubtedly had many negative effects, which are discussed below, it has had some effects which Islanders, at least, would regard as positive. The political stress and uncertainty have undoubtedly kept house prices low which has enabled people from all types of backgrounds and economic situations to afford to buy houses, thus contributing to the social mix that Islanders value so highly,¹ and probably preventing the community from becoming a predominantly summer cottage enclave for the well-to-do.

As noted earlier, the political campaigns, which have called upon Islanders to present their case to politicians and the public at large and to generally work together and use all the resources at their command, have also enabled Islanders to, as one person put it, "pull their muscles"--to exert themselves and discover personal strengths and abilities that they might not otherwise have found in themselves (such as the ability to write or speak in public or argue and cajole decision-makers or meet new people and cope with unfamiliar situations, and so on). Some Islanders have derived a degree of personal satisfaction from that.

By far the most frequently mentioned positive effect of the sense of (threatened) change and attendant political uncertainty has been the strengthening of Islanders' sense of community. Although Islanders experienced a strong sense of community before the Metro threat came upon them, there is little doubt in Islanders' minds that they are a stronger

¹See Sense of Community: "Some Community Values-Social Mix", pp. 208 ff.

more closely-knit community because of the outside threat of destruction and their consequent fight to prevent this than they would have been otherwise. They have gone to numerous highly emotional City and Metro Council meetings together. They have demonstrated together,¹ cried together, argued together, planned together and organized together to fight the various adverse political decisions. They have agonized together, quaked nervously together, shaken their fists in rage together and celebrated victories together. Many Islanders have commented on the positive side of the "community under siege".² For example:

I think it [the political uncertainty] has helped to create a sense of community, even more so, an interdependence on people for their own survival. How it would be without it, it's hard to say, I guess. I think it has helped to more closely knit the community, because there are a lot more people I know that I wouldn't know except through the political thing, especially on Ward's Island [because I live on Algonquin].

(Ron Mazza)

But of course it [knowing everyone in the community] is due in part to the fact that we're under siege permanently and we need to know what's going on day by day.

(Peter Cridland)

[Former Alderman Karl] Jaffary said it and I agree with him, that it's the "reign of terror" that's made us what we are. I'm almost sure it is, really. They just made us mix, which we perhaps wouldn't do. We wouldn't perhaps be the mixing type of community that we are if we weren't under pressure. I wasn't aware of mixing as much when I first came here [in 1958] as it does now.

(Maureen Smith)

¹See Illustration 28.

²Various related comments have been quoted earlier. See, for example, Sense of Community: "Inconveniences", p. 199 and "Impact of Islanders' Defense of Place On Their Sense of Community", pp. 246 ff.

In a community like this, especially when it's being threatened, then everybody has to know everybody to know where there may be weaknesses in the community and where there aren't.

(Peter Holt)

With this whole campaign that we had [in the spring of 1974], I got to know a lot of people that I'd seen for years, but never really talked to, never really known about. I got to go into their houses, which is another thing that I just hadn't done before. It's just a build-up. Well, it's the most fantastic thing about that campaign. I don't think it would have mattered whether we'd achieved anything political at all. But I think we got to know one another and we got to talk to one another, and that's the most important thing of all.

(Jenny DeTolly)

I guess we found out just what a lot of people were made of. There are a lot of very courageous people, in terms of standing up and being counted in City Hall Square or up at Queen's Park. ...People really showed phenomenal courage in dealing with the situation. And we got to be friends with a lot of people that we normally wouldn't have really gotten to be friends with: This business of going right outside your social circle and getting mixed up with a lot of different people--older people, younger people, people who had a little different style of life--working with them all and getting to know them and really getting to care about them was really important.

(Elizabeth Amer)

Elizabeth Amer expands on this idea of getting to know people who are not in your normal social group and on how the Goose and Duck was used to promote this sort of mixing in order to build community solidarity in the face of threatened change:

One of the things we tried to do with the Goose and Duck was to get different people in different groups dealing with each other, maybe not over the teacups or anything, but on some basis, in order to facilitate solidarity in the community and somehow integrate people so that they could all work together better on the political front and keep the morale up....You know, you'd get a "freak" who wanted to grow something or other and would find that Mr. _____ happened to be the greatest living expert on how to grow it and he would contact Mr. _____ and find out how the hell you grow it. Now, he and Mr. _____ are never going to get together for a beer of an evening 'cause it's just not that sort of thing. But they deal with each other because Mr. _____ has some information that the young "freak" wants. And that's the way it goes. And I think lots of people dealt with a lot of people they wouldn't have

otherwise dealt with through the kinds of community things and through the kind of information the Goose and Duck put out. And, then again, through the political campaign. People going out to political meetings who hadn't been--well, I talked to lots of people who hadn't been involved in political activity before in their lives. They'd go out to political meetings with people that were a lot younger, lived on Ward's, they maybe hadn't seen before or they'd just seen around but never met them. I think there are quite a few occasions to get together with people who aren't in your immediate social circle here.

Even if the present political threat were removed (i.e., if the ground leases were extended for a long term or permanently), some Islanders have felt that the sense of change and attendant stress would continue to exist and unite the community. For example:¹

I think it's inconceivable to most of us now that the pressure will be removed completely, I think. If we have a little more hope now that we do have a future as a community, the concern is becoming more a case of how we can retain what are the good parts about it that we have in the face of what seem to be likely, very likely, to be some fairly drastic conditions under which we live. So, I'm assuming that a certain amount of stress will remain for a long while. I think it's inconceivable to most of us that there will be a nice, clear-cut, long-lease extension, or actually freedom to go on or stay as they always have. For any number of reasons that's not likely to happen. So, I think an awful lot of us are going to be apprehensive for a long while until it settles down to whatever it is that it's going to settle down to be.

(Peter Gridland)

[If the present political threat were removed], we'd have almost as much work to do as we have now. The pressure is never going to ease out. It's always going to be a difficult job to control. It really is.

(Maureen Smith)

I think that if we're going to have any permanent or on-going community here, it's going to be, I'm quite convinced, in some form of rather experimental form of housing....I would expect if we have an on-going community, I think it's going to have to be under the City and the City is likely to require that it be either under City coop housing or our own coop housing or under some kind of

¹ These comments are all from interviews in 1974- early 1976.

controlled set-up. I don't think you're just going to get a lease extension and then be free to deal any way you want. I think that the proposition is going to be involving a lot of people and I think that it'll continue to be a lot of people mixing up together for community purposes, because there are a lot of things that are going to have to be done in terms of rebuilding and renovating and bringing houses up to standard and working out the administration of the coop and one thing or another, which will require a lot of working together....Whatever happens is going to constitute a crisis. No matter what happens. So that people are going to be dealing with a crisis in some form for the next ten years, I would imagine. A change. That's all I really mean. Like either you're going to have to get adjusted to the fact that the City owns your house and you're virtually sort of a tenant coop member, which is going to be very hard for some people....That's going to take some work and some dealing. And if everything goes rotten, then it's just going to be a case of "La Résistance".

(Elizabeth Amer)

Finally, as some of the above comments indicate, although Islanders obviously want to eliminate the present political threat to their continued existence as a community, some are nevertheless worried about how the community might change if that threat and some of the other physical stresses were lifted.¹ Maureen Smith commented on this:

[If the political stress were removed], no I don't think it could ever be [like other communities], unless it was joined to the Mainland and people started to bring their cars over. Then you would see the houses taken down and other houses built. There'd be pressure to own the land. And probably I wouldn't want to live here anymore. But the fact that people have to leave their cars and their status symbols in the city and come--I mean, it doesn't matter how well-dressed you are if you're slithering over the ice to get home in the winter. It's a great leveller, you know, winter on the Island. The thing that worries me is that if the reign of terror was ever ended, this place would go back to the summer community. And the trouble is that as it becomes more and more permanent, of course, as it becomes more and more secure, people will demand more and more. People will want better ferry services, people will want better delivery services. People will feel that they are justified in asking for them and in the past we felt we couldn't ask for them because our position was so insecure. Sure better ferry service would change the community, too, in that

¹See also the comments about welcoming inconveniences in Sense of Control: "Inconveniences", p. 322 and about the need for price controls in Sense of Control: "Reactions To A Housing Cooperative", pp. 326 ff.

it would encourage more and more people to come over to the Island who are not prepared to cope with the difficulties of living on the Island. One of the things is that most of the people here are pretty resourceful types of people. And you'd get the unresourceful types...that don't know one end of a screwdriver from another.

c. Other Effects of Threat and Uncertainty:

From the perspective of Islanders, the extreme sense of threatened change (and possible destruction) experienced by them over many years has created many negative effects as well as the positive ones just described.

1. Housing Conditions:

Islanders are the first to admit that housing conditions on the Island are far from ideal. Although, as has been described elsewhere, many Islanders have made major changes to their houses in spite of the political uncertainty clouding their future, and most Islanders make enough repairs to keep their houses going at a tolerable level, many Islanders have refrained from making major changes or major repairs in the face of an uncertain future.¹ They have been unable and/or unwilling to invest large sums of money in houses which might be demolished shortly. As is shown below, this is a great source of frustration and annoyance to people who would like to make changes and improve their

¹Some people have gone ahead and done major repairs in the face of extreme uncertainty. For example, the Daniels family finally spent \$30,000 renovating their Lakeshore house (called "Camelot") during the winter of 1979-1980 (after having spent 22 years on the Island). Jean Daniels explained, "We realized that any day could be the last, but there comes a point when you have to take a gamble." Quoted in "Faith Still Strong That Island Home Will Not Be Lost," Globe and Mail, July 2, 1980. According to Alderman Allan Sparrow at City Council on May 14, 1980, over the previous two years Islanders had spent nearly \$300,000 on home repairs and improvements (including 36 new foundations). See also Sense of Identity: "Island Houses", pp. 171 ff. and Sense of Control: "Island Houses", pp. 316 ff. for examples of renovations.

living conditions.

This is not a new situation, although it has been exaggerated in recent years. Alan Howard describes how the sense of change and feeling of uncertainty prevented people from improving their houses in an earlier era (late 1940's and early 1950's). He also condemns the attitudes of the civic administration which criticized people for allowing their houses to deteriorate while creating the very conditions which led to that deterioration. He comments:

Well, I think that during the long years that there was uncertainty about the future permanence of the Island community, it discouraged people from making plans. It discouraged people from refurbishing the houses and doing things that perhaps needed doing, because they knew they weren't going to be reimbursed for the extra things that they put into their houses and this was made more complicated by the fact that the civic administration frequently complained that the houses were not as well kept as they should be, but at the same time their sidewalks on the parks were appallingly kept and the argument was: well, that Island does nothing but cost us money; it's a sort of lodestone [sic] around our neck and we're not going to put any money into it. Well, how can you expect people to make their homes beautiful and insulate them and put on new roofs and do all the things that are necessary if first of all the civic administration, which should be setting an example, is not doing any of the things it should do and secondly, they are warning you at all times that you may be put off at any moment; they'd clear the place, you see? And you can't have it both ways. You can't really say to people: "Now, we'd like this to be a model community. Do up your houses and make it beautiful, but don't expect anything from us. We're not going to mend our public sidewalks or raise them if they're flooded during rainstorms." and so on. "Don't expect anything from us. And of course you realize that you do this on the understanding that you're not going to get a lot of repayment for this work when the house is eventually claimed for the City." Well, what would you think? You'd say, "Well, I'm going to live here as long as I can and I'm not going to do more than I have to." I think that the Island community could have been a really model place.

Many Islanders would probably make similar criticisms of more recent civic administration.

A number of Islanders commented, in the City's 1973 survey of

Island residents, on the deteriorating housing conditions and their desire for a "permanent" or long-term lease so that they could improve their houses. For example:

[I would like] extended leases so people would be willing to spend money on major home improvements.

I do not like the uncertainty of a year to year lease because it prevents me from making improvements on the house which I would sincerely like to make but cannot afford to invest in either time or money-wise for only one year. This is very frustrating to people who care a good deal for the Island community.

And many Islanders voiced similar opinions in their interviews. The sense of frustration comes through very clearly. For example:

From May '73 right through to now [summer 1974] we've been sort of "something coming in a few months that might change the situation" and we kept waiting for a permanent solution to make our permanent plans. But so far, we still don't know....I can't make any decisions....They'd fix their places up if they knew they were going to stay, but if we have to give our houses up and not get one red cent for them, who's going to spend any money on them? And that's why they've been going downhill for years and then they get criticized for having these messy places.... I would love to - I really enjoy fixing the place up....I'm very undecided as to what to do....But I'm not going to put a lot of money into the place or get myself into a lot of trouble.

(Mrs. Hopp)

[The political uncertainty] certainly had a lot to do with their "slum housing". General maintenance is very important and that gets to you after a while. I'm sure everyone has a game plan of what they'll do to fix their place up. Some of us have got to the place [in November 1975] where it's driving us crazy.

(David Amer)

The only thing I don't like about the Island is the fact that we're so unstable right now [January 1976] that we're forced to live in a way that we really don't want to live as far as our house is concerned or buying new furniture or making our house liveable for us....It's really inconvenient right now. Michael's in high school and Chrissy's only in Grade 2, so Michael has a lot more homework to do and she wants to watch television. With the size of the house it's very difficult for both of them to have their wants and so one has to sacrifice all the time for somebody else in the house.

(Maxine Wilson)

I guess the major [dislike] when I think of it is the house is the biggest annoyance. I'd like to be able to do certain renovations on the house and don't feel free to do so [November 1975], because of the short duration of time here. This wears on us. There are lots of ways that this affects your life, your planning.

(Terry Tyers)

We don't really get too down about [the political uncertainty] or too depressed, but we do talk about it and in this way that if we had a long time, if we were going to stay here for any length of time, we could do so many things with the house. But I think that that's what's happening to a lot of people, that the maintenance on their homes, they're starting to run down. Nobody wants to put out a great deal of money [in January 1976], because they know they're not going to get it back. Like people's roofs are leaking and they don't want to pay five or six hundred dollars for a roofer to do a proper job. That sort of thing. Sidewalks are busted and walkways, wooden walkways, are needing repair. Nobody really wants to do anything until they find out exactly where they stand and so they just make do until that day when they say we're going to stay forever.

(Jimmy Jones)

2. Human Costs:

The years of uncertainty, the intensive political campaigns and the forced evictions have all taken their toll. The human cost, according to Islanders' accounts, has ranged from weariness and tension through to relatively serious illness and even death.¹

Probably the most serious human costs have been associated with

¹The information collected for this study cannot confirm or deny Islanders' statements on these points or assess the possible extent of the problems. Since many people who left the Island (or were forced to move from one part of the Island to another) were old, it could be argued that their subsequent problems resulted from old age rather than forced moving or reactions to years of uncertainty. There is no way of knowing for certain if, as Islanders maintain, their problems were in fact related to their evictions. It is reasonable to expect, however, that some people who were forced to move did suffer because of it. See William Michelson, Man and His Urban Environment (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1970), pp. 163. ff.; and Marc Fried, "Greiving For A Lost Home," in The Urban Condition, ed. Leonard Duhl (New York: Basic Books, 1963), pp. 151-171 for discussions of medical and psychological consequences of forced relocation.

people who were forced to move, against their will, either from one house on the Island to another or off the Island altogether. Undoubtedly many people have been able to adapt without suffering serious consequences, but a number of Islanders mentioned instances of people who fell ill or suffered serious effects:¹

As the bulldozers went further and came to Centre, and there were some lovely homes they had to take down, even though the people got paid for their homes, there were some people who took it very, very hard and I know people who never recovered. I can't name names, but I definitely know them. One I have in mind, she just went speechless after the house was lost. They had made such a beautiful place out of their home and they'd worked so hard through all the trials and tribulations and she just never kind of gave up hope and found that it still was taken and she went to pieces and I don't think she's ever really been the same since. So, I don't know how many other people might have been badly affected. That's one case I know of.

I remember hearing a story once about somebody who had lived on Centre for ten or fifteen years and was really a part of it. All the houses on Centre were torn down and those people were going to get together every month and this guy said that by a year after, all sorts of emotional problems had arisen--all sorts of things--because these people were uprooted from their home and community, something that had been very important to them, and they were facing entirely different social and financial pressures.

[I think my neighbour has been affected.] He was in very poor health anyway and his only pleasure was to sit outside [his former house] and drink a glass of beer and watch the boats and that sort of thing. The very big human cost....And I've been through it from _____, you see. And that was the sort of traumatic experience. I don't think this next one will affect us as much, because over there was a house we'd had for twenty years and the first place, house we bought when we were married, before we even had a place to live in the City....My husband and I would, since we moved over here, he's more or less, well he's one of the human casualties. He had a very, he had a stroke after he left the Island and I think the worry and so forth and the work that he'd done....

¹See also Introduction: "Islanders' Sense of Place" for other examples.

The scars that they [the evictions and demolitions] have inevitably left. I mean, the proof is _____'s mother, who was asked to go down to Hanlan's...just to talk about the history, and layout of the streets and where people were and what there was and that day they were tearing down Durnan's boathouse and she broke down and started crying and they just couldn't do it [the interview].

Other people, according to some Islanders, died as a result of the experience:

There's no question [that people's health was affected]. I could name some of the people whose life was shortened by the fact that they knew their homes were being taken and they had nowhere else to go. They were elderly. They lived 30, 40 years on the Island. I remember one time this was stated at Metro Council before the Chairman, Fred Gardiner, who absolutely pooh-poohed it and he said, "Next thing you'll be calling me a murderer." I was there and heard this, you see. Well, of course, he couldn't appreciate what it was doing. I don't think he ever really felt any compassion whatsoever.

_____ : What do you think about your mother? Is she a fair example:

_____ : She didn't adjust at all.

_____ : Like _____'s mother. She wasn't very well anyway. Just leaving her home. She moved in with her sister. She just deteriorated completely. And she went to a nursing home and she died in a couple of months. Just leaving her home and not having the routine of doing things. Having things done for her. It's very difficult for old people to make any kind of adjustment. Any kind of a move.

While the political campaign may have drawn people together and reinforced their sense of community, it has also taken its toll. Several Islanders comment on this aspect of the political threat:

I think [the political struggle and uncertainty] has made them tired in many respects. I know I sometimes just get weary of the whole thing. It never seems to end. It always seems so long, so enormous.

I must admit that I was so tired afterwards [after the Spring Campaign of 1974]. The strain and the physical work involved. Your time is not your own and you feel guilty if you're not doing anything. Not that anyone says anything to you, but you just feel guilty and I felt that that was getting a bit unhealthy. You can't have a bit of fun. That's a bad state of affairs.

I took the major role out of our family and made the conscious decision that _____ was starting off on his own, self-employed, and we consciously made the decision that I would do the work on the Island political thing for us both and I would put in a lot of time to make up for what he wouldn't be putting in, and that was the conscious decision that we both came to. So I had the strain of the Island situation on a 24 hour basis and although I didn't think the strain would get to me, it did and our marriage suffered and our family life suffered and my health suffered and I lost an incredible amount of weight....It was the members of the Executive and the Borough Captains who were really carrying the strain from the responsibility point of view. And I'm sure from the stress point of view...a lot of people feel more strain than I do. I know they do. I know a lot of people who are taking pills and all sorts of things to get them through.

I suppose the sense of responsibility [drove me on]. I had agreed to do something and I had to see it through. I suppose really I could have quit and disappeared, but there was always something cropping up that had to be dealt with and people would phone and you couldn't just ignore the telephone. I was getting very tired. After December [1973], I think if I hadn't gone away for Christmas and been completely away from the Island for those few weeks, I probably wouldn't have survived. I would have had a nervous breakdown about February. I just couldn't cope. And I found that I was getting completely ineffectual. I just couldn't cope. I couldn't think. I couldn't make decisions. I was just losing my grip, through complete weariness and being burnt out. That whole bit of getting so crisp that everything was a major disaster and then I started to lose my memory. I couldn't remember had I done this or was I supposed to do that...and meetings would be coming up that I knew would be difficult. I just didn't want to do them. And I'd get into a fit of nerves before I went in. Because I'm basically a shy person and I couldn't run public meetings. I couldn't speak at public meetings at all and the idea of actually running a public meeting was just completely beyond my comprehension. I couldn't even imagine myself doing it, but I was forced into the situation and I wasn't very good at it. There was always something happened. And I used to say to my husband, "It's only another two weeks", and he'd say, "Ha, Ha. Tell me another one. Tell me another one!" He made it difficult sometimes. He would complain because I wasn't home or I had to go out and I'd be out sometimes three or four times a week. But when I'd say, "OK, I'll quit."; he'd say, "Well, no you can't.", and he would drive me back in again and he would say, "You took the job on. Now, you've got to do it." So we would carry on and keep going, but I think it was bad. I don't think the Islanders did themselves right in keeping me in that position for so long.

Anxiety and fatigue in the face of extreme threat and uncertainty have continued to plague Islanders--both those who are heavily involved in

the political defense and those who are not.

d. Coping With Uncertainty and Stress:

Islanders have adopted a variety of methods of coping with uncertainty and stress, which have ranged from voluntarily moving from the Island to refusing to believe anything untoward will happen. The next three subsections discuss some of these coping mechanisms.

1. Moving:

Undoubtedly, over the years some people have moved because they could no longer (or no longer wished to) cope with the political uncertainty. Several Islanders comment on this:

The only reason my father moved [from Ward's] was he applied for a Senior Citizen apartment and then this yearly stay [of execution] business sort of got under his skin after all these years. So we've been doing it now for about 20 some odd years. Year after year. So when these people come along and say, "Well, gee, let's begin the fight all over again," people such as myself are a bit tired. We've been through this for 20 years. So Dad had to make his mind up whether to risk losing being at the top of the list for senior citizens apartments or staying on the Island, so he took the apartment.

____: Well, I guess some have left because of [the political uncertainty]....

____: My brother and your sister.

____: ____ left because of the uncertainty, too. The longer they stayed, the higher the prices get in town, the more they panic....

After my husband died [1964], I couldn't have stayed alone over here winter and summer, not knowing whether there was going to be any future to the place. I accepted the fact that there wasn't, so I had to make plans to get myself settled down somewhere, so I wouldn't be a worry to my family and so I did....Because of the fact that we never had more than one year at a time to count on, anybody who could make other arrangements naturally would, unless they had a family of small children, they were young, healthy and able to stand the strain.

[In the early 1970's] lots of people left because they couldn't stand the insecurity. A lot of houses changed hands. A lot of the old people got off. 1971. Yes, I think there was more of

a move than now [August 1974]....I must say that our fortitude wavered somewhat about four or five years ago, in 1970 when it looked as though we weren't going to win. It really was pretty close.

I've never had anybody that I know of that said they left because of the political situation, but I felt that some of them left because of the situation that politics has created. I don't think people would express it that way. Uncertainty has got to be a problem for some people. I'm sure that's the reason for a number of them leaving.

I think that a reason why a lot of people have left and I'm relating this entirely to people that I know, who would be possibly different from other people--that there comes a certain stage in your life when something comes up--some kind of job offer, some kind of other pressure enters your life, some piece of property that you've been searching for all your life comes up, and it just becomes impractical to live on the Island any more. You're not only paying the price of inconvenience, but you're paying in uncertainty--a constant uncertainty. When we came here [1969] there was a year, then after that there was another year, and it's just been going like that ever since we've been here, so you're paying in that kind of uncertainty, because most people like their life pretty prescribed. They like to know where they're going in the next few years, and I think what has happened is that in all these cases, certain things have come up in these people's lives and they've had to go, they just can't put up with it anymore. Or not even put up with it. Other things have taken priority.

What is surprising, perhaps, is not that some people have moved because of the uncertainty and stress, but that more have not moved. For example, there has been no mass exodus of Islanders since the 1973 Metro decision to reaffirm its policy of acquiring and demolishing the remaining houses (a policy that has been delayed but not changed). In fact, according to some Islanders, there was more movement immediately before that decision was made than after. Several Islanders, who have been active in the political fight, comment on the lack of large-scale movement in recent years:

I remember a year or two ago [1974] there was an Island Solidarity Committee which was put there because, boy, as soon as the final notice comes through [summer 1974], people are going to

start deserting the Island. Well, surprisingly few have. I don't know what their arrangements are. But everybody who jumped into the Solidarity Committee really thought that. Maybe there have been people who moved because of the uncertainty, but I can't think of them.

Very few. In the last two years [since 1973] very few people have moved.

But it seems to me that in the last two years [since 1972] that the Island has been a lot more stable. I think everybody then just decided "Well, we might as well sit it out and see what happens. We've got nothing to lose by sitting here." And a lot of people literally got trapped; they can't move out now because of the housing and they really don't want to go. They're onto a good thing. Most of them own the houses outright and they just don't want to go. They might as well hang on and see, because, gradually this idea that we might be here for longer began to start to get a few converts and there seemed to be a little more hope. I think people started to think "we might as well sit it out. You know, we'd be fools to move now."...I think [that idea] started with the arrival of people like Sewell and the whole citizen movement in the City started to come about and the fact that there were more and more younger people coming....And I guess, too, a different feeling amongst the people who are living here, a younger group of people, a little more educated, a lot of architects and planners and that sort of thing, who were beginning to say, "you shouldn't just say, 'well, we've got to go some day.' You've got to make the place worth saving...." And we had a lot more planners and social types who thought the place should be kept because it was so different, and you know, the whole bit about the social mix was becoming more and more stressed and this was something that planners and so on were trying to create and couldn't. Here it was existing without anybody doing anything about it. And I think people began to think they'd reached a point where, well, they were crazy to move off in case it sorted itself out. They decided they still wanted to stay. I think the people that didn't really like the Island had all moved off. Now you find that the people that move off are the people that have to go and change their jobs or drastically alter their plans.

One factor that must inevitably be weighed in the decision about whether to move or stay is an evaluation of how one's life might change if one moved. Those who have chosen to move before the final eviction is forced upon them have done so for a variety of reasons. Not surprisingly, it seems that their view of how life might change tends to be ambivalent or positive about the future. Two people who moved (but did

not sell their Island houses) in the summer of 1974 comment:

[Life] won't be as relaxed. I don't think I'll mind it. I think _____ will. Hopefully, we'll make a lot of friends and hopefully we'll get more fun. It's tough for teenagers around here, because they don't have the freedom to participate in the extra-curricular school activities. I can do a lot of things that I cannot do here [like take night classes]....I'll miss seeing all those people that I've known for years and years and years, watching their kids grow up and have their children coming for holidays and seeing the third generation. I don't want to lose touch with them, but it's hard to keep touch. Apart from that, I look forward to the new situation. I'm ready for a change.

Oh, it's going to be a lot bigger house. We'll have a car which we haven't had in [a long time]. I shall put my two children in the car and drive to the shop and that will be, I think, a very nice change. I'm kind of looking forward to that. I've forgotten what it's like. I'm hoping my son will start school there. Now the negative part. I'm very sad that _____ will leave his [Island] school, because he was very happy there.¹

Some Islanders who still do not want to leave, believe that although life would not be as nice as life on the Island, they would probably be able to adapt well to a change. Two people who have been very active in the campaign to save Island homes comment on their expectations:

Well, firstly, I think we would adapt fairly well, I have no great, no nightmarish fears about it. It would probably be quite different, since I couldn't see us owning a house in the City, so we'd probably be living in an apartment, an older apartment, preferably not highrise, but there wouldn't be the sense of having your friends near.

I'd be pretty pissed off if I was forced to leave here. You'd have a really mad person on your hands, but that wouldn't prevent me from being perfectly happy in some new place. I don't think there's any place in the City that is as good to live as the Island....But I'd get a great deal of pleasure in spending the rest of my time [taking revenge on] the group that kicked me off.

But a number of Islanders have a bleaker view of how their lives might change and how well they might adapt if they were forced to move

¹This family returned to the Island three years later.

and live in the City:

Oh well, I think I'm the wrong guy to talk to about that, because my life would be totally different. I'd have to start another type of job, for one thing. And, I'm not trying to be funny, but I think I'd die. I really do. Not knowing anybody, not being able to go for a walk or a swim when I please, I think I'd become frustrated, I really do. Because, a lot of guys that move from the Island die within two or three years. Oh yeah. There's a guy lived down on Third Street and his wife no longer liked the Island, so they got an apartment uptown. A few years later he dropped dead. He was as healthy as a horse. He was old. He was retired from his job and he had lots of dough. He used to walk around here day after day. Now, I think my father won't last that much longer. He can't get out for his walks [from his Senior Citizen apartment]. He misses talking to Frank Ward and all his old cronies. They'll all be gone within a year, I'm afraid.¹

Jesus, I'd have a hard time figuring out how it would in any way be the same. If I lived in the City, I'd have to find an entirely new way of living.

If we have to move, _____ might well stay here and camp out. So you could say that we'd be separated. He nearly goes daft in the City. He really gets quite impossible. We were staying at [City friends' house]. He would come and stay on the Island two nights a week. I could adapt a lot more easily than he could.

There's an incredible amount of pain involved in having to move and I guess I'd go out screaming. I think it would be horrendous.... It was horrible moving [temporarily from the Island] and it was horrible the day I had to move over to Algonquin [from Ward's]. That sort of change takes months to adjust to and I can adjust because I'm younger, but some people it's just going to kill. I don't think they recognize that at all. I think it's a human thing. I thought when _____ and I were moving, I felt if we ever came to the crunch when we all have to go, this pain is going to be multiplied by a thousand, when you think of all the people and animals, cats and dogs, that are going to have to shift. It's incredible and whether people can realize how horrible it's going to be and fight because of it, I don't know. People don't talk about it much. Maybe it's a taboo. It's like talking about death. You don't want to write up that will. But maybe that would be one thing we should get people to face.

¹This person made similar comments several years later to a newspaper reporter in June 1980, when Islanders were facing imminent eviction.

Oh, it would be awful. I would have to find another job, I guess [away from the Island school]. I wouldn't want to come back every day, past where I'd been and everything. The kids wouldn't have the freedom that they have; for sure I wouldn't allow it. And I guess it would be all the locked door thing....Just everything would change so completely, I couldn't stand the thought. I'd never leave the kids alone, ever.

The first thing I would say is that I wouldn't move to the City. In a sense, I know that if I were kicked off here, it would force me out of Toronto, because I wouldn't move back. But, if I were forced to move back [to the City], I would change in the sense that I might drift back into getting a nice house and fixing it up and having to work harder to keep up the payments...God, I hate to think of it....[But] I'm actually afraid to move to the country.

I don't know how and I would survive if we were trying to build this boat from a City house, because I would never see him. He'd just be there all the time. And I don't know how our marriage would survive. The only reason I agreed he should do it was I knew that I would at least see him and I could participate and join in. And as the children get older on the Island, that's great. They can go off and do what they want to do and they can still establish contact with me. But if they're living in the City, they'll be wanting to do things in the City with their friends and I shall be over here and I shall have no contact with them. I think the family--that's looking on the bleak side, you know--could break up. We wouldn't have the sort of contact with each other that we have at the moment, because we touch base every now and again. We're either here or at the yacht club. I might not have seen them all day, but at least I know where they are; they're on the beach and if I want them I can find them. And they come back to me every now and again for something to eat, and that's the way the family functions. But I have a feeling that if we lived in the City, the only way it would work would be that the boat was in the back yard....I have the feeling that I wouldn't make out too well [socially in the City].

If I lived in the City I would like to continue working at the School. I don't know if it would be possible....I guess if that weren't possible, I'd look for another job....I think I'd try to duplicate as much as I could. Physical activity--you couldn't ski to school or ride to school; you couldn't jog....You wouldn't be as free as far as leaving the kids and going for a ski or for a job. I wouldn't feel as at home about that, leaving them alone for an hour. I guess there'd be a lot of times that you'd have to take them places, you couldn't send them. And I guess I'd be far more restricted until they got adjusted. I guess my working wouldn't be such an easy thing.

We'd have to work like dogs, because we don't want to live in an apartment. But, well, where else are you going to move, but to an apartment or a rented house. I'd have to become a 9 to 5'er, a career person. Both the children would have to be shipped out. We wouldn't see each other. Just become pretty humdrum. We'd probably end up splitting up.

I don't know. Pretty tough, I guess. The part of it that would be tough for me is that I'm so used to being out of doors. I go for a walk to Centre everyday. I'm getting older now. At one time I thought it wouldn't matter...but now I'm getting pretty old.

2. Buying a House:

In order to cope with the stress and uncertainty about the future, some Islanders have bought houses elsewhere in case they are eventually forced to move from the Island. These people do not want to move (otherwise they would have already done so); but they have found the uncertainty too hard to bear without having made alternative plans for the future. Several Islanders commented on this way of coping (in 1974-1976):

It's very difficult. ___ feels that way [panic about rising house prices]. But, he's bought a place and we've rented it. Now he feels settled about that at least....I don't think there are very many [who have done this]. I think you could count about five or six that we know of.

There are some people that have places that could move. They don't want to, but they've covered their bets.

I must say that our fortitude wavered somewhat about four or five years ago, in 1970, when it looked as though we weren't going to win. It really was pretty close....We weren't sure. We really figured that the Island was going to come to an end and there was no hope of anything in those days. We wanted this other boat, but the biggest thing that was concerning me, because the children were smaller, was what would we do when we left the Island. So what we decided to do in the end was to take a certain percentage of the money that we have saved and buy a house, or put a down payment on the house, then rent that out until we needed it, and then the balance of the money, any

money from there on in that we saved, would go into the boat. And that's what we did. So that at the moment we own another house in Toronto, which is rented and which we have owned for the last four years. But we've no inclination to move into it; even when the going is tough, we'll live here and stick it outWell, because we don't want to go and live there. We'd much rather live here. We don't particularly want to live there. The only reason we bought it was it was cheap, it had three bedrooms, it was gas-heated, it was opposite a school, it's close to shops, it's five minutes from the Go-train station, five minutes from a street-car line into the City. It fulfilled all our requirements. It had a garden at the back and that was it. It was in bad condition; it needs a lot of work done on it; it was small; it was cheap; it just filled our requirements at that particular time, but we didn't really want to live in it. We weren't dying to go and live there. It was an option that we didn't want to take up.

3. Attitudes:

Over the long years of uncertainty, Islanders have adopted various attitudes ranging from fatalism to total optimism, to cope with the stress and political uncertainty. Some of these coping mechanisms are described here.

In earlier years especially, many Islanders simply did not believe that anything unpleasant could happen. For years they had heard about plans for the Island, which had never materialized; they thought (or hoped) Metro's plan would not be implemented either:

I can remember them talking about this as long as I've been here and I know when I was a kid, "Oh, ya. We've listened to this since 1900"....So, you know, when they came up with these plans every six months or every year, whenever there wasn't enough happening in the newspaper it seemed they'd bring up the Island issue again. So, you used to think, "Oh, ya, I've heard that a thousand times before".

I was down here [Algonquin] then [1956]. At that particular time, as I recall, I don't think we took it very seriously.

Even as Metro began demolishing houses and developing the park, many residents at the eastern end continued to think that nothing would happen:

Well, I think for a long time we didn't believe...and I think

the people down here didn't believe, that it would ever happen. There was always this thought that Metro would run out of money. They were spending so much money. It was raising the land and installing the sprinkler system and...when they cleared Hanlan's we really thought this would give us a break, because there's, you know, a huge new area, which was new. Hanlan's was never really used.

Well, I don't think we took it too seriously in a way, because it seemed so far in the future and we were much too concerned with immediate things. Now I certainly was. We had small children; we had a business over here; and my husband wasn't well. So I just didn't believe in looking that far ahead.

As Islanders began to battle the demolition plans, some comforted themselves and kept themselves going with the thought that their cause was just and justice would triumph in the end:

I felt for years, you know, I sort of kept myself going with the feeling that if the cause was just, you gotta win out in the end. When we finally lost our house at the Island, after all those years of fighting, I realized that, well, it doesn't always happen that way. Even good causes can be lost if there are various circumstances.

And others were simply fatalistic: they assumed that Metro would implement their plans, that eventually the houses would go and that there was nothing anyone could do about it (except move or wait and enjoy the Island until the last possible moment). Presumably, there was no point in fighting or worrying about the ultimate outcome:

I'm not so sure it [the reason why people at this end were not involved in fighting Metro earlier] wasn't all part of a feeling that there was nothing that could be done about it. That was a long time before the days of the citizens' movement. I can remember the fellow next door to me saying, "Say what you like," he said, "They've done what they said they were going to do. They've taken the places they said they would. They said they would take this at this stage. They've done it!" And he never really believed that there was any real hope for us. It would just happen because it was just too large a thing to fight.

At that time [in the late 1950's when we bought a house] _____ said, "Look, we could be out of here next year" and that was

pretty reasonable, I think. In that particular time there was still some houses on Hanlan's with people living in them. They all went that spring and I think it was quite reasonable then to suggest that Metro might come into some extra money and just go through with a stronger push and the place would go. Circumstances could turn it around so that they wouldn't have to wait until 1968 to get rid of Algonquin or maybe they'd do Ward's immediately if they found the money....

I can remember very clearly _____ saying, "Oh, well, you can't fight City Hall" and I remember thinking, "Christ, if he has been around this long and he figures you can't fight City Hall, you probably can't fight City Hall." I just assumed he knew a lot more about it than I did.

In more recent years, some Islanders have coped with the insecurity by refusing to place a high priority on long-term security:

It's hard for people outside to realize how satisfied we are with another year, you know. Most people who have a house expect to be there for a period of time, before they decide to reinvest in another better house or whatever. We don't think too much in terms of security, so another year seems fantastic.

Some Islanders, even in the face of the past demolition of about 400 houses, have coped with the insecurity by simply ignoring the situation:

I'm really surprised at the number of people who have lived here long enough to think "Well, nothing's going to happen."-- who just ignore the question--put the question out of their mind and do not cope with it. [By contrast] I guess the Executive is made up of people who figure they'd better cope with that problem.

Others (like some of the people quoted earlier) are basically pessimistic about the final outcome; but they still continue to live on the Island, and in some cases, continue to spend great amounts of time and energy fighting to retain their homes. Pessimism has not always led to moving or giving up:

I think quite a few people feel that it's only a matter of time now, you know, lost hope if you look at the process. _____ just thinks we'll be here, we'll get another year maybe, maybe two, and then we'll be gone. I think he's pretty pessimistic. I'm

still pessimistic in twelve years after landing out here. I'm still very pessimistic about the long-term prospects for the community.

This pessimism is sometimes, but not always, combined with hope. In any event, hope that "something" will happen to prolong the life of the community enables some Islanders to cope with their situation:

I do tend to stick my head in the sand fairly thoroughly and hope that one way or another we can stay and even if we have to adapt to some very different conditions and perhaps an evolving community, that it'll all last long enough...until the kids are fairly independent and then...a fairly drastic change wouldn't be so traumatic anyway.

Hope, I suppose that there will be some resolution to it [prevents people from moving]. They just don't want to give it up.

Just as in the old days, belief in the justice of their cause (and its ultimate success) continues to give comfort to some Islanders (and inspires them to keep fighting to prevent the destruction of their homes):

Islanders have become convinced that they actually do have a case, whereas before they didn't really believe they did. They've realized that, because they've had to go out to explain to people [in the Spring Campaign of 1974] why they think they have a case. In order to explain to someone else, they've had to think it out themselves. The writing of the [1973 City] report brought to light a lot of the issues and, well, it's just made people think it over, I guess.

Some Islanders are fundamentally optimistic about the future either because they could not cope with the stress if they were not optimistic; or because they genuinely do not believe that Metro would really destroy their homes; or because they feel that Islanders are strong enough to resist the threat:

Oh, we'd always have these TIRA meetings, and we'd always get optimistic. _____ is a pessimist. He says, "Oh, it's not going to work. It's not going to work." I go into these meetings and get all optimistic. And then they go to vote [at Metro Council] and he turns out right and it's terrible. I'm always

optimistic. I'd die otherwise. I couldn't survive.

Oh, morale's incredible [summer of 1974]. It's incredible. You would never even dream that they were people who have suffered one defeat after another. There they are all ready to go in again. Nobody's negative. Everybody's talking about, "We'll do this to the house. We'll have to winterize the attic. We're gonna do this, that...." It's just as if life is going on as normal, no change, nothing. And they're all ready to get in there again, get on with the fight for survival.

Morale is fine [1975]. I think people are not down because I think, if they don't feel it consciously, subconsciously they must feel that nobody's going to come and get them.

I just do not believe that in 1975, with the economic situation the way it is, with inflation, with the government, with the political situation, where you've got housing as an issue, that's mentioned in the papers every single day, rent controls, I just think that any politician that even suggested coming over here and ripping down houses and putting people out of their homes, especially when the Metro government is raising taxes in the City and they're crying poor and they need to spend money over here like a hole in the head. I just think they'd be committing political suicide. I have the greatest confidence that nothing is going to happen.

Finally, some Islanders have coped with the stress and uncertainty by becoming angry and defiant and by resisting the outside threat. The political battle itself is one way of coping with stress and uncertainty (although as noted earlier, the political battle itself creates its own forms of stress):

The way that we've coped with stress most recently is just to dig in our heels and say there's no stress to cope with because we're going to win. It is stressful, though. It's still very stressful. Somehow, though, it's been much easier since I personally realized that my greatest ally was myself and my own state of mind and my own sureness of wanting to remain. And own sort of sense that they are screwing us. The whole sort of cap-in-hand mentality, as far as I'm concerned, has disappeared, for myself. I think that, having gone through the various fancy dances that we have at Metro Council--each one of those Metro Council meetings has made me more angry, more determined and convinced me even more that the kind of idiots who run politics, bar a few, are

not going to screw this community. They are stupid; they are, with a few exceptions, have very few scruples. It's all one great big power game and I don't see why a thing that I think is as viable and as precious as this community should be screwed by a bunch of stupid, power-hungry men. And I think it took each Metro Council meeting and the ludicrousness, the insanity of each of them, each one of them has convinced people more that they know what they're up against, that these little tin gods are for the birds. I think that's what, if one can use the word, "radicalized", I think that those meetings did more than anything else ever did. Because we went to them with a very fair case. The cards are stacked on our side, as far as I'm concerned. It's all just one great, big power game and I feel very defiant about that power game, because when I see the people who are in power, I don't see why they should do it to a place like this.

e. Children:

Island children have certainly not been unaffected by or unaware of the Island's uncertain future. Peter Cridland discusses some of the effects that he has noticed:

It definitely affects the kids. I think the kids are politicized to a far greater extent, I am sure, than the typical... well, the public school ones are untypical. I can still remember an incident at the school one year when we went to the, I guess, the annual open house and the kid's art work and so on was on display. We were surprised to see a recurrent theme among the kid's paintings and works was burning houses and similar dramatic sorts of scenes. And we thought about it for awhile, but then it was obvious after a little thought, that they'd seen houses being burnt down on their way to school, the last few houses along the Lakeshore, which were very crudely wrecked and their remains burnt and they really made a very deep impression on the kids. In fact, kids were coming home and saying, I think our kids came home and said, rather anxiously, "We will get a warning, won't we, before they come and burn our house down?" and that sort of thing is, of course, moving. A strong impression. And the kids still constantly see items here, things on the television and so on. Whether they've got a very good grasp or not, they're very well aware of the facts of the situation, and it's a constant fact of life and it's stressful.

Peter Holt relates the following rather poignant anecdote about a little girl who moved to Vancouver because her mother could not stand the uncertainty of living on the Island any longer:

I'd like to show you a picture of Charlotte Parsons the day they were leaving for Vancouver. Charlotte was, I guess she was about nine. Ursula, who is a photographer, was walking by when Charlotte

was drawing a picture of the skyline and of the Bay and Ursula took a photograph of her and her picture and the skyline in the background and got to talking to Charlotte. Charlotte explained how they were going to Vancouver the next day and so Ursula asked her if she would write a little story about the way she felt about the Island...so that she could put it with her pictureWhen Ursula went by [the house] at 10 o'clock they had already gone, but this little note was pinned to the door. It's just a perfect example of people leaving the Island and why, under what sort of pressure: "Sorry, we've left for Vancouver, but here is my story. I have lived on the Island for seven years and although I have travelled around the world, I think the Island is the best place in it. We have to move to Vancouver now, though. My mom says it was because we're never sure whether we're going to be on the Island for another ten years or another week. Your friend, Charlotte Parsons." Can you see this, in this little picture, that little picture is a social documentary that she's drawn. There's so much life. There's three birds in the water and there's all kinds of boats and motorboats, all sorts of sailboats and Campeau's buildings and a Canadian flag on the ferry boat....I think it's a big strain on a lot of people.

Maxine Wilson tells the following funny, but also moving, story about how her little seven year old daughter was well aware of the political situation (or its broad outlines) and was determined to do her part to help save her home:

I wasn't there for the meeting [at Metro Council on May 31, 1973], because Chris was sick. I'd taken her to the doctor's and she had scarlet fever. And she'd given the doctor a hard time. He told her to go back home and to bed and she said no, she couldn't; she had to go and picket City Hall to save her house! She had a temperature of 104, so he told her she could picket for half an hour.

Several years later, 11-year old Melissa Amer spoke on behalf of Island children at a July 1, 1980 rally when Islanders were facing imminent eviction and destruction:

I have lived on the Island for ten years and I want to live here for another ten and another and another. This community is about 150 years old. My great granfather built our house. He passed it on to my grandmother and she passed it on to my dad. If we get evicted, God forbid, I will have no place to live. There are 200 kids on the Island who will have nowhere to go. Last year, ten babies were born here and there will be six more coming. Our school is on Hanlan's Point—grades 1-8. Most of the kids go there

....I have a message to Chairman Godfrey and the Metro Council from all the Island kids: Please let us stay. Thank you.

A few weeks later, on July 28, 1980, the Islanders were put on "Red Alert" in anticipation of the arrival of the York County Sheriff to deliver notices of eviction. Even eleven and twelve year-olds joined "squads" and stopped cars and strangers to see if the sheriff was trying to penetrate the community defenses without detection. Finally, at two o'clock in the afternoon, arrangements were made for TIRA representatives to meet with the Sheriff at the Algonquin Bridge at 3:30. This news was flashed quickly to all Islanders via the CB network and word of mouth. Even a little six-year old was well aware of the situation and alerted an adult passer-by, "The Sheriff's coming to the Bridge at 3:30." At the 3:30 meeting, where the TIRA representatives were backed by a crowd of Islanders of all ages and descriptions, linking arms and singing, "Just like a tree that's standing by the water, we shall not be moved", another small Islander of perhaps 2½ said nervously to her mother, "I don't want to move." Her mother reassured her calmly, "We're not moving, dear. That's why we're standing here." On this occasion, the Sheriff agreed not to deliver the eviction notices, pending Islanders' legal request to be granted the right to appeal the Ontario Supreme Court's recent decision that the writs were valid.

In conclusion, Islanders' strong sense of change—notably their fear of the destruction of the Island as they know and love it—has had both positive and negative results.

ii. Sense of Change - Defense of Place:

Since the major reason for Islanders' having a strong sense of change has been a long series of outside political threats to radically change and even destroy the Island as they know it, this chapter has already discussed at length some of the links between sense of change and defense of place. It has discussed, for example, the existence of a "community under siege" (i.e., the notion that the outside political threat of change and Islanders' collective response to that threat have over the years strengthened their sense of community). It has discussed various other (frequently negative) effects of facing such threatened change, with its attendant uncertainty (including the human costs not only of forced change in the form of losing houses and moving from the Island, but also the anxiety, tension and weariness associated with becoming politically active in the Island defense). And it has discussed various mechanisms Islanders have adopted for coping with the stress associated with forced change and/or fear of forced change (including the idea that for some Islanders, engaging in the political battle itself has been a way of coping with stress and uncertainty). Several other reciprocal links between sense of change and defense of place are discussed here.

a. General Motivation:

There is no reason to believe that Islanders are inherently more interested in municipal politics than Mainlanders. If anything, were they not under the threat of forced change and imminent destruction, they are both physically and psychologically distant from the Mainland.¹

¹For example, Sense of Environment: "Urban Proximity-Pastoral Retreat" (pp. 276-278) and "Insularity: Physical and Political" (pp. 292-293).

For example, Peter Atkinson commented at a TIRA public meeting during the 1974 Spring Campaign to reverse the Metro Council decision of December 11, 1973, "We're not much interested in expressways and they [Metro residents] are not much interested in us." and as noted earlier, Alderman John Sewell commented somewhat scornfully in 1975 that "one of the staggering things one person told me [is], 'We don't understand anything about politics....We live on an Island'."¹ But, as discussions of defense of place have already indicated, Islanders have been under extreme threat of enforced change and, of necessity, have become politically involved. "Islanders," the TIRA Newsletter commented wryly in April 1974, "are interested in politics in the same way that a man about to be stabbed is interested in knives."²

Study of the long political history of the Island reveals that Islanders' strong sense of change--i.e., their fear of the radical alteration or even loss of the Island as they know and love it--has been the major stimulus for their political battles to save their homes, their community and their special place from destruction. Without that threat--that fear of change--there would, of course, have been no need to take action.

As earlier discussions of defense of place have indicated, Islanders have a long history of responding to threats to radically change their place. In the summer of 1937, for example, residents of West Island Drive received eviction notices (to make way for the Island Airport): Within a week, West Island Drive leaseholders had held a special meeting and appointed a Special Committee "to protect and

¹Quoted in full on p. 293.

²TIRA Newsletter, April 11, 1974.

further the interests of all leaseholders in so far as the airport site effects [sic] them."¹ The West Island Drive Association was born. In 1947, the City Planning Board issued its proposal, which would have changed the Island radically by building a tunnel, an Island Boulevard, parking lots, highrise apartments and hotels, and demolishing existing houses (Map 21). Islanders responded by forming the Inter-Island Council in 1948, and in 1949 by opposing the City Planning Board's Official Plan recommendations and issuing their own plan, which would have preserved (and tried to improve on) the status quo. (Map 22) In 1951, the City Planning Board and the Harbour Commission issued their Joint Proposal (Map 23), which, again, would have radically changed the Island. The IIC, as discussed elsewhere, strongly opposed these changes and, after Mayor Allan Lamport made the most extreme proposal to change the Island (by not only allowing cars, but also dockyards and warehousing) in 1953 (Map 24), Islanders issued another plan similar to the 1949 one.

During the 1950's and early 1960's, Islanders (as discussed on pp. 287 ff.) continued to oppose proposals to allow motor vehicles on the Island. But, as is discussed below, they did not take much action to oppose the Metro park development itself. Then, during the mid-to late 1960's (with the support of Alderman David Rotenberg), Islanders fought the fierce, but ultimately unsuccessful, Lakeshore battle, which ended in 1968. Faced with the need to gain another lease extension (by August 1970), the residents on Ward's and Algonquin formed TIRA in 1969 to organize the defense of the eastern end of the Island. In the early 1970's, Islanders gained additional temporary extensions

¹Minutes, West Island Drive Association, June 27, 1937.

(in 1970, 1971 and 1973).

But, on December 11, 1973, when Metro Council finally refused to grant an extension beyond August 31, 1974, the nature of the political battle changed significantly. Since they were no longer covered by the protection of even a short lease extension, Islanders' sense of change and threat increased dramatically. In response, Islanders, as discussed elsewhere, organized and carried out their massive Spring Campaign to change the Metro decision. Although they failed to win their political goal, they succeeded in keeping Islanders on the Island and in laying the groundwork for future defense actions. The launching of their legal defense of place actions in the summer of 1974 lessened the immediate sense of change and threat¹ until October 1978, when the possible legal actions had almost run their course² and Islanders voted to reenter the political forum in order to try to pressure the Province to transfer the residential areas from the Metro level to the City or to otherwise preserve the community. Once again, Islanders' sense of change and threat was extreme. It has essentially remained extreme since that time, except perhaps for a minor reduction when the Province asked Metro not to execute the writs of possession while the Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs, Thomas Wells, acted as a mediator between the City and Metro. When these negotiations failed,

¹ They were still well aware, however, that ultimately they would have to win a political solution and that the legal defense was only a temporary measure.

² Metro had won valid writs of possession for the Island houses. There was one last possibility of appeal, which, Island lawyers felt, would only have gained, at best, a very short extension. Island residents, therefore, decided that, with an upcoming municipal election and a minority Provincial government (in which both opposition parties favoured retaining the Island community), the time was ripe to return to the political forum.

the Province introduced a Bill that would have allowed Islanders to remain, but not to sell or transfer their houses. As they moved or died, the houses would be transferred to Metro, which could proceed with its plans. Eventually, the Island houses and community would be gone. Islanders (as well as the City and both provincial opposition parties) rejected the Bill. The sense of change and threat reached new heights when Metro Council voted in February 1980 to proceed with evicting Islanders if the Province did not pass the aforementioned Bill by June 30, 1980. Throughout this period, Islanders' sense of change and threat remained high and TIRA based its appeals to the community to fight (and not to accept the "slow death" Bill, as it came to be known) on this feeling:

The defense of our community is everyone's responsibility. We will stand united and in one, strong voice yell, "WE WON'T GO!" Our strength and our power lies in our unity.¹

YES, WE ALL ARE THE HOME GUARD! We will stand and defend our homes, our neighbour's homes and our community.²

TO WIN WE MUST STAND FIRM IN THE FACE OF THEIR THREATS.³

A large majority of Islanders continued to vote to reject the Province's Bill and, on the last day of the session (June 19, 1980), the Provincial government announced that it would not bring the Bill forward for second reading. It also announced the formation of a commission (under lawyer Barry Swadron) to look into the issue and asked both the City and Metro to appoint two representatives. The City obliged. But, on

¹TIRA News, (mid-May 1980), p. 1.

²Ibid, p. 1.

³TIRA News, June 7, 1980, p. 1.

June 24, Metro Council voted simply to "receive" Mr. Wells' request. It did not agree to appoint representatives and it did not agree to refrain from enforcing the writs until after the Commission reported in the fall. With Metro preparing to enforce the writs (after the June 30 deadline), Islanders organized a major rally of support on July 1, 1980, which attracted 2000+ supporters, continued to assert that they would "fight to the bitter end", as Elizabeth Amer put it,¹ and continued to pursue all political and legal lines of defense open to them.

b. Threat and Defense of Place:

As the above discussion indicates, Islanders' strong sense of change, based on the recognition of the existence of outside threats, has, over the years stimulated their defenses of place. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized again² that the existence of a threat to change a place is a necessary, but not a sufficient, condition for defense of place. The threat must also be perceived as a severe threat. For example, it is notable that even as bulldozers were demolishing houses at Hanlan's Point, Centre Island and eastward along the Lakeshore Avenue, most residents at the eastern end of the Island--on Ward's and Algonquin--remained politically inactive and uninvolved. As discussed earlier (pp. 381-385), many of these Islanders simply did not believe that they were in danger, because they did not believe that the Metro

¹"Although our policy is passive, non-violent resistance," she went on, "I think in the event of a confrontation some people could be hurt." Quoted in Patricia Hluchy and Virginia Corner, "Island Plans Resistance 'People Could Be Hurt'," Star, June 25, 1980.

²See Introduction: "Threat", pp. 38 ff.

park plan would be completed. Mary McLaughlin, who was active during the Lakeshore battles of the 1960's (and who moved to Algonquin Island after the Lakeshore house was taken), commented on this lack of involvement:

At that time [of the Lakeshore battles] the Algonquin and Ward's people were really taking no part in the battle at all. I was telling people that we're your first line of defense; if the Lakeshore stays, you will automatically stay; if the Lakeshore goes, then you're threatened. But, you know, people don't realize these things until they really sort of come upon them and they didn't really get involved at all. I mean, we really fought our own battle.

Beyond this, even if the threat is perceived as a severe one, other conditions may still prevent people from taking action in defense of place. For example, as discussed elsewhere, after the decision to create a Metro park was made (in the mid-1950's) and even when houses were being torn down around them, Islanders in the late 1950's and early 1960's did not take strong, concerted group action to halt the demolitions or change the plan.¹ Even during the later 1960's and early 1970's when Islanders were objecting to demolitions and trying to gain extensions, they did not mount an all out attack on the principle of the park plan and did not argue for permanent status (as opposed to temporary extension until the land was needed for

¹Some individuals, like architect Ross Anderson, did try, unsuccessfully. He developed his own plan, asked Metro to restudy the matter, and even took the issue to the Ontario Municipal Board, which refused to hear it because of a technicality. See for example, "Island Housing Plan Described By Architect," Globe and Mail, May 4, 1962. Only once during the 1950's did Island residents object as a group to Metro about the demolitions. Forty families on Centre Island did obtain a short extension in 1958. See, for example, Minutes of Metro Planning and Parks Committee, 1958, June 19, 1958, Item #78; and Minutes Metro Planning and Parks Committee, 1959, February 12, 1959, Item #20.

parkland).¹ The political environment was not supportive of strong challenges being made. For example, in the 1950's and 1960's Islanders faced strong political and bureaucratic opposition (notably the first Metro Chairman Fred "Big Daddy" Gardiner and Metro Parks Commissioner Tommy Thompson) and they were more deferential toward those in authority than they were a decade later.² By contrast, in the late 1960's, as discussed earlier, the citizens' movement grew on the mainland, giving rise to a new political assertiveness and a new sense that residents could, in fact, "fight City Hall". This spirit certainly influenced Islanders' own decisions regarding the defense of the Island. In sum, therefore, the political context of the threat must be conducive to people's taking action.

c. Making Threatened Change Visible:

At various points in the defense of the Island, Island leaders have deliberately set about heightening Islanders' sense of change and making the Metro threat as clear as possible to both Islanders and Mainlanders in order to spur them to take action. For example, at the public forum in March 1974 during the Spring Campaign, TIRA spokesperson, Bill Metcalfe, introduced a powerful slide show of bulldozers destroying Island homes in the late 1960's by saying:

I would like you now to join with me in [seeing] the destruction of part of our community and listen to Ruth Putt describe what happened at Centre Island and what's going to happen to us unless this decision is reversed.

Islanders then showed a series of pictures of Island houses being

¹See discussion, Sense of Control: "Attitudes Toward Authority, Politics and Politicians", pp. 340 ff.

²See Ibid.

demolished and played a tape recording of Ruth Putt describing the sights, sounds and emotions which accompanied this destruction.¹

It was an extremely vivid depiction of the threat they were faced with and it was an extremely effective way to demonstrate to the politicians the general public and Islanders themselves what the real effect, in human terms, of the Metro decision to demolish the houses was, and would be again if the December 11, 1973 decision to raze the remaining houses was carried out. This presentation was greeted by thoughtful silence. (See Illustration 33.)

Later in that Spring Campaign, Islanders organized a Spring Festival (which was never held because of wet weather). It was supposed to have a very strong political impact (politicians from all levels of government were invited). Among the planned attractions was a "Bulldozerama" and a "Bulldozer Day" preview--"It won't happen, but if it does, this is the way it will happen."² Both of these were designed to detail the political situation and graphically display to people on both sides of the issue what was likely to happen if the Spring Campaign failed (standing at the barricades and/or demolishing the houses). This was right in line with the advice given earlier in April by urbanologist Jane Jacobs:

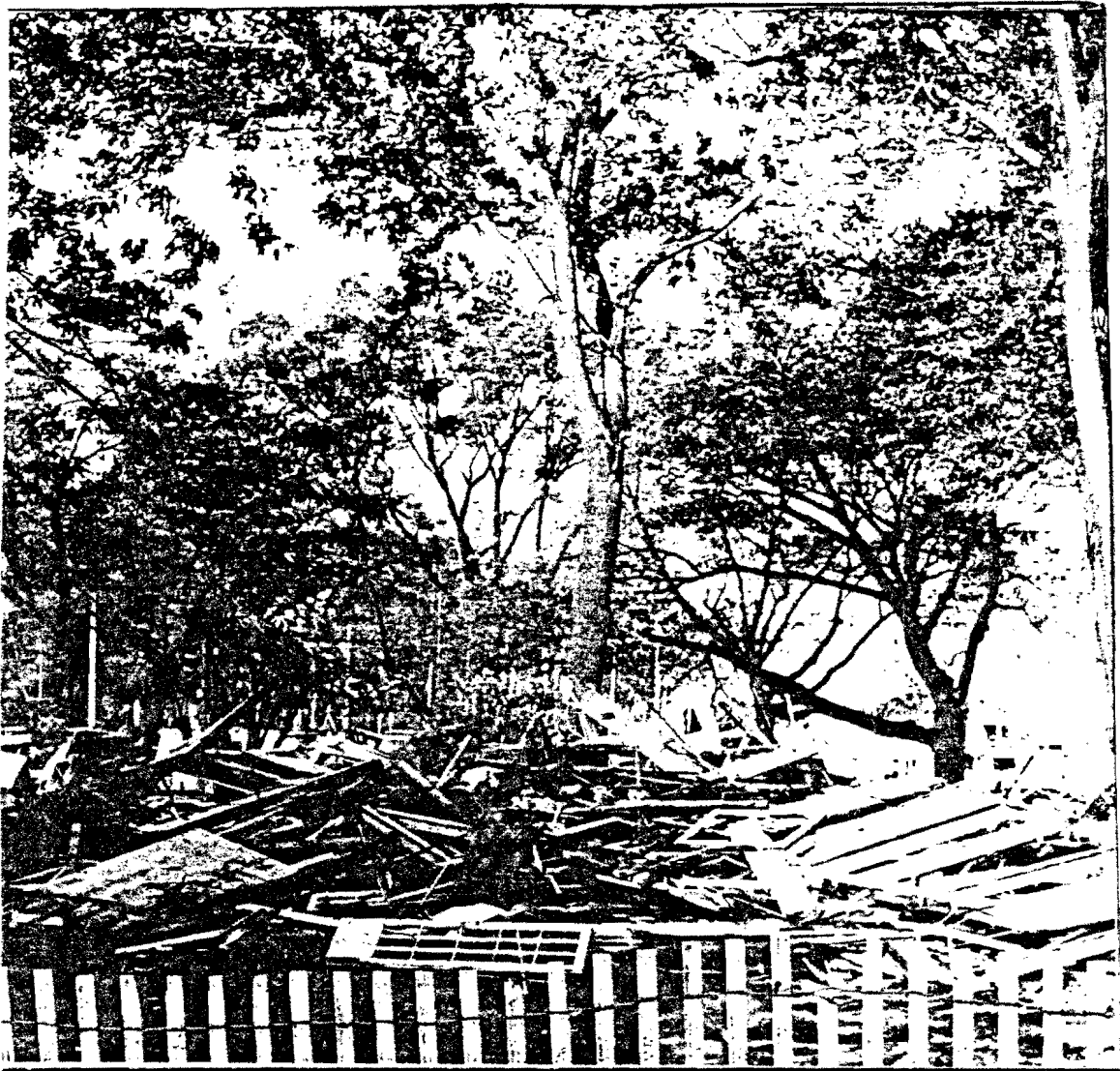
[U]se the Festival to demonstrate your determination to stay. The politicians don't believe you are determined to stay. Make it absolutely clear to them that you are. Suppose you had a work party putting up barricades. Get city visitors to help you.

¹Quoted in part in Sense of History, "Toronto Island: 1950-1970", p. 152.

²"Island Spring", Press Release, p. 2.

ILLUSTRATION 33

MAKING THREATENED CHANGE VISIBLE



Source: Save Island Homes (April, 1974), p. 22

put them up at the Festival.¹

More recently, in October 1978, when they reentered the political forum after having been protected for several years by the legal actions, Islanders finally did do exactly the sort of thing Ms. Jacobs had recommended earlier. They held "war games". Actors pretending to be the Sheriff and his men staged a landing on the Island and the Island defense system was tested: a recently installed air raid siren atop the WIA Clubhouse screamed out its warning; the CB network beamed out a constant report of what was happening; and a somewhat frantic "Home Guard" chased after the intruders and practiced acts of passive resistance to prevent the Sheriff from gaining vacant possession of the houses. In addition to testing their defense systems and reinforcing their own solidarity and determination to stay, Islanders' "war games" received extensive publicity and firmly planted in the minds of politicians (as well as of the general public) a graphic image of just what unpleasantness would follow any decision to try to evict Islanders.² Islanders have continued to carefully nurture and reinforce this image.³

¹At the same meeting, organizer Dale Perkins observed that "dramatizing our position was for a dual purpose--to win here [on the Island] as well as out there." Minutes of the Meeting of the Borough Committees, April 28, 1974, pp. 1, 5.

²See for example, Barbara Keddy, "Defenders Triumph As 'Sheriff' Lands To Evict Islanders," Globe and Mail, October 30, 1978.

³For example, "Island Plans Resistance - 'People Could Be Hurt'," op. cit.; and Alden Baker, "Islanders Taking Lessons In Obstructing Sheriff," Globe and Mail, July 1, 1980.

In conclusion, this chapter has discussed the positive and negative aspects of Islanders' strong sense of change, the marked impact sense of change has exercised on each of the other components of sense of place and the strong interactive relationships between sense of change and defense of place.