

STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION:

THE CASE OF WINNIPEG

by

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THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in the Department

of

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Kevin Allen Choy 1991

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

March 1991

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ABSTRACT

"Citizen participation" has been a key word among political scientists for some time. Various writers have cited, depending on their orientation, the importance and benefits of citizen participation on both society and individuals while others have stressed--but still in a democratic vein--the need to limit mass citizen participation.

This thesis examines citizen participation as presented in the City of Winnipeg. Notably, this city, under its Unicity experiment initiated on January 1 1972, presented innovative structures in its political architecture which were aimed at stimulating citizen participation. Two components of the new structure stand out in Canadian local government: the Community Committees and the Residential Advisory Groups. Certainly, the architects of these unique components in Winnipeg's government had great optimism for the participatory value and potential that these entities had as expressed in the flourishing rhetoric that followed their initiation.

Though the concept of Unicity's participatory innovations border the philosophical discussions concerning

citizen participation, no study has presented an analysis of Unicity through the two major schools of democratic participatory theory: the participationist school and the elitist school.

Given the above hiatus, this thesis questions the Unicity model on the following:

Did changes in the structure of Winnipeg through Unicity bring about greater levels of citizen participation?

In the conclusions of this study, an attempt is made to solve this question through the applied analysis of our normative models of democratic theory and through qualitative analysis of the Unicity experiment from earlier assessments of Unicity and a survey of Resident Advisors carried out in December of 1982.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have played a special part in this research.

Foremost, my Senior Supervisor--**Dr. Patrick J. Smith**--deserves a most strong note of appreciation from me. Paddy's academic insight into the political realm of how urban society works and his always stimulating thought and encouragement provided a large influence in the direction and completion of this research. Most notably, I thank Paddy for his early acceptance in acting as my Senior Supervisor and his continued dedication and support to my research interests--I am truly greatly indebted.

I also thank **Dr. Laurent Dobuzinskis** for acting as a Supervisor to this research. His readings and comments during the drafting of this thesis have been most helpful.

I wish also to thank **Dr. Warren Magnusson** for acting as my External Supervisor and for crossing a part of the Pacific Ocean on my behalf.

The Graduate Chair of the Department Of Political Science, **Dr. A.H. Somjee**, has always provided a strong motivating force to me: Dr. Somjee's interest in my academic interests and my future studies is most appreciated and I feel very fortunate to have studied under him.

Finally, I wish to thank my parents, **Allen and Judy Choy**, for their continued support in my university studies for something they never had a chance to undertake themselves.

A note of appreciation is given for financial support provided by the **Alan Boag Foundation Ltd. Writing Scholarship** and the **President's Research Grant And Stipend.**

CHAPTER I

Political Structure And Citizen Participation

Introduction

Many writers have dealt with the structural issues of local government centering on the machinery of urban bureaucracies and political administration just as many others have written about the shaping of urban policy through various urban political forces: how citizens can participate through the ballot box, form electoral coalitions and interest groups based on occupation, race, ethnicity, religion, business, labour and many others. Yet these works, for the most part, have been independent of each other and only reiterate the commonly assumed shibboleths (i.e. local government is grass roots government) about the political nature of the institution of local government.¹

¹ *See, for example, works by Graham, Katherine A. "Organizational Change In Urban Local Governments: A Perspective" in Occasional Papers No. 1 The Institute of Local Government Queen's University Kingston (April 1978); Plunkett, Thomas "Structural Reform Of Local Government In Canada" Public Administration Review 33 (January/February 1973): 40-52; Hickey, Paul "The Changing Structure Of Municipal Government In Canada" Canadian Chartered Accountant 8 (June 1971): 403-406; Dasgupta, Satadal Structure And Change In Atlantic Canada P.E.I. Community Studies Report No. 2 University Of P.E.I. Charlottetown (1975), and Lineberry, Robert L. and Fowler, Edmund P. "Reformism And Public Policies In American Cities" in Hofferbert, Richard I. and Sharkansky, Ira eds. State And

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Two recent and enlightening Canadian contributions that address the issue of structural/institutional change² and people's behaviour are C.R. Tindal's Structural Changes In Local Government: Government For Urban Regions³ and Matthew

Urban Politics Little, Brown And Co. Boston (1971): 231-260. This is with the exception of works presented by such scholars as Georges Langrod in "Local Government And Democracy" Public Administration 31 (Spring 1953): 25-33, Keith Panter-Brick in "Local Government And Democracy--A Rejoinder" Public Administration 31 (Winter 1953): 344-348, and Leo Moulin in "Local Self-Government As A Basis For Democracy: A Further Comment" Public Administration 32 (Winter 1954): 433-437 --all of whom have devoted lengthy articles debating the philosophical enigma of the "purpose" of local government as a basis for democracy. For our purposes, "political participation" is used interchangeably with other concepts such as "political change" and "political outcomes". See, for example, the discussion presented in Higgins, Donald J.H. The Changing Face Of City Politics In Canada, 1954-1985: Structural Determinants Of Political Change An Unpublished Paper Presented At The Canadian Urban Studies Conference University Of Winnipeg (August 15 1985) pages 2 and 4.

² *In regards to the relationship of political structure and political change, it is interesting to note Higgins' comment that "there is surprisingly sparse general literature on the causes (and consequences) of political change. Most of the existing literature seems to define political change as political 'modernization' or 'development', phrases which have normative connotations that I do not accept as either necessary or appropriate, unless one is a believer in the determinedly optimistic Victorian notion that 'every day in every way the world is getting better and better'; in other words, that all change is for the better. None of this literature provides much help in exploring linkages at any level of political life, especially the local one, between political or governmental structures on the one hand and their effects on political behaviour and outcomes." Higgins Op. cit. 4.

³ Tindal, C.R. Structural Changes In Local Government: Government For Urban Regions Monographs On Canadian Urban Government--No. 2 The Institute Of Public Administration Of Canada Toronto (1977).

J. Kiernan and David C. Walker's "Winnipeg" chapter in City Politics In Canada.⁴ Although both works focus on the City of Winnipeg and provide an assessment of the impact of its Unicity reforms on participation, the authors are in sharp contradiction with each other. Tindal, through his own model⁵ of assessing the relative success or failure of structural change in Winnipeg, makes the general conclusion that the Unicity experiment did, in fact, involve "major change". This stands in contrast with Kiernan and Walker's challenging claim⁶ that "radical reform of the organizational superstructure of local government has never really been attempted,"⁷ and that "contrary to conventional assumptions, the Winnipeg 'reform' experience can provide us

⁴ Kiernan, Mathew J. and Walker, David C. "Winnipeg" in Magnusson, Warren and Sancton, Andrew eds. City Politics In Canada University Of Toronto Press Toronto (1983): 222-255.

⁵ *See Tindal Op. cit. 2-4.

⁶ *Higgins goes as far as to suggest that both Tindal's and Kiernan and Walker's assessment of Unicity are based on their own personal perceptions of an ideal, rather than according to the architect/planners' implicit objectives. However, it should be noted that Higgins implies Kiernan and Walker's analysis as following along the lines of the "common neo-Marxist line of argument which holds that changes made to local politics in terms of conduct and/or structures are not significant because the key substantive issue remains unchanged and unresolved." Higgins Op. cit. 1.

⁷ Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 222.

with little empirical evidence on the efficacy of institutional reform."⁸ Kiernan and Walker are thus obviously sceptical about the impact of structural/institutional change.

This thesis is an attempt at resolving the different conclusions between Tindal and Kiernan and Walker by providing a further case study of Unicity Winnipeg. It is centered on resolving the following question:

Did structural change in Unicity bring about greater levels of participation?

A measure of political behaviour that relates to this question is the concept of "access" as defined by David M. Cameron:

By access we mean the most widespread participation possible on the part of all or virtually all individual citizens.⁹

⁸ Ibid. 234.

⁹ Cameron, David M. "Provincial Responsibilities For Municipal Government" Canadian Public Administration 23 (Summer 1980): 228. *This follows along the philosophical basis for municipal government as expressed by Kenneth G. Crawford's claim that "municipal government exists to carry out the wishes of a community." Crawford, Kenneth G. "Public Growth And Boundary Readjustments" Canadian Public Administration 3 (March 1960): 51-52.

This concept is especially relevant to this study largely because the original Unicity proposals found in the White Paper¹⁰ of late 1970 expressed a flourishing philosophical rhetoric on the importance of structural change, accessibility and citizen participation which stands out as, according to Higgins, "being by far the most explicit, comprehensive, and detailed statement of philosophical explanation of intent/objectives"¹¹ regarding citizen participation. No Canadian city¹² has initiated, de jure,

¹⁰ Manitoba. Provisional Plan For Local Government Organization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Local Boundaries Commission Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1970). *These concepts are also addressed in other Canadian studies such as Citizen Involvement: A Working Paper by the Committee Of Governmental Productivity Queen's Printer Toronto (1972) and Citizen Involvement In Public Policy-Making: Access And The Policy Making Process by the Canadian Council On Social Development Ottawa (1978).

¹¹ Higgins Op. cit. 11.

¹² *In contrast, there is a vast amount of literature that can be found concerning the "new citizen participation" programs in America. For example, some good insight can be made by a cursory examination of January/February 1969 and May/June 1972 articles in Public Administration Review. In addition, see: Carl W. Stenberg's "Citizens And The Administrative State: From Participation To Power" in Public Administration Review (May/June 1972): 190-198; Stenberg, Carl W. The New Grass Roots Government? Advisory Committee On Intergovernmental Relations Washington D.C. (1972); Martin, Roscoe C. Grass-Roots Harper & Row Publishers N.Y (1957); Almond, Gabriel A. and Verba, Sidney "The Obligation To Participate" in Larson, Calvin J. and Wasburn, Philco C. eds. Power, Participation And Ideology David McKay Co. Inc. N.Y. (1969): 218-232; Altshuler, Alan A. Community Control Pegasus N.Y. (1970); Biddle, William W. and Biddle, Lareide J. The Community Development Process Holt, Rinehart And Winston Inc. N.Y. (1965); Brokensha, David and Hodge, Peter Community Development: An Interpretation? Chandler

structural changes in their political architecture to accommodate citizen participation to the extent of Winnipeg's structural reforms.¹³ Initially heralded by

Publishing Co. San Francisco (1969); Turner, John B. "Citizen Self-Help Organizations: An Analysis" in Turner, John B. Neighborhood Organization For Community Action National Association For Social Workers N.Y. (1968): 3-25; Henry J. Schmandt's "Municipal Decentralization: An Overview" also in Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 571-589; Galaskiewicz, Joseph Exchange Networks And Community Politics Vol. 75 Sage Library Of Social Research Sage Publications Beverly Hills (1979); Hillman, Arthur and Seever, Frank "Elements Of Neighborhood Organization" in Cox, Fred M., Erlich, John L., Rothman, Jack and Tropman, John E. eds. Strategies Of Community Organization 2nd. ed. F.E. Peacock Publishers Inc. Itasca Ill. (1976): 254-269; Lazar, Irving "Which Citizens To Participate In What?" in Cahn, Edgar S. and Passet, Barry A. Citizen Participation: Effecting Community Change Praeger Publications N.Y. (1971): 2-110; Litwak, Eugene "An Approach To Linkage In 'Grass-Roots' Community Organization" in Cox et. al. Op. cit. 31-144; Steggert, Frank X. Community Action Groups And City Government: Perspectives From Ten American Cities Ballinger Publishing Co. Cambridge Mass. (1975); Boyte, Harry C. The Backyard Revolution: Understanding The New Citizen Movement Temple University Press Philadelphia PA (1980).

For Canadian references see Frisken, Frances J. and Homenuck, P.H. Peter M. Citizen Participation: Views And Alternatives: A Symposium York Urban Studies Program Toronto (1972); Chapin, Henry and Deneau, Dennis Citizen Involvement In Public Policy-Making Access And The Policy-Making Process Canadian Council On Social Development Ottawa Ont. (1978), and Donald J.H. Higgins' "Municipal Politics and Government: Development of the Field in Canadian Political Science" in Canadian Public Administration Review (Fall 1979): 390-401.

¹³ *Higgins claims, for example, that the creation of Unicity Winnipeg "was applauded as one of Canada's few real innovations in local government and this country's only conscious and serious attempt to redistribute local political power. Certainly there were no Canadian precedents for a Unicity-like structure, and only very loose connections can be made to any developments in Britain or the United States." Higgins Op. cit. 1.

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many as exceptionally innovative, the White Paper's creation of the community committees and the residential advisory groups proposed major changes in Winnipeg's government towards structurally decentralizing city government. These mechanisms were adopted to provide citizens with both greater access to grass-roots participation in their local government and a means for citizens to participate in the administrative control of local services much along the lines of Cameron's concepts.

What follows are five Chapters that address the issue of structural change, citizen participation and accessibility. Chapter One, defines the scope of this study and outlines the context and issues linked to local citizen participation. As an introduction, the important structural changes that have occurred as a result of urbanization, centralization and bureaucratization are outlined here. Since the concept of "participation" (i.e. participatory behaviour) is central to this thesis, Chapter Two provides a review of two major schools of participatory thought: the elitist and the participatory school. Each school presents various arguments that outline the theoretical significance of participation: its purpose, value and short-comings. In short, this Chapter provides a foundational set of arguments for analyzing the participatory success of Unicity's reforms. The purpose of Chapter Three is to outline the

historical development of Winnipeg's city government structures since its period of Metro government. Chapter Four provides an analysis of Unicity's success at structural change in stimulating participation. It is in this Chapter that the findings from a sample survey carried out in December of 1982 and the conclusions of earlier research on Unicity are applied in assessing the state of citizen participation in Unicity. Chapter Five provides a concluding comment on citizen participation and democratic political theory.

In summary, the attempt of this outline is to introduce and overview the theoretical issues related to the concept of citizen participation as a basis for analysis of Winnipeg's Unicity reforms towards increased citizen participation.

Urbanization And Centralization: Structural Trends Affecting Citizen Participation

Large scale growth of the great metropolis has witnessed the unrestricted expansion of the principal city, the gradual coalescence and immense growth of its suburbs and the rise of demands for costly municipal services. One parallel result of urbanization has been the overwhelming

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problem of developing democratic citizenship.¹⁴ Inkeles' states, for example, that the "larger cosmopolitan centers...may be particularly counter-productive so far as concerns the inculcation of good citizenship.... The city does not seem the place to learn participant citizenship, the big city least of all."¹⁵ Robert A. Dahl further adds that in simple terms, the "larger the unit, the larger the costs of uniform rules, the larger the minorities who cannot prevail, and the more watered down is the control of the individual citizen."¹⁶ Since decisions in large scale urban centres are likely to involve a greater number of competing interests, (i.e. as compared with smaller units), this immediately limits the numbers who can successfully participate, for, as Verba points out, "if one group is successful, the other is not; or if both groups are satisfied, it can only be partial satisfaction and partial

¹⁴ *Hill's definition of democratic citizenship is used here. It centres on two problems: "one is that of accountability and the related question of access to government and governors. Individuals must be able, in order to hold their representatives to account, to find out what they are doing. They must also be able to have their demands heard before final decisions are made." Hill, Dilys M. Democratic Theory And Local Government George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London (1974): 221.

¹⁵ Inkeles, A. "Citizen Participation In Six Developing Countries" American Political Science Review 63 (1969): 28.

¹⁶ Dahl, Robert A. "The City In The Future Of Democracy" American Political Science Review 61 4 (December 1967): 959.

success. Scale, therefore puts severe limits on the amount of successful participation."¹⁷

This pattern of growth, common to many cities and local governments, is significant in that there often exists a gap in the establishment of new structures to accommodate citizen participation outside the ballot box.¹⁸ Modern cities contrast with the previous era's villages and towns in which, proportionately, a greater number of citizens

¹⁷ Verba, Sidney "Democratic Development As A Process" in Gross, Bertram M. Social Intelligence For America's Future Allyn And Bacon Inc. Boston (1969): 53. *Hill, basing his argument on his concept of "fraternity", claims that "Fraternity is best achieved in small communities among people with similar interests and values." Hill Op. cit. 221.

¹⁸ *For a Canadian comment, see Grayson, J. Paul Citizen Participation In Urban Planning: The Guelph Alternative Ministry Of Housing Publications Local Government Planning Branch Ottawa (1975): 105-106. Hormell, in his comparative work on the prehistoric peoples of India, Africa and elsewhere, claims this has historically been the case.

He points out that:

[M]ost evidence of palaeolithic and neolithic ages...points to domination of human activity by the past and few. Excavations of some early western villages reveal a single house larger than the others, suggesting the residence of an 'elite village person'. In addition, the development of Egyptian and Sumarian documents around 3000 B.C. gives evidence of pharaohs and priest stewards who, with purported divine support, held sway over the masses of people.

Hormell, Orren C. "Popular Assemblies" in Encyclopedia Of The Social Sciences (1972): 44.

often participated in governmental affairs. Indeed, it would be entertaining--although perhaps in fantasy only--if a rebirth of small-scale Stephen Leacock's "Golden Age" of Mariposa could be replicated in the modern metropolis. Political life, at least in this scenario, would certainly bring out in many a nostalgic feeling of "community life".¹⁹

Yet, however much one may romanticize social-political life of the past, it is generally accepted that, as Desmond Morton claims, "it is highly improbable, in spite of all the fantasies of social engineers, that the process of urbanization can be reversed."²⁰ With urbanization, the increasing complexity of local government administration has

¹⁹ *Indeed, it is often noted by romantics that having a voice in the decision-making of the community's affairs, the paying of welfare through the Community Chest and the carrying out of one's own garbage to the town dump, and the like, do have their good points. See, for example, Leacock, Stephen Butler Sunshine Sketches Of A Little Town McClelland & Stewart Toronto (1948). Interesting points against a return to small units of societal organization (i.e. the tribe and parish) can be found in Dahl Op. cit. "The City In The Future Of Democracy"; Miner, Horace St. Denis, A French Canadian Parish University Of Chicago Pheonix Books Chicago (1939) especially on pages 58 to 61; Kristol, Irving "Decentralization For What?" Public Interest (Spring 1968): 17-25; Gittell, Marilyn Limits To Citizen Participation Sage Publications Beverly Hills (1980), and Burns, R.M. "Government In An Urban Society" Canadian Public Administration (Fall 1971) pages 415 to 425.

²⁰ Morton, Desmond "Responsibility Or Trusteeship?" Canadian Forum 52 (May 1972): 24.

required bureaucratic structures that are technical in nature--often with the exclusion of citizen participation and involvement. This perception has especially become evident as municipal services become public services, performed by public personnel, paid through public tax dollars and supposedly responsible to publicly elected officials.²¹ How, for example, would Ancient Greece's city-state cope with the problems that face modern cities? The problems of transportation, air and water pollution,

²¹ *The "monopolization" of public services by urban government administrations provides an interesting discussion which borders the economic theories of public goods and the merits of public-service bureaucracies. Some prominent works that discuss this issue are by: Sayre, Wallace and Kaufman, Herbert Governing New York City Russell Sage N.Y. (1963); Savas, E.S. "Municipal Monopoly" Harper's Magazine (December 1971): 55; Hirschman, Albert O. Exit, Voice And Loyalty: Responses To Decline In Firms, Organizations, And States Harvard University Press Cambridge Mass. (1970); Marsden, Peter V. and Laumann, Edward O. "Collective Action In A Community Elite: Influence Resources And Issue Resolution" in Liebert, Roland J. and Imershein, Allen W. eds. Power, Paradigms, And Community Research Sage Studies In International Sociology Beverly Hills (1977): 199-251; Williams, Oliver P. and Adrian, Charles Four Cities University Of Pennsylvania Press Philadelphia PA (1963); Bennis, Edward ed. Municipal Monopolies: A Collection Of Papers By Eminent Economists And Specialists Crowell N.Y. (1899); Alford, Robert R. and Coble, Harry M. Bureaucracy And Participation Rand McNally & Co. Chicago (1969); Cockburn, Cynthia The Local State: Management Of Cities And People Pluto Press London (1977), and Whyte, William The Organization Man Simon & Schuster N.Y. (1960). See also discussions on public choice in Mueller, Dennis C. Public Choice Cambridge University Press (1979); Russell, Clifford S. and Nichols, Namark eds. U.S. Agency For International Development Public Choice And Rural Development: The Proceedings Of A Conference Resources For The Future Inc. Washington D.C. (1979), and Bish, Robert L. The Political Economy Of Metropolitan Areas Markham Publishers Co. Chicago (1971).

inequality and many others not only extend beyond its boundaries but are also of such immensity that the small democratic city-state could not possibly efficiently solve them. As Dahl points out, "you forget that the world of the 21st century is not Ancient Greece...; the trouble with the small city in the modern world is that there are too many problems it cannot cope with because they go beyond its boundaries."²² Similarly, it would be a bit of a peculiarity if modern civic political actors focused much of their political wizardry on matters such as the "cutting [sic.] or carrying away any wood of any part of the town's commons," or insuring that "all swine be sufficiently yoked and ringed,"²³ as they once did in the fabled medieval town meeting.

In short, there is no turning back. This fact has particularly faced many advocates for participatory democracy and social observers since the Industrial

²² Dahl Op. cit. "The City In The Future Of Democracy" 958. *See also Newton, K. Is Small Really So Beautiful: Is Big Really So Ugly? Studies In Public Policy No. 18 University Of Strathclyde Glasgow (1979).

²³ Cunningham, James V. "Citizen Participation In Public Affairs" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 591. *This is still required in Essex. See the Records Of Ye Towne Meetings Of Lynn 1691-1701/2 Lynn Historical Society Lynn Mass. (1949).

Revolution.²⁴ Tocqueville, for example, foreshadowed in the 1800s that a "highly civilized community can hardly tolerate a local independence, is disgusted with its numerous blunders, and is apt to despair of success before the experiment is completed."²⁵ More recently, without the philosophical fervour of a Tocqueville, advocate planners²⁶ have suggested that, since the Industrial

²⁴ *See especially Magnusson, Warren "Community Organization And Local Self-Government" in Feldman, Lionel D. ed. Politics And Government Of Urban Canada Methuen Publications Toronto (1981): 61-87 and Magnusson, Warren "The Development Of Canadian Urban Government" in Magnusson and Sancton Op. cit. pages 3 to 58.

²⁵ Tocqueville, Alexis de "Political Consequences of Decentralized Administration" in Williams, Oliver P. and Press, Charles eds. Democracy in Urban America Rand McNally & Co. Chicago (1966): 77.

²⁶ *The concept of advocate planning is often associated with citizen involvement in planning. Advocate planners commonly argue for public participation as a means of learning about public preferences, informing people and generating support for policy implementation. See, for example: Sewell, W.R. Derrick and Coppock, J.T. Public Participation In Planning Wiley N.Y. (1977); Kasperson, Roger and Breitbart, Myrna Participation, Decentralization And Advocacy Planning Association of American Geographers Washington D.C. (1978); Breitbart, Myrna and Peet, Richard "A Critique Of Advocacy Planning" in Ley, David ed. Community Participation And The Spatial Order Of The City B.C. Geographical Series No. 19 Tantalus Research Ltd. Vancouver (1973); Heskin, Allan "Crisis And Response: A Historical View On Advocacy Planning" Journal Of The American Planning Association 46 (January 1980): 50-63; Karnig, Albert K. "Planning And The Search For Answers" Urban Affairs Quarterly 15 (September 1979): 101-110; Lovrich, Nicholas P. Jr. and Taylor, G. Thomas Jr. "Neighborhood Evaluation Of Local Government Services: A Citizen Survey Approach" Urban Affairs Quarterly 12 (December 1976): 197-222; Gilbert, Neil "The Design Of Community Planning Structures" Social Sciences Review 53 4

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Revolution, citizen impact in the planning and development of his/her "total life-space"²⁷ has fallen seriously short of a "truly successful participatory model".²⁸ For one, urban governments, organized to solve the "brick and mortar"²⁹ problems of expanding cities, have often left out alternative avenues for citizen access and participation in their goal of attaining the "city efficient". Given the

(December 1979): 644-654; Graves, Clifford W. "Citizen Participation In Metropolitan Planning" Public Administration Review 32 (May/June 1972): 198-199; Hyman, Herbert H. "Planning With Citizens: Two Styles" Journal Of The American Institute Of Planners (March 1969): 105-113; White, Louis G. "Approaches To Land Use Policy" Journal Of The American Planning Association 45 (January 1979): 62-71; Ranney, David C. Planning And Politics In The Metropolis Merrill Columbus Ohio (1969); Davidoff, Paul "Advocacy And Pluralism In Planning" Journal Of The American Institute of Planning 31 (November 1965): 332; Tabb, William K. and Sawers, Larry Marxism And The Metropolis: New Perspectives In Political Economy Oxford University Press N.Y. (1978); Grosser, Charles F. New Directions In Community Organization Holt, Rinehart & Winston Of Canada Ltd. Toronto (1976), and David, Stephen M. and Peterson, Paul E. Urban Politics And Public Policy: The City In Crisis 2nd. ed. Holt, Rinehart & Winston Of Canada Ltd. Toronto (1976).

²⁷ Krueger, Ralph R. "Community Planning And Local Government" Community Planning Review 18 17 (Winter 1968): 14.

²⁸ *For an introductory discussion on participatory models, see especially White, Louis G. "Rational Theories of Participation: An Exercise In Definition" Journal Of Conflict Resolution 20 (June 1976): 255-278 and Redburn, Stevens F. "On Human Service Integration" Public Administration Review 37 (May/June 1977): 264-269.

²⁹ *From Herbert, Adam W. "Management Under Conditions Of Decentralization And Citizen Participation" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 622-638.

above, many advocates for citizen participation have argued for modifications in the structure of local governments towards stimulating citizen participation. They further add that this is essential since the demise of such earlier institutions as the all-encompassing community, church, and extended family has not necessarily meant that concurring accommodative structures for instituting citizen input and promoting citizen access into the local governmental process have been found.³⁰

Floyd Hunter's early study of Atlanta, Georgia provides a classic example for illustrating this point. After applying his methodology³¹ for finding the "reputational

³⁰ *In modern times it is often the case that the replacement of the robber baron, resident leaders and leading families by a withdrawn managerial elite has left vacant positions in the local structure. In general, this "managerial elite has been neither willing nor able to fill these positions except in a ritualistic fashion that seems transparently the product of company public relations rather than a personal community commitment and identification." Long, Norton E. "The Corporation, The Satellites And The Local Community" in Williams and Press Op. cit. 60.

³¹ *Hunter's methodology has often been criticized by the pluralist school. See, for example: Preston, James D. "Identification Of Community Leaders" Sociology And Social Research 53 (June 1969): 204-216; Dahl, Robert Who Governs? Yale University Press New Haven (1961); Polsby, Nelson W. Community Power And Political Theory 2nd. ed. Yale University Press New Haven (1980); Anton, Thomas "Power, Pluralism, And Local Politics" Administrative Science Quarterly 7 (March 1963): 425-457; Kelso, William A. American Democratic Theory: Pluralism And Its Critics Greenwood Press Westport Conn. (1979); Jennings, Kent Community Influentials: The Elites Of Atlanta Free Press N.Y. (1964); Salisbury, Robert "The New Convergence Of

leaders" of Atlanta--those who were identified by informants as consistently occupying top leadership positions in the community power structure--he was led to conclude that "the dominant factor in political life is the personnel of economic interests...and their tie-in with the other powerful institutions and organizations of the community make government subservient to the interests of these combined groups. The government departments and their personnel are acutely aware of the power of key individuals and combinations of citizens' groups in the policy-making realm, and they are loath to act before consulting and 'clearing' with these interests."³²

Power" Journal Of Politics 26 (November 1964): 775-797; Rossi, Peter H. "Power And Community Structure" in Clark, Terry N. Community Structure And Decision-Making: Comparative Analysis Chandler Publishing Co. San Francisco (1968); Freeman, Linton Metropolitan Decision-Making University College Syracuse (1962); D'Antonio, William V., Erlich, Howard J. and Erickson, Eugene C. "Further Notes On The Study Of Community Power" American Sociological Review 27 (February 1962): 848-855; Clark, Terry N. "The Structure Of Community Influence" in Hahn, Harlan ed. People and Politics In Urban Society Vol. VI Urban Affairs Annual Reviews Sage Publications Beverly Hills (1972); Wachtel, Dawn Day "Structures Of Community And Strategies For Organization" in Cox et. al. Op. cit. 77-183, and Domhoff, G. William Who Really Rules? New Haven And Community Power Reexamined Transaction Books New Brunswick N.J. (1978). It should be noted that Domhoff's study supports the findings of Hunter and counters the pluralists' findings.

³² Hunter, Floyd Community Power Structure Chapel Hill University of North Carolina Press (1953): 100-101. *There are many other examples to further illustrate the impact of economic elites. Three often-highlighted American examples can be found in the activities of Eric Jonsson as the Mayor of Dallas, United States Steel in its efforts to resist pollution control in the city of Gary and the State of

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Moreover, the consensual paradigm of the reformist theory of urban governance³³ has been described by some writers as a major factor in further hindering attempts at local citizen participation. Richard Cole states, for example, that within this paradigm "urban officials, administrators, and many urban scholars for the past several decades have advocated a long list of reforms--including the centralization of authority, reduction in the number of governmental units, and at-large elections--all designed to promote the values of economy, efficiency, and professionalism."³⁴ These reforms have effectively made

Indiana and Henry J. Ford Jr. who chaired an organization to construct the Renaissance Center in Detroit. See, for example, Shefter, Martin "The Emergence Of The Political Machine: An Alternative View" in Hawley, Willis D. and Lipsky, Michael eds. Theoretical Perspectives On Urban Politics Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1976): 4-45, and Madgwick, P.J. American City Politics Rutledge & Kegan Paul London (1970).

³³ *See, for example, Masotti, Louis H. and Lineberry, Robert L. The New Urban Politics Ballinger Cambridge Mass. (1976): 2-4 for an in-depth discussion of paradigms and urban studies.

³⁴ Cole, Richard L. Citizen Participation And The Urban Policy Process Lexington Books D.C. Heath & Co. Lexington Mass. (1974): 8. *See also Fried, Robert C. and Rabinovitz, Francine F. Comparative Urban Politics: A Performance Approach Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1980) especially on page 112; Lowenstein, Edward R. "Citizen Participation And The Administrative Agency In Urban Development: Some Problems And Proposals" Social Science Review 45 (September 1972): 289-301; Katznelson, Ira "Antagonistic Ambiguity: Notes On Reformism And Society" Politics And Society 2 (Spring 1972): 323-335 especially on pages 328 and 333, and Cullingworth, J.B. Town And Country Planning In England And Wales: The Changing Scene 3rd. ed.

community ties dispensable as individuals become increasingly dependent upon the centralized authorities in almost all areas of their life.³⁵

In short, the spread of professionalism and bureaucratization has had the consequence of making local government remote from the people it seeks to serve. Bureaucracies have been accused of taking a solely elitist perspective of participation on making decisions and providing services which may well differ from those of individual citizens. Ray Walker and Roy Darke, for example, note that "professionals, not least town planning, tend toward a scientific or technical ideology which is expressed in terms of believing in value-free advice and in the

George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London (1970).

³⁵ *See especially Hess, Karl and Morris, David Neighborhood Power: The New Localism Beacon Press Boston (1975); Marsden and Laumann Op. cit. 199-251; Downs, Bryan T. Politics, Change And The Urban Crisis Duxbury Press North Scituate Mass. (1976); Barton, Allen H. et. al. Decentralizing City Government Lexington Books Lexington Mass. (1977); Spiegel, Hans B.C. Citizen Participation In Urban Development: Vol. I--Concepts And Issues NTL Institute For Applied Behavioral Science Washington D.C. (1968); Scott, William G. and Mitchell, Terrence C. Organizational Theory: A Structural And Behavioral Analysis rev. ed. Irwin-Dorsey Homewood Ill. (1972); Dunleavy, Patrick Urban Political Analysis: The Politics American Institute Of Planners Journal Macmillan Press Ltd. London (1980), and Sneed, Joseph D. and Waldorn, Stephen A. eds. Approaches To Accountability In Post-Categorical Programs Stanford Research Institute Menlo Park n.d. for further elaboration on this phenomenon.

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arrogant assumption of full knowledge of public preferences."³⁶ The value of participation to the bureaucracy becomes a legitimating device, aimed at securing support for those in authority. For example, although citizens can be found to participate in proposal campaigns, public meetings and surveys, and leave the public feeling it has made a contribution, decision makers often do as they like. "Channels of influence viewed from below are often no more than channels of support when viewed from above."³⁷ Often the end result, as Guskin and Ross note, is a situation where "passive acquiescence serves as consent for many whose basic interests are more or less served; apathy or frustrated rage (its near relative) is the response of those who do not comprehend the processes and who feel their own interests are excluded from the process of tacit consent."³⁸ In short, citizens feel excluded from the process of decision-making as decisions are made for them rather than with them. Stenberg, for example, claims

³⁶ Walker, Ray and Darke, Roy "Means Of Participation In Local Government" in Darke, Roy and Walker, Ray eds. Local Government And The Public Leonard Hill London (1977): 94.

³⁷ Boaden, Noel, Goldsmith, Micheal, Hampton, William and Stringer, Peter Public Participation In Local Services Longman London (1982): 170.

³⁸ Guskin, Alan E. and Ross, Robert "Advocacy And Democracy: The Long View" in Cox et. al. Op. cit. 341.

bureaucracies have viewed citizen participation as "antithetical to much of public administration and practice."³⁹ A concomitant "centralized prestige" composed of the middle class values of the bureaucrats, the merit system, and the traditional principles of hierarchy and professionalism has thus evolved in North American administrative thought. This "ethos"⁴⁰ of "efficiency, impartiality, honest planning, strong executives, no favouritism, model legal codes, and strict enforcement of laws"⁴¹ has, for the most part, geared the process of urban policy formulation to exclude the citizenry. Shrouded in a degree of expertise and specialization beyond the understanding of the lay public (and even elected officials), bureaucracies are often accused of being too formal in their administrative tasks, high handed in their operations, insensitive to human feelings, unresponsive to

³⁹ Stenberg Op. cit. "Citizen And The Administrative State: From Participation To Power" 191.

⁴⁰ Banfield, Edward C. and Wilson, James Q. "Power Structure And Civic Leadership" in Cox et. al. Op. cit. 107-117. *See also, Banfield, Edward C. and Wilson, James Q. "Politics, Planning, And The Public Interest" in Ibid. 307-321, and Banfield, Edward C. "The Traditional System--Pro Or Otherwise" in Burkhart, James A. and Kendrick, Frank J. The New Politics: Mood Or Movement Englewood Cliffs N.J. Prentice-Hall Inc. (1969): 8-10.

⁴¹ Ibid. 111.

citizen needs and highly resistant to change.⁴² Lithwick and Paquet note, for example, that: "no senior bureaucrat will willingly relinquish power.... [E]ffectiveness demands that he build up a loyal cadre of followers,"⁴³ with the result that "the whole bureaucracy will reject any attempt from the outside to influence its priorities."⁴⁴ De Cocq's comparative study of citizen participation in developing countries echoes a similar conclusion that "in many agencies and institutions...professional social workers were unable to communicate with people who did not subscribe to their own middle-class values, and were, therefore, not really able to help."⁴⁵

⁴² *See especially Chapters 14 to 19 in Downes, Anthony Inside Bureaucracy Little And Brown Boston (1967), Lowi, Theodore J. "Machine Politics--Old And New" The Public Interest 9 (Fall 1967): 83-92 and Long, Norton E. "The Corporation, The Satellites And The Local Community" in Williams and Press Op. cit. 367-382.

⁴³ Lithwick and Paquet Op. cit. 580.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ *See, for example, works written by De Cocq, Gustave A. Citizen Participation: Doomed To Extinction Or Last Foothold Of Democracy A.W. Sijthoff-Leyden London (1969): 247-248; Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton Power And Poverty Oxford University Press (1970); Bachrach, Peter and Baratz, Morton "The Two Faces Of Power" American Political Science Review 56 (December 1962): 947-952, and Debnam, Geoffrey "The Two Faces Of Bachrach And Baratz" American Political Science Review 69 (September 1975): 889-899.

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An element of this bureaucratic ideology is linked in the bureaucratic control of information. Through this action, government agencies are able to limit the success of citizen impact on their (i.e. the local government's) programs.⁴⁶ "In this regard they enjoy powerful control over the means of access to decisions about public services and can screen out contributions after they have been made."⁴⁷ Certainly, this perspective has negative consequences on citizen participation. If the transferal of information between the citizen and his/her government is not complete, or satisfactory enough for the development of a productive and symmetrical dialogue, the individual is faced with negative political consequences. He is only conferring and withdrawing his/her deposits of political trust in a political and ideological vacuum. As Krefetz and Goodman state, "for if the citizen participants are not having any real influence on the policies and decisions made, it is unlikely that the policies will be responsive to them or that it increases in them self-confidence and a

⁴⁶ *Boaden et. al. make the argument that exchanging information between the government and the public is one sense in which the term public participation can be used. They suggest that "involved here are the ideas of publicizing governmental proposals, of telling people what a local authority is doing or might do, and generally making such widely available: this is essentially the publicity of government." Boaden et. al. Op. cit. 12.

⁴⁷ Ibid. 171.

sense of efficacy...."⁴⁸ This especially applies to local government, where historically communication between the local governing institutions and the public has been hindered by deliberations behind tightly closed doors and the marking of a large majority of documents as "confidential". Ferres, for example, concludes that:

The reasons for this secretive attitude towards arriving at issues, which is characteristic of local rather than central government seem largely mysterious. One is forced back sometimes to fall back on the view that there is a kind of 'secret society' attitude operating in town and country halls, particularly among elected members. Those 'in the know' like to keep their knowledge exclusive largely for reasons of personal gratification: it gives them a sense of power and status that little else in local government confers.⁴⁹

As urbanization, centralization and the importance of technocracy take place, the urban administration and the leadership elites have necessarily established means to contain information.⁵⁰ This control becomes part of the

⁴⁸ Krefetz, Sharon Pearlman and Goodman, Allan E. "Participation For What Or For Whom?" Journal Of Comparative Administration 5 3 (November 1973): 373.

⁴⁹ Ferres, Peter "Improving Communications For Local Political Issues" in eds. Darke and Walker Op. cit. 166.

⁵⁰ *Theorists and researchers such as Edgar Streeter Dunn in Economic And Social Development: Process Of Social Learning Johns Hopkins Press Baltimore (1971) and Dunn, Edgar Streeter An Introduction To The Sociology Of Education Rutledge & Kegan Paul (1962), and Karl Mannheim in Essays On

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means to develop a power base that excludes citizen input. As Taebel neatly states from his transportation and policy study, "in a complex, technological society, experts move to positions of preeminence in policy-making."⁵¹

The tactics used to implement this strategy can be considered manipulative⁵² in the sense that they create only the illusion that citizens and the administrative agency are engaging in a meaningful exchange of ideas and influence.

Sociology And Social Psychology Oxford University Press N.Y. (1953), and Amitai Etzioni in Modern Organizations Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1964), have generally agreed that in the planning of the urban living environment information to the citizen is of major importance since "citizens are intimately involved with some parts of the environment, they must continually note--if not adapt to--changes occurring around them. In this case the citizen's input to the planning process can take the form of providing wholly new information categories or it can serve to update information already stored in the planning system." Smith, Richard Warren "A Theoretical Basis For Participatory Planning" Policy Sciences 4 3 (September 1973): 281, 282.

⁵¹ Taebel, Delbert A. "Citizen Groups, Public Policy, And Urban Transportation" Traffic Quarterly 27 4 (October 1973): 509.

⁵² *See Gittell, Marilyn Limits To Citizen Participation Sage Publications Beverly Hills (1980) especially on pages 41 to 42.

Concepts such as "pseudo-participation",⁵³ "controlled manipulation",⁵⁴ "conditioning and symbolic bedazzlement"⁵⁵ and "ideological hegemony"⁵⁶ are common theoretical labels attached to elitist-bureaucratic manipulation. Also, public agencies may simply limit and screen information through the news media, pamphlets, posters, and meetings.⁵⁷

⁵³ Hain, Peter Neighborhood Participation Temple Smith London (1980): 21. *See also, Hain, Peter "Neighborhood Councils: The Attitudes Of Central Authorities" Community Development Journal 1 1 (January 1976): 2-9.

⁵⁴ Montgomery, J. "Allocation Of Authority In Land Reform Programs: A Comparative Study Of Administrative Processes And Outputs" Administrative Science 17 (March 1972): 62-75. *This concept is also used by Krefetz Op. cit. and Lowenstein Op. cit..

⁵⁵ Saunders, Marion K. The Professional Radical: Conversations With Saul Alinsky Harper & Row Publishers N.Y. (1970).

⁵⁶ Ibid. *See also Andrews, Lewis and Karlin, Marvin Requiem For Democracy? Holt, Rinehart & Winston Of Canada Ltd. Toronto (1971) on the concept of "psytocracy".

⁵⁷ *See, for example, Alan Howard's study on planning processes entitled "The Great Participation Fallacy", which defines the centralized manipulation of citizen entry and information dispersal into a number of concept-labels such as: "Act Now, Argue Later"; "Divide and Rule"; "The Bogus Choice"; "Marksmanship"; "Stone Wallmanship"; "Passing the Buckmanship"; "Confusism Long"; "Nice Chapmanship"; "The Cotton-wool Wall"; "'Go Away, You Rude Little Boy'", and "I'm Only Trying to Help". Howard, Alan "The Great Participation Fallacy" The Planner (September 1976): 51. Also, see Bramhall, Billie "Planners Advocate For Communities Within Planning Department" Planners Notebook 3 (June 1974): 1-3, and Needleman, Martin L. and Needleman,

In summary, the above purports that urban bureaucracies have developed with the growth of modern cities into a paradigm or "ethos" of closed centralistic political machinery. This paradigm, based on reformist attitudes towards efficiency and professionalism is held to be contributory to neglected citizen input into the urban decision-making process. Given this contention, this thesis attempts to evaluate Winnipeg's Unicity structure in providing viable avenues for citizens to participate in local government.

The Political Culture Of Citizen Participation

In addition to condemning bureaucracies for shunning citizen involvement in local affairs, it is also contended that citizens themselves lack interest and motivation to participate. Numerous researchers have summed up their studies, for example, on the sad remark that the average North American citizen is simply not motivated enough to "really" participate at the level his/her fullest potential; instead, they have become the "nonparticipatory and sloth"⁵⁸ of political decision-making. Cary's extensive

Carolyn Emerson Guerrillas In The Bureaucracy John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1974).

⁵⁸ Hart, David K. "Theories Of Government Related To Decentralization And Citizen Participation" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 616.

study of Syracuse, for example, led him to make the conclusion that "the extensive involvement of the citizens may be a value assumption without basis in reality. It certainly indicates that the establishment and maintenance of a wide base of community participation is not easily achieved, if at all possible."⁵⁹ The authors of Voting claimed that the behaviours and attitudes of the subjects included in their survey "fell far short of the democratic ideal at almost every instance,"⁶⁰ and that a great number of people were "lacking in political motivation, interest, and knowledge."⁶¹ Similarly, in Who Governs? Dahl makes the general observation that "typically as a source of direct gratifications, political activity will appear to homo civicus less attractive than a host of other activities; and as a strategy to achieve his[/her] gratifications indirectly, political action will seem considerably less efficient than working at his[/her] job, earning more money, taking out insurance, joining a club,

⁵⁹ Cary Op. cit. Community Development As A Process 152.

⁶⁰ Riedel, James A. "Citizen Participation: Myths And Realities" in Berelson, Bernard, Lazarsfeld, Paul F. and McPhee, William N. Voting University Of Chicago Press Chicago (1948) 307.

⁶¹ Ibid.

planning a vacation, moving to another neighborhood or city, or coping with an uncertain future in manifold other ways."⁶² Again, in James A. Riedel's study appropriately entitled "Citizen Participation: Myths and Realities" the familiar conclusion was made that:

1. Even under the best of conditions, most people tend to avoid participation and involvement.
2. Most individuals are activated only by single issues and are turned off by coalitions.
3. Localizing control does not necessarily mean increased participation. [A]ccustomed to being static and receptive...they are not daring, but long for security. They do not know how to co-operate and how to pool risks and sacrifices for a common goal. They do not meet much. They do not organize.⁶³

The central conclusion that these studies came to was the revelation that most people do not want to become involved in public-policy formation beyond the very impersonal (secret) act of voting. Citizen activities at participation outside of the arena of electoral politics have been for the most part--uncommon. Maurice Stein's The Eclipse of Community stresses this point. He came to the conclusion that:

Study after study has underscored the contrast

⁶² Dahl Op. cit. Who Governs? 224.

⁶³ Riedel Op. cit. 307.

between the high proportions of voters and the very low proportions of politically concerned and alert citizens within the mass electorate; on the one hand a large majority of only-voters, of citizens who turn up at their polling stations but show very little articulate concern about the issues of politics, only rudimentary knowledge of the alternatives, and no willingness to take an active part in the conflict between the parties, and on the other hand a small majority of active participants in the political system of articulate and informed citizens motivated to act and take a stand.⁶⁴

There are, of course, exceptions to the above. When bulldozers arrive to begin tearing down housing for a highway development project local citizens have little difficulty in forming an immediate political collectivity for articulating their general mood.⁶⁵ An endless set of

⁶⁴ Stein, Maurice The Eclipse Of Community Princeton University Press Princeton N.J. (1960).

⁶⁵ *A good discussion of protest activity philosophy, strategy and tactics can be found in Alinsky, Saul D. Reveille For Radicals University Of Chicago Press Chicago (1945); Alinsky, Saul D. Rules For Radicals: A Practical Primer For Realistic Radicals Random House N.Y. (1971); Elliot, Brian A. and McCrone, David The City: Patterns Of Domination And Conflict St. Martin's Press London (1982); Bay, Christian and Walker, Charles C. Civil Disobedience: Theory And Practice Black Rose Books Montreal (1975); Bondurvant, Joan V. Conflict: Violence And Nonviolence Aldine Atherton Chicago (1971) especially Chapter Three by Rucker, Darnell entitled "The Moral Ground Of Civil Disobedience" 62-73; Kent, Edward Revolution And The Rule Of Law Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1971) especially the Chapter by Rawls, John entitled "The Justification Of Civil Disobedience" 30-46; Tilly, Charles From Mobilization To Revolution Addison-Wesley Pub. Co. Reading Mass. (1978), and Zashin, Elliot M. Civil Disobedience And Democracy Free Press N.Y. (1972).

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examples can be used to illustrate the sudden interest of citizens in actively working together in union with each other against a formidable opponent.⁶⁶ Yet, these forms of citizen participation are basically protest and "conflict"⁶⁷ actions "usually both spontaneous and limited--spontaneous because it relies on the appearance of burning issues that immediately jolt residents into action, limited because only a few problems develop in this way."⁶⁸ If there is no cause for immediacy, citizens will remain content to allow things to go on as they are and to delegate responsibility for managing political affairs to whom they elect, thus relieving themselves of an excessive concern with political matters. As Hain states, "when dogs do not bark it is most likely because nothing has happened to provoke them."⁶⁹

In summary, the significance of the above to this thesis is the conceivable realization that structural

⁶⁶*A Canadian example can be found in Graham Fraser's Fighting Back: Urban Renewal In Trefann Court Hakkert Toronto (1972).

⁶⁷ Hain Op. cit. 20.

⁶⁸ Yates, Douglas "Political Innovation And Institution Building: The Experience of Decentralization Experiments" in Hawley and Lipsky Op. cit. 171.

⁶⁹ Hain Op. cit. 25.

changes to political organizations which provide avenues for citizens to participate do not necessarily bring about greater participation. The political culture of citizen participation as outlined above suggests, instead, that citizens will only participate when an acute immediate concern stimulates them to.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the above presentation has outlined the important structural changes that have occurred in urban government and the significant participatory characteristics of the prevailing political culture. Notably, large scale growth of the metropolis, the absence of new avenues to accommodate citizen participation, and the growth and centralization of city bureaucracy have had a negative effect on citizen participation. In addition, a review of the current political culture suggests that citizens are not highly motivated to participate in local government, but rather are loathe to get involved in political activities outside of the ballot box. Given the above, the central question is the following: can structural change secure increased citizen participation? The next Chapter provides an outline of the major theoretical arguments related to this question.

CHAPTER II

Two Schools of Democratic Participatory Theory

Introduction

This Chapter is a review of the major premises put forward by the "participationists" and the "elitists".¹ What follows is a sifting of the significant components of the concept of "citizen participation" that can constitute a

¹ *Although the pluralist school is also considered a "school" of democracy, its theories are often characterized as those which view the basic elements of society as groups rather than as individuals and, though recognized, is not considered in this presentation. Holden states, for example, that:

[T]hese elements are numerous and in an important sense autonomous. Pluralism shares some of the features of both individualism and collectivism. There is, broadly speaking, a division in political philosophy (and in political thought generally) between 'individualist' and 'collectivist' views of the structure of society. The former sees society as constituted by discrete and self-sufficient individuals and the nature of the society as derived from the characteristics of the individuals. The latter--which has affinities with ancient Greek political thought--points to the fact that individuals are born into an on-going society and that its customs, culture, etc. (indeed, the society itself), have a reality of their own. There is a corresponding emphasis on the extent to which the character of an individual is derived from the society--its customs, culture, etc..

Holden, Barry The Nature Of Democracy Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. London (1974): 59.

"measuring stick" or "indicator" of participatory "success" in relation to political structure, political culture and citizen participation.

Participatory Democracy

Introduction

The tenets of participatory democracy include a wide range of arguments that stem from the most fundamental claim for increased citizen participation in the affairs of government.² In much of the contemporary literature on citizen participation, these tenets of participatory democracy are steadfastly held and promoted by many. Herbert R. Balls claims, for example that "our society has opted for more humanistic and democratic values, however unfulfilled they may be in practice."³ Although it has often been impugned in modern democratic-elitist regimes as unrealistic and inefficient and utopian--even dangerous to the governments of the day--it has never fell into abeyance.

² *See, for example, Ruffman, Linda Christiansen Models, Ideologies And Counterideologies Of Citizen Participation A Paper Presented At The 16th Annual Meeting Of The Canadian Sociology And Anthropology Association (May 29-30 1981).

³ Balls, Herbert R. "Change Is The Only Constant" Optimum 54 (1974): 5-16.

Instead, participationists have resolutely sought to create a "human Weltanschung in which everyone of us cooperates and participates"⁴ and to "encourage the development of social and political systems in which the individual can have a significant voice in shaping the governance of the community in which he lives."⁵ As John R. Seely contends, there is a general concern that "as many people as possible should be 'involved'--ideally 'all the people'--[which] runs like a thread thick and strong through much of the social work fabric, and participation [therefore] is the desire to 'get everybody in' so it will be 'democratic', i.e. from this viewpoint, right."⁶

Without doubt, fundamental participationist claims such as "public participation offers the promise of 'more power to the people', of a greater say for the individual citizen in the decision making process,"⁷ operate within the

⁴ Chardin, Pierre de The Phenomenon Of Man Harper & Row N.Y. (1959): 259.

⁵ Nathan, Richard P. "Essay On Special Revenue Sharing" in eds. Sneed, Joseph D. and Waldorn, Stephen A. Approaches To Accountability In Post-Categorical Programs Stanford Research Institute Menlo Park n.d. 46.

⁶ Seely, John R. ed. Community Chest: A Case Study In Philanthropy University Of Toronto Press Toronto (1957): 111.

⁷ Balls Op. cit. 14.

framework of political philosophy. Davis contends, for example, that the "Heart of classical participatory democracy is moral purpose. Therefore it is necessary to intrude within the jurisdictional boundaries of political philosophy."⁸ Its arguments have been built "not on assumptions of rationality but rather on teleological and moral grounds."⁹ Burnham provides an example of the above:

[T]he sovereign, which is simply a collective being, can be represented only by itself. At the moment when a people set up representatives, it is no longer free, it no longer exists. A mass which delegates its sovereignty, that is to say transfers its sovereignty to the hands of a few individuals abdicates its sovereign functions. For the will of the people is not transferable, nor even the will of the single individual.¹⁰

This point is also clearly brought out in Bennello and Rousopolous' definition of participatory democracy. The authors contend that:

In a participatory democracy, decision-making is

⁸ Davis, Lane "The Cost Of Realism: Contemporary Restatements Of Democracy" Western Political Quarterly 17 (1964): 41.

⁹ Whalen, Hugh "Democracy And Local Government" Canadian Public Administration 3 (March 1960): 1-2.

¹⁰ Burnham, James The Machiavellians: Defenders Of Freedom Gateway Regnery Co. Chicago (1963): 161.

the process whereby people propose, discuss, decide, plan and implement those decisions that affect their lives. This requires that the decision-making process be set up in a functional manner, so that the constituencies significantly affected by decisions are the ones that make them.... Participatory democracy assumes that in a good society people participate fully, and that society cannot be good unless that happens. Participation and control must be one.¹¹

Citizens thus remain the final and sole arbiter of their own interests, since "they alone can raise and discuss moral issues, develop rules of right conduct, and regulate their own behaviour to conform to them."¹²

The Value Of Participation For Individuals

Under much of participatory democracy's philosophical umbrella is the coveted goal of developing the "impeccable" democratic character vis-a-vis participation. Although participationists often assume a majority of citizens are "undeveloped" or "spiritually or psychologically sick",¹³ they hope they can become "healthy"--in other words participatory and efficacious. As Lithwick claims, they

¹¹ Bennello, George C. and Roussopolous, Dimitrios The Case For Participatory Democracy Viking N.Y. (1972): 19.

¹² Pennock, J. Roland Democratic Political Theory Princeton University Press Princeton N.J. (1979): 221.

¹³ Hart Op. cit. 604.

believe that improvements stimulating individual participation would "permit corresponding benefits in character and development and stimulate an increased awareness of the neighborhood community."¹⁴ Although it is nowhere clearly expressed what the ideal is made up of, a generalization is conveyed that all citizens are "capable of handling all the requirements for full participation; [s/]he will invariably participate when given the opportunity; [s/]he receives his greatest satisfaction from participation; [s/]he and his[/her] fellow participants will arrive at a consensus in the resolution of policy matters; and, most important, [s/]he understands that his[/her] full human potential can only be realized through participation."¹⁵

Intrinsic in the individual development model, then, is a basis for social-political activity. As Pateman claims, "the theory of participatory democracy is built around the central assertion that individuals and their institutions cannot be considered in isolation from one another."¹⁶

¹⁴ Lithwick, N.H. "Urban Policy-Making: Shortcomings In Political Technology" Canadian Public Administration 15 4 (Winter 1972): 581.

¹⁵ Hart Op. cit. 604.

¹⁶ Pateman, Carole Participation And Democratic Theory Cambridge University Press Cambridge (1970): 42. *This is also discussed in Thayer, T.C. Participation And Liberal

Hence, any improvements towards developing participatory avenues for individuals to have greater influence in the affairs of their government would correspondingly improve the participatory "health" of citizens. Pennock states, for example, that "the individual who chooses to expand the 'public' area of life, to pursue goods cooperatively and in common, will find greater satisfaction and self-actualization than the one who chooses to place greater stress upon self-reliance and tends to retreat within the domain of his[/her] own family or other small group."¹⁷

One of the most fundamental and cherished components of participatory democracy related to the above is the importance of education. Participationists believe individuals can learn what is possible, practical and expedient through their direct involvement in the affairs of government. As an educative experience, individuals are taught the use of power and authority and the value of consultation and negotiation.¹⁸ Philosophically, it is believed that "man could know truth, and thus be freer than

Democratic Theory Queen's Park Toronto (1971).

¹⁷ Pennock Op. cit. 140.

¹⁸ *For a review of works on this subject from J.S. Mill to the present, see Wilson, C.H. Essays On Local Government Basil Blackwell (1948) especially pages 11 to 24.

before, only through discovering himself."¹⁹ This has special significance in the relationship between government and citizens. Participationists believe the relationship between government and citizens must "entail a continuing two-way communication rich with education as well as information."²⁰ Citizens, therefore, have a means of learning how political decisions are made in order to realize the impact political decision-making has on them. Pateman states, for example, that the "major function of participation in the theory of democracy is...an educative one, educative in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and procedures."²¹

Psychologically, participation is viewed as a means for improving the governmental product by making it more acceptable and more readily enforceable. Studies such as Lester Coch's and J.R.P. French's study on garment factory

¹⁹ Bachrach, Peter The Theories Of Democratic Elitism Little, Brown And Co. Boston (1967): 4. *However, a word of caution need be stated here. Although local government may indeed educate individuals to appreciate political life, so too do other activities through a wide range of groups and associations.

²⁰ Seaver, Robert C. "The Dilemma Of Citizen Participation" in Spiegel Op. cit. 67.

²¹ Pateman Op. cit. 43.

workers in which the conclusion was made that the "productivity of work groups can be greatly increased by methods of work organization and supervision which give more responsibility to work groups, which all want fuller participation in important decisions and which make stable groups the firm basis of support of the individual's social needs,"²² illustrate an early basis for this reasoning. More recently, the participationists have based a large part of their conviction on the belief that protest-conflict organizations would theoretically never have been organized if participation in the community development process had been all-inclusive, that "if all citizens participate in policy decisions, the resultant policy (and the regime from which it issues) will be more legitimate in the minds of the citizens."²³ This point is echoed in Samutai N. Dubey's examination of American renewal programs. He summed up his observations stating "citizen participation was sought in order to avoid, or at least handle protests that arose among the residents.... [P]rograms for resident participation were often used to offset the spontaneous but disruptive

²² Coch, Lester and French, J.R.P. "Overcoming Resistance To Change" in Macoby, J. Readings in Social Psychology Henry Holt & Co. N.Y. (1958): 221.

²³ Hart Op. cit. 613.

activities of local groups."²⁴ No doubt, this contention can be easily grasped. If citizens are included in the policy-making process and not left out (as in a marginal group), "consequences that are favourable both to the system (compliance with general system support) and to the individual units (avoidance of frustration and alienation)"²⁵ are likely to exist. Humanistically then, participation becomes therapeutic in which the end result is the fostering of a "commitment to peaceful resolution of conflict, the absence of feelings of alienation, and a willingness to compromise."²⁶ As Robert Lane neatly sums, "participation in national or community processes tends to enhance the loyalty and sense of identification of participants with nation and community."²⁷ Participation, therefore becomes "the necessary concomitant of our faith in

²⁴ Dubey, Samutai N. "Community Action Programs And Citizen Participation: Issues And Confusions" Social Work 15 (1970): 76.

²⁵ Pennock Op. cit. 442-443.

²⁶ Eisinger, Peter K. "Protest Behavior And The Integration Of Urban Political Systems" Journal of Politics 33 (November 1971): 981.

²⁷ Lane, Robert Political Life The Free Press N.Y. (1959):344.

the dignity and worth of the individual."²⁸

Participationists also contend that citizen participation and citizen involvement constitute a source of insight and information for learning the skills and procedures of decision-making. Engagement in the process of decision-making enables citizens to become better informed and cognizant of the issues that affect his urban life. Moreover, the "accelerated political education of the citizen which results from participation...produces heightened appreciation for participation."²⁹ Individuals engrossed in the political decision-making mechanisms will be stimulated to become more interested in political affairs and therefore will participate with ever greater intensity. As Hart states, there is the "assumption that all will be positively motivated by participation which will make them want to participate more."³⁰ Clearly, the participationists believe citizen participation is valuable for enhancing the knowledge and political ability of citizens.

²⁸ Schmandt, Henry J. "Municipal Decentralization: An Overview" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 571.

²⁹ Hart Op. cit. 604.

³⁰ Ibid. 614.

Participation As Consumer Sovereignty

In all societies and at all levels of government, distribution is a major concern of government planning. Fiscal priorities must be set, policy choices made and desirable projects sacrificed for better programs. In the administration of our present day urban complexities, it is commonplace for officials to bear the responsibility of judging the direction of priorities that affect the community as a whole or in part. Basing their decisions on research, documentation, and their history of previous decision-making experiences (as well as a host of other factors)³¹ their ascendent role as the policy maker has been neither unique nor exceptional in the urban allocation process. Yet, evolving within this policy-making orthodoxy is a "latent basis of conflict between the neighborhood and the public bureaucracies which deliver services to them."³² For one, the improper coordination of public

³¹ *See, for example, the points raised in Chapter One concerning bureaucratic centralism.

³² O'Brien, David J. Neighborhood Organization And Interest-Group Processes Princeton University Press Princeton N.J. (1975): 8-9. *Much of this relates to the concept of "political decentralization". See, for example: Yin, Robert K. and Yates, Douglas Street-Level Governments: Assessing Decentralization And Urban Services D.C. Heath & Co. Lexington Mass. (1975); Barton, Allen H. "The Problem Of Urban Decentralization And The Research Of The New York City Neighborhood Government Study" in Barton, Allen H. ed. Decentralizing City Government Lexington Books Lexington Mass. (1977) pages 1 to 27; Yates, Douglas "Neighborhood

services--of poorly orienting the delivery of public services in accordance with the real needs and wishes of the governed--has often left citizens feeling they have not received their share of the governmental product. In the conflict between the citizen and his/her bureaucracy, one of the most significant factors lies in the bureaucratic adoption of "scientific management theory"³³ which has directed bureaucracies to become "relatively resistant to change, because they often place major emphasis on

Government" Policy Sciences 2 (July 1972) pages 209 to 219; Lamb, Curt Political Power In Poor Neighborhoods John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1975); Spiegel, Hans B.C. ed. Decentralization: Citizen Participation In Urban Development Vol. III Learning Resources Corp. NTL Fairfax Virginia (1974); Fesler, James W. "Centralization And Decentralization" International Encyclopedia Of The Social Sciences Vol. II MacMillan Co. & The Free Press (1968): 153+; Fesler, James W. "Approaches To The Understanding Of Decentralization" Journal Of Politics 27 (August 1965) pages 536 to 566; Fesler, James W. Public Administration: Theory And Practice Prentice-Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1980); Scott, William G. and Mitchell, Terence C. Organizational Theory: A Structural And Behavioral Analysis Irwin-Dorsey Homewood Ill. (1972); Golembiewski, Robert T. Man, Management, And Morality McGraw-Hill N.Y. (1965); Tocqueville Op. cit. pages 74 to 81; Kaufman, Herbert "Administrative Decentralization And Political Power" Public Administration Review 29 (January/February 1969) pages 3 to 15; Ashford, Douglas E. Democracy, Decentralization, And Decisions In Subnational Politics Sage Publications Beverly Hills (1976); Lindquist, Lennart Means And Goals Of Political Decentralization Nordens Boktryckeri Malmo Sweden (1972); Mawhood, Philip "Decentralization For Development: A Lost Cause?" in Bruhns et. al. Op. cit. 231-237, and Washnis, George J. Neighborhood Facilities And Municipal Decentralization Center For Governmental Studies Washington D.C. (1971).

³³ Hersey, Paul and Blanchard, Kenneth Management Of Organizational Behavior 3rd. ed. Prentice-Hall Englewood Cliffs N.J. (1977): 84.

organizational efficiency rather than on an analysis of the client's [i.e. the citizen's] problems."³⁴ Bureaucracies have, for the most part, interpreted the distribution of services only on functional grounds "as a series of discrete or technical problems"³⁵ instead of a "political crisis...to which participation is a response."³⁶ According to the participationists, even if government has shown excellence and efficiency in government, "it is still impossible to get effective government if the framework within which it must function is not sufficiently flexible to adjust to changing needs and conditions."³⁷

In such cases of "establishment repression"³⁸ the participationists have criticized the centralized machinery of local government as too cumbersome and insensitive to the particular local needs of its citizens. As Eisinger remarks, "centralized administration is governed by universalistic criteria: it is impersonal and 'distant' from the ordinary

³⁴ Guskin and Ross Op. cit. 348.

³⁵ Hain Op. cit. Neighborhood Participation 15.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Crawford Op. cit. 54.

³⁸ Guskin and Ross Op. cit. 348. *See Chapter One for a review of this subject.

recipients of public service."³⁹ Moreover, it becomes increasingly evident in large local bureaucracies that the specialization of administration makes it possible for bureaucracies to diffuse their responsibility to the extent that citizen attempts at reaching and identifying the individual or individuals responsible for a policy decision becomes a difficult task. Circumstances also allow bureaucrats to use the claim of scale and complexity to exclude the citizen and deny responsibility for the governmental product. As Douglas Fisher describes, "each bureaucrat has his[/her] function and usually does not raise the broader question of what it is all for."⁴⁰

In short, local government bureaucracies have been deemed often as neither responsible, responsive to public demands, nor accountable in permitting citizens to seek judgment on its performance. As Bruce Wood claims, it is here in the problem of equitably distributing the governmental product that "there is a clear link between the ideas of 'democracy' and 'efficiency' or

³⁹ Eisinger, Peter K. "Community Control And Liberal Dilemmas" Publius 2 (Fall 1972): 131.

⁴⁰ Fisher, Douglas "Incompetence Is Our Hallmark" Executive (December 1975): 50.

'effectiveness'."⁴¹ Peter Self perhaps best sums up the above in his claim that the "tensions between the requirements of responsibility or 'accountability' and those of efficient action can reasonably be described as the classic dilemma of public administration."⁴²

Participationists have also recognized that inequalities in the service delivery system exist between neighborhoods. O'Brien, for example, notes that the "quality and quantity of these services varies considerably from one neighborhood to another...the nature of the public services that an individual receives is dependent in large measure on which neighborhood he lives in."⁴³ This assumption is based on the belief that cities are divided by various qualities of residential lifestyles. Moreover, since most

⁴¹ Wood, Bruce The Process Of Local Government Reform: 1966-74 Allen & Unwin London n.d. 40. *Indeed, the problem of finding "perfect solutions" relates to many areas of urban administrative decision-making. See, for example, the arguments presented in the sections related to planning, transportation, housing, local health services, social services and education in Boaden et. al. Op. cit. 22.

⁴² Self, Peter Administrative Theories Of Politics: An Inquiry Into The Structure And Processes Of Modern Government University of Toronto Press Toronto (1974): 277-278. *See also, Smith, Patrick J. and Nicoll, Patricia M. "Municipal Planning In England And Canada: An Assessment Of Self's Dilemma Thesis" London Review Of Public Administration 12 (November 1979): 29-64.

⁴³ O'Brien Op. cit. 9.

middle-class-ethos bureaucrats reside in the more desirable areas, it is unexceptional to hear of the richer suburbs getting richer while the poorer ones decline in their share of the service goods. Geraint Parry states, for example, that:

It is not a necessary truth that in a competitive political situation all interests will be considered, let alone accommodated. A comparison can be made with a competitive market situation in economics. Such a market can only claim to meet the effective demands of the consumers, i.e. demands backed by purchasing power. It does not attend to the needs of everyone in the community since not all needs may be backed by purchasing power, and such needs do not go forward as demands. The competitive market may continue to satisfy demands without being concerned with the level of needs.⁴⁴

In short, "variations in the impact of public services tend to mirror social, economic, and political status; that is, higher quality services go to those with higher status."⁴⁵ Inevitably, the inequality between regions of

⁴⁴ Parry, Geraint Political Elites George Allen & Unwin Ltd. London (1976): 124-125.

⁴⁵ Herbert, Adam W. "Management Under Conditions Of Decentralization And Citizen Participation" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 625-626. *See, for example, articles presented in Urban Crisis In Modern America by Branyan, Robert L. and Larsen, Lawrence H. eds. D.C. Heath & Co. Lexington Mass. (1971) by Duncan, Otis Dudley and Reiss, Albert J. Jr. "Suburban Growth Patterns" 26-39; Wood, Robert C. "Suburban Political Transformation" 39-43; Grodzins, Morton "Black Migrants Alter The Center City" 66-71; Greer, Scott "The Social Structure And The Political Process Of Suburbia" in Larson and Wasburn Op.

the city has led some neighborhoods to get only the "short-end" of the stick. In Samutai N. Dubey's examination of community action programs in American ghettos, for example, he found that "in slum communities the primacy of the individual's welfare is generally overshadowed by the interests and manipulations of the 'down-town' political apparatus, whose decisions are frequently inconsistent with the values and aspirations of the slum residents."⁴⁶

A basis for this inequality lies in the realization that certain regions of the city are intrinsically less capable of successfully articulating demands. Having a "voice" as a professional is quite different than "voicing demands" as an ordinary citizen improperly prepared with the necessary facilities for dealing with government technocrats. For the most part, citizens are ignorant about the specifics of government operations, government policies, government priorities and funding allocation.

cit. 269-287; Greer, Scott "Problems Of Housing And The Renewal Of The City" in Becker, H.S. ed. Social Problems: A Modern Approach Wiley N.Y. (1967), and Dunleavy, Patrick Urban Political Analysis: The Politics Of Collective Consumption The Macmillan Press Ltd. London (1980). See also the concept of "cost shifting" in Masotti, Louis H. and Lineberry, Robert L. eds. The New Urban Politics Ballinger Publishing Co. Cambridge Mass (1976) on page 149 and Krueger, Ralph R. "Community Planning And Local Government" Community Planning Review 18 17 (Winter 1968) on page 14 concerning urban growth and the central-suburban split.

⁴⁶ Dubey Op. cit. 78.

The negative bureaucratic view point of shunting citizen demands from the system has also acted against citizen involvement in governmental decision-making. This view point considers the citizen as only or just a consumer of the governmental product and not as a sovereign consumer, producer, or distributor. As Cahn and Cahn claim, "framed in economic terminology, the professional essentially is arguing that because the poor speak as consumers, they are incapable of making an allocation of resources between the production of consumer goods and services, increased capacity, social reform, and an improved standard of living."⁴⁷

Given the above scenario, participationists have argued for affirmative citizen activity in the delivery of services to neighborhoods; citizens should have greater opportunities at becoming involved in the allocation of local government resources according to their own requirements and desires since local bureaucratic administrations have become immune to the petitions of ordinary citizens. According to David M. Cameron, this goal entails "not only the economical discharge of public functions, but the achievement of

⁴⁷ Cahn, Edgar and Cahn, Jean Camper "Citizen Participation in Spiegel, Hans B.C. ed. Citizen Participation In Urban Development Vol. I--Concepts And Issues NTL Institute For Applied Behavioral Science Washington D.C. (1968): 217.

technical adequacy in due-alignment with public needs and desires."⁴⁸ Furthermore, as Self claims, this premise "has some analogy with economic theories of consumer's sovereignty and the market system. Political man can be conceived as a 'consumer' of public services and decisions, who should be free to deploy his voting power (that is spending power) according to his tastes and interests."⁴⁹

In summary, the devolution of political decision-making from local bureaucratic institutions to the public is considered a means of achieving greater citizen efficacy and broadened trust and confidence in government. The participationists assume that through the localization of administrative controls in urban areas, greater administrative attentiveness and responsiveness relating to the actual needs of neighborhoods will come about. In regards to the individual, devolution will lead to the enhancement of participatory and self-confident political attitudes and loyalties on the part of disadvantaged urbanites. As Schmandt claims, this is "based on the belief that alienation and the distance which many urbanites now feel toward a remote city government can be overcome by reducing the scale of the service-delivery system and giving

⁴⁸ Cameron Op. cit. 23.

⁴⁹ Self Op. cit. 282.

the consumer a direct input into it."⁵⁰ As Cahn and Cahn add, "when a grown man is treated as a child, with respect to those very services being rendered to him[/her], [s/]he is unlikely to view those services as anything other than rituals of humiliation designed either to prove his[/her] incapacity to function or to keep him dependent and out of trouble."⁵¹

Conclusions On Participationist Democracy

The above overview of participatory democracy rests on a fundamental assumption that participation and a good society are one. Participatory society is deemed "good" since individuals learn the use of the power of authority--becoming active, involved and educated in the decision-making process. In short, citizen participation results in more responsible and accountable government with citizens becoming an essential part of the approval process.

⁵⁰ Schmandt Op. cit. 576.

⁵¹ Cahn and Cahn Op. cit. 219.

The Elitist Polemic And Citizen Participation

Introduction

Since the elitists believe the exigencies of democracy include "the will of some to participate and the acceptance by many of political leadership,"⁵² it becomes readily evident that a contradiction exists between this school and the participatory school. Unlike the participatory democracy school, the elitist theory of democracy acknowledges the inevitable existence of elites and the role of leadership.⁵³ Moreover, elitists believe in the minimal concern of the average man with politics and question a single definition of the public interest.

In the first instance, elitists believe that the rise of elites in society has been due, in part, to the desire of some individuals to control the community and to the "reluctance of the citizenry to alter the prevailing

⁵² Whalen Op. cit. 4.

⁵³ *It should be restated here that in elite theory demonstrates that elites are a concomitant of complex social organization since the unequal distribution of resources and skills further reinforces elite organization. Mass apathy, political incompetence and the irrationality of the citizenry further consolidate the elitist position. Interestingly, it is often assumed that the mass is psychologically dependent on the elite.

arrangement of power."⁵⁴ As Dahl states "this is true in democracies as well as in dictatorships.... We seldom confront the elemental fact that a few citizens are always called upon to govern the remainder."⁵⁵ This is supported by Dye and Zeigler in their study of elite-mass interaction patterns. They state that "elitism in cities is depicted as arising in all societies, and under all forms of government...the few govern the many."⁵⁶ Democracy,

⁵⁴ Hahn, Harlan "Reassessing And Revitalizing Urban Politics: Some Goals And Proposals" in Hahn Op. cit. 17. *It is interesting to note that in Mein Kampf Hitler wrote that "the masses feel very little shame at being terrorized intellectually and are scarcely conscious of the fact that their freedom as human beings is being impudently abused." Hitler cited in De Cocq Op. cit. 39.

⁵⁵ Dahl Op. cit. Who Governs? 153. *Scott Greer similarly states these few carry out most of the public affairs in a community and that "they are virtual representatives. They are a form of ruling class, a 'Coxey's Army' drawn from local business and bureaucrats, small property owners, clubwomen and aspiring young lawyers." Greer, Scott The Emerging City Free Press Of Glencoe N.Y. (1962): 165.

⁵⁶ Zeigler, H. and Dye, T. "Elite-Mass Behavior And Interaction" American Behavioral Scientist 3 (1969): 35. *For an extended examination of this phenomenon, see especially Michels, Roberto First Lectures In Political Sociology Harper & Row N.Y. (1949) pages 104 to 105 where he makes the conclusion that "even in democratic countries and among democratic parties that deny messianic leadership, a directorate of chiefs exists, although democracy formally tries to hide this effective process. It follows that the masses are not the ones who ruin the leaders, but new leaders who use the masses to such ends." Also, see Michels, Roberto Political Parties Free Press N.Y. (1962) especially concerning the German Socialist Party on page 108, and Soreno, Renzo The Rulers Harper & Row (1968).

therefore, is not conceived as the free participation of people in the decision-making of their government but as the free electoral competition among individuals for positions in the elite.⁵⁷ Schumpeter claims, for example, that "the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote."⁵⁸ In the process, citizens act as a safeguard or check on the elite; should the elite act against their perception of "democracy", the result will be either the elimination of the elite through the electoral process or by the act of protest. Saunders, for example, suggests that elitist democracy is similar to banking. He states that:

[J]ust as a bank may use the funds deposited with

⁵⁷ *This is stated in terms of the concepts defined by Robert A. Dahl in which the elite consists of "political entrepreneurs" who possess ideological commitments and manipulative skills as opposed to the citizens at large or the "apolitical clay" consisting of a much larger class of passive, inert followers who have little interest and knowledge of passive affairs. See Dahl Op. cit. Who Governs? 225-227.

⁵⁸ Schumpeter, Joseph A. Capitalism, Socialism And Democracy Harper & Row N.Y. (1956): 287. *Self claims that "this, the most basic and still dominant theory of democracy, assigns policy-making to the elected representatives of the people. The basic popular control is provided by periodic elections, and representatives have considerable, though arguable, freedom to make policies on the electorate's behalf." Self Op. cit. 281.

it to create credit by lending more than it can actually repay at any one time, so too politicians may draw upon the trust vested in them by the electorate to create more power which can be used for the collective good. If they become dissatisfied with the returns they are being paid, then electors may withdraw their deposits of trust at elections, just as bank depositors may withdraw their money balances in an attempt to seek a higher return elsewhere.⁵⁹

Thus, in elitist democracy, citizens have only a limited creative role in the periodic choice of governors in which "elections are essentially a passive affair, more in the nature of a broad referendum of approval or removal."⁶⁰

"They must necessarily judge governors, their records and their promises, largely as a passive object of the actions of others. They are to judge a world they never made, and thus become a genteel counterpart of the mobs which sporadically unseated aristocratic governments...."⁶¹

The Public Interest

In the second instance, elitists are puzzled over the inability of the participationists to define the public

⁵⁹ Saunders Op. cit. 26.

⁶⁰ Clague, Michael "Citizen Participation In The Legislative Process" in Draper Op. cit. 35.

⁶¹ Davis, Lane Personality And Politics Markham Chicago (1969): 45.

interest. In addition, elitists are curious as to how all of the needs of all the public can be accommodated. In contemporary democracies, for example, it is generally accepted that severe upper limits are set on effective participation in "democratic" decisions by the sheer number of persons involved. Dahl, for example, illustrates this logic in his conclusion that:

[T]he requirements of time exceed the time available in any given circumstances. Just as there is quite literally no conceivable way by which every citizen of New York can be guaranteed an opportunity to speak at a meeting where every other citizen also speaks, so there is literally no way by which every citizen of New York or Sweden (let alone the United States) can be guaranteed the right to participate in decisions at every stage of the process.⁶²

This point is similarly made in Schattschneider's work entitled The Semi-Sovereign People. Schattschneider summed up the elitist polemic against participatory democracy in his conclusion that in a democracy "the problem is not how 180 million Aristotles can run a democracy but how we can

⁶² Dahl, Robert A. After The Revolution? Yale University Press New Haven (1970): 143, 145. *Dahl, in another work, also argued that "the assumption about the need for total citizen participation in democracy, are at the very least, inadequate. If one regards political equality in the making of decisions as a kind of limit to be achieved, then it is axiomatic that this limit could only be arrived at with the complete participation of every adult citizen...." Dahl, Robert A. "The Problem Of Participation" in Williams and Press Op. cit. 407-408.

organize a political community of 180 million ordinary people so that it remains sensitive to their needs."⁶³

The Problem Of The Public Interest

According to the elitist school, the participationists' arguments for greater participation and citizen involvement in government are unclear and unrealistic. Walker states, for example, that the participatory school can be criticized "first, because it employs conceptions of the nature of man and the operation of society which are utopian; and second because it does not provide adequate operational definitions of its key concepts."⁶⁴ In the former, elitists base their claim on the realization that most individuals are not motivated to participate even if given the channels of opportunity to participate.⁶⁵ Thus, efforts to alter political structures to accommodate citizen participation will fail because the citizens lack the incentive and

⁶³ Schattschneider, Elmer Eric The Semi-Sovereign People Holt, Rinehart & Winston N.Y. (1960): 130.
*Succinctly, the elitists believe the participationists "have not come to grips with reality." Hart Op. cit. 604.

⁶⁴ Walker, Jack L. "A Critique Of The Elitist Theory Of Democracy" American Political Science Review 60 2 (June 1966): 285.

⁶⁵ *Dahl claims, for example, that "homo civicus is not, by nature, a political animal." Dahl Op. cit. Who Governs? 225.

motivation to participate. For example, James W. Prothro and Charles M. Grigg, in their review of the arguments put forward by both schools, make the claim that the elitists assert that the "common man is not the rational, self-motivating, and thoughtful democrat.... Rather, the picture that emerges is of a lethargic, irrational, and prejudiced individual who neither understands nor is particularly committed to democratic principles."⁶⁶ Similarly, Berelson et. al. point out that:

If the democratic system depended solely on the qualifications of the individual voter, then it seems remarkable that democracies have survived through the centuries. After examining the detailed data on how individuals misperceive political reality or respond to irrelevant social influences, one wonders how a democracy ever solves its political problems.

That is the paradox. Individual voters today seem unable to satisfy the requirements for a democratic system of government outlined by political theorists. But the system of democracy does meet certain requirements for an on-going political organization. The individual members may not meet all the standards, but the whole nevertheless survives and grows. This suggests that where the classic theory is defective is in its concentration on the individual citizen.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Prothro, James W. and Grigg, Charles M. "Fundamental Principles Of Democracy: Bases Of Agreement And Disagreement" 12 Journal Of Politics 22 (May 1960): 277.

⁶⁷ Berelson, Bernard, Lazarsfeld, Paul and McPhee, William "Democratic Practice And Democratic Theory" in Bachrach, Peter ed. Political Elites In A Democracy Atherton Press N.Y. (1971): 34-35.

Lane, in his study of fifteen "common men" in an Eastern city, came to similar conclusions that citizens lack a "well-defined sense of social justice that would allow them to stand in judgment on their society and its institutions."⁶⁸

Elitists also base a large part of their criticism against the participationists on the vagueness of their notions concerning the "public interest" that are implied in the participationist arguments related to "citizen needs", "citizen demands" and the "citizen interest". Since, according to the elitists, individuals are not necessarily aware of what in any given situation their interests are, it is questionable how they are to be "governed by their wishes". As Whalen points out, "the wishes of men are infinitely variable, effervescent, frequently contradictory and often impracticable."⁶⁹ Similarly, according to Self, "all populist theories flounder on the problem of the enormous differences of interest, knowledge and concern between members of the public on policy issues."⁷⁰ In short, the problem is best posed in the question "just what

⁶⁸ Lane Op. cit. 475.

⁶⁹ Whalen Op. cit. 12.

⁷⁰ Self Op. cit. 283.

is the public interest?"

Elitists also question the need for intensive participation at the levels that the participationists argue for. Elitists believe that the insistence on continuous participation has acted to discourage successful participation by those who are willing to give partly of themselves where they feel relevant, but who are dismayed at the insistence that they may be involved actively when they are not interested, or feel they do not have the relevant skills and would be far more pleased to entrust the decision to others. "Clearly then, if adequate community development requires genuine participation at relevant points, it just as importantly requires refraining from insisting on that participation at irrelevant points."⁷¹ Elitists, for example, assume that individuals are too occupied with their own daily concerns to continually participate in the affairs of government. Government, therefore, should be administered by elected officials (i.e. as an elite). As Whalen claims, "as citizens we place our trust in elected governments and give them wide power on the understanding that they perform satisfactorily within the rule of law; we are thus relieved of an excess concern with political matters and are enabled

⁷¹ Tumin, Melvin "Some Social Requirements For Effective Community Development" Community Development Review (December 1958): 11.

to pursue important non-political goals."⁷² Lipset similarly summarizes that, "politics is not organized to be a daily concern and responsibility of the common citizen."⁷³

For the most part, elitists believe large-scale citizen participation is detrimental to the efficiency of government as local public agencies often have to invest money, time, and other resources to accommodate citizen participation. Thus, "if professionals devoted 100 per cent of their efforts to respond to the demands of the poor, they would never get to the significant underlying causes but would deal only with symptomatic, unending crisis demands."⁷⁴ In short, "having to negotiate with citizen organizations, in addition to all the other governmental and private organizations with which administrative agencies must deal and which must be accommodated, complicates the planning process, introduces a greater degree of uncertainty, and may

⁷² Whalen Op. cit. 6.

⁷³ Lipset, Seymour Martin "Social Structure And Political Activity" in Blishen, Bernard ed. Canadian Society MacMillan Of Canada Toronto (1964): 306.

⁷⁴ Cahn and Cahn Op. cit. 215.

substantially lengthen project completion time."⁷⁵ As Carl W. Stenberg summarizes in his study of the relationship between citizens and administrative bodies in the United States: "citizen involvement is commonly thought to be antithetical to much of public administration and practice."⁷⁶ This contradicts sharply the arguments put forward by the participatory school which stress the importance of citizen involvement in the affairs of administrative policy-making.

This elitist argument is largely based on the assumption that individuals are neither educated nor knowledgeable enough to make coherent decisions in government. Because of the inability of citizens to comprehend the capacity limitations of governments, their demands on the system would be both overwhelming and impossible to fulfill. Robert C. Seaver, for example, in his work entitled "The Dilemma Of Citizen Participation" claims "there is a gross disparity between the actual capabilities of renewal and planning programs as such, and the results citizens expect of them, or have been led to expect. The

⁷⁵ Lowenstein, Edward R. "Citizen Participation And The Administrative Agency In Urban Development: Some Problems And Proposals" Social Science Review 45 (September 1972): 290.

⁷⁶ Stenberg Op. cit. 190.

bureaucrat or technician is frustrated at the citizens' apparent inability to understand that [s/]he cannot solve all problems because they are not all his[/her] responsibility."⁷⁷ Masotti and Lineberry, in their American study similarly concluded that:

Citizen 'demand' for public services is characterized by confusion, ignorance and tolerance of the status quo. This confusion about the set of governments is compounded by citizen ignorance about the specifics of government operations. The average person knows little about local government policies and priorities. He does not know the proportion of funds spent in various service areas, nor how this compares with other cities.⁷⁸

Krefetz and Goodman also make a supporting conclusion from their study of the impact of participation on government programs. In addition to decreasing the efficiency and quality of programs, the authors provide the argument that mass citizen participation is "undesirable because it could lead to a rising demand for participation in other programs far beyond the capacity of the administrative system to satisfy. Rather than lead to a

⁷⁷ Seaver, Robert C. "The Dilemma Of Citizen Participation" in ed. Spiegel, Hans B.C. Citizen Participation In Urban Development: Concepts And Issues Vol. II NTL Institute For Applied Behavioral Science Washington D.C. (1968): 67.

⁷⁸ Masotti and Lineberry Op. cit. 152.

sense of socio-political well-being, then, participation could disrupt on the system level."⁷⁹

Given the above, elitists make the contention that citizens cannot learn the technical aspects of decision-making solely through their participation in government because, unlike their bureaucratic counterparts, they are not educated with the necessary specialized background for understanding policy issues and determinants. Hart gives the example that "one, for instance, does not learn about nuclear physics by participating in policy decisions about breeder reactors. Without technical information, citizen participation cannot make intelligent evaluations on various programs. The requirement for such technical information inevitably forces policy makers to turn to experts."⁸⁰ This point lies in direct contrast with the participationists who link education with participation (i.e. the greater the participation, the greater the level of understanding of policy issues). In summary, the elitists believe that "it is a puzzling

⁷⁹ Krefetz, Sharon Pearlman and Goodman, Allan E. "Participation For What Or For Whom?" Journal Of Comparative Administration 5 3 (November 1973): 369. *This will be further examined in the next section.

⁸⁰ Hart, David K. "Theories Of Government Related To Decentralization And Citizen Participation" Public Administration Review 32 (October 1972): 615.

business how to connect this knowledge of the few with the spirit of the common life."⁸¹

Apathy And Elitist Democracy

An important prerequisite for sustaining a democratic-elitist regime is the requisite of a stable democracy. Such a democracy must include general agreement among the electorate on democratic procedures and restraints on political activity. The elitists argue, for example, that "limited participation and apathy have a positive function for the whole system by cushioning the shock of disagreement, adjustment and change."⁸² Apathy permits a flexibility in the system which it would not otherwise have as individuals willing live with the compromises made by the elites and do not make impossible demands on the system. Apathy leads to a political system in "equilibrium" in which the system benefits by having few turmoils and disruptions in the elitist decision-making and individuals benefit by letting others take care of their political concerns and organizational affairs. The citizen is thus "freed for things that are more important to him[/her] and avoids the

⁸¹ Whalen Op. cit. 4.

⁸² Pateman Op. cit. 1.

pitfalls of being smothered by the group and the polity."⁸³ The elitist reasoning for a stable society can be easily understood. Stability permits the ease of initiating and implementing decisions made by elitist organizations with little opposition. Thus, unlike the participatory model which stresses mass citizen participation in the affairs of government, "moderate levels of participation [only] help to balance citizen roles as participants and as obedient subjects."⁸⁴

This elitist perception has been directed especially against a stream of the participatory school which argues for a totally different kind of society.⁸⁵ In contrast to

⁸³ Smith, Constance and Freedman, Anne Voluntary Associations: Perspectives On The Literature Harvard University Press Cambridge Mass. (1972): 73.

⁸⁴ Ibid. 54.

⁸⁵ *It noteworthy that there is a tendency for democratic theory to spill over into concept of "anarchism". However, for our purposes, the distinction between anarchism and democracy relates to Holden's definitive parameters of each concept. According to Holden:

Anarchism emphasizes individual autonomy like many theories of democracy; but, unlike the latter, it focuses clearly on the tension between individual autonomy and the power of the people as a whole--and, if necessary, rejects the power of the people. (When democrats emphasize the individual at the expense of the people there is, then, an affinity with anarchism.) Anarchism completely rejects the power of the state, even if such power is exercised by the people. Some varieties of anarchism concentrate on small groups--and their

the school of participationists who argue that the "very concept of participation implies acceptance of the present structure and norms of democratic society and that the changes they advocate relate to human behaviour, not to political systems,"⁸⁶ these participationists believe that "those in power are in [their] eyes responsible for the ills of those not in power and hence are scarcely imitated."⁸⁷ Hart defines this stream as "revolutionary", its advocates calling for immediate total citizen participation in all areas of society:

[T]he advocates urge immediate pervasive changes in all political, economic, and social systems to allow for maximal citizen participation. The reason for this is not impatience, but the significance they place upon the development of the democratic character: the specific personality

autonomy--rather than on individuals.

Holden Op. cit. 218.

See also Woodcock, G. Anarchism Penguin Books Harmondsworth (1963); Carter, April The Political Theory Of Anarchism Routledge & Kegan Paul London (1971) especially on pages 72 to 73 relating to the some relationships between anarchism and democracy, and Ellul, Jacques The Political Illusion Alfred A. Knopf N.Y. (1967).

⁸⁶ Stankiewicz, W.J. Approaches To Democracy: Philosophy Of Government At The Close Of The Twentieth Century Edward Arnold London (1980): 164-165. *Stankiewicz also devotes a section of his book entitled "Can Democratic Theory Re-Order Society?" 251-254 which outlines the philosophical debate on this subject.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

characteristics essential for the successful performance of the duties entailed by democratic citizenship.⁸⁸

The basic elitist objection to this participationist view is that society is too important to be reorganized for the education and development of the participatory character outlined in the preceding section. Since massive changes to the prevailing political systems' organizational structure would be implemented on a "trial and error" basis, the elitists believe that society is too complex and fragile to permit such a massive change.⁸⁹ Lipset, for example, fears that individuals would enter the political system "smashing democratic institutions in the process, as part of an irrational force"⁹⁰ leading to a paroxysmal state. As Stankiewicz further adds:

Participationists wish to manipulate social organization rather than ideas with a recklessness that arouses suspicion. To answer them it is necessary to show not that men lack competence--advocates of participation recognize this--but that an attempt to give competence through

⁸⁸ Hart Op. cit. 606-604.

⁸⁹ *It should be noted here that this lies in direct contrast with the "liberal populists" who seek proposals for strengthening contemporary democracy within the existing system by increasing citizen participation through feasible increments until some optimal level is reached.

⁹⁰ Lipset Op. cit. 121.

permitting or encouraging participation is irresponsible. Traditional democratic theory has always been open to the view that men can be--should be, even--better than they are, but has also assumed that such improvements as are possible must not threaten the very structure of society.⁹¹

The protest movements of the 1960s and the New Left's⁹² demands for new government structures provide a major basis of this elitist perception. Writers such as Daniel P. Moynihan observed during that time that "in particular, they [i.e. the revolutionary populists] would appear to have but little sympathy with the desire for order.... The reaction among many (active social scientists) was not to be appalled by disorder, but almost to welcome

⁹¹ Stankiewicz Op. cit. 164. *For example, Hain adds in his definition of this school that the revolutionary populists adopt a "conflict" model in which they "promise direct action...and aims to involve deprived groups, initially through tackling the problems which beset them, and then broadening this out into a wider struggle for community control." Hain Op. cit. 20.

⁹² *See, for example: Roussopolous, Dimitrios The New Left In Canada Black Rose Books Montreal (1970); Oglesby, Carl The New Left Reader Grove Press N.Y. (1969); Sargent, Lyman Tower New Left Thought: An Introduction Dorsey Press Homewood Ill. (1972); Bacciocco, Edward J. The New Left In America: Reform To Revolution 1956 To 1970 Hower Institute Press n.p. (1974); Luce, Phillip The New Left Today: America's Trojan Horse Capitol Hill Press Washington D.C. (1972); Castells, Manuel The Urban Question: A Marxist Approach MIT Press Cambridge Mass. (1979), and Kotler, Milton Neighborhood Government: The Local Foundations Of Political Life The Bobbs-Merrill Co. Indianapolis (1969).

it."⁹³

Conclusions On Elitist Democracy

In summary, the elitists have criticized the participationists' claims for increased citizen participation. This is based largely on the elitist belief that the majority of individuals are unable to competently participate since they are neither educated nor concerned enough to contribute to the process of decision-making. Moreover, elitists believe that large scale citizen participation slows down the operation of government since the numerous demands and continual involvement of citizens would overwhelm the system's capacity to implement decisions. In short, elitists contend that government is not to be the daily concern of the ordinary citizen since they neither have the knowledge nor interest in becoming continually involved with the affairs of government.

Conclusions

The above presentation of the participationist and elitist tenets outlines the major points of each school of

⁹³ Moynihan, Daniel P. Maximum Feasible Participation: Community Action In The War On Poverty Free Press N.Y. (1969): 8.

participatory thought. Clearly, both schools present differing aspects of the concept of participation--often contradicting each other. To the participationists, participation is a means for citizens to achieve greater knowledge of government decisions, an understanding of the decision-making processes and a greater say in the delivery of services. Furthermore, the participationists contend that government will become more responsive and accountable if its constituents are actively participating and voicing their demands. Since, according to the participationists, all individuals have the potential to participate and develop their "human potential", what appears missing is the appropriate structures or avenues to accommodate their participatory aspirations. In contrast, the criticisms posed by the elitists suggest that much of the participationist goals are not possible to achieve, since citizens are neither inclined to actively participate nor have facility in understanding the process of government. The elitist arguments also suggest higher levels of participation would be detrimental to government administration since large scale participation would slow down and complicate the implementation of government decisions. In summary, all of these arguments provide a theoretical understanding of the different philosophies of citizen participation for analyzing the road to Unicity's reform and its ensuing participatory achievements and failures.

CHAPTER III

The Organization And Development Of Unicity Winnipeg

The purpose of this Chapter is to outline the organization and development of Unicity Winnipeg. To provide an understanding of its one-tier structure and its participatory-decentralist aspects, this Chapter is divided into three sections: a first part describes the Community Committees and the Resident Advisory Groups; a second part describes the administrative structure of Unicity's Councillor-Commissioner-Committee system. A third section presents an overview of the recommendations of two important Committees of Review on Unicity: the 1977 Taraska Committee and the 1986 Cherniak Committee. Before approaching an examination of Unicity's organization and the Review Committees' recommendations, a note on the significant developments preceding the incorporation of Unicity is necessary.

The Significant Events Preceding Unicity

Beginning in 1960,¹ a two-tier metropolitan form of

¹ *The Government Bill was introduced in the Provincial Legislature during the 1960 spring session and received assent from the Lieutenant-Governor in March of 1960.

government existed in Winnipeg up until Unicity in 1971. Although the Metro experience in Winnipeg provided notable progress in the physical development of road building, parks, streets, public transportation, water supply and sewage, Metro faced large criticisms from the newspapers, radio and television media. This campaign of criticism was largely due to the view from municipal politicians that Metro was an "opponent." Kaplan, for example, claims that:

Rather than articulate the conflicting system loyalties, conflicting cultural identities, and sharply defined boundaries that lay at the root of this conflict, most municipal politicians blamed the whole thing on Metro's failure to consult with local officials. Rather than consider the major programs that produced Metro's healthy tax rate, the municipal officials attributed that rate to administrative inefficiency, duplication, and overstaffing.

Municipal officials picked at trifles, avoiding a direct attack on metro's popular, more general achievements, falsely suggesting that improvements in administrative efficiency would chop metro's tax rate in half, and offering detailed complaints about lack of consultation on substantive decisions when, in fact, the municipalities were really out to cripple or eliminate the metro system.²

A significant politician who fuelled the criticism was Mayor Stephen Juba, whose "personal mission [was] to attack

² Kaplan, Harold Reform, Planning, And City Politics University Of Toronto Press Toronto (1982): 559-560.

everything Metro did."³ Juba, a maverick populist Mayor who strongly fought to improve the city's self-image and reputation both inside and outside the province,⁴ was especially offended by the Metropolitan Corporation's extensive jurisdiction over a number of services considered to be of joint concern.⁵ In short, the hallmark of Winnipeg's Metropolitan government was a "consistent internecine warfare between...the city of Winnipeg and the councillors and administrators of the Metropolitan

³ Axworthy, Lloyd "Winnipeg: An Experiment In Innovation" in Axworthy, Lloyd and Gillies, James M. eds. The City: Canada's Prospects And Problems Butterworth & Co. Ltd. Toronto (1973): 277. *For a detailed account of this conflict and Mayor Juba's personality and politics, see Brownstone, Meyer, Feldman, Lionel D., Hefferon, Dennis C. and Plunkett, Thomas J. Politics And The Process Of Reform Of Urban Government: The Winnipeg Experience Ottawa (1975).

⁴ *In 1967, for example, Mayor Juba obtained the Pan-American Games for Winnipeg. In addition, as Artibise claims, "during Juba's years in office, Winnipeg once again began to reassert itself; the downtown core has become the centre of building activity; and a confidence and pride that the city has not known since before 1913 have reappeared among Winnipeggers." Artibise, Alan Winnipeg: A Social History Of Urban Growth: 1974-1914 McGill-Queen's University Press Montreal (1975): 182.

⁵ *However, according to Brownstone and Plunkett, the "motivations of Mayor Juba, whose single-minded obsession with Metro fuelled the dispute, are not fully apparent. They probably combined a strong commitment to the City of Winnipeg, a powerful ego-drive, and the attraction of a convenient whipping boy. His political resources, vote-gathering success, skill at using the media, and ethnic appeal, far outstripped Metro's." Brownstone, Meyer and Plunkett, T.J. Metropolitan Winnipeg: Politics And Reform Of Local Government University Of California Press Berkeley (1983): 152.

Corporation."⁶ Thus, Metro's criticisms from the media, the area politicians, and Mayor Juba, predated and set the stage for reform.

Approaches To Reform

In 1966, Premier Roblin tried to deal with Metro's problems by creating a Local Government Boundaries Commission "to study the territory and boundaries of existing local governmental units, and other matters considered relevant to establishment of viable local government units in the entire province."⁷ "In December 1970 the Commission completed its \$750,000 report. The Commission's recommendations were largely similar to those of the 1959 Greater Winnipeg Investigating Commission. Whereas the GWIC had wanted eight cities, the Local Government Boundaries Commission wanted nine: Winnipeg, Fort Garry, St. Vital, St. Boniface, Transcona, St. James-

⁶ Axworthy, Lloyd "The Best Laid Plans Oft Go Astray: The Case Of Winnipeg" in Dickerson, M.O. ed. Problems Of Change In Urban Government Wilfred Laurier Press Toronto (1980): 106. *Kaplan goes as far as to claim that "what occurred was a virtual municipal insurrection, an assault on metro far exceeding anyone's expectations. During its ten year history, but especially in 1961-65, Metro lived under a state of siege." Kaplan cited in Tindal, C.R. and Tindal, S.N. Local Government In Canada McGraw-Hill Toronto (1984): 18.

⁷ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 31.

Assiniboia, Tuxedo-Charleswood, Old Kildonan-West Kildonan, and North Kildonan-East Kildonan-Elmwood. The Metro Council was to be composed of the mayors and aldermen of the nine cities, plus ten directly elected representatives."⁸

Significantly, the Boundaries Commission's recommendations were an affirmation of the traditional approach to political organization. In the Commission's view, the Metro system of 112 municipal Councillors was not "over-government";⁹ it recommended "that the Administrations of local government units be kept to manageable sizes, both from the point of view of the elected representatives to whom the Administrations are responsible, and from the point of view of the citizens who must deal with the Administrations in connection with various sundry services...."¹⁰ The Commission rejected total amalgamation and urged a continued two-tier form of regional government. Of major significance to this thesis is the Commission's limited discussion on citizen participation in local

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Manitoba. Local Boundaries Commission Provisional Plan For Local Government Units In The Greater Winnipeg Area Provincial Government White Paper Queen's Printer (December 1970): 26.

¹⁰ Ibid.

government. The Commission, in their Provisional Plan only mentioned that "the apathy of the electorate in regard to local elections as opposed to provincial or federal elections," was attributed to the "very low level of visibility" of local government.¹¹ In its report, the Commission rejected efforts towards decentralization in its conclusion that "neighborhood, borough or ward councils" was "a futuristic concept which is a trifle premature at this time...."¹² Clearly the Commission defended the status quo "in arguments that ranged between ideological commitment and a political sense of what was feasible."¹³

However, before the Commission could report, the surprise election in June of 1969 saw the rise of the New Democratic Party as the Government of Manitoba led by Premier Schreyer. "In September 1969, Premier Schreyer stated publicly that an internal group within the provincial government would be established to reassess Metro."¹⁴ To this end, University of Toronto Professor Meyer Brownstone was appointed as a consultant to the cabinet to gather views

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid. 50.

¹³ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 43.

¹⁴ Ibid.

on the reform of Winnipeg's local government. With Brownstone's familiarity with provincial and local administrations, and his personal and professional ties with many provincial and local civil servants, a number of advisors were assembled into a small competent group to enrich the study. The consulting team included such members as Earl Levin, former planning director of Metro Winnipeg and, for a short time, James Lorimer, an economist interested in decentralized decision-making who worked with Toronto citizens' groups. Of significance is the fact that, unlike the Boundaries Commission, the members "always favoured amalgamation,"¹⁵ and urged a stronger approach to citizen involvement in local government.

The White Paper And Provisions Towards Citizen Participation

The consultant team's efforts at examining reform of Winnipeg's government culminated in its 1970 White Paper entitled Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area.¹⁶ In contrast to the Provisional Plan, the White Paper expressed numerous concerns regarding citizen

¹⁵ Axworthy, Tom The Future City Report No. 2: The Politics Of Innovation Institute Of Urban Studies Winnipeg (April 1972): 38.

¹⁶ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1970).

participation. In respect to Metro, the consultants claimed the "introduction of a second tier of government in 1960 effected major improvements in the quality of certain services administered on an area-wide basis. Regrettably, it also aggravated a much more fundamental and critical problem--the individual's sense of frustration with, and alienation from, the governments supposedly in existence to serve him[/her]." ¹⁷ Furthermore, the consultants added that the "citizen often knows neither whom to blame for a given situation, to whom to turn for remedy nor to whom to tender advice if he feels he has a worthwhile ideal to offer. The inevitable result is that the citizen begins to feel frustrated, alienated, and hence withdraws from active participation in the community. [S/]He is unable, in short, to exercise his full rights of democratic involvement in the level of government theoretically most responsive to his[/her] wishes." ¹⁸

Given the above, the consultants favoured reorganization of the existing municipal structure of government towards a more participatory form of local government. A large part of their reasoning was based on the consultants' conclusion that local governments were becoming

¹⁷ Ibid. 2.

¹⁸ Ibid. 5.

"more remote from the people".¹⁹ The government claimed in the White Paper, for example, that:

This has been characterized, on the one hand, by a high degree of professionalism and competence among administrative staff, and, on the other hand, by increasingly smaller councils or boards, and a very high ratio of citizens to elected representatives. One result has been, almost consistently, to achieve the desired improvement in efficiency and quality of services. But there is now clear evidence of another result as well--a significant loss of public responsiveness and citizen involvement.

In order to avoid the kind of unresponsive government experienced by citizens in large cities, and to tap the abundant energies and resources of all the diverse citizens that make up the Greater Winnipeg Community, it is necessary to devise some new and different structures, ideas and techniques.²⁰

As a solution towards making government more responsive and accessible for Winnipeg's citizens, the consultants expressed a desire to provide a ward structure of "one councillor for every 10,000-12,000 people."²¹ This ratio would leave the new government with 48 wards and hence a council "deliberately large in order to make it more

¹⁹ Ibid. 9.

²⁰ Ibid. 9-10.

²¹ Ibid. 11.

directly responsible to the electors."²² The number of wards was recommended to be even larger--to 50 wards--by the Provincial government's 1971 independent Commission to review urban boundaries.²³ The significance of the Commission's recommendations lay in its strengthening of the White Paper's proposals for a small ward system. Clearly, the White Paper, with the support of the 1971 Taraska Commission's recommendations, expressed "paramount importance to the Greater Winnipeg community that a closer relationship between citizens and their local governments be made possible."²⁴ In the end, a majority of the White Paper's recommendations were subsequently enacted in the City Of Winnipeg Act also known as Bill 36.²⁵

²² Ibid. 14.

²³ Manitoba. Report Of The Greater Winnipeg Electoral Boundaries Commission Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1971). *This was headed by Judge Peter Taraska who later headed a review of Winnipeg local government in 1975.

²⁴ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Op. cit. 18.

²⁵ Manitoba. Statutes Of Manitoba c. 105 (July 27, 1971). *Bill 109, passed a year later, implemented environmental sections on subdivision control, neighborhood rehabilitation and the views of the Manitoba Law Reform Commission that had been postponed in March of 1971.

The Community Committees

A significant recommendation of the White Paper expressed the need for an appropriate vehicle for creating a climate for citizen participation. This largely evolved from the consultants' optimistic belief that, "it is possible to create, at the local level, the sort of climate in which citizen interest, participation and active involvement can and will flourish. We [the government] believe that is possible to overcome public apathy, to overcome the now prevalent 'leave-politics-to-the-politicians' sort of attitude and all that these imply from low voter turn-outs to government isolated from the people."²⁶ The consultants therefore recommended the creation of twelve Community Committees composed of Councillors elected from wards in the municipal areas from where the Committees were to be established. According to the White Paper:

[E]ach councillor elected from a local ward would become automatically and simultaneously, a member of the municipal Community Committee and a member of the Greater Winnipeg Council. This dual responsibility of the elected councillor--the fact that he is elected to the Central Council but must also serve on the Community Committee--is a vital and integral part of our proposal. Indeed, it is impossible to overstate the importance of this

²⁶ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Op. cit. 18.

aspect of the proposed local government system.²⁷

The Community Committees would "serve as a general contact between Council and citizens over the whole range of city functions,"²⁸ in providing information to citizens with respect to city programs and finances, and maintaining the right of citizens to have a voice in revising plans and development proposals affecting a community committee area. This was especially expressed in the planning role of the Committees "designed to enable citizens in the community to be actively involved in the planning processes of government and thereby reducing the feelings of powerlessness, which are so destructive to the democratic process. The role to be played by the community committee, if the provisions in the Act [were to be] fully utilized, could put to rest the claims that the citizens [were] manipulated by the faceless administrators at the regional government level."²⁹ It was anticipated that citizens, in the interest of their neighborhoods, would participate in the planning of their physical, social and the economic environment of the city.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 45.

²⁹ Manitoba. A Suggested Model For Community Committee Structure And Organization Task Force On Community Committees (October 1971): 22.

If, for example, Council planned to develop a particular proposal effecting a particular ward area of the city, it was presumed that citizens from the ward area would be consulted on the proposed change before implementing the proposal. Objections, suggestions or recommendations from the citizens would be assessed in formulating a final report to be eventually forwarded to the Executive Policy Committee for final approval. The Committee would thus "behave on a geographic basis much like a Council Committee behaves in functional areas. The main difference would be citizen participation on a community level."³⁰

For the most part, the interaction between councillors and citizens would be accomplished through four time-oriented forms of meetings:

- (1) the at-least-monthly meetings 'to consider the business of the community',
- (2) the quarterly meetings 'to consider the progress reports on the programs and the projects of the city',
- (3) occasional meetings to discuss 'current and capital budgets', and
- (4) the annual meetings to discuss 'revenues and expenditures of the community committee'....³¹

³⁰ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 41.

³¹ Manitoba. A Suggested Model For Community Committee Structure And Organization Op. cit. 17.

In summary, according to Axworthy, the Community Committees would "be akin to Neighborhood Councils and were intended to provide ready access to the people.... They were intended to be responsible to develop effective ways and means of keeping citizens informed of what their council is doing, planning or proposing."³²

In addition to their informative-communicative role, the Committees were also envisaged to engage in a number of administrative functions. In the White Paper, for example:

[I]t [was] anticipated that, at reorganization, the unified Council will assume responsibility for those major functions (aside from those services now under Metro's jurisdiction) related to planning, development, and fiscal matters.

A number of services will remain at the local level. It will be the function of the Community Committees to administer these services.

It will also be the function of the Committees to administer those services generally deemed to be essentially local in nature such as community centres, local parks, playgrounds, libraries and recreational facilities.³⁵

Towards this objective, the White Paper also recommended the

³² Axworthy, Lloyd and Cassidy, Jim Unicity: The Transition Future City Series No. 4 Institute Of Urban Studies Winnipeg (1972): 24.

³³ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Op. cit. 19.

Community Committees to be given budgetary authority to:

- (1) consider and propose programs with respect to these services;
- (2) submit to the Central Council the proposed budgets for these services; and
- (3) supervise the delivery of these services.

Amounts would be allocated from the overall budget prepared for the regional government for the specified programs in each Committee area. These amounts would be considered in light of Committee program plans and budget proposals. The sum allocated would be a lump sum covering all such programs and in this way permit local flexibility in allocation of expenditures.³⁴

"The budget was therefore to be broken down in this manner so that each community committee could decide what wanted to emphasize within the limits of the budget allocation for its own area. Once this had been done, the committee could evaluate the efforts of the central administration in providing services in the area."³⁵

There were to be specific limitations, however, in the role of the Committees in the administrative-budgetary process. First, the appropriation for each Committee was to be determined by Council, "and could relate only to the four

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 133.

groups of local services indicated in the act."³⁶ Thus, the Committees were to be limited in their reallocation of funds from one budget group to another and could not reallocate funds between the budget groups but only within a particular budget group. Secondly, a Community Committee, could not vote itself a budget, nor hold an authoritative debate on a taxation question, since taxation is city wide. In addition, the "range of services within each group could diminish over time if the council decided to unify them. This meant that a community committee's power to reallocate funds within a budget group would decrease if unification proceeded."³⁷ Finally, the "Community Committees would have no legal authority over the hiring and firing of personnel at the community level, but would have the power to direct and assign local staff."³⁸

In summary, the Community Committee's budgetary-planning role was envisaged as a means to meet each individual community's fiscal needs with a procedure "designed to facilitate administrative responsiveness in the

³⁶ Ibid. 72.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Op. cit. 20.

delivery of local services."³⁹ Moreover, the Community Committees' role was a transitional one, in which the Committees would play a role similar to that of the former municipal councils in the administration of local services by ensuring the continuity of services. As Brownstone and Plunkett claim:

In short, there is a legally defined relationship, with decentralization representing much more than a mere facade, despite the absence of two-tier legislative bodies. The committees are an instrument of decentralization, being in effect the pre-existing municipalities reincarnated.⁴⁰

This role was, however, clearly subject to the overriding decisions of Council.

In conclusion, the Committees were an effort to develop community nuclei of citizens interested in common neighborhood concerns. Towards this goal, the Committees were regarded as a forum for authorities to interact with their constituents for the purpose keeping both citizens and professionals informed. Moreover, they were innovative, in that citizens had a vehicle to set specific task goals for their communities through the interaction of the citizens

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 160.

with their Councillor. In developing these special interests through the Committees, citizens could engage in the proposal of policy, touching on a variety of areas that concerned the welfare of their community and their particular community problems. An institutional means to facilitate greater citizen involvement in influencing and planning the requirements of their communities was thus established through the Community Committees.

The Grass Roots: Resident Advisory Groups

From the White Paper's recommendations for increased citizen involvement in local government, Resident Advisory Groups were provided by Section 21 1 of the Act,⁴¹ as a means of improving the communication between the citizen and his/her elected representative at a "grass-roots" level. The RAGs were significantly characterized by their flexibility of duties to perform. The RAGs, for example, could choose any or only some of these tasks:

- (1) Purely Advisory: this is primarily a passive role played by the advisors, who react almost exclusively to requests of the Community Committees (formal or informal) for advice;
- (2) A Watch Dog: the task force suggested that 'as watch-dogs...the RAG's could become more than mere advisors. A dynamic tension could endure that

⁴¹ Manitoba. City Of Winnipeg Act Bill 36 Queen's Printer Winnipeg (January 1 1972).

would provide for an active, continuing interaction between elections. This tension could be accentuated by the fact that only the councillors have the final decision-making authority and RAG's could only influence decisions by forceful pressure upon the members.';

(3) Planning: a group adopting this role would devote a considerable amount of its time to long-range planning matters to the Community Committee on day-to-day problems;

(4) Initiator: A group playing this role would spend a good deal of its time considering the matters or problems which it raises or researches, and to which it then develops its own solutions;

(5) Buffer: a group adopting this role would spend a good deal of time hearing delegations and complaints from the public, and making appropriate recommendations to the Community Committees.⁴²

In the above tasks, the Community Committees were to maintain "the closest possible communication with local citizens of the area in order to provide them with access to the regional government to express ideas, suggestions, problems, grievances, etc.," by "spurring citizens to discuss and develop ideas on policy, programming and budgetary matters" through the RAGs.⁴³ However, it was clear that the RAGs were "not designed to share power with the community committees. Instead they were to provide a recognized vehicle for residents to express their concerns

⁴² Ivanoff, Alexandra and Vopenfjord, Leonard Unicity Winnipeg 1972-74: A Preliminary Study Of Formally Structured Citizen Participation National Office Publishing Community Planning Association Of Canada (August 1974): 29.

⁴³ Manitoba. Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Op. cit. 21.

to the community committees, and through them to the council."⁴⁴

The RAGs permitted citizens to develop their own organizational hierarchy and procedure. Since members of the Resident Advisory Groups "were not intended also to be members of the community committees,"⁴⁵ with membership in the latter being restricted to the Councillors from wards within each Community Committee area, the RAGs were to be selected at a community conference that elects each advisory group. "The number of members of the residents' advisory group, the manner of their election, and their term of service, were to be determined by the residents present at the community conference that elects each advisory group."⁴⁶ As stated in Section 24 of the Act, for example, citizens may be "elected at any community conference referred...by the residents of the community who are present, from their number."⁴⁷ In summary, under these loosely-defined organizational arrangements, the Residents' Advisory Group was expected to advise and assist its

⁴⁴ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 70-71.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Manitoba. City Of Winnipeg Act Op. cit. 22.

Community Committee.

The Centralized Components Of The Unicity Structure

In addition to the creation of avenues for political decentralization, Unicity's decision-making structures consisted of a centralized Council-City-Commissioner system. This organization represented the political architects' attempt to unify and centralize administrative decision-making in Winnipeg. Through the implementation of this system, city plans could be carried out with greater efficiency "without resorting completely to a single chief administrative officer such as a city-manager."⁴⁸

This goal was to be accomplished through a Board of Commissioners which, "theoretically[,] would make recommendations on all matters concerning the carrying out of executive and administrative functions and would also be responsible to the central council for general management, direction and control of the city's administration."⁴⁹ The Board was thus "empowered to consider and make recommendations to the Executive Policy Committee on policy

⁴⁸Brownstone, Meyer and Feldman, Lionel D. "Innovation And City Government: Winnipeg 1972" Canadian Forum 52 (May 1972): 31.

⁴⁹ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. Unicity: The Transition 26.

matters and the administration of the city, to see all acts of Council are carried out, to prepare an annual current and capital budget, to report regularly on the city's financial position, and to recommend to council for the appointment or dismissal of department heads and assistant heads."⁵⁰ In short, each individual Commissioner would have divided responsibility at two levels: (1) the submission of policy recommendations to Council through the policy committees which are made up of councillors, and (2) the management, supervision and control of the city administrative organization, that is, the administrative departments. Each individual Commissioner would therefore serve "as a sort of chief administrative officer for the committees concerned with the services under its jurisdiction."⁵¹ Separate Commissioners for each administrative jurisdiction would include:

- (1) a Chief Commissioner who would be chair[wo/]man of the Board of Commissioners;
- (2) a Commissioner of Planning and Development who would be the senior civic servant dealing with the Committee on Planning and Development;
- (3) a Commissioner of Works and Operations, the senior civic servant dealing with the Committee of Works and Operations;
- (4) a Commissioner of Finance, the senior civic

⁵⁰ Brownstone And Feldman Op. cit. 31.

⁵¹ Canada. Winnipeg: Canada's Third Largest City Ministry Of State And Urban Affairs Queen's Printer Ottawa (1971): 31.

servant dealing with the Committee of Finance;
(5) the mayor, ex-officio.⁵²

Of importance is the role of the Chief Commissioner who would "maintain effective liaison with the Mayor and Council and to provide leadership and guidance to other Commissioners."⁵³ As Chair of the Board of Commissioners, the Chief Commissioner would also be responsible for the "coordination of the implementation of all policies and programmes."⁵⁴ The Chief Commissioner would thus "direct the budget bureau, the information system, law department and the clerk's department."⁵⁵ In this role, the Chief Commissioner would authorized to direct appointed Commissioners or employees in the performance of the duties and responsibilities assigned to each by the Act or by council.

By and large, the Board would function under the Council in accomplishing their administrative functions. Specific responsibility for the operation of each of the

⁵² Canada. Bernard, Andre Profile: Winnipeg Ministry of State and Urban Affairs Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1974): 10.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

City's Departments and services would be assigned by Council to an appointed Commissioner designated by Council. Council could thus vary a Commissioner's assignment at any time, "provided only that at all times responsibility for each city department and service is assigned to one of the appointed commissioners."⁵⁶

Council's major role, however, was in legislative decision-making over-and-above administrative tasks:

[T]he Council is intended to be more of a legislative and policy decision-making body than an administrative body. Its role is to decide upon policy recommendations which are channelled through the Executive Policy Committee from the Standing Committees.⁵⁷

Council would thus be the exclusive law-making body responsible for all programs under its jurisdiction:

The council may, by-law, make regulations not contrary to law, respecting matters for which provision is not specifically made herein and without restricting the generality of the foregoing may make such regulations for the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants and for the peace, order, and local government of the

⁵⁶ Feldman and Goldrick Op. cit. 323.

⁵⁷ Bernard Op. cit. 18.

city as a council deems necessary.⁵⁸

As reviewed earlier, Unicity's Council composed fifty wards. These wards were "divided in two groups: A (Centre City) with twenty wards and B (Suburbs) with twenty seven wards, requiring that three members be elected from each."⁵⁹ Large by Canadian standards, with fifty Councillors plus a Mayor elected at-large, four Committees were established. The most powerful of these would be the Executive Policy Committee composed of ten members, including the Mayor, and the Chairs of the three functional committees, plus six Councillors selected from the Council. Its principal task lay "in the formulation and coordination of policy recommendations to council."⁶⁰ Specifically, the three main areas of responsibility assigned to the Executive Policy Committee resided in the:

1. formulation of policy recommended to council;
2. coordination of policy proposals from Standing Committees; and
3. programme review and coordination of policy

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Brownstone and Feldman Op. cit. 29.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

implementation.⁶¹

In summary, the Executive Policy Committee would be the "overall policy arm of the Council and other committees would be administrative ones."⁶²

In order to facilitate the EPC and Council's decision-making and policy execution role, three other Committees were designated under the Act:

The Committee on Finance is responsible to Council for the financial management of the city and for recommending the EPC fiscal policies for the city. In addition, the Committee on Finance may have such powers and duties as Council wishes to delegate with respect to: (a) assessment; (b) finance; (c) personnel; (d) purchasing; (e) protection of persons and property.

The Committee on Environment is responsible to Council for the preparation of plans and programmes respecting the environment and social development and for recommending to the EPC environmental policies for the city. In addition, the Committee has such powers and duties as the Council may delegate with respect to: (a) planning, including transportation, open space, and parks and planning and development of the environment; (b) housing; (c) urban renewal; (d) pollution regulation and control; (e) health and social development.

The Committee on Works and Operations is responsible to Council for the construction,

⁶¹ Canada. Op. cit. Winnipeg: Canada's Third Largest City 12.

⁶² Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. Unicity: The Transition 25.

operation and management of civic utilities, transit, and traffic systems, and all lands, buildings, structures, works and equipment held or owned by the city, and for recommending to the executive policy committee suitable policies and programmes with respect to these matters. In addition, the Committee has powers and duties as Council may delegate with respect to: (a) transit; (b) streets; (c) traffic control; (d) utilities; (e) waste collection and disposal; (f) engineering and design; (g) parks and recreation; (h) cultural facilities.⁶³

Overall, the Committees were specifically entrusted to advise, implement and review policy. Section 36 of the Act, for example, clearly sets out this function:

It is the responsibility of each standing committee:

- (a) to advise the EPC with respect to the responsibilities assigned to that standing committee by this Act or by Council;
- (b) to ensure the implementation of city policies and programs as assigned by this Act or council to that standing committee; and
- (c) to review the annual estimates of revenues and expenditures of the city departments and city services committee by this Act or by Council.⁶⁴

In conclusion, Unicity's Board of Commissioners and the Council Committees represented a centralized administrative structure. This structure was coupled with a form of

⁶³ Canada. Op. cit. Winnipeg: Canada's Third Largest City 12.

⁶⁴ Brownstone and Feldman Op. cit. 29.

political decentralization through the Community Committees and the Residents' Advisory Groups.

The Taraska Report And Recommendations Of 1976

"Section 660" of the City Of Winnipeg Act specified that the Lieutenant Governor in Council appoint a committee "to review the operation of this Act and the activities of the city...."⁶⁵ The Committee of Review, City Of Winnipeg Act, was thus "appointed by Order-in-Council Number 1174/75, dated September 11, 1975."⁶⁶ Chaired by Judge Peter Taraska with Earl A. Levin and Allan O'Brien as the other Committee members, the Committee examined the quality of the government being provided to the people of Winnipeg. According to the Committees' Report And Recommendations:

Having gained insight into that issue we could then address ourselves to the questions of how the City of Winnipeg Act affects the government of the City, whether the Act is functioning as intended, whether the government's goals (as expressed in the White Paper) are being achieved and, what, if anything, should be done about it if we discovered malfunction. This approach virtually determined

⁶⁵ Manitoba. City Of Winnipeg Act Op. cit. 22.

⁶⁶ Manitoba. Taraska, Judge Peter, Levin, Earl A., O'Brien, Allan and Gallagher, Ellen N. Report And Recommendations Queen's Printer Winnipeg (October 1976): iv.

the methodology of our review.⁶⁷

In completing their research, the Committee published notices in newspapers one month before hearings, sent letters to Council, Legislature, and organizations for their opinions of government in Winnipeg, and urged civil servants to express their opinions. Its research culminated in the release of their Report And Recommendations published in October of 1976.⁶⁸

The General Findings Of The Committee

The Committee felt that the "single most noteworthy 'accomplishment' since the Act was passed [was] the general acceptance of unification," and that the "major services have now effectively been unified."⁶⁹ The Committee also acknowledged two additional and "quite remarkable"⁷⁰ accomplishments:

The first is the fact of the citizens' greatly

⁶⁷ Ibid. ix.

⁶⁸ Ibid. iii.

⁶⁹ Ibid. 10.

⁷⁰ Ibid. 12.

enhanced accessibility to their local government-- a goal on which the White Paper dwelt with force and at length. The system of community committees and residents' advisory groups may not, so far, have worked out to everyone's complete satisfaction, but the system is in place and the opportunities for greater citizen participation do exist.

The second--and by far the most dramatic-- achievement of the city has been the swift and astonishingly smooth and orderly integration of services. The chaos and confusion which critics of the legislation so confidently predicted before the Act was passed simply never occurred.⁷¹

The Committee, however, also noted in its assessment that the White Paper expressed an "out of scale"⁷² preoccupation with the notion of political alienation and political deprivation. They noted, for example, that although there was merit in the informed involvement of citizens in their local government, the "attempt in the City of Winnipeg Act to give the community committees an executive role with respect to the delivery of local services was not successful. And, on the evidence, it is obvious that the directive in the Act to encourage the development of techniques for the facilitation of communication and the dissemination of information on questions of policy, programs and budgets has been little

⁷¹ Ibid. 13.

⁷² Ibid. 22.

more successful."⁷³

Towards explaining the basis of the Committee's conclusion, the next sections outline the Committee's review of Unicity's attempt at stimulating participation, citizen accessibility, and political decentralization through the Community Committees and the Residents' Advisory Groups.⁷⁴ The presentation of the Committee's recommendations and the Provincial Government's response will be examined in the last section.

The Community Committees In The Administration Of Local Services

By 1975, when the Committee began its review, confusion had been evident in the Community Committee's local service supervisory role. This was largely due to the misconception of many Councillors who had occupied similar posts in the former municipalities and viewed the Community Committees as having roles similar to those of the former suburban municipal councils. As pointed out earlier, the intention of the White Paper and the City Of Winnipeg Act stressed the

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴*A number of recommendations were also made concerning the election of the Mayor and his/her role in a parliamentary form of local government.

Community Committee's responsibility to qualitatively assess the delivery of services as in a supervisory role. Nevertheless, as Brownstone and Plunkett note, "many committee members interpreted 'supervision' as giving them direct control over employees involved in local service delivery. Some even argued that employees could not be appointed, transferred, or replaced without the appropriate community committee's express sanction."⁷⁵ This misinterpretation by the Councillors resulted in a number of conflicts between the Community Committees and the Board of Commissioners over the direction of employees. Eventually, these "misinterpretations caused so much conflict that the [A]ct eventually had to be amended, defining 'supervise' as watching, observing, and making qualitative assessments of the service delivery."⁷⁶ In the Committee Of Review's conclusions, the Committee noted that the "Act does not define what it means by supervising employees in the delivery of services, nor does it indicate how the community committee should carry out this responsibility while being unable to hire, fire, suspend, or exercise ultimate administrative control over them," and that there was "much disappointment, even bitterness, voiced by witnesses who gave evidence about the failure of the community committees

⁷⁵ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 132.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

in this respect, and about the pre-emption of their responsibility and role by the central administration."⁷⁷

Furthermore, the Committee Of Review pointed out that the "attempt in the City of Winnipeg Act to give the community committees an executive role with respect to the delivery of services was not successful," and that "they have, in fact, no authority--they cannot hire or fire personnel or enter into contracts. These powers are vested in the central administration."⁷⁸ In their review, the Committee further noted that it was the government's intention in the White Paper and in the Act that local services be eventually centralized, rather than decentralized, and that the role of the Community Committees in the supervision of local services was intended to be a transitional one. The Committee pointed out, for example that "there can only be one element in the city government with responsibility for their supervision of employees in the delivery of services, and that must be the central administration."⁷⁹ This point was reinforced by the Committee's belief that the Community Committees could not

⁷⁷ Manitoba. Report And Recommendations Op. cit. 85.

⁷⁸ Ibid. 26-28.

⁷⁹ Ibid. 87.

have supervised the employees in the delivery of services without creating serious confusion in the administration of the city in having several sets of supervisors for civic employees to respond to.

In spite of the above, the Committee supported the view that the Community Committees had "the potential for improving the citizen's access to the system of local government," and therefore "the community committees should be retained, but that their role must be modified if they are to make a useful contribution to the achievement of that objective."⁸⁰ The Committee therefore supported the participatory intent of the original Act. This was especially brought out in the Committee's recommendations for an increase in the involvement of the Community Committees' in the planning process and in the review of development and zoning proposals. Planning was seen by the Committee as the primary role for the Community Committees over an administrative one and in its Report And Recommendations, the Committee maintained that:

The most appropriate local context within which to focus the activities of the community committees is that of the preparation and implementation of city plans and, in particular, the district plans and action area plans. It is in the formulation of these plans that there can be developed the

⁸⁰ Ibid. 88.

greatest measure of communication between the people and their government; and it is in the guidance and control of development, in accordance with these plans, that there can be developed a sense of local involvement in the control of the local environment.

The community committees must be responsible for the preparation of the district plans and the action area plans. This will require them to consult with the local citizens, hold hearings, make information available, and develop and discuss concepts.⁸¹

Accordingly, the Committee proposed the abolition of the Community Committees' administrative role, emphasizing instead greater citizen involvement in the formulation and planning of policies and programs. As the Committee stated in their recommendations: "they can be made most effective if they have a real responsibility in the policy-making process, which is, in effect, the planning process. [T]his means a real involvement in the preparation of district plans and action area plans and in citizens advising their councillors on amendments to the development plan. On the implementation side of the planning process, it means an involvement in the processing of applications for zoning amendments and variations."⁸²

⁸¹ Ibid. 89-90.

⁸² Ibid. 136.

Towards Political Centralization

The Committee also made recommendations towards a more centralized form of local government structure in Winnipeg. For the most part, this was based on the Committee's view that the attempt at political decentralization led to confusion and ambiguous lines of responsibility and accountability. As pointed out earlier, this had its roots in the Community Committee's administrative decentralization in the supervision of local services. The Committee therefore opted for a more centralized system, with responsibility for interaction between policy and administration "placed squarely on the political executive, i.e., on the executive policy committee."⁸³

Two approaches were thus taken. First, the Committee believed that it would be more reasonable to base the size of the wards on a standard number of electors (i.e. those over the age of 18) rather than on the total population as the Act was based on. The Committee felt that this would reduce the then present fifty ward system and would speed up the business of government as there "does not seem to be any clear and compelling reason why a population of 10,000 was

⁸³ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 129.

chosen as the standard of the ward."⁸⁴

The Committee, however, continued to recognize the importance of accountability and believed Council should be large enough to maintain an adequate degree of closeness between the elected representative and their electors. The Committee noted, for example, that:

One councillor per ward means wards which are small enough for the councillor to be completely familiar with his own ward. It means that citizens, having only one councillor, are more likely to know his or her name and how to contact the councillor. It makes possible personal contact both in election campaigns and afterwards. It creates a more understandable relationship between elected and elector. Accountability is enhanced.⁸⁵

In the end, the Committee recommended using the number of electors from the 1974 electoral roll rather than the total population and recommended a reduction from fifty to thirty nine representatives. In its recommendation, the Committee pointed out that:

[T]he more appropriate ratio is that between representative and electors, rather than representative and total population, because, as already indicated, the total population is served

⁸⁴ Manitoba. Report And Recommendations Op. cit. 91.

⁸⁵ Ibid. 70.

by the representative's responsiveness to the electors, who are in fact the adult population of the community which is 18 years of age and over."⁸⁶

As a second measure, the Committee recommended the number of Community Committee areas be reduced from twelve to six. This recommendation was largely based on the Committee's view that the boundaries of the existing twelve Community Committee areas were, to a large extent, based on the former municipal boundaries and therefore the attitudes and interests from the former municipal governments were carried over and reinforced over city-wide concerns. According to the Committee, a "larger and more varied context would permit more comprehensive planning and development concepts at the district level," and "would facilitate, to a great degree, the establishment of a general development plan for the city."⁸⁷ The committee therefore reasoned that halving the number of Community Committee areas, and thereby enlarging them, might reduce tendencies towards parochialism.

Given the above, new Community Committee areas were to be organized along six previously set-out administrative

⁸⁶ Ibid. 91-93.

⁸⁷ Ibid. 90-91.

districts for the administrative organization of public works and engineering operations. As stated in the Report And Recommendations, the Committee stated that:

[P]erhaps the most important recommendation we are making is for the revision of the community areas. We are proposing that the present 12 communities, which are based upon the former municipal areas, be changed to six communities based upon the present works and operations districts[.]

[B]ecause of the present community and ward structure, councillors have a very parochial approach to city affairs and do not address themselves to matters of larger civic policy. Another reason is that we believe that the six engineering districts provide a better basis for the development of city plans at all levels and, accordingly, provide a better physical and socio-economic framework on which to base city policies.⁸⁸

Clearly, unlike the original White Paper, the 1971 Taraska Report, and the Act, less emphasis was made on the importance of both a large Council to improve the accessibility of citizens to Councillors and wards with relatively small populations that would emphasize neighborhoods as geographical areas of interests.

⁸⁸ Ibid. 135.

The Committee Of Review's Assessment Of The Residents' Advisory Groups

In a review of the accomplishments of the Community Committees and the Residents' Advisory Groups, the Committee of Review came to the conclusion that "neither of these elements of the city government was working as the Act had intended...."⁸⁹ This conclusion especially applied to the Residents' Advisory Groups which were either ignored or rejected by the Community Committees. This rejection was most often based on the negative perceptions of some Councillors of the composition of the RAGs who believed the RAGs represented small special interest groups rather than the general population of the community. To these Councillors, the small interest groups could manoeuvre themselves into positions of dominance in the RAGs and impose their own particular views on the Community Committees. The Committee noted, for example, that in some instances "councillors saw the residents' advisory groups as being used by defeated political candidates as a forum in which to conduct political campaigns or by aspiring politicians as a place to launch their political careers, and felt that these presented a threat to their own

⁸⁹ Ibid. 23.

political careers."⁹⁰ With the negative perceptions expressed by some Councillors, the Committee noted that a "common complaint on the part of the residents' advisory groups was that the community committees ignore[d] them, [did] not act on their recommendations and [made] little effort to fulfil the requirements of the Act with respect to their responsibility for consulting with the resident advisory groups and for developing techniques of communication with the citizens in their areas."⁹¹ Thus, although the Act set out the general intent of the Councillors' roles in the Community Committees in relation to the RAGs, "the specifics depended entirely on the will of the councillors, many of whom were not entirely sympathetic to the effective development of committees. Consequently expectations were raised regarding community committee activities and public participation in them, only to be dashed by the performance of council members, and to some extent, the behaviour of city administrators."⁹² In short, the relationship of the RAGs to their Community Committees "was left to chance": a "healthy relationship wherein residents' advisory groups could play a meaningful role

⁹⁰ Ibid. 98.

⁹¹ Ibid. 30.

⁹² Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 131.

depended on the attitudes of the councillors sitting on the community committees. Where the councillors were committed, the citizen's interest was sustained, but where the councillors were hostile, or at best neutral, the residents' groups soon found they were going through meaningless motions, and the process floundered."⁹³

In the Committee's recommendations a number of possible solutions were brought out. First, the relationship of the RAGs to the Community Committees was to be clarified so that there could, in fact, be effective citizen participation in the process of government. As the Committee pointed out: "one of the essential qualities which is lacking is a clear understanding of its role. It is our view that the difficulty can be overcome through a clarification of responsibilities."⁹⁴ Towards clarifying the RAGs' vague "advise and assist" function, the Committee recommended an emphasis of the RAGs in a planning-advisory role. The Committee claimed, for example, that:

[T]he residents' advisory group should play an important role in the process of dealing with zoning applications and variances. We propose that the community committee continue to hear, initially, applications for the rezoning of sites

⁹³ Ibid. 132.

⁹⁴ Manitoba. Report And Recommendations Op. cit. 100.

in the community, as they do now, and that the residents' advisory group continue to advise the community committee on such rezoning applications.⁹⁵

A second major recommendation by the Committee recommended for a broadening of the membership of the RAGs to "include any organization in the community which wishes to participate in the planning process," and for "nominations in writing [that] should be accepted in advance of the community conference...for candidates to be elected even if they are not present at the conference."⁹⁶ The latter recommendation was made in response to the complaints of several witnesses who complained Section 21 (1) of the Act limited the potential membership of the RAGs since it required only those who attended the community conference could be elected as a RAG representative.

The Committee also recommended minimum resources be available to assist the Residents' Advisory Groups. This recommendation was based on numerous complaints that access to information was difficult for the members of the RAGs. In the Report And Recommendations, the Committee stated, for example, that:

⁹⁵ Ibid. 101.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

It seems an elementary truth that the degree of access to the system of government, by the people, is in large measure a product of the extent to which they have accurate and current information about the activities of the local government. It also seems an elementary truth that a city council cannot function effectively if its members do not have the information they need to permit them to make intelligent decisions. On the basis of the evidence submitted to us, we must conclude that there is an inadequate flow, and an inadequate availability, of information about the process of government in the city.⁹⁷

In recommending a solution, the Committee was clear in supporting greater citizen accessibility to government by its recommendations for "an information office as part of the city administration," as "information offices are of basic importance to the success of the city government; that they should provide as wide a range of information as possible; that the information must be available on equal terms to everyone who asks for it. Only in this way can a proper basis for open government be established."⁹⁸

The Provincial Government's Response: Amendments To The City Of Winnipeg Act

From the Committee of Review's recommendations, the Legislature enacted 140 amendments to the City Of Winnipeg

⁹⁷ Ibid. 102.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 104.

Act.⁹⁹ Of the significant amendments potentially effecting citizen accessibility was the reduction of the number of electoral wards from fifty to twenty nine. This reduction went further than the Committee Of Review's recommendations for a reduction in the number of wards from fifty to thirty nine.

The Community Committee-RAG system was also substantially altered by the 1977 amendments. Unlike the original concept of the Community Committees that was based on identifiable neighborhoods that were already familiar to many citizens and comprised between three to six wards averaging 10,000 citizens, the 1977 reduction of the Council from fifty to twenty nine members meant the creation of much larger wards through an expansion of their boundaries. The result was a clear reduction of the "participatory potential of the system,"¹⁰⁰ virtually doing away the previous decentralized Community Committee structure once aligned with the former municipal boundaries. In short, the Province had retreated substantially from political decentralization, enlarging the wards and reducing the number of Community Committees. As Brownstone and Plunkett

⁹⁹ Manitoba. Fourth Session Thirtieth Legislature 26 Elizabeth II 1977 Bill 62 An Act To Amend The City Of Winnipeg Act.

¹⁰⁰ Manitoba. Report And Recommendations Op. cit. 140.

maintain, "the proposal to reduce the number of community committees from twelve to six, while helping eliminate the pre-existing municipalities, seemed more a matter of administrative convenience than an action taken to improve decentralization."¹⁰¹

As reviewed earlier, the original City Of Winnipeg Act gave the Community Committees supervisory and budgetary powers through Council's provision of a lump sum to be reallocated by the Community Committees to pay for four specific groups of services. The 1977 amendments reduced these functions drastically, leaving only libraries, parks and recreation matters to be supervised by the Community Committees. This essentially removed the essence of the Committees' supervisory function, confining them only to preparing an expenditure budget within a very limited range of local services in the now much larger areas defined as communities. Clearly the main thrust of the 1977 legislation was towards program centralization in which the Manitoba government's initial emphasis on reorganization was superseded by concerns for efficiency.

One exception to the above was in the continuance of the Community Committees' and the RAGs' planning function.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 138.

According to Brownstone and Plunkett, "planning [was] the sole remaining vehicle for political decentralization that has a link to local government functions."¹⁰² In conclusion, however, the Province had essentially weakened the democratic-participatory potential of Unicity against the White Paper's call for increased citizen participation and access in Winnipeg's local government.

The 1986 Review Committee

"The City of Winnipeg Act Review Committee was appointed by Order-In-Council No. 448/84 dated 11 April 1984"¹⁰³ to review the operation of the City of Review Act. Significant to this thesis was its mandate by the Province to review "meaningful citizen participation in City decision-making processes."¹⁰⁴ In July of 1984,¹⁰⁵ the Committee began its work by seeking public participation in

¹⁰² Ibid. 141.

¹⁰³ Manitoba. Cherniak, Lawrie, Artibise, Alan, MacDonald, D.I., Epstein, Donald and Thomas, Paul G. The Report Of The City Of Winnipeg Act: Final Draft Report (Copy From Institute Of Urban Studies University Of Winnipeg Before Publication At The Queen's Printer) Winnipeg (April 1986): 1.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. 3.

its investigation. Their paper, entitled Our City In Review: Issues Paper¹⁰⁶ was released at a press conference to bring the attention of the media and Winnipeg's citizens the focus of their study. Notably, throughout the fall of 1984, the Review Committee's review process involved considerable private discussion with civil servants, prominent businesspersons, civic and provincial employees and academics.¹⁰⁷ In addition, a poll was commissioned on the attitudes of Winnipeg residents to indicate decisive public opinion. As a third part of their investigation, the Committee sent a lengthy and detailed questionnaire to all of the serving and retired members of City Council. However, as with the public opinion poll, the number of responses was a "disappointing total".¹⁰⁸ In response, the Committee conducted public hearings throughout the City during the first three months of 1985. Interestingly, from their Issues Paper a number of citizens expressed their concern with the section entitled

¹⁰⁶ Manitoba. Cherniak, Lawrie, Artibise, Alan, MacDonald, D.I., Epstein, Donald and Thomas, Paul G. Our City In Review: Issues Paper Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1984). *About 3,000 were distributed in total.

¹⁰⁷ *The meetings were held in private since, according to the Committee, views would be less guarded as civil servants, especially, would not care to see their views on public record.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 4.

"The Qualities Of Good Government",¹⁰⁹ often referring to the page numbers of this section during the hearings. Significantly, in this, and other sections, (i.e. "Citizen Participation", "Political And Administrative Organization" and "Planning") the issue of citizen participation was an important part of each area of concern. In the release of its Final Report in late April of 1986, the issue of citizen participation was clearly evident in the principles underlying the Committee's recommendations. The Committee noted, for example, that:

The City of Winnipeg Act should encourage open and accountable city government. The Review Committee believes that the process of decision-making within city government should be as visible and as easily understood as possible.

The City of Winnipeg Act should contribute to the responsiveness of city government and to the involvement of city residents. As the level of government which has the most immediate impact on the lives of citizens, city government should exhibit a high degree of responsiveness to both their policy concerns and their service requirements.¹¹⁰

The next sections overview the Committee's recommendations in relation to citizen participation and accessibility. This is divided into three areas of concern:

¹⁰⁹ Ibid. 10-12.

¹¹⁰ Ibid. 16-17.

1) the Committee's recommendations regarding the number of Wards; 2) the Committee's recommendations concerning the Community Committees' role in the administration of local services and as an avenue for increasing citizen accessibility, and 3) the Committee's recommendations and views of the Residents' Advisory Groups.

The 1986 Committee's Recommendations On The Number Of Unicity Wards

A significant Committee recommendation was for a decrease in the number of wards in Winnipeg from the existing twenty nine wards to twenty four. This recommendation was based on enlarging the number of Councillors sitting on the Community Committees to a standard four from three within the existing number of Community Committees (currently six). In its recommendation, the Committee pointed out that:

[M]ost people in Winnipeg believe that Council should be reduced in size or remain the same. Very few people favour increasing the size of Council. While 24 wards represent, in some people's opinion, an inconsequential reduction from the present 29, it is a convenient number within boundary constraints to provide four wards--and four Councillors--per Community Committee. As we believe that three Councillors per Community Committee would not be satisfactory, and that Community Committees should be as equal in population as possible, we established a working framework of four Councillors times six

communities for a total of 24.¹¹¹

Although the number of wards was recommended to be reduced, the Committee maintained that the "new ward boundaries be determined on the basis of a collection of recognizable neighborhoods with neighborhood interests and priorities [and that] the boundaries of the Community Committee areas, as composed of mutual-interest wards, be determined on the basis of similarity of interest and other political criteria, rather than being patterned on the administratively-convenient public works district scheme."¹¹² Notably, this recommendation contrasted the 1977 ward boundaries recommendations that were not based on political or socio-economic criteria but largely on administrative-efficiency criteria. The Committee claimed, for example, that "in our judgment, the six public works districts, superimposed on the political map of Winnipeg, are not the means by which community boundaries should be determined."¹¹³

A further contrast to the 1977 ward boundaries was the

¹¹¹ Ibid. 111.

¹¹² Ibid. 107.

¹¹³ Ibid. 111.

Committee's recommendation for taking the total number of residents, and not electors (as in the 1976 recommendations), in the determination of the constituencies of elected officials. Disagreeing with the 1977 method of apportionment of electors, of which the Committee felt disadvantaged inner-city representatives who typically had fewer electors, the Committee believed the current Unicity ward structure enhanced suburban parochialism. The Committee, clear on building "limited but effective safeguards to protect the city wide interest,"¹¹⁴ noted, for example, that:

As a result of the incorporation of the former municipalities and the population shift to the suburbs, City Council has been dominated by suburban Councillors. Council policies in favour of additional suburban expansion, intermingled with support for business activity in the central city, reflect the political dominance of the suburbs.

The resulting polarization of population, with the more fortunate members of society concentrated in the new suburbs and with the poor and disadvantaged concentrated in the older and deteriorating areas of the City is a social phenomenon which represents a new challenge to governments.¹¹⁵

The Committee, therefore, recommended modifications of the

¹¹⁴ Ibid. 93.

¹¹⁵ Ibid. 11-12.

ward-Community Committee structure to allow for greater representation from the older-central areas of Winnipeg. In "Recommendation 16", for example, the Committee stated that:

We expect our suggested redistribution of ward and community boundaries to bring other benefits as well. To only a limited extent, it redresses in an acceptable manner the political disadvantage of older areas of the City in the current suburban-dominated system. Two of our proposed six Community Committees are clearly identifiable as older areas; their representatives will be able to pursue resident interests with vigour within those communities and with Council. We do not want to exaggerate the political impact of these suggestions, but we sense that a better balance of forces and a sounder basis for city-wide cooperation on civic priorities may result.¹¹⁶

In summary, the Committee's recommendation for a reduction in the number of wards was based on increasing the number of Councillors in the Community Committees and on equalizing the representation of especially the inner areas of the City while retaining a sense of homogeneity and commonalty in the Community areas. In short, the recommendation went against the 1976 determination of ward boundaries based on six administrative units.

¹¹⁶ Ibid. 107. *"Recommendation 16 Reduction In The Number Of Wards, And Adjustments In Ward Community Committee Boundaries".

Extended Powers For The Community Committees

In the 1986 Report, the Review Committee did not believe the fundamental role of the Community Committees as a forum to develop local interests and administrate local services materialized. The Committee felt that, since the early initiation of Unicity, Councillors were intent on unifying municipal administrations and services and therefore focused their attention on making the system work. The Committee also believed the Community Committees failed "as the political reality of amalgamation set in--that is the weakening of the old City of Winnipeg and the strengthening of the new suburbs," of which "the community committee structure was not seen by the suburban Councillors as the vehicle by which to press for local constituency, neighborhood interests, and land development. City Council itself provided them with their most effective decision-making forum."¹¹⁷ In short, the Committee felt that both the overriding concern to get Unicity working and the obstinacy of Councillors to not utilize the Committees in developing local community interests, weakened the importance of the Community Committees.

Given the above views, the Committee made the

¹¹⁷ Ibid. 98-99.

recommendation "that Council, should it wish to decentralize further--a thrust with which we are clearly sympathetic--be required in the Act to do so on a socio-economic need basis and, furthermore, that the Community Committees themselves be authorized to determine, within the scope of their community fund, whether they want to spend money on an arena, library books, an outreach worker, or other neighborhood projects."¹¹⁸ The Committee especially emphasized a significant Community Committees role in planning. In its Report, the Committee maintained that:

The majority of the Review Committee is agreed that Community Committees should play the key role in community and neighborhood planning matters.

The Community Committees have a vital role to play in the development and subsequent implementation of Local Plans, in interpreting them to the residents, and seeing that the views of residents are properly considered and reflected in plans at all levels. If they cannot or will not perform those basic functions, the Community Committees may as well be disbanded.

We believe that Community Committees can and will perform these functions, and extend them in creative ways, if offered adequate incentives. Local Councillors want to serve their constituents; they want the political credit for doing their job well. They must have tools appropriate to the job, so that their constituents can hold them accountable.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁸ Ibid. 105.

¹¹⁹ Ibid. 93.

In this role, the Committee recommended the Community Committees be empowered to "initiate, prepare, and approve Local plans," to "make final and binding decisions on applications to amend the zoning by-law," and "to issue final variance and conditional use orders...."¹²⁰ Clearly, the Committee was optimistic that the Community Committees could play a vital role in improving citizen participation and involvement. In their conclusion, the Committee held that "the various incentives provided in our recommendations will likely result in a new and positive impetus for local planning in neighborhoods that need it."¹²¹

This optimism extended in the Committee's recommendation for the Community Committees to have a budgetary role in the reallocation of funds for local programs. The Committee, for example, recommended that the "Community Committees, in the allocation and implementation, must appropriate funds, and select methods and means of implementing city-wide policies, programmes, services, and public works within such Council guidelines as may be issued to the Community Committees...."¹²² The Committee further

¹²⁰ Ibid. 92-93.

¹²¹ Ibid. 94.

¹²² Ibid. 98.

recommended that the Community Committee reallocate funds for any of the following forms of expenditures:

- a) Community Committee and office operations
- b) local planning and programming
- c) neighborhood improvement programming and projects
- d) local leisure and recreation programs and facilities
- e) local library educational and cultural programmes and facilities
- f) local social services and community outreach services
- g) resident participation programmes
- h) community relations policing and neighborhood security services
- i) residential street signage and traffic controls
- j) grants to local organizations
- k) any other service, programme, or facility that Council may deem to be of a "local" character.¹²³

The Committee also recommended a "needs formula" to ensure that those communities "deemed to have greater than average needs would receive a community fund proportionately larger than those with lower than average need."¹²⁴ In short, this recommendation centered on equalizing service levels among the various community areas within the city. The Committee, for example, concluded that "the central worth of our proposed scheme is to permit important service choices within the limits of available resources to be made

¹²³ Ibid. 93.

¹²⁴ Ibid. 94.

at a local level--both to emphasize some services over others and to enrich some services by putting 'local money where local Councillors' mouths are'."¹²⁵ In summary, the Committee's recommendations enhance the importance of the Community Committees as a structure for decentralizing the administration of local services and the planning of local communities.

The Committee, however, suggested limitations on the Community Committees' decentralization to "ensure that Community Committees will not unduly interfere with or hinder the orderly administration of the City by employees and officials of the City."¹²⁶ Two areas of possible conflict were recognized by the Committee. First, the Committee believed the Community Committees' budgetary responsibility should be limited by specific limitations in which the "Community Committees, in the allocation and implementation, must appropriate funds, and select methods and means of implementing city-wide policies, programmes, services, and public works within such Council guidelines as may be issued to the Community Committees...."¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Ibid. 99.

¹²⁶ Ibid. 97.

¹²⁷ Ibid. 97-98.

Moreover, "budgets would still require Council approval and financial controls would remain as at present," which is "far more important than an increased administrative role for the Community Committee."¹²⁸

In planning, the "Community Committee's power to issue final variance and conditional use orders must be exercised within the framework of Council policy and legislation."¹²⁹ The Committee, for example, suggested in its Report that:

[I]f Council has adopted a policy of permitting and indeed encourage the location of social housing, semi-institutional group homes, or condominiums in all areas of the City, a Community Committee would be barred from denying a variance or conditional use approval for one of those purposes on the grounds that such action would conflict with Council policy.

It should also be clear that a Community Committee would only receive an application for variance or conditional use approval once it has been processed by the central administration under guidelines issued by Council. The important determination of whether any application would proceed as a zoning change or as a zoning variance, therefore, will be made as a result of Council's action, not a Community Committee's[.]¹³⁰

¹²⁸ Ibid. 101.

¹²⁹ Ibid. 94.

¹³⁰ Ibid. 94.

In summary, the Committee's limitations on the Community Committees were intended as a preventative measure, ensuring that confusion in the areas of local administration and the allocation of City funds would not occur. However, the Committee's recommendations provide a framework for the Community Committees to exercise local responsibility in the administration of local services and in the reallocation of City funds for these services. In the Committee's conclusions, "a stronger, more accountable leadership within Council will result in a more secure protection of city-wide interests, such that greater decentralization of political, planning, and budgetary authority is both acceptable and beneficial."¹³¹

The Committee On The Residents' Advisory Groups

In contrast to the positive optimism expressed by the Committee on the Community Committees, the Committee concluded that "resident participation in the form of RAGs ha[d] not been particularly successful, nor have the conditions necessary for success been present."¹³² The Committee therefore proposed that "Council itself should be required to decide whether to retain a formal participation

¹³¹ Ibid. 94.

¹³² Ibid. 235.

structure such as Residents' Advisory Groups."¹³³ Thus, in "Recommendation 52", the Committee recommended for Council to make a decision by 1989 whether to retain or replace Residents' Advisory Groups and "that section 21 of the Act, which establishes Residents' Advisory Groups, lapse in January 1989."¹³⁴ Although "on the positive side, RAGs have educated residents about city matters, have provided some valuable help to many Councillors, and have served as entry points for residents to get involved in the City's political process," the Committee felt that:

[C]ommunication between a Councillor and residents [was] not improved by RAGs. Those few people who serve on RAGs [did] not have a mandate to represent anyone. Councillors, for their part, most often treat[ed] the RAGs with patient indifference, preferring to tune in on the political sentiments of their constituents through more conventional methods, mainly through their own knowledge of their wards and their direct contact with constituency groups.¹³⁵

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid. 234.

¹³⁵ Ibid. *As Wichern further adds:

There is an associated implicit reductionism and sophistry which implies that because most councillors are "sheep", they can be "hearded" [sic.] into responsible and accountable policy practices by structural "fences", gates and "prodes" [sic.] (ombudspersons, tribunals, compensation commissions, etc.). Therefore, the complexity of local politics and decision-making--reconciling local and area-wide interests as well as others--can be reduced to a series of

Given the above, the Committee recommended Council be required to establish means of involving residents and suggested revisions to Section 23 of the Act which relate to citizen involvement in government. The revisions recommended Council and each Community Committee to:

(a) develop and implement techniques to maintain the closest possible communication between the city and the residents of the city, and shall carry out and ensure that those residents are given full opportunity to represent their views on policies, programmes, budgets and delivery of services;

(b) develop and implement techniques to provide the residents of the community with information concerning existing and potential city policies, programs and budgets so as to facilitate residents in discussing and developing views concerning these matters; and

(c) develop and implement techniques to make the fullest and best use of resident advice for the community, in providing advice and assistance to the community committee in the committee's considerations of the Winnipeg City Plan, and any Special Area or Local Plans, zoning changes or proposed plans of subdivision or any amendment, alteration, repeal or replacement or any one or

"structural" problems and solutions. Marvellous arrays of structural reforms to already innovated reforms are proposed. In the meantime the actual business of local governing and politics is going on--but quite outside the academic conceptual frameworks which emphasize institutions, formal arrangements, and jurisdictional niceties.

Wichern, P.H. "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity: The Politics And Proposals Of The City Of Winnipeg Act Review Committee (1984-1986)" A Paper Presented For The Winnipeg Local Government Session Of The 1986 Annual Meeting Of The Canadian Political Science Association Held At The University Of Manitoba (June 6 1986): 5.

more of them.¹³⁶

In short, the recommendations were aimed at emphasizing the Committee's view that "resident involvement through appropriate structures is a prerequisite" for the production and updating of the Winnipeg City Plan and local plans and is "a critical element in the development of economic and social policy roles for the City."¹³⁷

It is significant, however, that the Committee "down-played" the importance of the RAGs as an avenue for citizens to participate in local government. Alternatively, the Committee proposed "that other models of resident involvement should be examined," urging "Councillors to give thought to the examples provided by other Canadian cities, Ottawa and Edmonton particularly."¹³⁸ Furthermore, the Committee claimed that "there may be merit in developing a strategy for resident involvement which taps the energy and creativity of the many groups that form around specific issues and neighborhood interests rather than giving special status to one continuing group of advisors. Perhaps Council

¹³⁶ Ibid. 231.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ Ibid. 236.

would prefer to foster resident involvement through a variety of means."¹³⁹

However, as an interim measure, the Committee proposed various measures to improve the operations of the RAGs. In terms of funding RAG operations, the Committee noted that "the token annual grants (of \$100 or \$200) made by the Community Committees to the RAGs are quickly spent in simple record keeping,"¹⁴⁰ and recommended the following:

[A]ny group with over 50 people entitled to vote by the payment of a fee should be entitled to a minimum of \$1,000 in municipal resources; in addition the Community Committee should continue on a quarterly basis to match the nominal membership fee levied by the group[.]

The system suggested above could result in a modest yet useful pool of resources for a RAG. With 500 fee-paying members, and with the Committee providing funds on a five-to-one matching basis, a RAG with a one dollar membership could obtain a \$3,000 annual budget.¹⁴¹

The Committee also recommended that the "groups should have the right to use the community offices for meetings and some designated resources from the community offices, including

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. 235.

¹⁴¹ Ibid. 239-240.

secretarial help," and that "Council should provide facilities and resources for an annual conference of resident groups."¹⁴²

The Committee also made recommendations towards ensuring citizen accessibility to information. In "Recommendation 49", for example, the Committee recommended that "the City consider additional and improved techniques by which information on municipal activities and programmes can be publicized and provided to residents."¹⁴³ The Committee proposed three major means of improving the accessibility of information to citizens. First, the Committee proposed that "Council be required, in a public report, to set out clearly what it is required to do by law, and to explain how it is living up to its obligations. Such information improves accountability and the ability of aggrieved citizens to seek redress."¹⁴⁴ Secondly, the Committee proposed that "City Council should be required to set its own information policy by means of a by-law," since "access to information is too important a political right to

¹⁴² Ibid. 239.

¹⁴³ Ibid. 225.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid. 216.

leave entirely to the discretion of government."¹⁴⁵

Thirdly, the Committee recommended "an independent statutory officer--[a] suggested City Ombudsman (see Recommendation 59)--be assigned the responsibility of reviewing denials of access to City documents in the first instance."¹⁴⁶ In summary, the Committee's recommendations were clearly in the direction of improving citizen accessibility and knowledge of government affairs.

In conclusion, it was clear to the Committee that the RAGs had failed as an avenue for citizens to get involved in local government. For the most part, the Committee recognized that this was due to the fact that local politicians and civil servants were not inclined to alter their methods of decision-making to allow citizens to "advise and assist" the development of government policy. Moreover, the RAGs had recognizable deficiencies in financing their operations and in obtaining information which further weakened the RAGs as a means for increasing citizen accessibility in government. In its recommendations, the Committee made limited interim proposals for improving the RAGs and suggested that they be reviewed in 1989 by Council. Significantly, the Committee also stressed the need

¹⁴⁵ Ibid. 217.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid. 223.

for citizens to participate by means other than the RAGs.

Conclusions

From the above, a review of Unicity has become part of a "regular agenda". Since the White Paper, for example, the 1977 and the 1986 Committees of Review have provided various recommendations towards modifying the roles of Unicity's participatory structures. It is significant that these recommendations are regarded by the Province as "recommendations" only, and that the Province has responded to these recommendations in varying degrees of agreement. In 1977, for example, the Province went further than the Taraska Committee's recommendation for lowering the number of Councillors by reducing the number of Councillors from a proposed thirty nine to twenty nine and halved the number of Community Committees from twelve to six. The supervisory and budgetary powers of the Community Committees were also taken away. In short, the Province's actions at that time express a resort to centralized administrative efficiency over the original intent of the White Paper that strongly mandated decentralized participatory local government.

In the 1986 Committee of Review's recommendations, however, a reversal occurred with the Committee's recommendations for expanded Community Committee powers in

initiating, preparing and approving Local plans, representing at least a modest retreat towards political decentralization. The philosophical grounds for decentralized decision-making were not completely eroded with respect to the Community Committees. This was not the case with the RAGs, however, with the Committee's down-playing of their significance as a structural avenue for citizen participation; instead, the Committee promoted comparative models of citizen involvement from other Canadian cities.

In summary, Unicity's record of structural amendments (and recommended amendments) since its inception reflect changes in perception by the Province and the Committees of Review between the goals of citizen involvement in local government and the goals of efficiency. Clearly, the original Unicity components for citizen participation have undergone more than minor overhaul.

CHAPTER IV

An Assessment of Unicity Since 1972

Introduction

The purpose of this Chapter is to assess the participatory dimensions of Unicity's Community Committees and the Residents' Advisory Groups. What follows is an overview of Unicity's decentralized structures as evaluated from earlier studies. This is coupled with a survey of twenty Resident Advisors and ten Councillors carried out in December of 1982 of the relevant topics of concern brought out from the other studies concerning citizen participation. Given the above, the direction of this Chapter is aimed at resolving the question "did structural change in Unicity bring about greater levels of participation?" as outlined in Chapter One.

The 1982 Survey Of Resident Advisors And Councillors

The Respondents

In December of 1982, a survey of Resident Advisors and Councillors was carried out in Winnipeg. To initiate the gathering of information from prospective participants, the

Fort Rouge Community Committee Offices provided a list of Resident Advisors recently involved in the RAGs from all areas of the City and a list of Councillors sitting on Council. This list included the phone numbers of both groups. From this list, a telephone survey was carried out.

In total, forty two Advisors and seventeen Councillors were contacted and asked to take part in the survey. Of these, twenty citizens and ten Councillors agreed to participate in the end. A majority of the non-participating Advisors claimed they were no longer involved nor interested with their RAGs, often claiming their RAGs were ineffective in getting their demands heard by Council, or that their Groups did not satisfy their original expectations. The Councillors that could be reached but did not participate claimed, for the most part, that they too lost interest in the Community Committees and the RAGs and/or had already "provided enough information to others" researching Unicity. The significance of the numbers of those who did not participate compared to those who did in the survey (of those contacted) lies in the assumption that both citizens and Councillors either lost interest in Unicity's participatory avenues or had "given up" on their having a major role in Winnipeg local government by 1982. It can be additionally presumed that the failure of a mutual and on-going rapport between the RAGs and Council

overshadowed any continued interest.

In spite of the above, the participants who were reached and responded to the survey represented, by and large, Advisors and Councillors who were the most interested or the most concerned in voicing their opinions on their involvement in Unicity's Community Committees and/or the RAGs. This is accented by the design of the survey which includes, in addition to rating scales, open-ended questioning to expand on their responses and concerns. This survey research is therefore qualitative, in that it is not based on solely collecting numbers but rather a large part of the data collected is in the form of quotations to illustrate and substantiate the presentation. As Bogdan and Biklen state:

Qualitative articles and reports have been described by some as "anecdotal." This is because they often contain quotations and try to describe what a particular situation or view of the world is like in narrative form. The written word is very important in the qualitative approach, both in recording data and disseminating the findings.

The qualitative research approach demands that the world be approached with the assumption that nothing is trivial, that everything has the potential of being a clue which might unlock a more comprehensive understanding of what is being studied.¹

¹ Bogdan, Robert C. and Biklen, Sari Knopp Qualitative Research Methods: A Phenomenological Approach To The Social Sciences John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1975): 28. *For further discussion of the qualitative approach as it relates to

Combining the survey with evaluations from other studies also presents qualitative analysis in that the respondents' answers and comments with commentary from the other studies is applied inductively: the many disparate pieces of collected evidence are interconnected in making generalizations about citizen participation in Unicity.² In summary, this study's assessment is based on gathering information like a funnel in which things are open at the beginning (or top) for information from various research components to be combined in the analysis.³

urban research, see Saunders, Peter Urban Politics: A Sociological Approach Hutchinson London (1979) on pages 336 to 352.

² *See Glaser, Barney A. and Strauss, Anselm L. The Discovery Of Grounded Theory: Strategies For Qualitative Research Aldine Publishing Co. Chicago (1967).

³ *By and large, then, this research represents the qualitative approach. Taylor and Bogdan's outline of this research methodology best outlines the methodological basis for this research:

1. Qualitative research is inductive. Researchers develop concepts, insights, and understanding from patterns in the data, rather than collecting data to assess preconceived models, hypotheses, or theories.

2. In qualitative methodology the researcher looks at settings and people holistically; people, settings, or groups are not reduced to variables, but are viewed as a whole. The qualitative researcher studies people in the context of their past and the situations in which they find themselves.

3. Qualitative researchers are sensitive to their effects on the people they study. That is, researchers interact with informants in a natural and unobtrusive manner.

The Accommodation Of Unicity In Winnipeg

After its inception in 1972, the "Unicity" concept was remarkably accepted by Winnipeg. Although a number of criticisms from citizens and Councillors were initially directed against the centralization of Winnipeg's administration because of the fear that their community would be lost to a large central administration, few complaints were directed against the system once it was established: citizens and politicians in general echoed the optimism that lay embedded in the White Paper's participatory and efficiency rhetoric. This "smoothness" was

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4. Qualitative researchers try to understand people from their own frame of reference.
 5. The qualitative researcher suspends, or sets aside, his or her own beliefs, perspectives, and predispositions.
 6. For the qualitative researcher, all perspectives are valuable.
 7. Qualitative methods are humanistic. When we reduce people's words and acts to statistical equations, we lose sight of the human side of social life. When we study people qualitatively, we get to know them personally and experience what they experience in their daily struggles in society.
 8. Qualitative researchers emphasize validity in their research. By observing people in their everyday lives, listening to them talk about what is on their minds, and looking at the documents they produce, the qualitative researcher obtains first-hand knowledge of social life unfiltered through concepts, operational definitions, and rating scales.

Taylor, Steven J. and Bogdan, Robert Introduction To Qualitative Research Methods: The Search For Meanings John Wiley & Sons N.Y. (1984): 5-7.

paralleled by the administration's easy adoption of the new system. The expected chaos and mass disorganization of the old Metro administrations' accommodation and conversion to the new organization did not appear evident during the transition. As Wichern claimed in his functional analysis of Unicity, "this social system provides the integration for its members because partisan, locational and personality factors are submerged by an overriding desire to get on with the jobs at hand. In Unicity, the previously warring (Metro) Councillors and (City) Mayors, along with the former suburban and City alder[wo]men were physically and systematically integrated."⁴ The much heralded Unicity balance between administrative centralization and political decentralization was to be the model of the future for Winnipeg local government.⁵

⁴ Wichern, P.H. Jr. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" A Paper Prepared For Delivery At The Canadian Political Science Association's Annual Meetings Toronto St. Paul's College (June 3-6 1974): 11.

⁵ *Axworthy notes, for example, that "for those administrators and politicians who harken back with fond nostalgia to the days of the small suburban Councils, Metro Council or City Council, when ten or twelve elected representatives would gather together and make decisions by consensus, it must be pointed out that this was only possible because they were working in forms of government dealing with a limited number of functions. As well, the consensus on policy that seemed to operate in Metro Council did so in part because its functions were limited. Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. Unicity: The Transition 197.

Citizen Involvement In Unicity

As reviewed in Chapter Three, each Community Committee, with the advice and assistance of their RAGs, would have a role in the administration and planning of local services. It was anticipated that Councillors would regularly meet with their electors "to ensure that all services are delivered in a manner most responsive to the needs of the community...."⁶ The Community Committees were, for example, to hold open public hearings on various land use and license permits, subdivision approvals, rezonings, zoning variances, special development applications, action area plans, community district plans and conditional uses.

Since their creation, however, the extent of this decentralization has been limited. Citizen involvement in the making of final decisions, for example, was never realized. On land use planning, Kiernan and Walker note, for example, that:

[T]he committees were accorded no powers of final decision. They were to conduct public hearings on planning and zoning matters that were ultimately decided by the council. Even the committees' power to permit minor exceptions to zoning by-laws was attenuated by the right to appeal their decisions

⁶ Manitoba. Op. cit. Report And Recommendations 84.

to a more senior subcommittee of council.⁷

The only decision-making power belonging to the Committees existed in their ability to allocate "an extremely modest (25c per capita) block grant from council to neighborhood cultural and recreational groups."⁸ For the most part, this grant was used to support the operation of the RAGs (i.e. photocopying, typing, etc.) and provided their only financial resource. However, even this was taken away from the Committees in 1976 when the Unicity Council "prohibited the Community Committees from continuing with the allocation of modest sums to various community cultural and recreational groups."⁹ In short, citizens did not have a significant role in the decision-making of local services with their Councillors. As Axworthy points out from his analysis, "in no way did they [the Community Committees] provide an effective counterweight to the centralized administrative system, and their influence on major Council decisions has been limited."¹⁰

⁷ Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 233.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Tindal and Tindal Op. cit. 19.

¹⁰ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. "The Best Laid Plans Oft Go Astray" 117.

This participatory short-coming was largely due to the fact that citizen efforts at participation often confronted the realization that either the central Council or the administration could simply go against their proposals. Undoubtedly, citizens were disillusioned with the impact of their participation in their RAGs since they had "little influence and that even if their particular Community Committee was responsible to their views, the Committee only comprised from three to six of the fifty-one members of the Council."¹¹ Similarly, the Community Planning Association of Canada, noted that:

1) The role of the Community Committees is too weak. Citizens expect them to be able to make some policy decisions dealing with local matters, yet these bodies although legally constituted, do not possess the powers to do so and are denied the opportunity to respond to citizen needs and requests.

2) The Community Committees, although charged with the supervision of the delivery of services is often frustrated in taking action when such is needed to correct disfunctions or bring about improvements. Response is inhibited by the intricacy of the hierarchical structure and by a bureaucratic maze.¹²

In summary, as Axworthy claims, "because of this duplication of procedures, where the Community Committees have an

¹¹ Tindal and Tindal Op. cit. 18.

¹² Ibid. 26.

ambiguous set of responsibilities and powers and because there is confusion by officials as to the role of the Community Committee, it is apparent that one of the real advantages of decentralization has been lost."¹³ Thus, contrary to citizen expectations at the beginning of Unicity, the Committees have had no decision-making role with the exception of small allocations in funding.

From the above, the next section presents an evaluation of citizen participation in the administration of local services and in the development of policy decisions through the RAGs and Community Committees. Other roles citizens have had through these structures and the significance of their participation is examined. Notably, the next section evaluates the linkage between Advisors and Councillors in relation to these roles.

The Role Of Citizen Advisors In The RAGs and Community Committees

Six questions were asked regarding the perceptions of the Advisors about their role in the hiring of staff, the determination of service levels, the approval of program plans, the formulation of general policies, the channelling

¹³ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. "Winnipeg: An Experiment In Innovation" 34.

of citizen complaints and acting as an advocate for citizens.

Of the first two questions, the results of the survey of Advisors suggests that they had no role in either hiring staff or approving programs. In the first question, the survey had the following responses:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government:

Hiring staff:

1. very important
 2. somewhat important
 3. at times important [1]
 4. fairly unimportant [3]
 5. unimportant [15]
- Total: 19/20¹⁴

Although the Advisors may originally have interpreted the Act to mean the Community Committees were to supervise the delivery of services, this was not the case in the hiring of service employees. Some Advisors even claimed they did not favour the control and supervision of service employees by the Community Committees and felt that Council should approve all appointments. One Advisor, for example, claimed: "no way should the Committees or the people in the RAGs look after the City workers...this should be left up to the

¹⁴ *This ratio represents nineteen responses out of twenty Advisors interviewed.

City." In summary, the impression from the survey suggests that the Advisors, in their recommendations to their Community Committees, did not perceive themselves as having an important role in the hiring of local service staff.

In the approval of program plans, the general impression from the survey suggests Advisors were not involved in the approval of program plans. The following was asked:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government:

Approving program plans:

1. Very important
 2. Important [3]
 3. Fairly important [5]
 4. Not very important [10]
 5. Not important at all [2]
- Total: 20/20

Although one Advisor pointed out that "Yea, after all--after you think about it--I think we should make the end decision...isn't that what we were supposed to do?...at least, I thought so even though I generally agree with what we're doing now is okay," no other mention was made concerning an approval role for the Advisors.

A majority of Advisors, however, believed they had a role in the determination of service levels. The following results were found:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government through the Community Groups and RAGs:

Determining specific service levels:

1. Very important [10]
 2. Important [2]
 3. Fairly important [1]
 4. Not very important [6]
 5. Not Important at all [1]
- Total: 20/20

Notably, most who rated the determination of service levels as "important" or "very important" were involved in various neighborhood improvement projects.¹⁵ One Advisor, for example, claimed that her RAG demands enabled her to get sandlots for a playground in her area. Another claimed her RAG, through the Committee, obtained money for neighborhood swimming pool lifeguards. A third Advisor claimed his RAG, through the Committee, worked successfully in changing his local library's hours of operation so that the community library could be kept open for those who worked late. Interestingly, a fourth Advisor stressed the importance of her participation in her RAG and Committee in working against the mis-appropriation of City funding. As she

¹⁵ *Similar survey results were found in Axworthy, Lloyd, Grant, Maureen, Cassidy, Jim and Siamandas, George Meeting The Problems Of Resident Advisory Groups Institute Of Urban Studies University Of Winnipeg (March 1973) in which the authors claimed that "most people who are working actively on groups are people who care about their community and who have particular interests either in recreation, planning or even business interests. Our research indicates that approximately 80% of all advisors had been previously involved in community affairs." 15.

stated:

The RAG was successful in stopping Council from giving too much money to this hockey program that was going to get way too much money...more than was really needed.

In addition to the determination of service levels, Advisors also gave the impression that they were involved in the planning of their local urban environment. The general impression from the survey suggests that citizen involvement in the formulation of local policy is an important function of the Residents' Advisory Groups with their Community Committees. The following results were found:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government:

Formulating general policies:

1. Very important [9]
 2. Important [1]
 3. Fairly important [2]
 4. Not very important [6]
 5. Not important at all [1]
- Total: 19/20

For the most part, this policy formulating role centered on policy-initiation. "Grass-roots" interests and issues, often in the areas of zoning and licensing,¹⁶ were brought up

¹⁶ *A case study of these and other achievements can be found in Axworthy, Lloyd and Kuropatwa, Ralph An Experiment In Community Renewal: Observations And proposals Arising From A Demonstration Project In Winnipeg Paper Presented To The Annual Meeting Of The Canadian Political Science Association St. John's Nfld. (June 9 1971).

from the RAG meetings to the Community Committee level. For example, one Advisor claimed the following:

Oh yea, we as a group worked together to go against a pool hall that had pinballs.... We don't want those kinds of businesses in our area.

Another Advisor claimed:

We worked against a church parking lot that wanted gravel.

Another, who claimed she was very active in getting what she wanted through her RAG and Community Committee, pointed out that:

I wanted to see guest houses in the neighborhood since I work for mental health.... After I brought it up to the RAG, people supported me and I eventually got to bring it up to the Committee level with others.

In the regulation of private clubs, one Advisor stated the following concern:

Yea, we have to stop these private clubs since they don't belong in the community. Some of those clubs have nothing...no windows on the buildings...nothing...they don't look good in my neighborhood and they should be open to everybody.

In general, Advisors who responded to the survey were determinedly optimistic about getting interests and concerns brought up at their Residents' Advisory Group to the Community Committee level. A majority of these Advisors felt their concerns were best initiated through their RAG Chairperson who would bring their issue up to their Community Committee. Since the RAG Chairperson dealt with the Councillors as a representative of his/her RAG, they had greater opportunities in communicating with Councillors over the other Advisors. Advisors believed that if their Chairperson could introduce their concerns on the Community Committee agenda, they could join in the research and presentation of the issue with their Chairperson at the Community Committee level. Through this strategy, Advisors felt they had a greater chance of making their concerns heard in the formulation of programs and policies affecting their community.

Advisors also felt their RAGs provided an avenue for channelling general citizen complaints, in addition to providing an avenue for raising their own issues. The following question was asked:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government:

Channelling citizen complaints:

1. Very important [14]
2. Important [4]
3. Fairly important [2]

4. Not very important
 5. Not important at all
- Total: 20/20

Advisors felt that the RAGs were more successful than individual efforts at communicating with Councillors. Many, for example, claimed they used their RAG and Committee as a vehicle for generating support on issues. Some Advisors stated that they had used the local newspaper in advertising specific issues to bring citizens to their meetings while others processed individual letters from their membership and made phone calls to the Councillors directly--claiming the backing of their RAG. A question was asked to confirm this aspect of citizen participation:

Please rate the following in considering the importance of your roles in local government:

Acting as an advocate for citizens:

1. Very important [15]
 2. Important [3]
 3. Fairly important [2]
 4. Not very important
 5. Not important at all
- Total: 20/20

Again, the general impression was made that the RAGs provided an avenue for advocating the interests of residents.

In summary, as earlier research pointed out, the RAGs had little or no decision-making powers over local services,

i.e. in the hiring the staff. Advisors also had no powers of approval. However, the RAGs have provided a forum for citizens to make recommendations and to advise Councillors on service levels. Advisors have, for example, played a part in the formulation of policies through voicing their interests and concerns at their RAG meetings. The RAGs have also provided an avenue for channelling and advocating citizen complaints and interests in general. Clearly, the RAGs provided citizens with opportunities to develop and make heard their interests.

Factors Affecting Performance: Problem Areas

The Record

The novel idea of political decentralization through RAGs initiated a large number of citizens to participate in the early RAG meetings. Beginning in November of 1972, when, according to the Act citizens were to choose their advisors, as many as 150 to 500 turned up. Wichern, for example, noted that in this early period the "St. Boniface's RAG Community Committee began operations with a dinner-dance attracting over 450 persons. Attendance at other Community Conferences was estimated at two to three hundred persons...."¹⁷ This

¹⁷ Wichern, P.H. "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity: Citizen Participation And Resident Advisory Groups, 1971-1984" Institute Of Urban Studies University Of Winnipeg

included a large number of "newcomers to citizen group activity,"¹⁸ who sought positions on the RAG executive. As Axworthy noted in 1973:

Competition for the positions of citizen advisers has been keen. In some cases, political parties have entered slates. In others, the local community clubs and citizen groups have been the major participants. In others, it has been citizens at large.¹⁹

This initial participatory success was followed by limited citizen achievements in effecting local policy. James Lorimer noted, for example, that the "Fort Rouge RAG organized an articulate, well documented popular opposition to a rezoning application by Safeway which, in order to expand a shopping centre in the area, wanted to knock down some old, architecturally interesting houses occupied by low-income roomers. The RAG group, on its own initiative, conducted a traffic study of the affected area [and]

(1984): 24. *See also Wichern, P.H. "Patterns Of Public Participation In Canadian Urban Policy Making: The Case Of Winnipeg's Resident Advisory Groups" Paper Presented At The Annual Meeting Of The Atlantic Provinces' Political Science Association Antigonish N.S. (October 1975).

¹⁸ Higgins Op. cit. The Changing Face Of City Politics In Canada, 1954-1985: Structural Determinants Of Political Change 12.

¹⁹ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. "Winnipeg: An Experiment In Innovation" 280.

organized public hearings where various experts, local citizens, architects and environmentalists voiced their opinions."²⁰ In an analysis of the same RAG, Axworthy pointed out that "the citizen advisers applied for a grant under the provincial winter works programme to hire a secretary and a community researcher who were responsible to them, not to the Councillors."²¹ Professor Wichern, as a Chairperson of the Fort Rouge Community Committee, has also pointed out that his RAG "attempted to pioneer various methods of communication and citizen access, including a store-front information centre (called 'The City Plans And What Do You Think Shop')...."²²

Another significant RAG achievement during the 1970s was in 1972 when Community Committees and RAGs across the city united to forestall railway relocation. Alliances were formed "between suburban and central city residents, with each group acting out of different motives to oppose the plan which had as its aim the replacing of the railways with

²⁰ Lorimer, James and Ross, Evelyn "Reform Politics In Winnipeg: Opening Things Up" in Lorimer, James ed. The City Book: The Politics And Planning Of Canada's Cities James Lorimer & Co. Toronto (1976): 124.

²¹ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. "Winnipeg: An Experiment In Innovation" 280.

²² Wichern Op. cit. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" 6.

freeways."²³ In conclusion, the early period of the RAGs seemingly followed the original intent of the White Paper's call for greater citizen participation and involvement in Winnipeg local government.

Within a year after their initiation, however, participation in the RAGs had fallen drastically. The number of citizens that had originally showed up at the first few meetings did not continue to do so. Moreover, many of those that did remain eventually left with a "general sense of lack of achievement and ineffectiveness, which [was] attributed to their lack of decision-making powers and their advisory role. Members were unhappy about the 'housekeeping' role generally adopted by the groups...."²⁴ This shortcoming was, largely due to the reluctance of the Provincial government to define the purpose of the RAGs beyond the broad "advise and assist Councillors" duty outlined earlier. Wichern noted in 1974, for example, that the RAGs were "the institutions of Unicity which...attracted the most attention, but [were] the least powerful. Appearing unheralded and unexplained in the Act, only their selection

²³ Axworthy, Lloyd Op. cit. "The Best Laid Plans Oft Go Astray: The Case Of Winnipeg" 118.

²⁴ Ibid. 118.

and duties [were] prescribed."²⁵ The very purpose and direction of the RAGs were held into question and left many Councillors and RAG representatives unsure of what their RAGs should do. Undoubtedly, without a clear mandate, citizens were disillusioned with the potential impact and importance of their RAGs and withdrew their involvement. By 1974, Wichern noted that:

In two and one-half years, much of the enthusiasm is gone, and so are most of those who initially got involved. About 450 were involved in the beginning, probably a few more than had been on municipal planning, recreation, or library boards the year before. However, by the summer of 1973, a little more than half that number were participating, a decrease in individual RAG's ranging from 20% to 60%. By 1974, a number of communities were having great difficulty in getting RAG members from all wards in the communities. Actual attendance was always less than the membership, and by 1973, this was also averaging 50% of membership or less. In addition, there has been at least a 50% turnover in RAG membership.²⁶

The decline in participation continued in 1979, when Higgins noted, for example, that he "found very little evidence indeed of even a continued existence of the RAGs, let alone

²⁵ Wichern Op. cit. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" 13.

²⁶ Ibid. 11.

any sign of their wielding effective citizen control."²⁷
Clearly from its infant success, the RAGs did not continue to stimulate citizen interest and participation as originally expected from the White Paper.

Given the above, the next section presents the opinions of Advisors in identifying short-comings and obstacles to the success of their RAGs. In short, the problem areas cited above will be assessed as to whether or not they constitute a problem in the operation of the RAGs.

Accessibility To Information Problems

Various impediments have been blamed for hindering the establishment of the RAGs as a significant participatory component of Unicity. Of these, citizen inaccessibility to information resources has been noted as a major contributing factor to the RAGs failure. Although Community Committees were to provide increased citizen accessibility to local government through the development and implementation of techniques to provide residents with information concerning existing potential policies, programs, and budgets so as to best facilitate residents in discussing and developing

²⁷ Higgins Op. cit. The Changing Face Of City Politics In Canada, 1954-1985: Structural Determinants Of Political Change 12.

citizen views on these matters, Advisors and citizens have had difficulty in obtaining these resources. Wichern, in 1984 noted, for example, that "specific information of the type demanded by the Act...[was] usually not available"²⁸ in such areas as the disclosure of centralized information such as monthly financial statements, minutes of any Council or open committee meeting, and other documents such as the auditor's report, bylaws, list of electors and tax rolls. Similarly, in the 1976 Report, it was noted that a "common complaint on the part of the residents' advisory groups was that the community committees ignore them, do not act on their recommendations and have made little effort to fulfill the requirements of the ACT with respect to their responsibility for consulting with the residents' advisory groups and for developing techniques of communication with the citizens in their areas."²⁹

An associated information problem is the lack of adequate time available for Advisors to review and make recommendations on available information from their Community Committees. In as early as 1973, Axworthy et. al. pointed this problem out:

²⁸ Wichern "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity Government: Past Efforts And Present Challenges" Institute Of Urban Studies University Of Winnipeg (1984): 12.

²⁹ Ibid. 30.

1) The present referral process takes too long and advisors get issues and items too late for adequate consideration. A mechanism by which the various council committees and council meetings could be monitored would be useful in giving issues to the RAG early enough for adequate consideration.³⁰

For the most part, this problem was due to the lack of communication between the Community Committees and the RAGs in the timing of each's meetings. Since most of the RAG agendas were set out on issues and recommendations from the Committees,³¹ the "agenda for a Community Committee meeting, which generally takes place one week after the RAG meeting, [was] often not received by the RAG in time for items to be put on the RAG agenda for discussion and comment, before action [was to be] taken on these items at the Community Committee meeting."³² This problem was recognized in the 1976 Report and Recommendations by the Fort Rouge Residents' Advisory Group who maintained that:

The greatest handicap of the residents' advisory

³⁰ Axworthy et. al. Op. cit. Meeting The Problems And Needs Of Resident Advisory Groups 33.

³¹ *See, for example, Wichern, P.H. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" A Paper Prepared For Delivery At The Canadian Political Science Association's Annual Meetings Toronto (June 3-6 1974).

³² Ivanoff and Vopenfjord Op. cit. 30.

group is the lack of sufficient information and time to advise Councillors in a responsible fashion. It is not uncommon to have to respond to city administration proposals in planning matters with less than a few days notice.³³

This problem was exacerbated as Advisors did not understand the technical aspects of information that was available.

Ivanoff and Vopenfjord noted, for example, that:

Citizen participation is in most cases reactive. Citizens react individually or in groups when they feel their interests threatened. Information concerning potential developments often does not clarify for the citizen what their full impact will be on him. It is not until actual events illustrate the threat that the citizen becomes active, often too late to do anything but protest. Information must be explicit and available to citizens from the first stage of the planning process, for before they can participate actively and effectively, citizens must be well informed.³⁴

In summary, two problems in citizen accessibility to information appear evident: 1) information was difficult to obtain and, if available, was presented to the RAGs in short notice and 2) information that was available was difficult to interpret by the Advisors.

The general impression from the survey suggests,

³³ Manitoba. Report and Recommendations Op. cit. 102.

³⁴ Ivanoff and Vopenfjord Op. cit. 37.

however, that Advisors' access to information and the interpretation of that information was not difficult. The following question was asked:

Please rate this problem as to its degree of concern to your group:
Data and information are difficult to obtain:
1. major problem
2. often a problem
3. sometimes a problem [2]
4. occasionally a problem [6]
5. not a problem [10]
Total: 18/20

By and large, Advisors felt information could be obtained from either their Councillor or their RAG chairperson who was their link to their Community Committee. All of the Advisors further agreed that their participation and attendance at the RAG meetings provided greater access to information about current urban issues than otherwise available. One respondent, for example, claimed she went to the RAG meetings specifically to obtain information about her neighborhood for her friends who did not have the time to either attend the meetings or find information for themselves otherwise. Another respondent added that her sole purpose of attendance at the RAG meetings was to gain information about her neighborhood for herself. As she claimed:

I went for a trip to Las Vegas for four days and after coming back a building that was once there

totally disappeared.... I didn't know what had happened.... The building was there when I left and nobody told me it was going to be torn down. The RAG people gave me information about what had happened. How else could I find out?

Advisors also claimed they could obtain "special insight" into government plans and decisions through their chairperson. Since their chairperson interacted with Councillors, representing RAG interests in the Community Committees, Advisors claimed they could find out who their opposition was on Council and what new plans Council was going to introduce that would affect their community before formally coming up in Council or Community Committee meetings. In short, the RAG was the medium for many Advisors to find out more about government programs.

Advisors also generally agreed that the interpretation of available information on government programs and policies was not difficult. The following question was asked:

The following is a possible problem that may exist in your RAG. Please rate this problem as to their degree of concern to your group:

Data and information are difficult to understand and interpret:

1. major problem
2. often a problem [1]
3. sometimes a problem [4]
4. occasionally a problem [1]
5. not a problem [14]

Total: 20/20

In general, Advisors felt the issues facing their RAGs were simple; issues requiring expertise, such as in the interpretation of documents related to the law, were considered above the level of the RAGs and were not of direct concern. Moreover, Advisors pointed out that if their RAG had problems in the interpretation of government information, their Committee Councillor would clarify the details and complexities of the document. In summary, these Advisors perceived their RAG-Community Committee relationship as a means to access and understand Council policies through the interaction of their RAG chairperson with Councillors on the Community Committees.

Despite the above dismissals, however, a number of Advisors claimed there was not enough available time to study and consider issues that were put on the agenda of their RAG meetings. This was due to the timing of the Groups' meeting on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month (once a month in the summer) in which the Committee meetings were usually held the next Monday or the Monday before Tuesday. Many respondents felt this "ill-timing" of the meetings posed a major problem for citizens who could not attend all of the meetings and would miss out on some of the particular issues concerning a proposed policy. One particularly active Advisor claimed, for example, that:

How in the [expletive deleted] can we get to know the issue if we're told just a day or let alone a week before we send the chairperson to the Committee meeting? Most of us aren't here in the first place anyway [when the information was originally distributed].

In conclusion, however, the RAGs have provided an avenue to access local government information. Citizens have gained information not available elsewhere for themselves and for others who could not attend the meetings. Citizens have also used the RAGs as a means to gain special insight on Council proposals through their RAG chairperson. Moreover, citizens have obtained help in the understanding of Council policies and decisions with the aid of their Councillors on the Community Committees. Clearly, the role of the RAGs in providing information to citizens was important.

Financial Shortcomings

RAGs have faced problems in obtaining financial and technical resources for their operation and research. Although Community Committees have provided limited financial assistance through the City budget,³⁵ this assistance was the first to be cut from the City budget

³⁵ *See, for example, the earlier section on the Community Committees in Chapter Three.

since there were no set percentages assigned specifically for the RAGs.³⁶ Since the RAGs were composed of volunteer citizens, most of the research and clerical work had to be done on the volunteers' own limited and unpaid time. A permanent staff of their own, although considered necessary for the RAGs to function efficiently and effectively, could not be funded. In some cases, even the costs of photocopying and a meeting place could not be funded.

During the early years of Unicity, Brownstone and Feldman attributed the problem to the absence of "an explicit provincial or provincial-federal commitment to find such resources as a matter of public policy."³⁷ Yet, by 1973, it was clear that Council was at fault. In that year, with Axworthy's recommendations,³⁸ his election as a

³⁶ *See Section 27(1) of Manitoba. Op. cit. Background Paper On The Works And Operations Section Of The Winnipeg Act on page 25. It is noteworthy that in 1973, Axworthy et. al. recommended a budget allocation of "\$48,400 per year for the first year, and a sum of \$52,000 for the second year to cover inflationary costs," for RAG operations, research and advertising. Axworthy et. al. Op. cit. Meeting The Problems And Needs Of Resident Advisory Groups 49.

³⁷ Brownstone and Meyer Op. cit. 60.

³⁸ Axworthy et. al. Op. cit. Meeting The Problems And Needs Of Resident Advisory Groups 46-52. *A.R.C., or the Advisory Resource Council composed of an association of RAG groups, led the appeal for funding from Ottawa.

Liberal MP in Winnipeg,³⁹ and a federal Liberal government, the "secretary of state, had offered council a grant of \$230,000 to create a research staff capability for the then embryonic RAG system."⁴⁰ However, the "City refused to help, and the E.P.C. [Executive Policy Committee] almost vetoed acceptance of the money if it were granted, claiming it would impose a shadow government on the elected representatives."⁴¹ The refusal was a curious rejection in that, as Kiernan and Walker claim, it "must surely be the only known case of a Winnipeg city council declining unsolicited funds from a senior government.... A funding opportunity of this magnitude would never again present itself; its refusal was a blow from which the RAGs have yet to recover."⁴²

³⁹ *This, of course, is an assumption given Axworthy's recommendations, interest in urban affairs, and the fact that he was only one of two Liberal MP's west of Ontario.

⁴⁰ Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 236.

⁴¹ Wichern Op. cit. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" 13.

⁴² Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 256. *It should be pointed out that Kiernan and Walker recognize the problem as related to urban political party conflict. See, for example, pages 236 to 237. Ivanoff and Vopenfjord also attribute, to some degree, the importance of partisan politics in the funding issue. See, for especially Ivanoff and Vopenfjord Op. cit. pages 37 to 39.

In 1976, Council made matters worse for the RAGs when it prohibited the Council Committees' reallocation of funds to the RAGs.⁴³ In 1981, however, Council was again allocating RAGs "on average the derisory sum of \$400 each, which had to cover typing and photocopying as well as the cost of providing meeting space."⁴⁴ In summary, it is clear from the above that the RAGs experienced inadequate financial resources for their operation. What funding was available was not set and varied in amount.

In general, the results of the survey suggest the lack of financial resources was not a major problem in the operation of the RAGs. Two questions were asked with the first of which was:

The following is a possible problem that may exist in your RAG. Please rate these problems as to their degree of concern to your group:

There is difficulty in obtaining financial resources:

1. major problem
2. often a problem [1]
3. sometimes a problem [3]
4. occasionally a problem [3]
5. not a problem [10]

⁴³ *"Of the twenty-three votes cast in favour of this motion, twenty came from the ICEC; conversely, five of the six NDP Councillors present voted in support of RAGS." Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 237.

⁴⁴ Ibid. *It could be assumed that either new demands for funding were made, or that there were other political reasons for re-funding the RAGS.

Total: 17/20

Thus, contrary to the above review, the lack of financial resources did not seem to present a major problem to the RAGs.⁴⁵ Two citizens also claimed the RAGs were voluntary in nature and did not require funding. The only exception was in the hiring of a paid secretary who, at the time of the interview, did most of the paper work and reporting on a voluntary basis. As one respondent pointed out:

The poor girl [secretary], she has to do all of the writing and keeping notes.... It is a hard job, I really think she should get something....

A follow-up question asked the Advisors if they lacked other resources for the operation of their RAGs. The following question was asked:

The following is a possible problem that may exist in your RAG. Please rate these problems (if they exist) as to their degree of concern to your group:

There is difficulty in obtaining technical resources:

1. major problem
2. often a problem [1]
3. sometimes a problem [3]
4. occasionally a problem [4]

⁴⁵ *It should be reminded, however, that the survey was carried out in 1982 after funding had been re-established. Interestingly, most of the interviewed representatives were well aware of the Council's annual \$600 allocation for their RAG.

5. not a problem [9]
Total: 17/20

The Advisors dismissed the idea that they lacked other technical resources for their operation and pointed out that provisions for office space and meeting halls for the groups to meet were provided by their Community Committee. Other resources, such as the use of photo-copiers, typewriters and duplicators, were readily available from Community Committee halls for advertising and recording RAG meetings and for the distribution of information regarding Council proposals currently under study.

In summary, funding and technical resources were not considered a major problem confronting the operation of the RAGs. Instead, some Advisors viewed their RAGs as purely voluntary in nature, not requiring outside funding with the exception of a paid secretary. Adequate technical resources were available and, in general, Advisors felt their Community Committee halls provided these resources.

Defining The Public Interest In The RAG

Negative Councillor views of the RAGs and their representatives have been recognized as a major RAG set-back. A review of early RAG studies point out that Councillors have not performed their "communication"

responsibilities with residents, often perceiving the membership of the RAGs to be largely composed of radicals and defeated politicians who have "a special grievance...merely interested in opposing the 'establishment' or in airing their personal complaints; that they were more interested in promoting their own personal or political views than they were in cooperating with the elected representatives."⁴⁶ As Wichern noted in 1974, there was "not the climate for good Councillor-RAG relations,"⁴⁷ as "some RAGs have been perceived as composed of N.D.P.ers, defeated and potential rivals, 'people with lots of time'...and the radicals."⁴⁸ In 1984, Wichern further concluded that:

The author has seen citizens interrogated and challenged until they were close to tears.... Extensive unpublished student research documented disrespectful treatment as a hallmark of the way many of the original Unicity councillors treated average citizens and Resident Advisors. Such behaviour does not encourage participation. Therefore, "let's get on with civic business" rather than "the closest possible communication between the City and the residents of the community" (Section 23[a]), soon became the prevailing norm at most Community and central

⁴⁶ Manitoba. Report And Recommendations Op. cit. 98.

⁴⁷ Wichern Op. cit. "Winnipeg's Unicity After Two Years: Evaluation Of An Experiment In Urban Government" 7.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

meetings.⁴⁹

These negative Councillor views were largely based on the fear of some Councillors' who perceived their RAGs in an altered relationship--posing a threat to their own political careers. Newman pointed out in 1975, for example that:

Most Councillors expect individuals or groups to participate only "when there is something to talk about, protest, or complain", i.e.. issue involvement only. And for most citizens[,] this perception is correct. But the Councillors (and top administrators) go on to assume that any further participation is "a waste of time" of "pious god-damned theory in the extreme." As well, most Councillors believe they should personally make decisions--that is what they were elected for--and any advice they seek will be privately from their friends.⁵⁰

As a consequence, Councillors with these perceptions often ignored their RAG, ending any significant impact the RAGs may have had as a decentralized "grass-roots" local government structure for developing citizen interests. In summary, Councillor suspicion and lack of understanding of RAG participation has been cited as major reasons for the decline of significant RAG involvement in Unicity. As

⁴⁹ Wichern Op. cit. "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity: Citizen Participation And Resident Advisory Groups, 1971-1984" 14-15.

⁵⁰ Ibid. 17.

Wichern concluded in 1984, it "does not appear that many Councillors actually perform their 'communication' responsibilities through the RAG...that the RAG is left to simply react to referrals or items which may interest them. This means that the RAG contributions are structurally reduced to gratuitous comments, rather than being part of an on-going positive exchange of information."⁵¹

A number of questions were asked in the survey that were aimed at examining the relationship between Councillors and their RAGs. One question asked the following:

Do you think elected officials become more responsive to citizens as a group?:

1. very much [10]
 2. somewhat greater than on an individual basis [6]
 3. sometimes
 4. little
 5. not at all [2]
- Total: 18/20

In general, Advisors felt their Councillors were more responsive to their interests as a group than as individuals. However, two respondents stated that writing letters and phoning their officials directly achieved quicker and more effective results. Not surprisingly, these representatives pointed out that their Community Committees

⁵¹ Ibid. 31.

had Councillors who never attended.

The impression given from Councillor responses was not as positive. One question was asked concerning the importance of the community groups' role in generating new ideas and increasing the creativity of new programs:

The following question relates to your perceptions of your local community groups:

Do you think greater involvement of citizens in your local community groups generates new ideas and increases creativity in programs?:

1. Very much
 2. Fair amount [1]
 3. Some [3]
 4. Little [2]
 5. none [2]
- Total: 8/10

Significantly, variations in Councillor attitudes seem to play an important factor in the support or non-support of the RAGs. This was expressed in the survey, where a wide-range of Councillor views were made concerning the value of their interaction with their RAGs. On the positive side, one Councillor claimed he made an extra effort to attract citizens to the group meetings by going door-to-door on his own initiative:

Yea, I tried [expletive deleted] hard to get those people out. I even...it got to the point where I went knocking on doors to get them out. Yea, believe me, I tried everything.

This same Councillor repeatedly pointed out that he believed

the RAGs had the potential to play an important role in policy recommendation although he had no ideas as to how this was to be accomplished. He stated, for example, that:

There should be an improvement in the representation of the RAGs, but how?...I don't know.... I don't have the Midas Touch.... I try to relate with the citizens but I find only a few people with a 'bone to pick'.... The Community Committees are a good thing.... They're doing what they should be doing and this is better than just a Council.... I think they should be given more power.

Other Councillors pointed out that they didn't attend any of their Community Committee meetings because they believed the Advisors who represented the community were radicals or only those that had an "axe to grind". One Councillor, for example, did not look forward to attending the meetings because he felt citizens used him as their scapegoat for all of their problems. Another Councillor commented negatively during the interview that the RAGs were nothing more than the "[expletive deleted]" and was harsh on the membership of the RAG executive. He claimed that he would not attend any of the Community Committee meetings because the majority of the Advisors were a "narrow-minded group" who dominated the RAG meetings in developing their own issues and ignoring the rest of the community. One Councillor, for example, described a case where the RAGs had a single tightly-knit group of self-serving citizens who

didn't want a Supervalu store built in a vacant lot even though he tried to reason (without being heard) that the store only used up 13,000 square feet of land.⁵² He concluded that "only those that have a cause" came to the meetings and the citizens in general did not attend.

This viewpoint was shared by some citizens who attended their RAG meetings. Because of their inexperience in group participation, these citizens pointed out they "didn't have a chance" to voice their opinions over the others. Instead, they claimed they just "sat out" the meetings and let others do the talking. One lady, for example, claimed:

I come to the RAG meeting and sit there listening to so-and-so explain the importance of the RAG.... They bring all kinds of ideas up and talk about how good the RAG is and what they're going to do...then I go home and I sit down and say to myself "what did I do there?" and wonder if I should have ever come.

Others claimed the RAGs did not generate new ideas in advising their Community Committees but, instead, slowed the process of decision-making. Tindal, in his research, made a similar conclusion that the "attempt to give citizens a greater voice in planning and development decisions by including the community committees and residents' advisory

⁵² *Interestingly, this quoted figure is clearly short of the space required for a supermarket.

groups in the planning process through procedures under the Act led to many submissions to the Committee [1976 Investigating Committee] claiming that this had unduly extended the decision-making process."⁵³

Other citizens pointed out that they did not attend the RAG meetings since the Councillors in the Community Groups had control over the RAG agendas in setting out which issues were to be raised. They added that because of this, they could never get their own ideas or interests brought up at RAG meetings. To them, the current means of citizen participation in the RAGs were "too restricted" and "striked the opportunity to participate at Community Group [and RAG] meetings."

Another respondent also felt alienated in the RAG meetings but was optimistic that future partisan activity would stimulate and allow others, like himself, to get involved. He, for example, made reference to the early years of the RAGs in which he organized a slate of NDP members to run for positions on the RAGs against other interested parties. It was during this time that he felt the RAGs were most active. He claimed, for example, that:

⁵³ Tindal Op. cit. 35.

The discussion of issues only shows approval of discipline the Council took over.... Citizens and Councillors only 'chew fat'. There is not a political superstructure...not enough integration.... This has been a failure of the political parties...mainly Left wing parties to pick up on citizen groups to get their things done.

In contrast, another respondent argued against overlapping partisan politics in her RAG. She believed the RAGs should be only composed of citizens not currently or previously involved in city politics. She claimed, for example, that:

At the Group level, the membership was composed of those second rate politicians that didn't get elected to Council. I've seen and heard them so many times already. They've already been in politics. Let us have a chance.

In summary, the value of having partisan-political activity through the RAGs varied between citizen-to-citizen. What is significant, however, is the fact that the RAGs have provided a "spawning ground" in introducing aspiring "future" Councillors to the local government process. As Wichern claims, a "major unrecognized contribution of RAG participation has been the opportunities it has provided for future Councillors to learn about and experience the nature of City operations. At least a third of the present Councillors have some background as RAG participants, and several of the senior positions--Deputy Mayor, Committee

Chair[wo/]men--are RAG alumni. Many of the unsuccessful candidates also have RAG experience."⁵⁴

In conclusion, Councillor perceptions of the RAGs play an important part in the determination of the success of the RAGs. Clearly, negative and suspicious Councillors, who viewed the RAGs as a threat, crippled the RAGs "advise and assist" potential with the Community Committees. These Councillors, as reviewed, did so by their non-attendance at Community Committee meetings and by ignoring or sharply challenging recommendations from the RAG Advisors. However, the opposite was also the case. Advisors pointed out that some Councillors were more responsive to their interests through the RAGs over their individual efforts at communicating with them. Moreover, some Councillors clearly promoted the RAGs, and attempted to encourage citizens to attend RAG meetings and participate. From the above, variations in Councillor-RAG relationships have been, for the most part, attributed to individual Councillor perceptions of the RAGs. The impression is made that Councillors may simply dismiss the importance of the RAGs or "write them off" as a self-serving group of "axe grinders". However, as noted in the research, the Councillors' negative

⁵⁴ Wichern Op. cit. "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity: Citizen Participation And Resident Advisory Groups, 1971-1984" 32.

perceptions were similar to those of some Advisors: perhaps some RAGs were, according to both Councillors and Advisors, composed of a narrow, self-serving group of "axe grinders"--ignoring the rest of the community.

Conclusions: Reverting Back

From this review, it can be concluded that although Brownstone and Plunkett maintain "Winnipeg's Unicity reorganization represents a marked departure from that of any other community in Canada," and that "Winnipeg's 1971 reorganization was a marked departure from Canada's traditional approach to metropolitan reform,"⁵⁵ the only "major change" of significance in Winnipeg's local government lies in the structural reforms themselves. The Tindals' conclusion that "major change"⁵⁶ has taken place is over zealous in review of the record of citizen participation through the innovative structures. No "major change", in citizen decision-making power, for example, has taken place. Citizens were never given the power of decision-making or approval that was inferred in the White Paper. Instead, they were limited only to "advise and assist" their Community Committees who would bring up

⁵⁵ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 181, 183.

⁵⁶ Tindal and Tindal Op. cit. 2-4.

citizen concerns to Council.

Furthermore, declining levels of citizen participation in Unicity do not represent a major change towards a more participatory form of local government. After initial RAG attendance success, involving a few hundred citizens, participation quickly waned. Participation levels and disillusionment within the RAG structure has continued since its inception. As pointed out, earlier research attributed this to a number of reasons. RAGs, for example, lacked the funding and technical resources for their research and operations. RAGs have also experienced difficulties in obtaining information resources for their research.

This thesis points out, however, that the major identifiable obstacle that has faced the RAGs lies in the difficulty of establishing communication linkages between Councillors on the Community Committees and citizen representatives in the RAGs. Some Councillors, in their negative perception of RAG participants, ignored their concerns and, in some cases, failed to attend their Community Committees. Given this, the "advise and assist" task of the RAGs with their Community Committees was further weakened as citizens lost interest in participating as they no longer felt their RAGs could play a significant role in local government. The founding participatory rhetoric of the

White Paper was never attained through the decentralized entities.

In summary, although the innovative decentralized structures represent a departure in the organization of Canadian local government, the presence of the structures themselves did not bring about increased nor effective citizen participation. The structures themselves are not at fault however. Instead, it can be concluded that the negative attitudes of those involved (especially those of certain cynical Councillors) were central to the erosion of any potential participatory achievements through the decentralized participatory structures.

Notwithstanding the above, however, Kiernan and Walker's conclusion that "radical reform of the organizational superstructure of local government has never really been attempted," and that the "Winnipeg 'reform' can provide us with little empirical evidence on the efficacy of institutional reform,"⁵⁷ is also an inexact evaluation of Unicity. Although the original great expectations for increased citizen participation in decision-making have not been realized in numbers, citizens have participated in the planning of their communities with Councillors through the

⁵⁷ Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 222.

RAG-Community Committee structures on policy issues in the regulation of private clubs, zoning, mental health guest houses and others. Moreover, the RAGS have been used as a vehicle for raising citizen complaints to Councillors on the Community Committees, making some Councillors more accountable to their electors. Advisors have also organized their interests with the backing of their RAGs.

The most significant accomplishment of Unicity's structural changes from this thesis, however, is in making local government information more accessible to citizens. The reforms have provided citizens with a means to obtain information on Council proposals from their RAG meetings unavailable elsewhere. In addition, citizens, through their RAG chairperson, have gained special insight on future Council plans before they formally came up in Council. It was also noted that Councillors, through the Community Committees, often aided citizens in the understanding of local government decisions and policies. Clearly, Unicity has provided participatory reform in enhancing accessibility to information.

In conclusion, structural change has not brought about significant changes in the levels of citizen participation. The decentralized structures have continually experienced declines in their membership and they have never been

allowed decision-making powers. What success the reforms have had is based on their opening up of government by the express desire of some citizens to get involved and the positive attitudes of Councillors in hearing their advice and recommendations.

CHAPTER V

Conclusions: A Concluding Note On Structural Change And Participatory Democracy

Introduction

Throughout this thesis the relationship between structure and citizen participation has been in the forefront of discussion. Notably, structures have, all along the development of Unicity, been considered a determinant of political behaviour. From the nascent proposals for a Unicity form of government, through to the 1986 Review Committee, various prescription-panaceas for perceived short-comings in Winnipeg local government have been recommended and, at times, enacted under the assumption that structures affect political processes. The purpose of this concluding Chapter is to assess the efficacy of Unicity's reforms towards a more participatory form of local government.

For the most part, authors who have commented on the relationship of structural change and participatory ideas in Unicity suggest that the Unicity reforms moved little in the direction of participatory democracy. Brownstone and Plunkett maintain, for example, that "although the

government was prepared to go a long way to improve the representative model, and did so in the legislation, it provided little statutory base for a participatory model," and that "the Unicity act made only rather weak contributions to a participatory relationship in Winnipeg."¹ Similarly, Kiernan and Walker point out that although the original "rhetorical flourishes indicated not only a pious faith in the efficacy of structural reform, but also a commitment to use such reform to reconstitute, decentralize, and politicize a system previously predicated on efficiency rather than political responsiveness," the "compromise provisions that emerged were only a token gesture in the direction of participatory democracy."²

This thesis' research supports the contention that Unicity's reforms moved little towards a more participatory local government. Although the overall NDP ideology expressed the ideas of social and political justice, its reforms did not move to the extent of drafting a truly decentralized participatory system over the existing representative one. Thus, as an expression of elitist democracy, power was not decentralized to the extent that citizens had decision-making authority. Although the

¹ Brownstone and Plunkett Op. cit. 158, 183.

² Kiernan and Walker Op. cit. 230, 233.

representational system was altered to include Community Committees and Residents' Advisory Groups, which were aimed at opening up the political process, it is apparent that Council remained the sole decision-making authority. Citizens were strictly limited to an "advise and assist" function with their Councillors sitting on the Community Committees.

In terms of participatory democracy, however, Unicity's decentralized structures have provided an avenue for citizens to initiate, discuss and get involved in local government. It was pointed out, for example, that citizens were involved in raising their local interests on various zoning and local service issues initiated at the RAG level. This, however, does not go as far as to say that citizens have become "sovereign consumers", making and implementing decisions on local services. Instead, their recommendations have been heard by Councillors on the Community Committees who have raised their issues in Council. Unicity's structures have also provided citizens with opportunities to become better informed and cognizant of the issues that affect their communities. Some citizens have, for example, gained greater access to information resources in their communication with Councillors in the Community Committees and have obtained help from their Councillors in the interpretation of Council decisions. In summary, the most

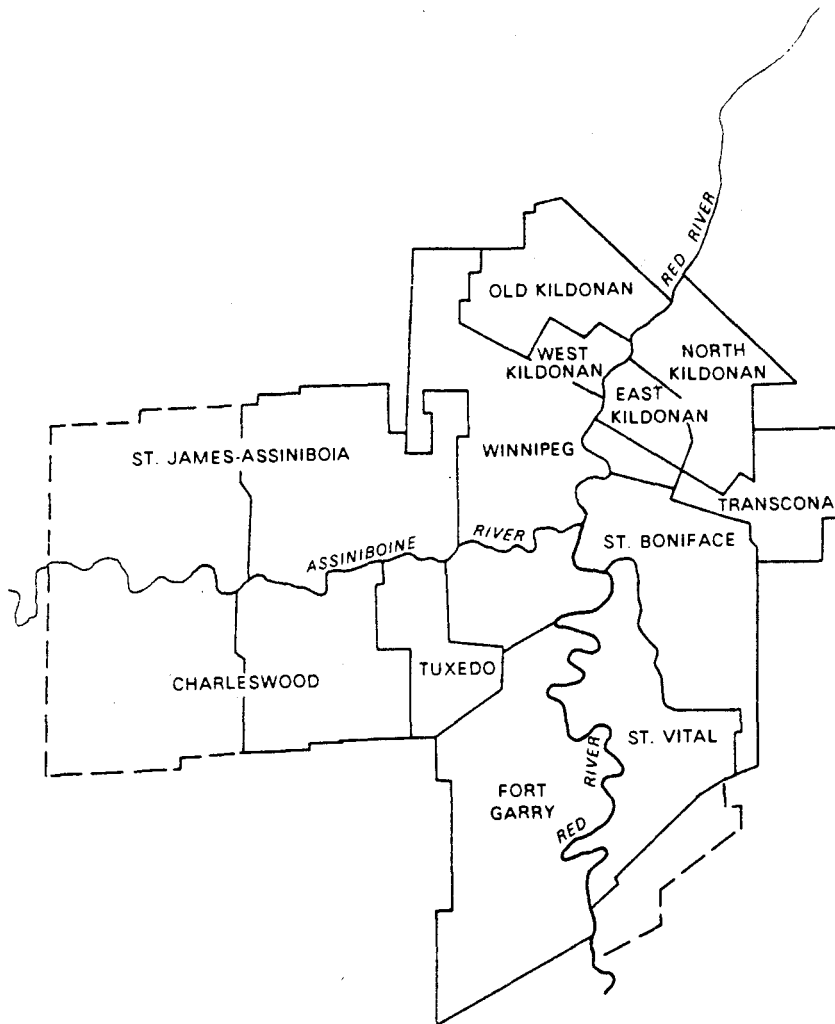
significant aspect of Unicity's reforms towards participatory ideals is the greater access to information provided in the interaction between citizens and their Councillors through the decentralized entities.

Despite these achievements in accessibility, it is evident that the Community Committee-RAG structures have not worked out as originally anticipated in the White Paper. Most Urban issues have not become politicized through the structures and there has not been strong citizen interest in participation and involvement in the development of policies through the Community Committee-RAG arrangement. Instead, citizen participation in the RAGs has declined sharply since their inception, with fewer and fewer numbers of participants. [Refer to List Of Figures Table 2 "Estimates Of Participation In Resident Advisory Groups, 1971-1983"]

In conclusion, Unicity's reforms have moved little towards participatory democracy. Little has changed in the role and place of citizens in local government. In conclusion, what is needed to make the model a more participatory one lies beyond changes in the structures themselves.

Map 1

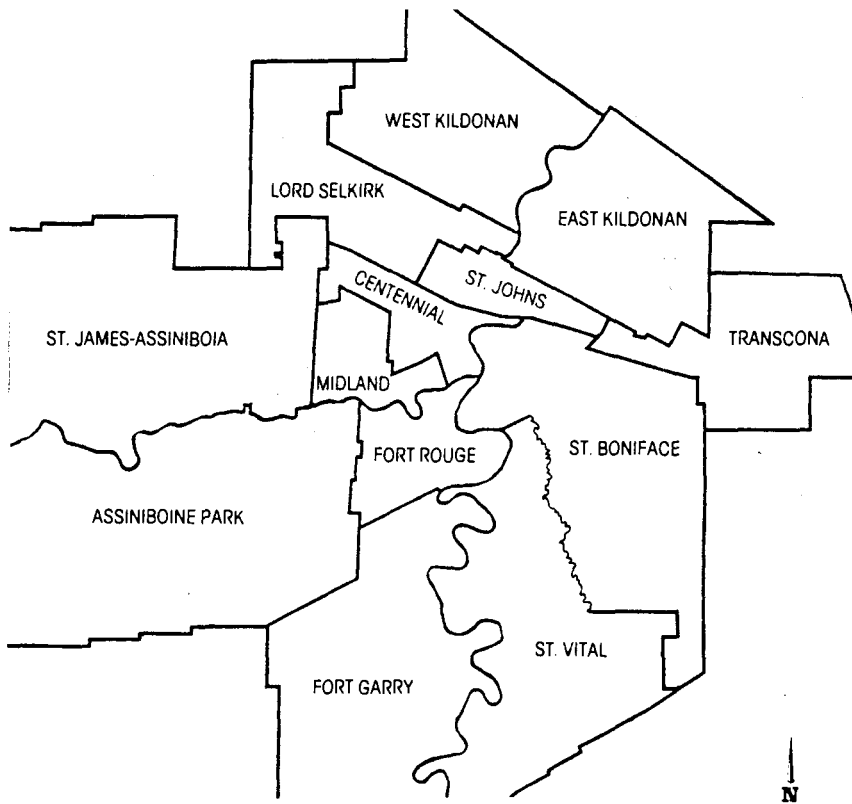
Winnipeg Boundaries Before Unicity



*Source: Manitoba. Cherniak, Lawrie, Artibise, Alan, MacDonald, D.I., Epstein, Donald and Thomas, Paul G. Our City In Review: Issues Paper Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1984).

Map 3

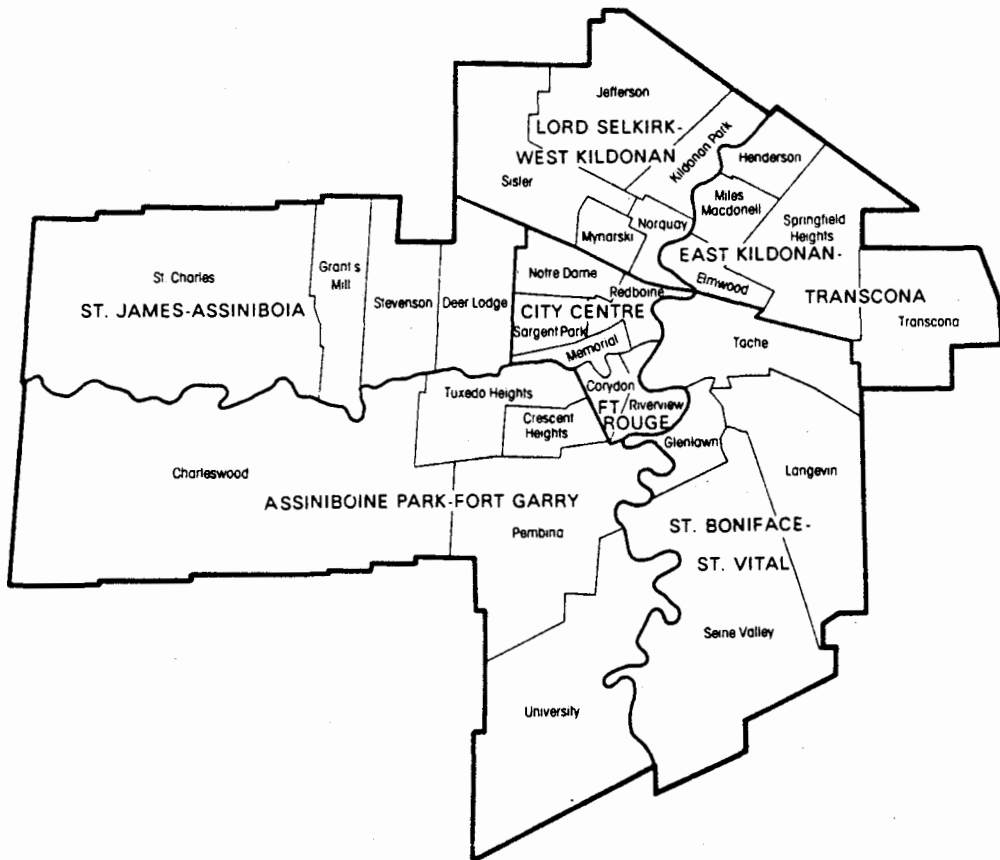
Unicity Wards 1972-1977



***Source: Manitoba. Cherniak, Lawrie, Artibise, Alan, MacDonald, D.I., Epstein, Donald and Thomas, Paul G. Our City In Review: Issues Paper Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1984).**

Map 4

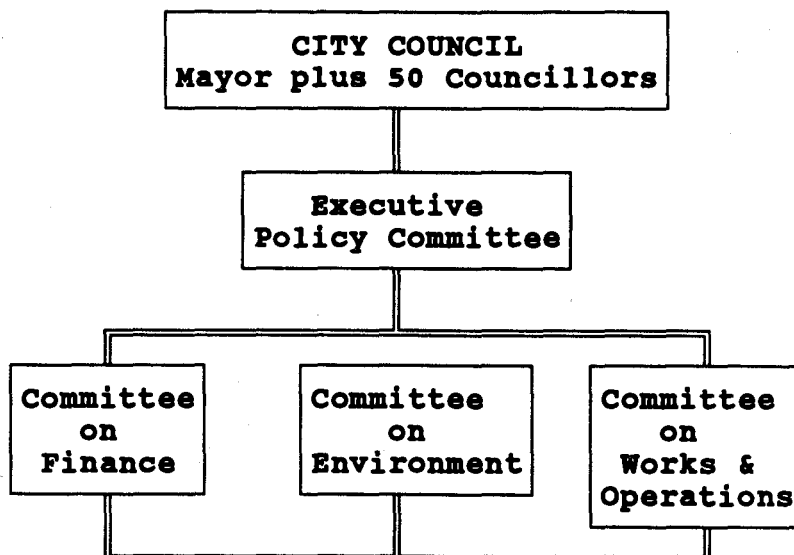
Community Committee And Ward Boundaries After 1977



*Source: Manitoba. Cherniak, Lawrie, Artibise, Alan, MacDonald, D.I., Epstein, Donald and Thomas, Paul G. Our City In Review: Issues Paper Queen's Printer Winnipeg (1984).

Figure A

**Community Committees And Standing Committees
(Under City of Winnipeg Act 1971)**



<u>Community Committee</u>	<u>No. of Wards In Each Community</u>
Assiniboine Park	3
Centennial	4
East Kildonan	4
Fort Garry	3
Fort Rouge	5
Lord Selkirk	4
Midland	4
St. Boniface	4
St. James-Assiniboia	6
St. Johns	4
St. Vital	3
Transcona	3
West Kildonan	3

13 Community Committees	50 Wards

*Source: Manitoba. Provisional Plan For Local Government Organization In The Greater Winnipeg Area Local Boundaries Commission Queen's Printer Winnipeg (December 1970).

Figure B

Estimates Of RAG Participation 1971-1983

	1972	1975	1978	1979	1982	1983
1. Wards	50	50	29	29	29	29
2. Communities	13	12	6	6	6	6
3. Community Conference Total	2245	731	430	300	195	226
Attendance Average/cc	173	60	72	50	33	38
4. RAG Members	481	348	222	150	156	152
5. "Active" Members	320	200	120	108	82+	77+
6. Largest RAG	146	54	55	55	34	27
7. Average Size	40	29	36	36	25	25

Notes:

+ Average Attendance at RAG meetings is used here as an index of "active" membership

*Source: Wichern, P.H. "Evaluating Winnipeg's Unicity: Citizen Participation And Resident Advisory Groups, 1971-1984" Institute Of Urban Studies University Of Winnipeg (1984).

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