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CRIMINAL AND INDUSTRIAL HOMICIDE:
AN INTERPRETIVE STUDY OF MINERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF SUDDEN, NON-NATURAL VIOLENT DEATH

by

John C. Brady

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology
Carleton University

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Original and Industrial Homicides:
An Interpretive Study of Miners' Perceptions
of Sudden, Non-Natural Violent Death

submitted by Bill O'Grady, B.A.
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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... which confirms the shared assumption that a
glow of honor over Canadian labourers' level of homicide and
occupational death. Sudbury nickel miners contend that
homicide is the "crime of crimes" while occupational carnage
is viewed as perceived to be a normal and acceptable part
of life. The origins of the myth of the worker to be
confronted in process ultimately deriving from ideological
negotiation.

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This paper could not have been written without the help of many students and faculty members. I wish to offer my deepest thanks to my advisor Ian Taylor who helped me to formulate the initial thesis topic, and gave so generously of his time in guiding the study to completion. To my second advisor, Craig Hurrell, I register my appreciation for another job well done, especially with respect to his excellent editorial work. I also wish to thank Ann Hewitt for her continuing and valuable assistance throughout the project. Acknowledgement is also undoubtedly due to my many friends from both "The Lounge" and "The Shop", whose ceaseless flow of creativity proved to be immeasurably appreciated.

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CHAPTER ONE: THEORY AND METHOD

Almost universally, homicide has been viewed as the "crime of crimes" and has acquired a unique and continuing prominence. Historically, this type of sudden, non-natural, violent death (Sivych) has had a fundamental impact on the values and consequently the creation of laws in most societies. Ian Taylor (1981) uses the following passage by Hordis and Bloom-Cooper to illustrate why the "intentional" taking of life has been seen in this manner:

...the act of murder disturbs the balance. It accelerates the inevitable in a way which profoundly unsettles the delicate equilibrium which social institutional beliefs have achieved, and arouses in individuals the most deep-seated unconscious fears and anxieties. The unconscious fears are obviously aroused, in large part, by the feeling that the chance of being murdered is beyond the control of any one individual, and that the characteristic murder occurs without forewarning and provocation, at the hands of strangers. (1981:121)

Homicide is just such an issue in Canadian society today. Events surrounding the Clifford Olson child murders and the mysterious deaths at Toronto Sick Children's Hospital (in addition to numerous other instances of newsworthy homicidal activity) constantly appear as bold headlines across front pages of Canadian newspapers and magazines, as well as being regularly featured as the lead stories in radio and television newscasts. Concern, however, about violent crime in Canada (most notably homicide) is not only limited primarily to the realm of civil stories. Legislators of the Canadian press have often voiced concern

over this issue, as Statistics Canada once reported.

To citizens and their government, the incidence of murder is a matter of preeminent concern, for a variety of reasons; for how it is thought to illuminate the personal and public sphere, for what it is believed to indicate about the health of Canadian society and for the controversy it has aroused in the process of dealing with the most violent of criminal acts. (1974:1)

These shared assumptions, existing within both civil and professional spheres, represent a vocalization of the issues and problems most "concerned" individuals and state institutions tend to associate with SNIV. Violent death in Canadian society is commonsensically linked with the anti-social activity of disturbed individuals.

and (1974:102-103) (1974:103)

There is another type of SNIV which takes place in Canadian society, and seemingly occurs with increasing frequency. This domain involves what has been termed "occupational carnage". Many Canadians die annually owing to occupational hazards existing within the workplace. The violent nature of these types of deaths has been well documented in the literature (e.g., Layton, 1974) and reasons et al. (1974). Furthermore, the fact that many of these deaths occur within the workplace is a cause for concern. It is a matter of public health and safety, and it is a matter of public concern. It is a matter of public health and safety, and it is a matter of public concern. It is a matter of public health and safety, and it is a matter of public concern.

The following table, by Reasons et al. (1981:4), point out this discrepancy:

CANADIAN DEATH RATE BY CAUSE, 1975

	Number	Rate/100,000
Heart Disease	56,970	250.0
Cancer	37,998	149.0
Occupational Death	5,265	48.0
Motor Vehicle Accidents	5,895	25.9
Pneumonia	5,454	20.9
Suicide	2,803	12.0
Cirrhosis of Liver	2,725	12.0
Gastric Ulcer	735	3.2
Murder	250	1.8

Reflecting upon the nature of SNNVL in Canadian society, the "social, logical imagination" must be alerted when the following question is posed: "Why does one particular form of UNLV in Canadian society merit such a tremendous amount of attention, while another, equally as violent and similar in side effects (1) warrant relatively little societal concern? It becomes even more intriguing when one considers the significant differences that exist between the recorded number of homicides that take place in Canada versus the compiled occupational death statistics. Why, then, are deaths that are violent and non-natural, but which take place within the workplace, not the subject of much

critical comment? Ian Taylor considered a similar question when he wrote:

They are not thought of as avoidable or as preventable... Whatever the form and context "accidents" seem to involve a set of normalizing assumptions, whereby blame and fault are substantially dismissed and meaning given to the event. "It could have happened to anyone" or more theologically, "It must have been God's will."
198:1141

Thus, meanings generally held within the domain of the public concerning occupational accidents are commonsensically not regarded as significant events that warrant the prominent attention typically associated with the crime or crimes. Occupational death is continually reconstructed by the media as relatively unnewsworthy or as regrettable but nevertheless "unavoidable". What are the reasons for homicide being presented as a commonplace subject in the news headlines today, while occupational death on the other hand, is not a popular item in the media when occupational death is actually mentioned. It usually fades away and escapes social commentary. Does this dichotomy represent, for example, the biographically determined beliefs of Canadian workers who are exposed to hazardous working conditions on a regular basis? Do high risk workers in Canadian society make sense of their own experience in terms of "accidents" which are not connected with any possibility of being killed or seriously

injured while at work? Hence, the critical question which this thesis must address is: How do certain groups of workers in Canada (those working in high risk occupations) "make sense" and consequently deal with the relationship between homicide and occupational carnage?

To address this question it was necessary to understand the meanings a particular Canadian occupational group had regarding this relationship. Workers in the Canadian mining industry were selected for analysis precisely because of the danger associated with their work. The following table by Reasons et al. (1981) statistically documents the violent nature of this economically vital Canadian industry.

AVERAGE FATALITY INCIDENCE RATES
IN CANADIAN INDUSTRY
BY INDUSTRY DIVISION, 1969-1978
Rate per 100,000

Industry	1969-1979	N(d)	1978
Mining	121.2	160	75.8 (a)
Forestry	111.1	80	98.6
Fishing	73.9	17	60.9
Construction	33.7	204	22.0
Transport	26.4	213	21.3
Manufacturing	11.0	215	7.3
Public Admin.	10.8	69	9.4
Police (c)	7.4	4	3.6 (b)
Trade	4.5	74	3.1
Agriculture	4.4	21	1.3
Service	3.0	75	1.6
Finance	1.3	6	.9

Element (1981:121) further elaborates upon the violence taking place in the Canadian mining industry:

The mining industry is the most dangerous in the country... Although it employed only 1.4% of the labour force, mining accounted for 2.9% of the deaths and injuries and 57.5% of those related to occupational illness. 4. death arising from mining between 1967 and 1976 was more than ten times higher than the rate in manufacturing. Over that decade some 1,670 people were killed in mining. Moreover, the fatality rate for mines in Ontario in 1976 was identical to that in 1951 1.139 per million hours worked.

The miners of Sudbury, Ontario were selected as the group of miners for the analysis. The reason for selecting this group of high risk workers was simply because of the fact they were the most accessible occupational group of this type available for practical investigation.

Interpreting the social meanings miners used to impute legitimacy or outrage to SINWU, helped to unravel the reasons why occupational deaths in Canada persist and remain relatively unexamined.

The type of issue being confronted here required an approach to the question of how death is normally understood, which in turn entailed "bracketing" the categories of homicide and occupational death. The emphasis on bracketing, of performing the phenomenological reduction according to what Merleau-Ponty writes on the withholding

all judgements concerning the existence or otherwise of the world that is ordinarily taken for granted as being just as it appears." Hence the meanings of each category (homicide and occupational death) were not assumed. Rather, commonsense meanings were suspended, observed and analysed. A strategy such as this one allowed one to try and root out the variables that make one form of SNNVD, the "crime of crimes" in Canadian society, and another simply an unfortunate, but acceptable way to die.

This thesis, therefore, follows an alternative approach to conducting empirical social research than that followed by traditional American sociological theory and methods, modelled as they are, on what are taken to be the procedures and tests of the natural sciences. I agree with Willis (1984:89) that this kind of traditional theory can only demonstrate its own assumptions and that therefore what lies outside these assumptions cannot be represented or acknowledged. So to maintain the richness and authenticity of social phenomena this thesis will not begin by identifying something which is presumed to operate on the group life of Sudbury miners as an independent variable. To begin by entering the research setting with an explicit (or closed) theoretical scheme and design would limit the development of theory during the study; after the data have been collected and while writing up the findings. However,

this is not to say that the project intends to operate without a "theoretical confession".

According to Willis (1981), there is no untheoretical way in which to "see" an object. An object can only be perceived and understood through an internal organization or pattern mediated by conceptual constructs and ways of seeing the world. Therefore, to explain why this particular subject matter was selected for sociological investigation, a "theoretical confession" must be forwarded. In other words:

...the inevitable organization concerns the attitudes toward the social world in which the research takes place, a particular view of the social relationships within it and of its fundamental determinations and a notion of the analytic procedures which will be used to produce the final account. (Willis, 1981:90)

Adhering to the dictum that, "the social scientist should not expect to have a clear and distinct definition of the phenomena to be studied prior to inquiry, and that the important provisional definitions of the social scientist should be as open as possible," (Douglas, 1967:133), a sociologist entering into a new "meaning world" should have the necessary "sensitizing concepts" (5) about the meanings of the phenomena to be studied.

The concepts of this analysis were rooted in an alternative conception of violence to the traditional

used by criminologists. This entails broadening the scope of the term "violence" to include more than actions which are conceived as something bad and illegal, perpetrated by a person or persons. Reason et al. 1981:89. A broader interpretation includes such phenomena as automobile accidents where people are either killed or seriously injured, occupational accidents and self-induced health risks (Layton, 1983:89). Essentially, what is being brought forward in this analysis is an orientation which deems it insignificant to distinguish between acts and omissions which cause GNVU. In other words, to kill and to not strive to keep alive will both be regarded as grounds for constituting violent crime.

RESEARCH STRATEGY: HOW THE CONVERSATIONS CAME TO BE

This thesis grew specifically from two sources. First, participant observation (p) took place in five homes, two taverns, and two hockey arenas in Sudbury, Ontario. Secondly, a series of nine in-depth interviews were conducted by the author during the last week in October 1983. Approximately fifteen hours of discussion were recorded: both private interviews and group discussions. Among working men, their wives, children, friends, and myself. Three of the miners who were interviewed had recently retired and were in their late sixties. The

remainder of the informants were in the thirty to forty year age range.

In the formal talks people were interviewed in their homes. It was not atypical for the conversation to begin in the living room and end in the kitchen over a cup of coffee and "homemade treats". The informants were told that I was preparing a master's thesis about workers in the mines and asked if they could help. A tape recorder was used, which sometimes caused initial nervousness, but it was soon forgotten.

There was no rigid questionnaire used for the interviews. I had instead a set of concerns that required elaboration, and the actual questions were essentially determined by the particular shape of each interview.

Although I had conversations with almost as many women as men, the thesis reflects primarily the experiences of men. This was the case because this thesis explored part of the social order of Sudbury miners and virtually all underground workers in the Sudbury Basin were male.

Something now must be said about the necessary changes which were made from what people actually reported, to what appears on these printed pages. None of the names used are real, and all identity and personal information has been altered to honour the promise of confidentiality.

I have chosen not to make a strictly "scientific" study of people's feelings about SNNVD. The reason for this rejection is based in the pitfalls one often encounters while conducting such research. According to Bennett and Cobb (1973:43), there are four conditions which must be met before an opinion poll or attitude survey is able to be put out into the field:

The researcher first of all has to define some criterion by which he [she] can judge the people he [she] will interview as "representative" of other people's feelings. Then, he [she] must decide what kind of questions will be meaningful to a person as a representative of some larger group. Third, he [she] must find some way of boiling down the responses he [she] gets so that he can make comparisons between different groups of people. Finally, he [she] has to find a means, by random selection or otherwise, to gain access to individuals who are in fact representative of the given group.

What this requires, then, is a "scientist" to know in large part what he/she is doing before there is a discussion with the selected informants. A strategy like this, therefore, produces difficult problems in dealing with the ambiguities, subtleties and contradictions involved in the response to these questions (Bennett and Cobb, 1973:44). In this particular investigation, however, it was just the kind of subtlety which was being pursued. Bennett and Cobb continue by stating the merit of this particular approach to social research:

To talk to people about their experiences, moreover, involves a measure of person-to-person trust that does not come from getting people's names in a dictionary and calling them up. It is very difficult to ring doorbells randomly in a neighbourhood and ask people if they would like to sit down for three hours and tell you the story of their lives. 17 3:44

For the interviews in this study, therefore, we moved from person to person through contacts developed in Sudbury. During the outset of the study miners were first met in various ways. For example, the owner of the motel where the research project was based, was discovered as being a retired and underground miner of thirty-five years' service. Then increasingly, the people who were interviewed helped me locate other informants they thought might be helpful (for which they all were!).

This particular "sampling strategy" was selected on the basis of one being able to concentrate on points of human experience that could teach something about a more general frame of reference concerning how commonsensical notions of SHIELD are socially constructed.

It is important to realize that the miners interviewed indeed are not "scientifically" representative of the total population of Sudbury miners. The "universe" of miners in this Northern Ontario community did not have an equal chance of being selected as informants for analysis. However, for the purposes of this investigation, the "scientific" and

for sampling rigour is not relevant. This methodological prerequisite would only be necessary, for example, if a certain set of hypotheses were constructed for empirical verification.

Given this, that a "non-representative" group of men were asked to provide information pertaining to their involvement surrounding underground carnage, another group of men, if asked similar questions, may indeed have responded differently; especially if they were militant trade unionists or another friendship group, based for example on religious denomination. However, my purpose is not in any conclusive way, to provide an analysis of the total range of views of SINVD amongst Sudbury miners. Rather, it is important for the purposes of this analysis to make visible some of the key themes of the common sense views of SINVD. Therefore, it would be a task for future research to provide a social distribution of the provided perspectives generated in this thesis.

NOTES

1. The term "side effects" is used here to denote the tragic nature of SNMVD. Regardless of cause, SNMVD entails a significant degree of suffering, including emotional and financial hardship for those persons who had close kinship or social ties with the deceased individual.

2. Sources: Fatalities in Canadian Industry, Occupational Health Branch of Labour Canada, 1968-1975; 1975 employment by industry data from Perspective Canada II, Ministry of Supply and Services Canada, 1977.

3a. These rates are for 1978 only.

3b. This rate is only for 1978 and is derived from Statistics Canada, 1979. It is based upon the total number of police personnel.

3c. This is the average annual incidence for 1968-80 per 100,000 police personnel. Derived from Ministry of Solicitor General, 1978:21.

3d. This is the annual average number of actual deaths for the years considered.

3. When construction engineer James Worthington casually chose another in a series of temporary construction sites along the line of the Canadian Pacific Railway being built west from North Bay across northern Ontario in 1883, he named it Sudbury after his wife's birthplace in England (Holypherry, 1963:24). Following the 1902 amalgamation of Canadian Copper and several other ventures, the International Nickel Company (Inco) has been the largest mining company in this community which has become Canada's largest company town.

4. Bracketing is a methodological device of phenomenological inquiry consisting in a deliberate effort to set aside ontological judgments about the nature and essence of things (events, etc.) a priori. Thereby, the "reality" of things and events is not denied but "put into brackets." (Schutz, 1969:316-317)

5. Sensitizing concepts are part of a procedure of "getting to know the stranger". In sociological terms, this amounts to using preconceptions as sensitizing concepts. The preconceptions the Author had of nickel miners before entering into their world were learned by becoming familiar with a selective body of literature concerned with occupational health and safety in Canada (primarily in the mining industry). This and other stock knowledge did not represent any firm research convictions, however, it was used only to help foreground aspects of the general ideas that dominated, shaped or influenced the author's initial

preconceptions. (Glaser and Strauss:1967)

3) In Becker's (1958:652) words, "the participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he [she] studies openly in the role of researcher or covertly in some disguised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said, and questioning people over some length of time.

Although no formal "quantitative" questionnaire was used in this analysis, the group of miners were all asked to provide the following information:

- Name
- Age
- Marital Status
- Number of children
- Final grade completed in school
- Number of years working in Sudbury
- Number of years working in the mining industry
- Number of relatives working/worked in the mining industry

After this, the miners were then asked to respond to the following questions:

- What do you do at work?
- Have you ever been at work when a fellow miner was seriously hurt or killed?
- If so, were you with other workers at the time?
- How do you feel when you hear about workers having bad accidents while working underground?
- Who's fault is it when a miners gets hurt on the job?
- Can any of these accidents be prevented?
- We have been talking about death in the workplace, your workplace, how would you compare this type of death with murder, or would you?

CHAPTER TWO: MINERS' INTERPRETATIONS OF SNNVD

In what ways did Sudbury miners understand both death in their workplace and homicide? How were these two forms of SNNVD differentiated? The group of "hard rock" miners treated the two types of death as being "not the same at all". Homicide was understood as being premeditated, illegitimate "criminal" activity which can most often be prevented. The murderer was seen to choose his/her victim, or at least know under some description whom he/she was killing. Occupational death, on the other hand, essentially was regarded as accidental death which was to be tolerated since it was something that "cannot be avoided". The following will be a presentation of the way in which miners explained this relationship.

When one of informants was asked how he would compare occupational death (particularly that which takes place within the confines of their workplace) with murder he responded as follows:

No, you can't compare it, I wouldn't compare it, no way! Murder is usually premeditated and death can be avoided. On the job death is something that (pause) happens and it's very difficult to prevent.

Another miner made these comments:

It's absolutely two different things I would say. Murder is planned whereas serious accidents underground....well.....it's just something that happens. That's all. Nobody plans them, nobody plans them.

One informant, a female miner, went so far as to compare

the "risky" nature of mining to that of getting hurt as a professional hockey player:

I think there's a big difference. I don't think you can compare the two at all. Because I work for you and get killed it's not your fault. It's like getting hurt as a Montreal Canadien; you can't sue the owner of the hockey club for such an accident, it's part of the risky nature of the job, it can't be avoided.

Although there were those who suggested that there was "no relationship at all" between murder and death in the work place, one miner was somewhat more ambivalent towards this seemingly transparent relationship:

If it were something like my case where I had reported the unsafe working condition and it was not made safe and I were to have been killed, then somebody has to be held responsible for that.

Following a review of the interview transcripts, it became apparent that only in situations where the company had knowingly neglected safety regulations (as was the case in the above quotation), could the company be held responsible for death or serious injury. However, even in these types of circumstances (which were reported by the group of miners as being "very rare"), the miners failed to define the death as being morally equivalent to murder. Indeed, no deaths which take place underground are ever defined as deliberate or premeditated. The only credible situation whereby an underground "accident" could be defined as resembling murder, was hypothetically constructed by a recently retired miner:

...unless it was something deliberate, in anger or whatever, dislike; like when a shift boss felt, "I don't like you, so here, go and do this dirty job" and the guy gets killed. Now that would be almost like murder.

So at no time during the interview schedule was there any account which associated underground SNNVD with the "crime of crimes". A distinct dichotomy was observed to exist between these two forms of SNNVD. The way in which these particular workers made sense of homicide and occupational carnage presented itself as being spontaneously available and appeared to be widely shared. Reflecting upon the miners' thoughts on this matter, it felt as though the knowledge used to articulate this relationship had always been there, as though it were a form of intrinsic wisdom.

It became extremely evident that the group of miners believed underground SNNVD was an acceptable event. Occupational death presented itself as being "a fact of life" in this particular Northern Ontario mining community: "...that's the way it is and there is really not very much anybody can do about it." Or as another miner put it: "You can't be a miner and not expect to get hurt." Hence, this discourse lead to the hypothesis that an institutionalized set of normalizing assumptions existed within the life world of miners which served to legitimate underground SNNVD. These normalizing assumptions were found to be closely associated with the miners' accounts regarding the causal

nature of SNNVD within their work place. A consensus surfaced among the group of hardrock miners which strongly supported the notion that underground deaths were "accidents". Accidental deaths were recognized as events which were unexpected and undesirable. This was based upon their perceived irregularity and infrequency. While underground hazards were widely recognized as numerous and ubiquitous, a particular individual was not expected ordinarily to experience the same accident more than once.

Upon initial observation of this predicament (SNNVD), the underground workers appeared to employ a lay version of statistical probability whereby accidents were interpreted as occurring or not occurring by chance alone. Obviously, miners were unable to say in advance which people would lose their lives as the result of an underground mining "accident". However, during the interviews it was widely recognized that some men would inevitably get killed.

Miners often considered themselves as being "lucky" if they had worked underground for a substantial period of time and never were involved in an accident. One miner made these comments: "I was never involved in one [an accident] and I think I was very fortunate in that way. No not even a serious injury." One particular miner, who now works above ground for Inco, had this to say about his older cousin who has been working underground for Inco for the past sixteen

years)

Now he's been in the mine for sixteen years and I think he's only had one or two minor accidents. Nothing really serious... I think he is a super miner. He can do that sort of work and he's only hurt his back once and I think he broke a bone in his hand or something, and that's terrific for the work that he does.

One recently retired miner summed up his feelings by pointing out these things: "Even though I never had an injury in the thirty years I worked underground, I could have, I sure could have, because there were some close calls over those years; it's really hard to be a miner and never get hurt."

In more detailed discussion with Sudbury miners, the matter of SNNVD became more complex. While a substantial number of informants believed that all miners had a more or less equal probability of being involved in an underground accident, when the interview became centered around a particular serious injury or fatality, the element of "chance" was dismissed by hard rock miners as a credible and relevant explanation for understanding SNNVD. The notion of "cause" now emerged under a new light, away from the realm of statistical probability. Causes of accidents were attributed to three things: unsafe acts, unsafe conditions and Acts of God. Reasons et al. (1981:40) list the following examples of Unsafe Acts and Unsafe Conditions:

which accident investigators use in determining the specific causes of work related injuries and fatalities in Ontario, many of which were used by the sample of miners in their understanding of SNIVD.

UNSAFE ACTS

- Operating without authority, failure to secure or warn.
- Operating or working at unsafe speed.
- Making safety devices inoperative.
- Using unsafe equipment, hands instead of equipment for equipment safety.
- Unsafe loading, placing, mixing, combining, etc.
- Taking unsafe position or posture.
- Working on moving or dangerous equipment.
- Distracting, teasing, abusing, startling, etc. (horseplay).
- Failure to use safe attire or personal protective devices.

EXAMPLE:

An ex-underground worker of thirty seven who is presently employed by Inco at the Copper Cliff Mine in the Transportation Department provided an account of a near fatality in which the cause associated was worker negligence:

I remember one time, my partner and I were drilling, we weren't supposed to be but we were drilling a certain way and a piece of loose (2)

✓came down and we were just ahead of the screen, and you're supposed to stay behind the screen. I moved under the screen and when I yelled at him to move, as he turned, a piece of loose came down and broke his heel.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

- Improperly guarded.
- Hazardous arrangement, procedure, etc.
- Improper illumination.
- Improper ventilation
- Unsafe dress or apparel
- Unsafe design or construction.
- Unguarded.

EXAMPLE:

Here is a statement by one miner who reported being involved in an accident which was caused by an unsafe condition:

...at the time I was switching and my partner was the motor man. He was driving the train and I was switching the cars. We had a car off the track and I was trying to put it back on. He moved the train and crushed me. But the whistle was broke. There's supposed to be a whistle there. Like two to back up and three to go ahead. And that was broken so I couldn't give him a signal to back up or go ahead. So he said that there was another train coming and that switchman gave my motor man the signal to back up and he thought it was me so he backed up the train not knowing I was in between the two cars. I lost three ribs, a lung and I have no feeling in my left side. And I have a scar from here (under left arm) to here (just above left hip).

ACTS OF GOD

Accidents which are not explained by either worker or company neglect. These types of SNNVDs are attributed to events which are "nobody's fault" (e.g., the "geology of the environment").

EXAMPLE:

The following is a statement by a miner who attributed the cause of one particular accident to "bad ground":

They were working at the upper levels and there was really bad ground.

Unable to understand what the term "bad ground" signified, an explanation was requested and the answer was:

From blasting you loosen the rock... Well, for example I was coming in day shift and the night shift man phoned me at home to "come in early"; they had a fatality. Well all that man was doing was hitting the back with his bucket on the scoop and the whole thing came down on him. That was just bad ground, see, bolts, screen, (4) everything comes down.

When asked "Who's fault this was?"; the reply was: Just the ground.

He then proceeded to explain another account of a "close call" which was caused by "bad ground":

Another time, I seen a jumbo driller getting ready to drill his next round. Now that's a huge drill, he was all ready to take the machine in and he thought he seen a crack or something and he put the twelve foot scaling bar (5) up and enough loose came, one place, it would have crushed that big drill. It didn't touch him, but it came down and

it was huge. But you can't see that. Something like that you can't see it, so you can't prevent it.

What we have here is a distinct dichotomy existing between two levels of attribution. What we call a priori causality involved notions of accidents which were attributed to statistical probability. Within this realm, 'accidents' were contextualized not necessarily as abstractions from direct experience, but rather were presented as being innately known. The taken-for-granted position was that SNNVD was "part of the job" and required no further explanation.

Conversely, accounts based upon specific observation and experience (a posteriori accounts) of SNNVD were qualitatively different and more complex than those set forth at the a priori level. At this level, the causal nature of SNNVD was once again presented as having causality in the socially shared common stock of knowledge. However, rather than employing a lay version of statistical probability to explain underground SNNVD, the miners typified the causal nature of occupational carnage in three distinct ways: unsafe acts, unsafe conditions and acts of God.

The specific manner in which the three direct causes of accidents were conceptualized by the sample of hard rock miners in accounting for the causal nature of SNNVD is

posteriori) helped, of course, to serve as a normalizing process, i.e. in accepting occupational death within the work place. SNNVD was commonsensically articulated at the a priori level of discourse as, "it's part of the job."

It is now necessary to put forward a detailed account explaining how the sample of miners understood the causal nature of underground SNNVD; according to the three causal explanations used at the a posteriori level of reasoning.

UNSAFE ACTS

There was a consensus among the informants that the greatest percentage of underground "accidents" were caused by unsafe acts. When miners were asked: "How many underground accidents are caused by unsafe acts [the fault of the worker]?", the range of replies was anywhere between "at least half" to "just about all of them". As one miner put it: "Usually it ends up being the guy's fault because maybe he wasn't paying attention or was cutting corners, or whatever."

Unsafe acts were usually broken down by the informants in two ways. First, there are those "accidents" which are caused by worker carelessness - those being unintentional incidents. Second, "bending the rules" was regarded as a significant reason for why miners got hurt - these

particular unsafe acts are intentional in motive. The following is an account of an "accident" which was reported by a miner as being the result of "carelessness":

I remember one time when people were getting ready to blast and they had their line over top some other guy's blasting agent. And when it did go off, half the level of went up with it. This was because there was so much powder there and people just ran over top and did not pay attention...it's lack of paying attention, that's when people get hurt.

Many of the miners reported that they believe a substantial number of mining accidents were attributable to men who "break the rules"; usually to increase their production.

A lot of the time it's the man's fault because he's making bonus and the harder he works the more he makes. So a lot of the time you cut a corner here and there, and the first thing you know you get hurt.

Typical statements regarding the "practice" of "cutting corners" went like this:

...sometimes they [the worker] will take a chance and not screen and bolt. They'll just really scale well and think that it's OK and go in and drill, because they really want to cut corners. That guy was killed because of that, it was from the loose: all to save some time.

Hence, within the realm of "unsafe acts", it became evident that both carelessness (unintentional) and cutting corners (intentional) were relevant and very credible explanations miners used to "make sense" of the causal nature of injury within their work environment.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

Unsafe conditions were also relevant to the matter at hand. Most informants reported that certain underground deaths or serious injuries were the result of unsafe work conditions. Essentially, these incidents are not the workers' fault (as is the case with unsafe acts), but rather fault lies with the company. An example of an "accident" caused by company negligence, was reported in part in the previous account regarding the miner who was crushed between two rail cars. This particular miner continued by stating:

They [Lincol] were entirely at fault. Well, it had to be, because if the whistle had been going, you know, it [this near fatal accident] would have never happened. So I think it was the company's fault....All they had to do, like we report unsafe things to our safety foreman and he in turn reports it to the general foreman and they are supposed to get it fixed. But we had reported that for days and days, weeks, and it was never fixed. I don't know if I should be telling you this, but they didn't fix it and it resulted in a serious accident.

Although miners considered unsafe working conditions as a relevant cause of SNNVD, this domain was rarely considered as a credible way in which to explain SNNVD. Very seldom did underground workers report instances whereby underground deaths had been the direct result of company negligence:

To lay blame on the company, well in some ways

maybe, but most of the time you can't. It's a tough thing...but I really don't think that you could lay blame or charge the company with murder or anything like that. I don't think so.

There was a shared attitude among the respondent miners that only in situations where the company "broke the rules" (e.g., the Mining Act) could they be held responsible for underground death. One miner brought the following point to light:

...as long as the Lincoln follow the standards laid down in the Mining Act, you're going to get hurt alright, but they are not going to be held responsible for your death or injury.

This passage shows that unsafe conditions are not often used, nor are they a very convincing explanation for understanding the causal nature of underground mining. As long as the company was "following the rules" blame could not be associated with the company.

RULES OF GOLD/NATURE

As previously noted, certain underground accidents were not the result of either unsafe acts nor unsafe conditions.

Mining was often expressed by Sudbury miners as an

inherently dangerous occupation. Swift (1977:112)

concludes:

In its inherently destructive nature, mining involves a re-ignition of the earth's crust, creating thousands of feet into the earth and disturbing for miles under it. Inevitably, it leads to encounters with the intense pressures of the crustal structure, to crush

of the planet.

According to this particular group of miners, notions such as "bad ground" are seen to have undoubtedly contributed to a substantial number of SNNVD's at Inco over the past. When asked, "what causes bad ground", a typical response is illustrated by the following:

Because the ground continually is being effected by the air. As soon as you open the ground up, the moisture in the air gets into the cracks and it seems to loosen the rock. Then there is continually blasting. It's not like a finished wall, you disturb that opening - it's continually working and it takes a long time for an opening to become stabilized. A lot of places that are not stabilized will continually peel off, thus causing loose rock to fall.

Hence, the "forces of nature" were presented as a relevant way in which to explain and consequently understand more fully the causal nature of SNNVD within the work environment. Moreover, the credibility associated with this particular typification (Act of God/Nature), was significant in explaining certain mining deaths. According to a retired miner: "Acts of God are maybe ten percent. Mining is dangerous to about that point." A final example of a serious mining "accident" which was attributed neither to an unsafe act nor unsafe conditions was described in the following way:

I know a guy that got hurt badly. Like he nearly got messed up. He was scooping, mucking (?) with a scoop tram and he put his bucket up into the boxhole and went to come back down (his bucket was full) and a big chunk came down and slipped across the top of his bucket and busted his hydraulic

hoses and headlights and it shorted and the hydraulic oil exploded and it just burnt him to a crisp. He was scarred for the rest of his life. Whose fault was that? It was nobody's fault. It's just one of those things that happens.

The point has been made here, that the "geology of the environment" was taken very seriously by the miners with respect to explaining a certain proportion of underground carnage. Certainly, this was the causal realm whereby miners had no control over accidents and death. Injuries and fatalities caused, for example, by "bad ground" were neither predictable nor controllable. In this way, the threat of an undetectable, unpredictable, and consequently unexpected "fall or loose" added an entirely different level to the other two types of causes of SNNVD. This particular domain, although it only contributed in a relatively small way to the overall direct causal nature of SNNVD experienced and articulated by the sample of miners, as will later be argued, served as an important element in the legitimizing process for accepting occupational death within the work place.

SUMMARY

I have tried in the present chapter to describe the three dominant themes associated with the causal nature of underground mining in Sudbury. The implications of these facts, working conditions, and acts of coordination and negotiation

their effects on the personal cognitive organization of the individual miners who have to "deal with" the risks involved with underground mining on a daily basis.

In what ways are these biographically determined accounts associated with this a posteriori causal conception of SNNVD? crystallized into a pattern of understanding this type of death at the a priori level as mere statistical probability? It is with this crucial problem that we concern ourselves in the chapter to follow.

NOTES

1. The bonus system is found in all underground operations in Sudbury. About half of the men who work underground are on bonus. In theory, the bonus system is an incentive or inducement to reward miners for producing or doing development work more quickly. Essentially, the harder the miners work the more money they will earn. (Clement, 1981:272-273)

2) Loose is a term used by underground workers which refers to loose rock which often falls from the ceiling of the mine. Loose can weigh anywhere from a few grams to hundreds of kilograms.

3) A scopetram is a trackless diesel vehicle used to move ore from the work area.

4) Screening and bolting refers to the process whereby heavy wire screen is fastened to the ceiling with six-foot (usually) roof bolts. This is to prevent loose rock from dropping and injuring workers.

5) Clement (1981:117) provides us with a good definition of scaling. "Scaling is the knocking down of loose rock that may have been freed during a blast but has not fallen. The scaler first knocks on the walls and ceiling of the work area with metal bars from six to fourteen feet long, listening to the "ring" of the rock.

6) An underground mine consists of a number of levels where men are stationed to work. For example, the first level of a mine may begin at the 200 foot level (below the surface).

Once this work area has been mined out, another level will be dug deeper in order to locate and extract the valuable ore.

7. Mucking refers to the process of shovelling ore; this is usually done by a scoop tram.

CHAPTER THREE: ANALYSIS

In this chapter some evidence will be presented to suggest how the three causal levels of analysis miners used to "make sense" of SNNVD helps to normalize this form of death. The previous chapter indicated that these typifications (unsafe acts, unsafe conditions and acts of God/Nature) were all used to explain certain types of underground SNNVD. However, it is important to understand that the notion of unsafe acts surfaced as the explanation miners used most often to explain the causal nature of SNNVD within their work place. Why was this the case? Why could the majority of underground "accidents" (perhaps 90%) be prevented if miners would cease performing unsafe acts? Similarly, why were other causal explanations of SNNVD considerably less relevant, according to the underground workers, for understanding the phenomenon of occupational carnage? These are the concerns which will be addressed in this chapter.

Essentially, the majority of underground "accidents" at the Inco mining operation in Sudbury were regarded by the group of workers as being the direct result of worker negligence. The previous chapter provided examples illustrating the types of accidents miners most often defined as being consequences of either worker carelessness (unintentional unsafe acts) or workers who "cut corners".

(intentional unsafe acts).

The analysis will begin by examining the notion of the "careless worker". According to the informants, a substantial number of "accidents" came about because workers were not paying attention to their work environment. The example provided in Chapter Two concerning the group of workers who: "...had their line over some other guy's blasting agent", is a case in point. When workers were asked: "How can these types of accidents be prevented?", the general response was that "increasing worker awareness" and "trying to make workers more alert" were the "key" elements involved in eliminating mining "accidents". One informant suggested that the following is necessary to reduce or ultimately eliminate injuries and deaths caused by worker negligence:

Just by more educational programs, safety lectures and safety structure of the mine. Being aware of...being told or shown maybe an accident that happened - the events leading up to an accident. The general atmosphere of the whole system [educational] could be changed.

One finds here a focus centering upon the "clued out" worker as the cause of accidents. Consequently, the seemingly logical solution put forward by the group of workers concerning workplace violence was for the company to somehow change the attitudes of the workers; to make them more careful, more safety conscious.

A contradiction emerged at this juncture when the

informants were asked, "Why are miners often careless while at work?" The informants' responses centered around such notions as: "It's often because the job is monotonous or boring, and concentration is lost", or as one miner put it: "...often family problems are bothersome while you're at work which can decrease the concentration level that is required to be safety conscious."

Hence, having more efficient company safety programs, (training and education) for underground workers is the perceived necessary step to take in order to reduce or eliminate these types of "accidents" (unintentional unsafe acts). However, this strategy would appear to have little effect upon the "causal" nature of these types of "accidents", in that existing company safety programs are not structured to handle job monotony, nor are they geared towards eradicating miners' family problems which were reported as "spilling over" into the workplace. This contradiction became more visible when each miner reported how he dealt with the realization that safety consciousness may be "slipping", as the result of either one of the above factors.

Yes, I've often caught myself that way, and often you catch your self. By the cracky, I'd better buckle down, I'd better start thinking about what I am doing. It's concentration, accidents will happen very quickly from lack of concentration.

This technique of "buckling down" when you're not concentrating on the job, according to the informants, is

not something that is learned by attending safety meetings and lectures. One miner summed up his feelings on this matter in the following way: "It's a personal thing, commonsense is what does it, you learn how to do this on your own, through experience".

In addition to the preceding remarks, safety lectures (which according to the informants form a significant part of the overall Inco safety program) were reported as often being ignored by the miners. A miner made these comments concerning the daily safety lectures which all underground workers must attend at the outset of the shift:

Well you lock yourself off because it gets monotonous. Unless they have something specific to say, 95% of the men block themselves off. They go through their speech because that's what's called for.... This business of talking safety every morning I don't agree with. I mean the safety is included in the morning line-up any way.

Considering these remarks, why is it that workers believe accidents attributed to "carelessness" may be best prevented by company educational programs? The following two explanations may shed some light on this situation.

First, by paying more attention to Inco safety programs may have surfaced as being the most credible explanation miners could conceive of to prevent "stupid" accidents for the simple reason that it was the only relevant explanation available. Inco miners work in an environment where education of the worker is the most significant and prevalent strategy used to prevent occupational accidents. According to one particular miner "Miners cause these types

or accidents [due to carelessness], and only they can prevent them.* The only mechanism available to overcome carelessness was education: that is, make the worker more safety conscious. So it was up to each and every miner to pay attention to the various health and safety programs and practices provided to them by the company if they wanted to "stay alive". As the popular phrase on the Workman's Compensation television commercial goes, "You've got it, so use it [one's head]."

It is important to note the way in which "education" is popularized at the wider societal level in order to come to grips with this problem. Education in Canadian society has developed into a key institution - its form has become pervasive and taken-for-granted. The major function of education in this particular social formation has been to serve as a means to particular ends. "Certainly, the vast majority of Canadians would not be opposed to education and training per se. Education is usually coupled with individual and societal betterment. Hence, for miners to conceive of safety education as a "good thing" for themselves and other miners as an effective lever by which to reduce or possibly eliminate "accidents" is indeed a commonsensical, logical and rational way of thinking; considering the manner in which education has been popularized at the broader societal level.

This brief explanation suggests that the credibility attributed to educating the "sound worker" is grounded in

both the miners' lived experiences while working underground. In addition to their "broader" conception of education as a social function or mitigation within Canadian society. At this point, however, a more complete answer to this question is difficult to construct when the notion of the "unintentional unsafe act", as well as the other two typifications are excluded from the analysis. This being the case, the second form of unsafe acts, unsafe conditions and acts of God/Nature will now be attended to, only to be followed by a more complete and total explanation, synthesizing all of the typifications based upon the informants' specific observations and experiences of SNNVI.

INTENTIONAL UNSAFE ACTS

It was not uncommon for miners to use the notion of "intentional unsafe acts" as a credible explanation for understanding the causal nature of certain underground "accidents". Taking "short-cuts" was regarded by all of the informants as routine activity in that all miners reported intentionally "cutting corners" while working underground. There was also a consensus among the hardrock miners interviewed that risk increased more when short cuts or cutting corners were taken. Considering that miners clearly understood that cutting corners and accidents were inextricably bound together, why would they intentionally increase their risk of being killed while on the job? The typical response to this question was "to speed things up, to increase production".

At this juncture, it is important to realize that men who cut corners are not perceived to be randomly distributed throughout the entire underground work force at Inco. The bonus miner in particular was perceived to regularly break the safety rules and regulations in order to increase his production quota more often than other miners.

Why were these individuals willing to substantially augment their "risk factor" so that they could increase their production output? Responses to this particular question can be classified into two distinct groups - bonus and non-bonus miners. According to those men who were not on the company bonus, it was because: "...it's bread into them", as one miner put it. Bonus miners were generally characterized by Inco workers (above and below ground) who were paid by the hour, as a "special breed" who were money hungry or in debt, crazy or suicidal. In light of these characteristics, bonus miners were perceived as being labourers who, in the words of one particular non-bonus miner, "have not shown themselves in the past to be very careful about how they did things". By and large, those miners who did not work on the bonus system felt that bonus miners were a money hungry and "wild and crazy" lot of men who were indeed not noted for their safety consciousness.

One gets an entirely different picture of the motives behind why bonus miners are willing to accept more risk than non-bonus miners when the bonus miner was interviewed.

Bonus miners report that they are willing to deal with the "high risk" factor involved by working as a bonus miner because they generally perceived themselves to be an elite, the most skilled and safety conscious miners at Inco who needed the extra income in order to support their families.

It should also be added that bonus miners considered themselves to be the "quickest" and "safest" underground workers. Because of this, they felt they had the

talent (which the non-bonus miners lacked) to properly handle the dangerous situations which often confronted them.

Thus, we are receiving two rather different messages as to why miners are willing to work on the Inco bonus system.

However, it is important to realize that both groups of men were convinced that the bonus miner was to be held

responsible if he were to get hurt on the job as the result

of cutting a corner. Again, the reason why a bonus miner should be deemed responsible for his "intentional unsafe actions" depended upon who was being interviewed. If it

were a non-bonus miner, fault would rest upon the bonus miner for the reason that "they have it coming to them"

for the retribution. As one underground worker stated another non-bonus miner said this:

It's like being a gambler. You are playing a

game of chance in a way. If they don't ever get hurt they can make pretty big bucks. But they are still taking a hell of a risk in trying to make the extra money.

Thus, according to the non-bonus miners, the bonus miner is responsible for his adversity for the reason that he is perceived as one of a "special breed", and by virtue of his predicament he is believed to be willing to take somewhat more of a risk while at work and should therefore be expected to "pay the price" for his gamble.

The accounts received from the bonus miners regarding this phenomenon were different than those articulated by the group of non-bonus miners. If a bonus miner were to be involved in an accident directly as the result of cutting a corner, it would not be because he was any more crazy, suicidal or any more money hungry than a "normal" miner, but rather, a miscalculation or error was perceived to be the dominant explanation used to explain accidents of this nature. In addition, the explanations of miscalculation and error were not used as excuses for these types of accidents. Rather, mistakes were seen to be made by individual miners, and miners were seen to be responsible for committing acts known to be dangerous and over which they have control (e.g. "Should I, or shouldn't I do this").

Examining this problematic in a somewhat different fashion, it is not surprising that non-bonus miners felt that bonus miners "got what they deserved" when they had been hurt as the result of committing an intentional unsafe

act. Perhaps an explanation for this animosity is grounded in the overall impression that bonus miners were taking jobs away from workers who were being paid by the hour, and not by how much they produced(2). Here a non-bonus miner provides us with an example of this notion:

Like bonus workers can do a full cycle in one shift. They can drill, blast and muck. But for them to do this, they often have to do without their breaks and their lunch. While those of us who get paid by the hour take about a day and a half to do a cycle. This means that the more men on the bonus the less men the company needs working for them by the hour.

Additionally, non-bonus workers' sentiments of responsibility resting solely with those who intentionally break the rules in order to increase production likely has something to do with the fact that it is not the non-bonus miners who are in the bonus miners' "shoes". They are not the miners who are being seriously injured and killed on the job because of cutting corners (3).

This being the case, the bonus miners' feelings that safety is a personal thing are somewhat more difficult to comprehend, since these men are disproportionately involved in accidents which are the result of intentional unsafe acts. Why is it that bonus miners conceive the essence of this type of accident in this particular manner?

Compensationally, it would appear bonus miners considered safety to be a personal thing for the reason that they had control over whether or no they wanted to be safe. Consequently, this stems from the notion that bonus

miners are able to exercise a great deal of control over what takes place within their workplace. This autonomy exists because they are traditionally unsupervised. The bonus miners who were interviewed reported that their foremen only "checked up" on them once or twice during a shift. The remainder of the time they were left to work alone or with their other crew members (usually there were three men in a crew). Consequently, bonus miners could work at practically any speed they desired; the decision was solely left up to the individual or a consensus between crew members. In other words, the pace at which a bonus miner works is commonsensically based upon a "free willed" decision-making process. Additionally, it was widely recognized by the entire group of respondent miners that the faster one worked underground, the greater the chance one had of becoming involved in an accident. So, if a bonus miner chose to work at an "unsafe" pace in order to increase his production quota, responsibility for getting hurt would rest solely with the individual, since it was the miner himself who freely chose to take this "gamble".

This commonsensical explanation seems to be hinged upon the notion that bonus miners have the freedom of choice; either to work quickly and not to be safety conscious, or to work at a "moderate" pace to adhere to safety regulations. The choice is seen to be dependent upon the specific individual. Hence, safety is a "personal thing".

Rather than accepting this particular explanation of

why bonus miners felt safety was a personal thing (since there was a "free willed" decision)-- making process involved which determined whether or not an individual would be safety conscious. I will argue that corners were often cut by miners not as a result of "free willed" decisions, but rather as the consequence of what was required of them as bonus miners. Nonetheless, the "cause" of accidents among bonus miners interpreted at the commonsense level of discourse as a matter of free will.

The analysis begins by examining the evidence of why cutting corners was much more than merely a "personal thing".

Throughout the interviews a consensus emerged among the bonus miners. The miners all agreed that being a bonus miner demanded a faster work pace compared to a miner who was not on the bonus system. This group of underground labourers also adhered to the notion that working bonus involved cutting corners. Therefore, if one wanted to be a successful bonus miner in terms of making extra cash, one had to be prepared to take shortcuts. The nature of the job simply demanded this from all workers. A thirty-one year old bonus miner who has worked at Inco for the past thirteen years said:

To make money, for us to make money you have to take shortcuts. There are always shortcuts. But if you don't, if everyone were to stop and say that this is the way it is and there's no two ways about it. Well, the company would have some more and you would make a little money, but it's not the same. It would never work like this.

Hence, taking shortcuts as a bonus miner is a structural prerequisite. If a particular bonus worker is not prepared to take short cuts: "He won't last very long as a bonus miner", as one miner put it. Consequently, very little choice is involved concerning whether or not corners will be cut. "Extra cash" and "short cuts" were seen to be inextricably linked by the bonus miner.

Considering that bonus miners were aware that they often did not freely choose to take shortcuts while working underground, why did they take it upon themselves to be responsible for acts which they did not freely choose to commit? Why did miners continue to feel responsible for the consequences they regularly incurred from cutting corners? Why was safety a personal thing? To answer these questions one must examine the way in which miners dealt with this problem. The following account may help to explain . .

Sandy, a bonus miner who has been working for Inco for over a decade recognized that the job of being a bonus miner often demanded that individuals take shortcuts so that they could increase their production levels. Having realized that miners failed to exercise freedom of choice over their personal safety, he wanted, in his words, "to do something about it."

One day an incident happened to Sandy which, "...brought the whole thing to a head", as he put it. This sentiment was triggered when he decided he did not want to work in an

area of the mine which he had reason to believe was unsafe .
So he "pulled a Bill 70" (4). A Bill 70 according to this
particular worker is used by a miner when "...you don't feel
that it's safe in a certain area, and you tell them that
you're sorry, but that you are not going to work there and
there is nothing they can do about it". He continued his
account by saying:

When I refused to go into that one spot where the
place had caved in, they took guys out of fifteen
and put them in there. And they were saying to
me, "You suck, you don't want to work in there.
eh". They thought that I was being a wimp.

This miner was exercising his "right" to refuse to work in
what he believed was an unsafe work environment, and was
ridiculed for doing so by other miners. In addition,
instead of the company closing down that section of the mine
for an investigation (a required procedure), they sent - or
another crew to work where he had refused, a clear violation
of the health and safety legislation.

This was a terribly frustrating experience according to
this particular miner. He did not appreciate the fact that
a "muck hungry" foreman was breaking the law by sending in a
group of unsuspecting miners to do the work he had refused,
nor was he impressed by being called a "suck" by these
incoming miners for not having the "guts" to work in that
particular area. What Sandy decided to do about this
situation was to join what he called the "Health and Safety

Committee". In Sandy's words: "It was about all I could think of doing to improve things; make them better so something like that would not happen again." However, the miner's decision to join this group was, in retrospect, "a waste of time".

The first hurdle encountered in trying to join this committee was the amount of time it took to be taken on as a member. It was two years after he applied for this position before he first sat in on a meeting. During his time of membership on the Health and Safety Committee, Sandy expressed the feeling that he had gone through nothing but frustration. This frustration was reported as stemming from two sources. The first cause of his dismay was rooted in the perception that his participation and output into the proceedings of this committee was marginal. His presence was not doing what he felt it ought to be doing. As he put it:

I wasn't going to bother to go on because I really wasn't getting involved. Once every second month I go on a tour with a safety supervisor and sometimes I go on the lower levels or on the upper levels. I see the guys and ask if there are any problems, any complaints of the materials of whatever. I really wasn't getting into it.

Secondly, Sandy became disconcerted with his role as a health and safety committee member because it was beginning to interfere with his role as a bonus miner. This role strain is evident in the following account:

See what happens is that the workers get this attitude, well... how would I say it. You're suckholing to the company. In other words, if I'm doing something wrong you're going to nail me for it. And that's not the point at all. Like, 199, the machine I usually operate, I was bolting, the guy that was bolting was on the scope ok, so this guy is mucking the boxholes, and the guy told me that the machine was smoking a lot from the left bank. I said that that was tough like what do you want me to do about it? Well he said that I was on Health and Safety, well that has fuck all to do with me, I'm not on the machine. If it is smoking too much it's not up to me. And shit, a week later and it's still smoking.

Sandy summed up this situation by saying this: "Like it's [being on the Health and Safety Committee] not for a guy who is on bonus, there's too many hassles."

Hence, the frustrations Sandy encountered from participating on the Health and Safety Committee prevented him from changing the dominant underground safety code from "safety as an individual thing", to, "safety as a collective thing". If Sandy had had more success in his struggle to "change the way things are," as he put it, bonus miners may have begun to collectively come to the understanding that cutting corners may not (consensually) be a personal thing at all. However, as long as the work environment where Sandy and his cohorts are situated continues to emphasize individual autonomy and privatization (individual responsibility), these workers will not be able to collectively prevent these types of accidents from occurring. As was pointed out, the surroundings of a Sudbury miner are structurally

antagonistic toward anything but the ideology of individualism.

Considering the manner in which workers interpreted the essential qualities of both unintentional and intentional unsafe acts, it is not surprising these particular causes of SNIVD were not the subject of much critical comment. A significant element which normalized these types of "accidents" among the workers was rooted in the dominant underground consensus that "the workers" were responsible for these unfortunate occurrences, and that only they could prevent them from happening. Fault for these types of "accidents" rested solely with each worker's own personal level of safety consciousness.

NATURE/ACTS OF GOD

A consensus was evident among the miners in that Acts of God or Acts of Nature accounted for roughly ten per cent of underground mining accidents. These deaths were uncontrollable in the sense that they were not understood on a causal basis. For example, with respect to the concept of "bad ground", miners stated that accidents resulting from this particular Act of Nature were uncontrollable. In the words of one miner: "even the geologists and the engineers have no way of predicting where and when there will be falls of loose because of 'bad ground'; it's something that nobody can tell is going to happen." Hence, present technological methods were seen as being unable to control occurrences of this particular type. Consequently, miners were vulnerable

at practically any point in time to be victimized by this
uncontrollable "power".

How did miners bring the uncontrollable under control?
How did they work in an environment where they knew that at any time they could be killed? In what particular fashion did they deal with this level of uncertainty?

The concepts of fatalism and belief in the super natural surfaced in the interviews as the mechanisms employed by those who were forced to deal with the uncontrollable.

FATALISM

The notion of fatalism has surfaced in other works dealing with underground mining. According to Lucas (1967:30) in his study of a mine disaster: "The threat of the unpredictable and uncontrollable was brought into acceptable bounds when the unexpected was redefined as the inevitable." This use of the inevitable was commonly expressed by Sudbury miners interviewed:

Hell, I could get killed when I go deer hunting on Manatcolin Island every fall. Or when I go on a 3000 mile car trip. Shit, you can even get killed by crossing the street.

Another miner had this to say,

...what the heck, you can be working on the outside, say construction, look how many accidents there are in construction. You don't have to be a miner to get hurt.

Through fatalism, therefore, the worker could continue with his job, relatively undistracted by danger because of the conviction that detection, prediction, control or defensive action was irrelevant, because a miner's life span could be determined by a number of different factors.

THE SUPERNATURAL

Another way of bringing the uncontrollable under control was for miners to limit the unpredictable. Unlike fatalism, however, the supernatural implied types of action. Essentially, the action could take two forms: following a ritual which would serve the function of bringing about the desired empirical goals; and by paying attention to environmental clues in the mine which were regarded as signals of potential danger. An example of the first type of action concerned the daily practice of one particular underground miner who reported that he always mounted his scope tram on the right hand side every morning for "good luck". In his words: "It's kind of the same thing as getting out of bed every morning on the same side."

Exemplifying the second type of action, another miner made these comments:

Like I remember when I went back to work after I got hurt. The first thing that happened when I got off the cage on the level was a piece of loose fell through the screen, just a small piece, you know, and it fell right in front of me. And I thought that this was giving me a warning, like I got to get out of here. So I did, I put in for a transfer and I'm now above ground.

Hence through these actions the miner was able to alleviate anxiety, add to his confidence, and perhaps (as was the case with the second miner) go as far as to alter the course of events. If these mechanisms were to fail a miner, it would be a matter of "bad luck", or a similar perception.

So, responsibility for these types of "accidents" was not in any way or form associated with the individual miner.

as was the case with the causal realm of Unsafe Acts), nor were they deemed as the company's fault. Rather "nobody is responsible for these kinds of deaths" is what one miner had to say about the matter. Acts of God/Nature "just happen", and the group of miners felt that there was nothing (which was believed to be technically available) anyone (worker or management) could do to prevent these "accidents" from taking place. Consequently, there was no concept of human responsibility used to "make sense" of these deaths.

Deaths attributed to the uncontrollable were again not the subject of criticism amongst the informants because they were understood as being caused by "cosmic laws" and hence were legitimated.

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UNSAFE CONDITIONS: THE COMPANY'S FAULT

Very seldom did miners believe unrestricted "unsafe conditions" alone were causing SNNVD within the workplace. In other words, rarely did underground labourers attribute the source of SNNVD to company negligence. Consequently, this causal referent was used less frequently than the typifications of Unsafe Acts and Acts of God/Nature in explaining SNNVD. Very few underground deaths were believed to be the "company's fault". Why was this the case? Why were unsafe conditions not a popular way in which to interpret the causal nature of SNNVD in the underground workplace? In what fashion did miners address this concern?

According to the group of informants, Inco was perceived as doing "its best" to ensure that miners were working in a safe environment. Essentially three explanations arose in the miners' accounts pointing to why this was the case. First, there was a consensus amongst the informants that "management" did not want to see workers getting hurt. For purely humanitarian reasons miners felt Inco did "their best" to promote a safe work environment. The underground workers believed management was genuinely concerned with the welfare of its employees by doing all that was possible to reduce human suffering.

A second explanation emerged from analysis of the transcripts which showed why Inco was "doing its best" to make sure that they had a healthy workforce. A miner:

It costs them [Inco] more. You know. Every time somebody gets hurt they have to pay. Their compensation payments have to go up.

So they don't want to see miners getting hurt.

Third, Inco was seen as keeping an adequate safety environment because it had to adhere to the Mining Act. Workers "knew" that if a government safety inspector had reason to believe that a particular mine, or a section of a mine, was too dangerous for men to work in, he had the power to close the mine until the situation arose when it was considered by the government to be safe for men to resume their work. And until that time came, the workers felt Inco's production level would drop, thus resulting in a profit loss. A bonus miner had this to say about the matter:

Like, the Ministry of Mines is the only one that has anything to say about Inco. In other words, if they came over to Little Stobie and found that something was unsafe, they can close it down and there is nothing Inco can do about it.

Hence, the company has to adhere to the standards set by the Ontario Government if they wish to operate at a profitable level.

Another miner discussing the same issue made this remark,

...with the Ministry in there, like they have to cater to them. They have to make sure that the miners are safe. So maybe that's why this health and safety push is really on; the Ministry is putting the pressure on them.

Evidence to support the assumption that Inco is doing all it can to ensure a safe work environment for all of its workers was articulated by miners with respect to the idea that the mines are continually becoming a safer place in which to work. One miner stated the following when he was asked if safety has improved in the mines over the years.

Oh, by hundreds of percent, oh yea. And it's still getting better. Remember when I told you that we had all those fatalities a few years ago, well they put safety foremen on like you wouldn't believe to combat this and it has worked, because the fatalities stopped and the accident rate went down. It's safer now than it has ever been.

Believing that their work environment is becoming safer, the interpretations miners use to understand the nature of this perceived trend are reinforced and add to the credibility that unsafe conditions are not a significant problem in the workplace.

Although miners believed very few "accidents" were caused by unsafe conditions, the entire group of men interviewed still reported that either themselves, or other miners whom they knew, had encountered close calls or were victims in one or more accidents of this type. When asked who should be held responsible for these "acts of negligence", the miners overwhelmingly replied that the company should be. However, for the following reasons, they

seldom did miners attempt to challenge the company on their perceived acts of negligence.

The initial response most miners gave for their reluctance concerned the notion of futility. Workers generally shared the assumption that fighting the company was nothing but a worthless endeavour. As one miner commented, "What can you do? Even if they [Incol] were to be found guilty for an accident, nothing much will happen to them anyway (5)."

In addition, miners felt that trying to "hail the company" was not a wise move because, as one miner stated: "It can go against your work record". In other words, workers considered "stirring up trouble" merely acted as a barrier to the chances of being promoted. All of the informants had the opinion that the men who were the "shit disturbers" (on the issue of health and safety) were often the men who were first to be laid off, who seldom received a promotion or who frequently quit the mining industry. Therefore, it was not worth fighting the company for something that would only make it rougher for the miner to "get ahead" in his occupation.

Considering what has been said, SNNVDs resulting from unsafe work conditions were not the subject of much critical comment among the informants. These types of deaths were defined by the miners as being "part of the job" because of

Hence, the leadership capacity of hegemony is objectively grounded and the coordination of interests is based upon real compromises and sacrifices rather than just propaganda. In other words, this theory of ideology goes beyond the traditional tendency to: (a) treat ideology as a mere reflection of material circumstances, as pure illusion; (b) to imply a unidirectional process whereby ideology is always imposed on subordinates by a dominant force; and (c) to assume that ideology consists of a uniform set of beliefs is, again in the words of Hargreaves (1982:114), "too simplistic".

Having defined and clarified the term ideology, the analysis will now proceed by arguing that many of the ways miners normalized underground BNNVD were derived from general assumptions of the society in which they exist. Evidence will be brought into the analysis showing how these suppositions were based upon a dominant cultural element in Canadian society, one which is hegemonic; this being liberalism.

THE DOMINANT ELEMENT OF CANADIAN CULTURE

There is a general agreement among scholars that a dominant cultural element in Canadian society is liberalism. At the level of political ideology, liberalism "rests on the premise that the individual is more important than the

NOTES

1) All of the miners interviewed in the study were married and had children.

2) Evidence to support this notion is expressed by Dave Paterson, president of Local 6500 in Sudbury. He is quoted as saying, "If our guys wouldn't work on bonus anymore, they would save hundreds of jobs. Laid off miners would be returning to work a lot sooner." (Clement, 1981:280)

3) According to Tom Gunn, co-chairman of the Steelworker's Inquest Committee, and Dave Cochran, co-chairman of the Health and Safety Committee, between 1960 - 1976 sixty of the eighty-six reported deaths at Inco (70 per cent) were "bonus related" and that "people on bonus" made up "85 per cent of the accidents" at Frood Mine [Sudbury] in the first seven months of 1976. (Clement, 1981:231)

4) Bill 70 is an Act respecting the Occupational Health and Safety of Workers and was introduced to the Ontario Legislature in October 1977, and after lengthy debate and several amendments received Royal Assent in December 1978. Essentially, this legislation grants workers the right to refuse, without penalty, any work which they believe to be dangerous. (Walters, 1983:415)

5) These sentiments resemble the results of a national study of safety enforcement policies and practices in Canada. A study conducted by the Department of Labour (1971-73) found that existing penalties for health and safety infractions were rarely applied. More recent evidence suggests similar results. For example, a study by Reschenthaler (1979) in an examination of three provinces found little use of prosecution as a method of enforcement. In Alberta in 1977, there were 9,868 violations cited under provincial statute; however, only two prosecutions resulted. Similar findings were recorded in both Saskatchewan and British Columbia during this same time period. (Reasons et al., 1981:205)

CHAPTER FOUR - BROADER SOCIAL ORIGINS OF NORMALIZATION PROCESS

Until now, the investigation has revealed the shared meanings miners attached to both homicide and occupational carnage. When the Sudbury miners were asked to compare these two forms of death, they did so in such a manner that a distinct dichotomy emerged. In other words, homicide signified an "abnormal" cause of death, according to the informants, whereas occupational deaths were conceived as "accidents" and therefore were interpreted as "normal" causes of death. The details surrounding these differences were presented as they were articulated by this specific group of "high risk" labourers.

Basically, the miners considered homicide to be a form of SNNVD which involves a wish to cause death. Consequently, a distinct "evil character" was attached to this particular type of SNNVD. Additionally, the category of murder almost always elicited disapproval, anger, and often indignation while it was a topic for discussion. The miners' revulsion against killing (murder) presented itself as though it were a well entrenched cultural attitude.

Thus, the meanings miners expressed concerning murder appeared to be very consistent with those which are conventionally expressed in normal Canadian discourse. In both miners and the broader society, homicide is indeed the "crime of crimes".

At the a priori level, miners viewed occupational death

(a phenomenon occurring with a relatively high frequency in the underground workplace) in a totally different light when compared to their interpretation of homicide. Generally grounds for this differentiation were seen to rest upon the assumption that occupational death lacked the element of humanly willed intent. Consequently, the lack of criminal intent (mens rea) was the principle reason why underground SNNVD failed to arouse the abhorrence associated with the "crime of crimes". Hence, this was (at the a priori level) the presented discourse expressed by Sudbury miners regarding this particular form of SNNVD.

The explanations why the element of humanly willed intent was excluded from the workers' interpretations of underground SNNVD at the a priori level were found to lie in their understanding of this type of death at the a posteriori level. Specific discussions regarding Unsafe Acts, Acts of God and Unsafe Conditions were the domains where "intent" was dismissed from their analysis of the causal nature of SNNVD; thus serving the function of normalizing underground SNNVD at the a priori level and bringing it entirely into the realm of everyday comprehension.

THE NORMALIZATION PROCESS

This "normalization process" was first identified and

then described in Chapter Two of the text. Subsequent to this, the process by which SNNVD was normalized was examined in such a fashion as to allow the reader an opportunity to have an "inside look" at how this process was conceptualized by miners. In addition, the reasons why these specific social mechanisms exist as credible and relevant social practices for workers who had to deal with a potentially fatal work environment were drawn out.

Whereas this process containing the major typifications of Unsafe Acts, Acts of God/Nature and Unsafe Conditions, was shown to be socially produced amongst the miners and tacitly supported by the company, evidence was also brought forward to alert the reader to the prospect that the meaning and function of this process was derived, at least in part, from the nature of mining itself. That is, to better understand the essence of this normalization process, one must place it in terms of its wider social origins.

Throughout the analysis, evidence was brought forward suggesting how certain broader societal conceptions were linked to the ways miners articulated their popular wisdom of occupational carnage. These components surfaced in the workers accounts in terms of an ideology. Following a definition and clarification of the concept "ideology" (the one which will be used in the analysis) the thesis will proceed to identify the dominant ideology held by Canadians

and show its linkages with the social practices which played a critical role in normalizing SNNVD. The ideological nature of this process will be explained essentially in two ways.

First, an emphasis will be placed upon how these particular ways of thinking formed to discourage those forms of behaviour which were intended to "change the way things were done in the mines" (as articulated by miners with respect to underground safety). Secondly, attempts will be made throughout the remainder of the analysis to explain how certain commonsensical ideas served to reinforce those practices that conserved and stabilized the practice of verbally expressing the meaning of underground SNNVD as a legitimate social phenomenon.

IDEOLOGY: DEFINITION AND CLARIFICATION

The sociological study of ideology has a rich and varied background. Today we find several different approaches to this concept. According to Williams (1977:53), ideology has been treated as:

- 1) a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group.
- 2) a system of illusory beliefs - false ideas or false consciousness - which can be contrasted with true scientific knowledge.
- 3) the general process of the production of meanings and

ideas.

Williams himself believes that ideology should be seen as a "relatively formal and articulated system of meanings, values, and beliefs, of a kind that can be abstracted as a world view or a 'class outlook'". (1977:109)

In terms of this thesis, ideology will be treated in a similar manner as a "systemized body of beliefs that legitimates the rule of dominant classes. at the same time, provides a backdrop against which individuals may interpret their everyday lives" (Grayson, 1983:383). Examples included under this definition are liberalism and fascism. According to Grayson (1983) ideologies are relatively systemized. Each can be identified with particular classes at certain junctures in history. Each can provide interpretations for daily occurrences.

This particular theory of ideology was originally found in the writings of Antonio Gramsci. An Italian Communist, writing in 1926-36, Gramsci radically rejected the Marxist theory of social order which was popular among Marxist scholars during this unsettled historical epoch, based essentially upon a view of ruling class power grounded in coercion. According to Gramsci, ideology was much more than a reflection of immediate economic interests. Gramsci coined this specific concept of ideology as "hegemony". A good working definition of hegemony is provided in an essay by

Anne Showstack Sasson (1982:94) when she cites Gwyn Williams as stating:

By "hegemony" Gramsci seems to mean a sociopolitical situation, in his terminology a "moment", in which the philosophy and practice of a society fuse or are in equilibrium; an order in which a certain way of life and thought is dominant, in which one concept of reality is diffused throughout society in all its institutional and private manifestations, informing with its spirit all taste, morality, customs, religious and political principles, and all social relations, particularly in their intellectual and moral connotation. An element of direction and control, not necessarily conscious, is implied. ('Gramsci's Concept of "Egemonia"', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, No. 4, 1960, p. 587)

One of the most critical points of this conception of ideology is how problematic it is for a class or group to establish and maintain its hegemony. Hegemony is never guaranteed to a class or social group and it must be worked for. Hargreaves (1982:115) explains how this struggle takes place:

...by making genuine concessions to other classes and groups; by accommodating imaginatively and positively to opposing pressures; by forming alliances with potential enemies; by being able to foresee and pre-empt alternatives to its hegemony; and by assessing accurately what combination of coercion and persuasion to use. Most of the time a hegemonic class manages to incorporate potential opposition by negotiation, concessions, threats and pressures before opposition can reach serious proportions, which would bring its legitimacy into question.

Hence, the leadership capacity of hegemony is objectively grounded and the coordination of interests is based upon real compromises and sacrifices rather than just propaganda. In other words, this theory of ideology goes beyond the traditional tendency to: (a) treat ideology as a mere reflection of material circumstances, as pure illusion; (b) to imply a unidirectional process whereby ideology is always imposed on subordinates by a dominant force; and (c) to assume that ideology consists of a uniform set of beliefs is, again in the words of Hargreaves (1982:114), "too simplistic".

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THE DOMINANT ELEMENT OF CANADIAN CULTURE

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society and that the society does not have the right to limit his or her freedom to pursue happiness as he or she chooses to define it" (Marchak, 1981:16). Historically, in Europe, liberalism developed to justify the activities of the bourgeoisie. In the words of Grayson (1983:383):

...the acceptance - grudging or otherwise - by all classes of liberal assumptions, was a pre-condition for the development of capitalism. Without this acceptance, the bourgeoisie could not be assured of the right to buy and sell, enter contracts with whomever they saw fit, and so on.

Although, liberalism was not the dominant ideology in Canada until the turn of the century, today it permeates not only political philosophy but its assumptions also can be found embedded in formal disciplines such as political science, sociology and economics (Grayson, 1983:384). However, as Marchak points out, there are a lot of interpretations based on liberalism that it cannot deal with,

"There is a great deal about society that liberalism fails to explain. There is poverty in the midst of affluence. The liberal ideology fails to take account of it. There is evidence of interference in the political process by privately owned corporations. The liberal ideology cannot explain it. There is a persistent division of the population which the liberal refuses to recognize as a class division but which otherwise is inexplicable. The decisions of large corporations more profoundly affect the lives of citizens than the actions of politicians, yet the liberal ideology provides no understanding of economic power. (1981:5)

According to Grayson (1983:384) this is an ironic situation because "liberalism does not direct people's attention to matters that the capitalist mode of production in Canada holds together." Consequently, liberalism plays the role of deflecting attention from the essence of class domination in Canadian society. Unlike many European societies (and arguably the United States), where bourgeois society has used up its store of constructive ideas and lost the capacity and the will to confront the difficulties that threaten to overwhelm it (Lasch, 1979), in Canada, long a bastion of stolid bourgeois dependability, there is little evidence to suggest that a "hegemonic crisis" (1) is taking place.

Taylor (1983) has argued that in Britain, for example, a hegemonic crisis began to emerge from about 1970 onwards. Taylor summarizes the nature of this crisis:

That is to say that there was, and is, widespread recognition of the failure of government and business to bring about an effective form of social reconstruction - to inaugurate an efficient "people's capitalism" - in that country. The failure of the mixed economy in Britain is often presented in the bourgeois media and by right-wing commentators as a failure of "social democracy" as such, but it is certainly, viewed by the mass of the people in Britain as a general

failure on the part of all those with political and economic power. In this sense, it is quite appropriate to identify in Britain what Gramsci speaks of as a "crisis of authority" (or the existing structures of economic and political domination, or hegemony). (1982:9-10).

Unlike British society, however, Canada is a much less contradictory bourgeois society where there is no empirical evidence suggesting that a hegemonic crisis is taking place. Rather, the lack of a general social crisis in Canada is exemplified by the fact of there being a serious and prolonged economic crisis being experienced by the majority of working Canadians, yet there is no hegemonic crisis *à la* UI - as described by Taylor. As Chorney and Hanson have argued, "...the growth of the economic crisis of capital in Canada has been accompanied by a strengthening of popular, or working class, support for a capitalist solution to the failings of 'the Canadian economy' (Taylor 1983:14). On this basis, Taylor reflectively states:

...it is possible to argue that whilst there is an economic crisis in Canada, there is nonetheless no crisis of hegemony, in people's continuing sense of the familiar social order; no fundamental collapse in the belief of the mass of the people in the ability of the existing form of state and social order to "recover" from current "economic difficulties". What there is in 1983, is a strong sense of disbelief amongst Canadians as to the effectiveness of the government's present intervention in the economic market place.
1983:15

So, considering the relatively "unchallenged" nature of

Canada's "dominant" ideology, where liberalism generally prevails, the values traditionally associated with this political ideology should not have lost their capacity to inform working Canadians' interpretations of their social world.

So far, this discussion of liberalism has focussed on the level of the political ideology. Little has been said concerning how this ideology is connected with the ways in which Sudbury miners' normalized SNNVD in their workplace. Hence, to explain this relationship, we must return to the mechanisms miners used to interpret the causal nature of underground violent death and show how they were often couched in terms of stolid bourgeois virtues such as individualism and self help.

By doing so, it will become apparent that these mechanisms were indeed ideologically informed, and that as solutions to the problems of underground carnage, they were at variance with and often ignored the lived experiences of miners themselves, regarding their own involvement with SNNVD. In other words, at the conceptual level, it will be shown that these ideologically informed social practices failed to provide the equipment necessary for the miners to understand the circumstances surrounding SNNVD and effectively deal with them. Hence, to properly uncover the ideological character of this normalization process, it was

decided to further "unpack" the specific meanings of these social practices used by this group of Inco employees. An additional concern in the remainder of the analysis, will be to advance strategies with the intention of ideally preventing occupational death.

UNINTENTIONAL UNSAFE ACTS

It was shown in the last chapter that the majority of underground "accidents" were reported as being caused by worker carelessness. Consequently, miners regarded the educational programs (sponsored by the company) promoting changes in worker awareness as the "solution" for these particular types of accidents. However, a contradiction emerged within this domain which signaled that this strategy was at variance with, and ignored the lived experiences of many miners regarding violence in the workplace (considering that most of the unintentional unsafe acts were the result of a monotonous work routine or stemmed from a lack of attentiveness reported to be caused by "family troubles"). It then became important to understand why the miners expressed that these types of accidents could be prevented if workers payed more attention to existing safety programs. Besides those factors, workers stated that company safety

lectures (a significant part of the overall educational program) were usually ignored.

A tentative explanation was put forward to show why workers believed education was a credible way in which to alleviate this problem. This explanation was based upon the observation that miners appeared to couple education per se with individual self betterment. Because education was viewed in such a favourable light, accidents of this particular nature could only be prevented if individuals properly learned how to develop an educationally informed underground safety attitude. Only by means of self help, therefore, could unsafe acts be prevented.

BLAMING THE VICTIM - WHO BENEFITS?

According to Reasons et al. in their study of occupational health and safety in the Canadian workplace:

by focusing upon the worker as the cause of accidents, we then look for solutions to violence in the workplace by somehow changing the worker (education). The victim is set up as a culprit, freeing the company or work environment from blame. (1981:108)

If the majority of occupational SNIVD's can be explained as due to certain "kinds of workers" (those who don't take safety education seriously enough) that is left with clear hands. No wonder workers carried the perception that the company was always trying to "push" them to find safety

training on its work force. If it can be argued that the means are available for workers to "stay alive", which they don't take advantage of, then fault can be displaced from the realm of the company and consequently only rest with the victim of an occupational accident.

The following passage from Reasons et al. shows how this "blaming the victim" approach is evident in some traditional crimes of violence:

For example, in the violent crime of rape the victim is often viewed as the criminal, or at least a willing participant in the violence - if she didn't struggle and/or wore "suggestive" clothing, she is said to have been "asking for it". The same kind of blaming occurs in violence in the workplace. Like the rape myth that "she was really looking for it" and "anyone who wanted to could avoid being raped", there is the workplace myth that "any worker can avoid a violent accident or death" and "it's only those who are dumb and/or careless who get hurt". In rape the onus is on the woman to prove she did not "consent", and in workplace violence, it is on the victim to prove the harm was caused by work. (1981:138),

Blaming the miner for his "carelessness", therefore, protects the company and provides an easy means of identifying "causes" for accident reports but does not get to the root of the problem. Reasons et al. use a passage from W.T. Singleton, in An Introduction to Economics, who makes the following observations:

Human errors are an important source of information about equipment design fault...The only real solution is to design in such a way

that safety devices and procedures are an inherent and necessary part of machines and tasks, as well as being emphasized in instructions and training schemes - for example, a fuse box so designed that it is physically impossible to open it without switching off the power is obviously safer than one that merely has a note saying "Switch off the power before opening box." (1981:144)

If this is to be taken seriously, the root of the problem with respect to unintentional unsafe acts taking place underground does not lie within the psychological attributes of miners ("these kinds of workers") but rather rests in the "kinds of environments" where miners work. If environmental factors are viewed as causing accidents, then the onus would be on Inco to change the mining environment. For example, if the misuse of safety attire or a safety device led to violence of a miner, the design of the "protective devices" requires change, not the worker.

However, until the following steps are taken, Sudbury miners will continually be blamed by their co-workers who accept the world view in which the company is perpetually blameless and the company for these types of occupational "accidents":

1/ The antagonism miners reported towards Inco safety programs (e.g. safety lecture usually have the impact of "going in one ear and out the other") must become expressed on a collective basis in the form of a conflict or

struggle between themselves and those who are "pushing safety down their throats."

2) Miners will continue to interpret safety education as a credible and logical way of solving deaths attributable to unintentional unsafe acts as long as the popular societal conception of education in Canadian society per se remains linked with success. In other words, until the generally held liberal assumption that education inevitably leads to individual self betterment, education of the "dumb" worker will remain the dominant approach used by Inco to "prevent" these "accidents" from taking place on their property.

In concluding this section of the analysis, it must be clearly stated that health and safety education can become a mere ploy to shed company responsibility for establishing an inherently healthy working environment. Regardless of how educated or trained workers are, if the Sudbury mines are unsafe, violence will occur to workers. In the words of Reasons et al., "It is much better to eliminate the possibility of hazards rather than trying to merely reduce their likelihood through abstract calls for education and vigilance" (1981:153). However, as long as the philosophy of occupational health and safety is based upon the ideology of the "dumb worker" and the "unsafe act" as the major cause of health hazards, then education does indeed make sense. Perhaps if miners could somehow change the popular message

regularly appearing on television, from "workers being the cause of accidents and only they can prevent them" to "the company is the cause of accidents and only it can prevent them." It is not the worker, but the worker's environment, shaped by policies, practices, and procedures of management, which creates health hazards. Therefore, it will take a sustained struggle on behalf of workers and their allies to counter this prevalent mythology.

The basis of this argument must be logically extended to further interpret the nature of intentional unsafe acts.

INTENTIONAL UNSAFE ACTS

In Chapter Three an analysis was forwarded explaining why miners intentionally "broke the rules" while working underground. It became clear that bonus miners, in particular, were the group of labourers most likely to become involved in accidents resulting from intentional disregard of company safety practices. These workers were generally perceived by themselves and others (non bonus workers) as freely choosing to commit these unsafe acts where responsibility was seen to rest solely with the individual if he should happen to become involved in an accident resulting from a shortcut. Evidence, however, was presented indicating that this popular interpretation was indeed problematic for at least one miner. The example

illustrating how Sandy found it virtually impossible to change this social practice of always blaming the worker for his unsuccessful calculated risk, showed just how this constructive approach to health and safety was discouraged by co-workers and management alike from making headway within the Inco underground environment. (3) Consequently, the argument was put forward that the surroundings of a Sudbury miner were structurally antagonistic toward a departure from the ideology of "personal responsibility". It is likely that if more miners were to feel as strongly as Sandy did about the contradictory nature of the Sudbury work experience, then changes stemming from miners could be forced which might "change the way things were done." Something more, then, would have had to be operating. Why didn't all of the bonus miners interviewed articulate the nature of their jobs in the same manner as Sandy did?

An explanation will be offered at this juncture suggesting why most bonus workers articulated their actions as stemming from choice rather than necessity. Why did bonus miners work as hard as they had reported and experience substantially more "accidents" in their workplace than any other occupational group in the country without voicing more critical comment concerning their predicament?

Consistent with the thesis of Bennett and Cobb, The Hidden Injuries of Class (1973) we can hypothesize that a

morality or personal sacrifice may have been operating to segregate and immobilize persons with attitudes like Sandy's working for Inco. Sennett and Lobb state:

...if you feel inadequate and unfulfilled in demonstrating your worth, thinking you are doing it for the good of someone else makes the performance legitimate for you. (1973:124)

Considering this statement, bonus miners may have learned to regard their own actions essentially as serving the welfare of others - namely their families. In fact, during the various conversations with underground workers (especially bonus workers), the men often made reference to their feelings that their sons/daughters should have the possibility of attending university. Toiling in the mines, working the bonus and taking an extra risk of becoming seriously injured or killed, many believed they were contributing a legitimate part of "what it takes" to give "the kids" a fighting chance for the "good life"; a chance which miners themselves reported they did not have. Moreover, miners often expressed a feeling of pride in the accomplishment of "the kids" success in school or hockey (if a son was the topic for discussion). These sentiments seem to indicate a reflected glory. Hence, there was reason to believe that any success their children might achieve in the future was in essence contingent upon their sticking it out in the mine.

The ideological character of the element of sacrifice surfaced in the interviews when two retired miners (both of whom had reported as working "the bonus" for a considerable part of their career as a miner) were compared with those of miners with young families. Both retired Inco employees (one had worked for Inco for thirty years, the other thirty eight) reported that they had "broken their backs" for Inco during their years of employment. Their days of hard work seemed to parallel the way in which the younger men describe their jobs at Inco today. However, neither of the two retired workers' hard and dangerous work was enough to send any of their children beyond high school in Sudbury. In fact, none of their children (one man reported as having three children, the other two) had gone to university.

These "figures" "make sense" when the Canadian university population is examined demographically. It has become common knowledge among Canadian sociologists that the post secondary educational system is not evenly available to the total population of Canadian families. Students tend to belong to families whose heads have relatively high incomes and relatively high status occupations. Consequently, disproportionately fewer children from working class families in this country attend university (Himelfarb and Richardson, 1979:211).

Considering these observations, the assumption held by

miners that to "break their backs", and more to the point, the rules, as a means to advance their children's interest does not live up to social scientific scrutiny. Of course, this social practice of miners making a personal sacrifice to bring good fortune in the future is again consistent with liberal individualism and it also happens to serve the interests of Inco. The dream of the future, enacted in miners lives as self-sacrifice appeared to serve the function of pressuring these men to yield to, rather than resist the productive order which places them in this vulnerable position.

It was therefore for two reasons that miners generally adhered to the dominant explanation that responsibility for committing an intentionally unsafe act rested solely with the individual. This widespread sentiment was entirely credible in light of the fact that the men were employed in a working environment where it was extremely difficult to structurally change existing health and safety practices. Secondly, the way in which miners were seen as engaging in self-sacrifice severely diverted and consequently weakened their ability to express themselves in a fully social manner.

It is also true, of course, that as long as the philosophy of occupational health and safety is based upon the ideologically informed practice of treating safety as a "personal thing", the bonus system will remain in place in Sudbury. This of course means that miners will continue "ignoring the rules" and taking shortcuts to earn a few more collars. In other words, the International Nickel Company will remain adhering to the broad character of what constitutes a safe working environment - all in the interest of remaining a consistently profitable enterprise for its non-resident owners:

ACTS OF GOD/NATURE :

Upon further investigating the essential qualities of the types of accidents miners generally credited to "uncontrollable powers", it became evident that many of these so-called "cosmic events" could in fact be prevented.

An example will be presented in this section of the analysis which indicates that it is entirely conceivable for miners to bring certain "uncontrollable events" under their control without having to resort to fatalism or to rely on supernatural rituals to "solve" a problem. However, to do so, miners would be obliged to confront the employer if these situations are to be remedied.

In chapter II, an example was provided showing how an "Act of God" almost burned a scooptram operator to death. Because some "bad ground" (an unpredictable phenomenon) fell onto and split the hydraulic hoses of this particular man's machine, it caused him to be covered with boiling hot oil. Commonsense tells the miner that "bad ground" is an unpredictable "fact of life" which he must learn to deal with; since the technology has not yet been developed to prevent this type of event from happening. Thus, for miners to handle this level of uncertainty, they must employ ritualistic strategies (e.g. mounting a scooptram on the same side every shift) to remain "lucky".

If that particular worker who was burnt by an "Act of God" were to have been working in a Swedish mine, however, he would have never suffered as he did. In the words of Clement:

Technology exists as in Sweden to enclose the cabs so that the operator has his own supply of air and his head is protected from falling loose.

But to install these covers would cost \$10,000 a machine, and Inco's management has decided it is not worth the investment. A conscious decision was taken against providing this form of protection for machine operators. (1981:236)

In addition, current technology has developed remote control scooptrams. According to The Triangle, a monthly news bulletin published by Inco for its workers:

The five cubic yard scooptram has a 750 milliwatt high frequency radio control, activated by a portable transmitter, which is carried by the operator. Remote control allows operation of the unit in otherwise high risk areas. (July, 1979:20)

Again, as the apparent result of cost factors, this machine is operating only on an experimental basis in Little Stobie mine near the city of Sudbury.

Miners are certainly aware of the fact that safer scooptrams exist. Why then did the workers not refuse to operate the unsafe trams and demand that the safer ones be installed in the mines? A brief argument will be presented, hopefully explaining the miners' reluctance to do so. This "passivity" may be seen to be grounded in the conventional social wisdom of the "mastery over nature". Formulated in terms of the objective advancement of science and technology, the development of "tools" for the domination of humankind over nature are commonsensically perceived as taking place for the universal betterment of society. It then follows in the words of Leiss:

The attenuation of its universalistic credo - mastery over nature as a general human understanding - has the effect of causing it to be identified with specific social institutions and tendencies in the immediate environment. These institutions are the organizing centres for the ongoing scientific and technological progress whereby (according to established orthodoxy) mastery over nature is accomplished: the vast, interlocking, public and private bureaucracies of governments, corporations, military establishments and university research groups. (1974:172)

Such an interpretation seems in effect to couch man's mastery over nature as a grand enterprise of the species as a general human undertaking.

With respect to miners, then, any safety improvements taking place in the work environment may be essentially interpreted as yet another step in the great human task to conquer nature; the benefits, of course, accrue to the social collectivity as a whole. Hence, these may be the popular sentiments upon which miners' social stock of knowledge is hinged - allowing the miners to "bear with" technology's evolutionary growing pains.

In addition to this explanation, perhaps workers' "ameliorism" vis a vis technological advance, is underwritten by some acceptance of what they think are local (company) or national economic difficulties. In other words, with regard to the current fiscal problems generally being experienced throughout Canadian society, the ideological work of the two major political parties about

the need for restraint, etc. may have far reaching effects. Thus, miners may not want to press "all that hard" for remote control scoop trams if they feel themselves to be active participants in the "belt tightening" program which the entire population is currently supposed to be engaged in.

The most effective strategy to prevent these "Acts of God/Nature" from taking place is not for miners to continue performing "safety rituals" but, rather for the company to supply the workers with the safest equipment technologically available. However, recognizing that safety and the protection of health are inextricably bound to class interests, (and in some manner to the interests of quiescent unions) miners must continue to struggle with Inco on an individual basis in order to achieve these gains. Virtually all gains made by Sudbury workers have been the result of struggle with the employer. Hence it would be incorrect to suggest that measures have been achieved as a result of a betterment "naturally" instilled by science and technology within society.

UNSAFE CONDITIONS

It is now necessary to try to achieve a deeper understanding of the manner in which miners typically perceive the domain of "Unsafe Conditions" as being

relatively insignificant in the overall interpretation of the causal nature of underground SNIVD. To do so, will require a further examination of the two areas discussed in Chapter III pertaining to this causal realm of occupational carnage.

The first area concerns the reasons miners articulated through their accounts as to why the company was seldom if ever blamed for the deaths of workers. Secondly, an analysis must be developed to examine the factors involved when miners reported that they had adequate grounds for going about charging the company, but failed to do so.

In the last chapter, workers reported that Inco was not seen as being responsible for underground death. They suggested that 1) members of the company were perceived as possessing certain humanitarian values, and 2) the company had their compensation payments to take into account if the government were to suspect that Inco was exposing workers to unsafe conditions; who was seen as having the power to close down the dangerous work area - ensuing in a profit loss. As a result of this perception of state control with respect to the set of laws aimed at regulating and controlling the workplace, miners felt that it was incomprehensible that Inco put its profits ahead of workers health.

Hence, the symbolic significance of such legislation may have had the effect of encouraging the miners to believe

that if the mines were continually occupied by trained government safety officers, who were paid to recognize and rectify unsafe working conditions, then their health and well-being was being "structurally" taken care of by the State.

This may indeed be the symbolic significance of such legislation but when it was time for workers to use such provided legislation to "nail the company" (when they had reported a legitimate reason to do so) the specific provisions and enforcement policies of the legislation were shown to reflect interests other than their own.

Recalling from the last chapter that "it wasn't really worth trying to nail the company" for the reason that it was usually reported as going against the miners work record (decreasing his opportunity for promotion) while at the same time the company was perceived as "getting off the hook".

Hence, the side effects generated by attempting to prosecute and hopefully convict the company are real barriers

obstructing this process. This seems to illustrate how the assumptions of the liberal state in this country involving the ideology of law which claims to punish unacceptable

behaviour no matter who the perpetrator is, is absolutely at odds with how "the law" is being used in the Sudbury mines.

NOTES

1) In the words of Ian Taylor: "Hegemonic crises emerge, according to Gramsci, when 'social classes become detached from their traditional parties' (since these parties are) 'no longer recognized by their class (or fraction of a class) as its expression'. At such moments, Gramsci argues, there is a 'crisis of the ruling class's hegemony.'"

2) For a more detailed discussion and analysis of why Canadian society has not encountered a "hegemonic crisis" see Chapter One of Crime, Capitalism and Community, by Ian Taylor (1983).

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to grasp the essential qualities of occupational SNNVD, and to discuss why it is not viewed in the same critical light as is homicide. To understand why this is the case, a group of high risk labourers was interviewed to determine how they "made sense" of these two forms of SNNVD.

Essentially, Sudbury miners' interpretations of homicide were similar to commonly held views reported in the mass media. These miners' interpretations of underground SNNVD were substantially different from the meanings attached to homicide. Occupational death for these men failed to evoke the abhorrence they typically associated with murder. The principle reason given for this dichotomy entailed the commonly held perception that occupational deaths were not caused by humanly-willed intent while homicides were.

At that point, the thesis proceeded to address the question of why this element of humanly-willed intent was absent from occupational death. The fact that this element was missing served the purpose of normalizing SNNVD in the mines of Sudbury, Ontario as "a fact of life". To come to an understanding of why this form of death was commonsensically articulated at the a priori level of discourse as "normal", an in depth analysis was conducted examining the a posteriori level of miners' views regarding their typifications of the causal nature of underground

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carnage. These typifications (examined by means of interviews of a group of high risk miners) essentially showed the perceptions as serving the foundation of a normalizing process.

Thus, underground carnage was habitually normalized by workers' feelings that unsafe acts (caused by "money hungry" and "careless" miners) and acts of God/Nature (caused by uncontrollable forces) were the most credible explanations available for them to understand the "causal forces" of death in the workplace. In doing so, "Unsafe Conditions" was relegated to a minor but residual causal factor of SMNV in the mines.

The main reason why unsafe conditions served only as a residual causal factor, rested on the argument that miners interpret SMNV in their work environment with generally individualistic assumptions. These assumptions are inherent in our culture. In this view, individuals live and/or embody and systemize individual level culpability. That is to say, that many of the ways miners "made sense" of occupational death were discovered to be couched in a hegemonic liberal ideology. This ideology serves the interests of the employer, perhaps more so than those of the miners. In a sense, then, the argument ultimately concentrates on the effects of domination exercised and legitimated through a barrage of liberal-hegemonic ideology.

The type of domination, as it manifested itself in the Inco work environment, however, was empirically shown as not having the effect of eliminating miners' freedom and creativity altogether. It was seen as allowing or even encouraging the culture of the high risk worker. It did this by discouraging those forms of behaviour that were seen as interfering with the interests of the company (e.g. Gangs & suppressed resistance) and it also reinforced a reassuring consensus around issues pertaining to the workers' occupational health and safety. In this way, the assumptions miners used to normalize GNMV were incorporated as being compatible with the interests of the company. It is important to realize, however, that this form of "social control" created a certain amount of opposition which has always been characteristic of Sudbury miners' struggles with Inco. (Clement: 1987), which the company can never suppress.

Due to the nature of this interpretation, the analysis does not lead to the conclusion that the domination experienced by these particular miners was simply or solely the result of the machinations of employers. The process requires the complicity of workers, and was thus shown to be much more complex than deterministic class analysis would suggest.

However, what has been said, as long as the language of ideological analysis is used, is a somewhat limited and

solidly entrenched as the most credible explanation dominating the essential qualities of underground SNNVD, responsibility for these "accidents" will continue to rest in the hands of those who are being hurt and killed. Consequently, miners who are injured or die in the Sudbury mines retain an essentially tragic but not critical character.

To suggest, therefore, that the "solution" to this problem is limited solely in emphasizing and encouraging Sudbury miners' demands in their struggle with Inco for a safe work environment is unsatisfactory. This type of an approach is limited to an economic conception of social reality which reduces complexity to the expression of an unique logic.

Considering these words, along with the knowledge of this thesis, a necessary precondition for eliminating underground SNNVD would be to introduce this political struggle to the very heart of Canadian society. Hence, a rethinking of the political economy of capitalist production is necessary. According to Leyton (1975) who examined the heavy toll in life associated with working in Newfoundland's fluorspar mines:

At present, politico-economic crises dictate that resources be exploited and goods produced at minimum expense and without little serious regard for the hazards encountered by labour.

Now that the true social and personal costs of this system are beginning to be understood, no civilized society can seriously contemplate its maintenance. The barest humane response demands a political economy which prohibits all production which cannot be made sale.

With regard to the current ideological conflict in Canadian society, such a progressive proposal would not generally "come across" as being socially acceptable. However, again in the words of Lennon:

undoubtedly these proposals will be met with the same dislike that has greeted all social legislation since the 19th Century - that it is "socialist", that it interferes with man's freedom, that it is a challenge to free enterprise. ... it is the minimum response that a civilization owes to its victims.

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