

58. Particular attention has been paid to the declining coal mining communities of Cape Breton. The problems faced by such areas have been studied in considerable depth by Harold A. Renouf,¹ and by K. Scott Wood and Harold F. Verge.² The coal mining industry has been underpinned by federal government subventions. Wages paid are reasonably high, and income per capita in the coal mining communities is commensurate with the provincial average. Declining employment opportunities have resulted, however, in exceedingly high rates of outmigration, general population decline, and high levels of unemployment. The structure of outmigration and the high rate of natural increase has left in the communities a high proportion of dependent children. The towns studied were characterized by falling property values, substandard housing, and the lack of the tax base required to provide basic government services. In certain cases, provincial support was necessary to prevent the municipalities becoming bankrupt. In particular, none of the municipalities considered could maintain its educational requirements. If fundamental services such as education and social welfare are tied to local sources of finance, clearly the background to inequality of opportunity and future poverty are present in Nova Scotia's declining municipalities.

¹Harold A. Renouf, The Financial Situation of Certain Depressed Municipalities: Westville, Dominion, New Waterford, Nova Scotia, (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Institute of Public Affairs, Dalhousie University, 1964)

²K. Scott Wood and Harold F. Verge, A Study of the Problems of Certain Cape Breton Communities (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Institute of Public Affairs, Dalhousie University, 1966).