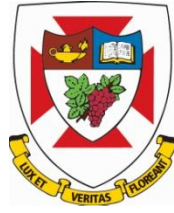


Winnipeg: The Unicity Concept

By Dr. Lloyd Axworthy
1976

The Institute of Urban Studies





THE UNIVERSITY OF
WINNIPEG

FOR INFORMATION:

The Institute of Urban Studies

The University of Winnipeg
599 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg
phone: 204.982.1140
fax: 204.943.4695
general email: ius@uwinnipeg.ca

Mailing Address:

The Institute of Urban Studies

The University of Winnipeg
515 Portage Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 2E9

WINNIPEG: THE UNICITY CONCEPT

Published 1976 by the Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg
© THE INSTITUTE OF URBAN STUDIES

Note: The cover page and this information page are new replacements, 2015.

The Institute of Urban Studies is an independent research arm of the University of Winnipeg. Since 1969, the IUS has been both an academic and an applied research centre, committed to examining urban development issues in a broad, non-partisan manner. The Institute examines inner city, environmental, Aboriginal and community development issues. In addition to its ongoing involvement in research, IUS brings in visiting scholars, hosts workshops, seminars and conferences, and acts in partnership with other organizations in the community to effect positive change.

HT 169
C32V1585
no. 245

LIBRARY
INSTITUTE OF URBAN STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

WINNIPEG - THE UNICITY CONCEPT

By

DR. LLOYD AXWORTHY

A Paper Presented at the
Seminar on Regional Government
September 9, 1976

DRAFT

WINNIPEG - THE UNICITY CONCEPT

By

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy

I should explain that my appearance here is due to the auspices and graciousness of the Government of Alberta which took off the border guards last evening and allowed me to sneak in under cover of darkness without any particular diplomatic immunity or privilege. Which shows there is still a degree of unity between us but I had to receive those assurance because I realize that being something of a rare breed that I am, I might be put under glass in the Province of Alberta and be kept around for curiosity sake. I feel a little uncertain about appearing before a crowd that is primarily composed of local government people and I consider I am both an academic and a provincial politician. It's like being an abortionist freemason appearing before the College of Cardinals, to talk about family planning. I hope that my remarks will try to, you'll receive them in the spirit in which they are given and not look at the source necessarily, or at least the label on which that source carried it. I'd also like just to say that much as I want to comment on is based upon a continuing attempt by our Institute at the University to keep an eye on Unicity and assess what's going on and try and figure out what is taking place. I'm not so sure that anyone can do a proper job of that kind of observation but we have over the past four years, since Unicity came into operation, have kept a watching brief and have undertaken a series of different examinations of aspects of Unicity, so my remarks are not based purely upon bias or prejudice or intuition

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

although they are sometimes useful ingredients, but it has been based upon some degree empirical examination and I hope that I'll be able to provide some of that for you.

The question has been raised about what is the difference between Unicity and Metro. Asked that before I always say Unicity is the son of Metro and it has something of that same kind of soap opera saga to it. When Andy Currie left off this morning we were on the edge of our seats trying to tell what was going to be the next step and I am always reminded though that in most soap operas we find some of the most extraordinary circumstances taking place and that one of the common stock themes of any afternoon soap opera, if you ever watch them, which I have on occasion, is that you find the unwilling taking of two incompatible partners usually producing an offspring that is both unwanted and unnecessary, and I think that that may in fact be one of the themes that one could put forward about the question of Unicity. That if I was to put forward a proposition to you, for you to examine, and that is the consequences, the results of that particular meeting that took place in the early '70's has resulted in many unintended unforeseen and unanticipated results. And that is probably one of the, if there is any lesson to be learned, to walk away with today, is that any attempt whatever at the restructuring, reorganizing of government institution is not a precise science or art, it perhaps closer to a form of black magic that it is to some scientific feat of precision. And as a result you get a lot of consequences that you didn't expect. In fact if there is any lesson to be learned from the Winnipeg both as it was described this morning in the Metro scheme, I think it is equally and perhaps it is more so in terms of the Unicity

operation in Winnipeg. That there were very definite specific sets of objectives set forward by the provincial government in its White Paper and as we look back, at least in the short history of the past four and one half years, in some cases those objectives have been totally turned on their head, in other cases they have been only partially answered and in some cases they have been accomplished. So to sum it up a clear statement as to is Unicity good or bad, I would have to say that part of the jury is still out and secondly from this early return would be that we gathered a lot of truth that we didn't expect when the seeds were sewn. And I suppose if there is any theme to my remarks it would be back to the Scottish poet Robbie Burns who said "the best laid plans of mice and men often gang a-gley", you can take that with whatever meaning that you'd like, But the fact of the matter is that many of the results of Unicity as well intentioned as they were simply do not bear fruition. And I think that part of the reason is that we'd have to look at the background to the inception of the Unicity. Any took us really into that period of the late '60's when it was very obvious that there was a stalemate in the decision making in the City of Winnipeg area. But I want to emphasize that what was described this morning was more a political statement than it was an institutional one. It was a group of competing politicians who happened to come out of different institutional backgrounds or jurisdictions who create a stalemate not the institutions themselves. And I would think that you might, with a different set of participants, you might have very considerable results. And so that it comes down to the point that again the engineering aspect of local government

-----4
Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

or the re-engineering of it, I think it is a reflection of a trend that has been pretty consistent in Canadian local government, public administrative circles for thirty or forty years and I think we should give due credit to those hard working academics in Queens, University of Toronto, University of Alberta who for years propounded their lectern tables the idea that the problems of the city as they saw them, could be solved by the reorganization of government and the students sitting in front of them eventually became civil servants who sat in the Department of Municipal Affairs and consulting firms and public administration centres and they learned their lessons well because one of the dramatic results of this half decade in this country have been a fairly rapid series of changes in the area of urban government. And certainly one of them if you look at province to province has been the introduction of a variety of forms of regional unified government structures. So obviously those lessons have been learned well but I would emphasize this - that those lessons that were being propounded back in the '30's and '40's and eventually for fruition in the '60's were based finally on a pom pom theory, there was nothing to prove them right or wrong and so the classic statement of urban problems which was growth creates sprawl, fragmentation of jurisdiction, the lack of a common tax base, the inefficiency in services, the disjointed planning, all those were certainly problems but it was not necessarily true then that the cause of the problems was the fragmentation of jurisdiction. It seemed to be the most obvious result, it was one that when you first looked at the problem I think you would have had a natural inclination to jump to. But it could never be proven

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy cont'd.

and in fact because nobody has ever instituted so that the number of reorganizing on a regional level until very recently. So I think you have to see ~~the~~ ^{that} part of the Unicity concept grew out of that particular school of thought or that particular reform trend. They argue that to solve all the problems you have to reorganize the government and that you can achieve the problems if the problem is bad planning for lack of control development, or poor services or financial difficulty that one of the panacea was to reorganize government primarily on a regional level. Make things administratedly clean, centralized, in fact cooying or duplicating the corporate motion, the organizational motion of a very well functioning administrative system that had a nice clean organizational base to put it on the wall. So that was part of the patrimony, if I can continue using that particular simile of Unicity that stream of thought. But equally as important, historically by Unicity is that it also came about at the same time that Canadians in urban centres were discovering another series of grievances about their urban governments. And that was really the populus notion of lack of democratic controls and responsibilities. And we've all heard the words used a thousand times about accountability, citizen participation, involvement, lack of access, all of you who have been in local government have dealt with that particular issue many times over. But the fact that it also is a very recent phenomina, we borrowed the idea in large part from the Americans and I won't go through this era, but the war on poverty in the States, Civil Rights Movement, Anti-war demonstrations, sort of flushed over. We read Time Magazine too and watched American news broadcats and said hey, that's our problem too. And the

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy cont'd.

Federal Government in its benign wisdom set up things like the CYC and OFY and we sent guys out to organize and all of a sudden citizens got together and said hey that council down there doesn't need represent me any more. I don't know what that City government is doing. And so the placid backwater of local government where you turn the lights out at five and make sure the snow ploughs are out and everything else. You got pretty much turned around in the '60's. Boy, all of a sudden it was action centre and local politicians were running for their lives in front of the wave of citizen participation that was sweeping us all over. Now that was part, contrary to most opinion, Winnipeg also had that kind of thing going on as well, not as dramatic a fashion as Toronto, because we don't have national media in Winnipeg to dramatize it the same way. But the fact of the matter is, it was happening in Winnipeg just the same as it was happening in Calgary and Edmonton and Halifax and anywhere else. Groups of citizens were saying we don't think we are being governed democratically anymore. So that was part of the tradition, also the climate of opinion and thought out of which Unicity was born. Now in very specific terms the description of events that Andrew Currie described this morning where a stalemate was achieved. The provincial government which up to 1969 was a conservative government had decided that they would set up that classic for all governments when they don't want to handle a hot problem, they set up a blue ribbon commission, in the hope that it will take a very long time to study the problem. They set up a commission chaired by Russ Pauley in 1956 to do, and it was a very classy operation, university presidents, senior respected civil servants, it was a very high powered operation and they spent three years and their mandate was to redesign boundaries both

in and outside Winnipeg, but Winnipeg was its first priority. And just at the point when they were about to give birth to their particular prescription for the reorganization of Metro Winnipeg, which was a two tier system as it was described, along came a provincial election and Mr. Shreyer and the new democrats emerged by some particular chemistry as the new government. Well, at that time understandably, Mr. Shreyer didn't quite trust what the Tory's had done before and he wasn't going to fool around with any Tory appointed task force. Furthermore, he also has in his new cabinet, several former Metro councillors and very strong individuals with very set opinions about the fact that they wanted a unified government, meaning we didn't want the two tier system where there was two levels with some connection, we wanted one government. That was the argument put forward by the Syd Green's, Saul Cherniak's and so on.

He also had in his cabinet, by the way, some suburban politicians and some mayors and councillors from the suburbs who didn't believe in unification but they also knew that their own particular constituency was for it, but that's another story. In effect then Shaw and his government brought in a group of consultants some of whom may be in the room at this moment, basically from Toronto, to solve their problems, and they came up with a very quick study, it was, unlike most government task forces, operated very quickly. It came out with a set of proposals which reflected those two trends. One was a complete unified municipal government, doing away with the two tiers and totally emerging all the former municipalities into one system both administratedly and politically. There would be no separate municipalities but that there would be only one City of Winnipeg taking over the entire former Metro region. Out of that particular unified system, the city governed basically by a, what they then

proposed a forty eight ward council, based upon about ten thousand base population. And that was back of the other equation and that was why they have small wards, so says the White Paper, was to bring the politicians closer to the people. And that if you recall the pie shaped affair that Andy Currie drew this morning, what usually took place because in the Unicity which is a lower income area, the sociology of things would result that very few people voted so that the politicians elected in the Metros tended to be elected in these areas. What we did with the Unicity was to do away with the pie wedge and simply create a series of wards based approximately, upon that 10,000 population, that was the theory, the smaller the ward - and furthermore that the small ward would give representation to the minority groups particularly to the central city groups. That one of the problems under local government was that the elected representatives tend to be middle class merchants or whatever you want to call it, and I'm not trying to be silly, but if you look at local government across Canada, that's who they are generally. And they are simply saying here what about the Italians and the Indians and the poor people down in central city, let them elect their own representatives. The irony, of course, is to find out that what we elected was a travel agent. I'm getting ahead of myself. That was the idea of a small ward. What they also felt though at the time was that there was a fair degree of pressure both political and otherwise on the provincial level and the city itself for some retention of some autonomy of the local suburbs, the municipality. The essence of the Unicity was to create what they call the community committee. What we said was Unicity would take three or four wards usually which would have some reflection of the former municipalities and create what they

Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

call a community committee of it. So the four councils from each of those wards were required by legislation to meet at least once a month in the local area to have powers of a local nature, primarily of an advisory nature but they would look at zoning local ordinances, smaller planning issues, delivery of services, into the area, so went the theory. And attached to these community committees which had to meet once a month was another major innovation in the local government structure in Canada, that they called the Resident Advisory Groups, commonly known as RAG. Even the people in the RAGS called them RAGS, there was nothing wrong with it. Now what the Resident Advisory Group was, again by legislation, under the Act is that every community committee area would have to call at least once a year a conference of all citizens who wanted to attend and in that conference they would elect resident advisors and the resident advisors had an official role under the legislation again to advise these councillors on the performance of their duties, not to be involved directly in the decision making, but at least to have access to them and they had to meet with them at least once a month. So the Resident Advisory Group was probably the most clear presentation of that fashionable concern at the time for increased participation and involvement of citizens in the decision making. But what I want to make one thing clear that it did not reflect the hard core theorist of participation. The hard core theorist of participation say "I don't want those councillors making decisions for me, I want to make them for myself". The Residents Advisor Groups Limit of power was to advise the councillors and that was specifically written into the Act and so interpreted later on. So that was the political structure, so what you really have is a unified government administra-

tively, so with a decentralized political system. It was an attempt to really answer both the concern, those who were concerned about efficiency, those who were concerned about the centralized planning, ending fragmentation, common economic bases. The unified administration at the same time they decentralized the political systems and assured some accountability in response to this, both to the small wards and to this community committee RAG system. Now the other key element in the Unicity act had to deal with the city decision making powers of government, the thing called the executive powers of government and area of local government, which is generally ignored. And what the underlying thesis, as it was interpreted at least, I don't think the authors have ever denied it was to create and form a parliamentary system at the city level. But they originally proposes that the mayors not be elected directly by the citizen but be elected by a fifty man council and out of that majority would then form the basis for a cohesive platform and a cohesive set of policies and programs. As long as you have to tie together the legislative and the mayor into a merger of interests so that to stay mayor he had to have a majority, and for the majority to keep him together it was the same way as it worked in the legislature or in the House of Commons, you have to pull the majority to be the boss. Well what the provincial government didn't count on at was the immense antagonism and ability of Steve Juba to part the troops. Steve Juba virtually went on the warpath on that particular issue. I am not one to say the provincial government caved in but I would say it was a fair guess. And as the Act was going to provincial legislature and everyone was taking great relish that Steve Juba may no longer be with us. The

The fact of the matter is the Cabinet announced one major amendment after a second reading and guess what the amendment was - those of you who watch soap operas will know. Yes, the mayor was to be elected by direct election. They really changed it. Now that has had very serious repercussions upon the executive structure of the City of Winnipeg. Once again it divorced the chief executive officer from any responsibility to command a majority in council. As a result the mayor can, as he does, go his own way and do what he wants to do. Any coincidence between what he may want to do and what the majority of council may want to do, is purely accidental. Mayor Juba as a mayor is a very fine man, a character who enjoys the public "juice" and that's why he gets elected because he's a character, one of the lessons you learn is you can't get to be an executive and be a character at the same time. A very tough thing

TAPE TROUBLE

they would be more responsive to the emerging social issues of the city, housing, poverty, Indians, the rest of them. What there in fact was, was a city council that was completely and totally dominated by the suburban property owner interest. I don't mean the development necessarily, but the guy who owns his own house, whose basis in local government is to get good services at low cost, keep a tax bill level and don't fool around too much with those people downtown. And it didn't take an awful lot of mathematical ability to figure out why, because the population centres were out here (suburbs) and not down here (inner city). And one of the interesting paradoxes which I've laid out before, and have had some argument over is "if the intention was reformed, then we should probably have left Winnipeg as an inner city and had the ward system inside it." Then if you are sort of

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy cont'd.

counting -our chickens, right now we'd probably have a reformed council in Winnipeg. As it is the independent civic election committee is not a reform council, it is business as usual. If there is not any great degree of policy program thrust than can in anyway be called socially minded or reform minded, in fact just the opposite. Again, I'm not laying the blame, that's the way the political system spelled it out. That the guy who is down here in Fort Garry is not all that concerned frankly, about the highrise tenant in downtown Winnipeg. He simply wants to get home from work five minutes faster than he does. He wants roads built that's what he wants. He wants highrise and office development down there because office development at least according to the general theory creates more tax dollars. I think it's a real dispute because it costs more in the end. But the fact of the matter is that he is going to support big downtown development that creates tax dollars and hopes it keeps his mill rate down.

so that

in actual fact the political system had been turned on its head. When I was listening to the debate this morning, Mayor Plain was talking about who was going to get it in the neck by Unicity.

The suburbs say "Boy we are going to get the squeeze play", well I've got news for you, the politicians who get elected from the inner city of Winnipeg. We are the tails being wagged by the dog and its not^a very pleasant experience because far more so than before, of the decisions, and I'll give you one example. I have just checked this out and you may be able to confirm it if you look at the budget. That the recreation budget in Winnipeg

if you took an average of 1,000 in Fort Garry, St. James and East Kildonan, just take and 1,000 citizens there and 1,000 citizens in Unicity, Winnipeg, the expenditure for recreation is ten times for them (suburbs) that it is here (Winnipeg). And if you start looking at budgets that's when you start discovering the priorities of government. And that's the way the system is worked out. It is worked out, I think, to the major benefit of those in the suburban municipalities. They now wield political power for the whole city. They are the guys who occupy executive policy committee

and the I.C.C. council members who happen to get elected in some of the older city wards had to resign from the I.C.C. almost to keep their seats. They, in all honesty could not stay as members of the I.C.C.

Two city councils in my own constituency had to resign because the suburban councils decided they were not going to allow on-street parking. While, when you go into the highrise district where it's 90% tenant, where are you going to park your car except on the street.

But if you have a fall of snow, if you don't have cars on the street, and we are going to have one law for everybody, so the law here we have driveways, there's no problem but here we don't have driveways, it is a problem

So the councils in the inner city were constantly getting themselves caught up in that kind of squeeze play. Sheer politics but totally predictable from that system. Now in terms of some of the other matters. Service deliver, I think, Andy was correct, I don't think the services are any better and they are probably

not much worse, but they do cost. There is also another problem, and that is, if citizens don't feel that they can get the good services that they did in the past. Now I don't think they are right on a measureable basis, if we go into some area that's actually measurable the services themselves. The citizens no longer feel that they can pick up a phone and say hey get out and get the snow off my street, off my sidewalk. They feel that things are being run down town, not in the local civic office. I'll give you another example, we've been working with the police commission for the last year, setting up a neighborhood team, policing building. Why do you need a police because that sense of local control isn't there anymore. It's all downtown and now we are reversing the flow of to get back to that kind of sense of closer connection and communication on the service delivery side. The other thing, and I won't go into that because I think that Andy did it very well this morning, was the cost factor, everything rises to its highest level. And what didn't happen and what was far more disturbing to me as an observer and one who wanted to see this thing work, was the fact that the administrative system itself didn't reform along with it, and I think I have some pet theories for it. One of the reasons for it, Unicity came in far too quickly. You know it was slam bang, thank you ma'am, that's that. Eight months report, regulation and six months later we're in business. As result all those administrators who had been used to the Metro system, the local municipal system and to the city system were thrown together and said O.K. guys work something out. Well you know it took them a while to realize that the guy you've been

hammering for ten years wasn't a card carrying come or something. But it took a while to meld that into some sort of working cohesion. And you know something, the City of Winnipeg still doesn't have a personnel policy worth a snoot. It still doesn't have a pension plan. It still doesn't have any management of any significant kind that you could call sophisticated or modern. They've tacked a bureau of budget on and I told you I was talking to one of the commissioners involved in one of these departments and said how are we using the bureau of budget? He said I don't know how I'm supposed to use it, there are three or four guys and they are figuring how to use it. I don't know how. I'll give you another example, the service delivery problems, fire department, critical services. The fire department is under the commissioner of finance, if and when the commissioner of finance knows he's under him. The fire department's away out there. The communications system that plugs into the fire department is under public works and the inspection system on fire prevention safety standards is under the Department of Environment so you talk about a fire system and the inspection communication and reaction are all under three different commissions. And no-one has figured it out yet.

we said who's responsible for fire, the commissioner's office or the city council? They said we think it is the fire chief. Well, the fire chief thinks it is too but he realizes the only thing that he can do is put out fires, he can't control inspections

So on the basis of sheer service delivery, I would make a case to you that there are some real problems. Now I'm not saying that those kinds

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

of problems can't be cleared up and I would also speculate that once you get a decent management system in the City of Winnipeg, it may be more effective than the old system, but right now it isn't because no-one really pays an awful lot of attention to the management, the internal management, not the structure. It reminds me of the story of the guy at the street light looking for his lost quarter, because it was easier to look under the street light than where he lost it. They should be looking at the management issues, not at the structure itself. One further matter ^{in which} I think that Unicity has been very successful is in the field of finance. It has brought in a common tax base we have a common mill rate, it has eliminated a lot of the economic competition between the municipalities and it has given the City of Winnipeg, I would guess, a much better debt position to go to the bond markets. So if you are in the business of heading capital works and you have to go down to New York to float your paper, Unicity can float its paper as a unified city much better totally. I think this is true of the regional system as well, that it is much stronger financially, there is no question about it. Much tougher and stronger financially with one exception, it has been able to use its leverage to get a better financial from the province. Unicity does not solve the great unsolvable which is local government finance, that still is an issue in every local government and will be I suppose for some time. So if you think local government is a case for solving your financial problems it will in part, there is no question that the economic unit now gives the city itself a much better base to work on. A much better position in capital

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

markets. But it has not done anything at all that I can possibly see to deal with the problem of finance also because the schools can still take off 40% of the property tax. There is one more area then which we'll deal with quickly and that is what about this R.A.G. Community Council system, in some cases the most innovative interesting part of the Unicity system. Again I would say that the results of the matter are mixed, it depends upon who you talk to. Many councillors don't like it, in fact I would suspect that four of the five councillors do say Let's reduce the size of council from fifty down to twenty, let's get back to the old larger unit and let's also get rid of the R.A.G.s. At the same time there are advisory committee system groups which at least to my mind, have shown some real potential. That it has shown if nothing else, by the fact that it still exists, the R.A.G.s still show up and you will get thirty or forty people per meeting discussing local issues. Now I have heard councillors say R.A.G. is full of local radicals or local activists, fine, at least they are in a legitimate form debating and discussing where they should be, that's good. They've got a legitimate role to play and rather than out there working on the mimeograph press pushing stuff out to men on the street corner, they are in there dealing head and shoulders with the council. And by the way, it's not just the activists who are active in the area. I represent, provincially, Fort Rouge which was mainly the classic downtown old neighborhood with lots of highrises with the young planning kids, environment on one side and the old duffers on the other, who say, if I want to sell my house for an apartment block that's my God given right. And that particular conflict which I think is an important conflict to be worked out in the urban centres, but it has to be at the community

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

committee level. And we don't have any real solutions but it is being worked, it being debated month after month and they all figure I'm behind it all, anyway, but the fact of the matter is a forum for debate for discussion for airing, in fact there are some very interesting results. I have sat and observed the many areas, some of the suburban are able to apply interesting kinds of leverage against the local development process, they do change development agreements. They don't get a revolutionary change, we still have developers, we are still building subdivisions, but the fact of the matter is they are being built a little better. Taking longer, mind you, but have got to some degree, more amenities in the, a little better protection and a little bit more in the way of facilities. And that's simply because the R.A.G.s are saying we are going to hold you up and they'll fight for what they want. And the Winnipeg system designed the way it is, you want to hold something up boy. If your mission in life is to be an obstructionist, move to Winnipeg because you will find your life's work there, without question of a doubt. The system is designed, there are more hurdles there to jump than there are at the Olympics. And as a result the system works both ways. But I think that the angle you don't have accuracies of participation, it is still very much a negative force. It's a veto force. But there are boomerangs and examples wherein the R.A.G. community system has been used as an alternative system for making decisions. The prime one was a railway relocation case which was one of the rare cases where the suburbs and the inner city residents agreed that they didn't want the old railway lines taken up and new ones put in because what was going to happen in the old railway line was that a freeway was going to be built. They didn't think that was a hot idea.

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

And a lot of coming together and the R.A.G.s were the basis by which debate took place, and that's where citizens are able to come together. I'd like to say the R.A.G. community system is being starved to death. The province has given it no resources and neither has the city. The city council has never debated the role of the R.A.G. for citizen participation, they are not interested in that kind of thing. So they have survived in spite of the best efforts of the administrators and the politicians, to get rid of them. In fact, one of the things that disturbs me most is that within the city with that beautiful system of community committee, one of the first acts of the administration, the Board of Commissioners was to divide the city into six administrative zones which had absolutely no relation to community committee areas. They would provide administrative services according to this zoned area and they would cut across three or four community committees which means keep the political system and accountability away from my administrative system. That was the message and that's the way it is working.

Question

R.A.G.S., Do they have some point where they meet together?

No, there have been several attempts to form an alliance with the R.A.G.A. and this proposal went in by a representative of the R.A.G. group about three years ago to form kind of an essential information resource centre to supply them with information and supply them with resources that they could call upon. It went to the Ministry of Urban Affairs, that brave courageous federal institution and it was skated off by a couple of city councillors who didn't think it was a good idea. And I happen to know that they were the ones to buttonhole it. They simply got to the - they simply said "kill it, we don't like it". I have made some very

Dr. Lloyd Axworthy, cont'd.

quick conclusions and maybe we'll have a chance to discuss them further tomorrow. I think someone this morning asked, I forget who it was. What about other innovations, other changes? I would say that first, reorganizing a government is really an over stimulated concept. That it is sold on the basis of far more than it can achieve. At the same time it is not necessarily that something that has to be rejected out of hand from the other side. It means simply that when you go to reorganize a government, if that is the will of the elected people and those that support them. Each step has got to be designed in a very careful systematic fashion, taking into account not just the structure but the social, economics and political realities of that area. In my own feeling, my own sense is that if you are going to reorganize, you do it in small segments. That you reorganize a system of management, and you reorganize a system by which citizens get involved. And you reorganize a system of planning and tie them together. And I think there are ways of doing it and I suppose my own inclination right now would be an advocacy of a form of two tier system, not necessarily the Metro model but a revised one. My own proposal as it has been written and talked about is to basically use the same Unicity system but give the community more power. Start building up their powers of local supervision, direction in planning, maintain the R.A.G.A. as the integral part of it and then use your central council, perhaps reduce the numbers and then use it for large scale planning measures and policy measures but leave the small minutia and don't let council simply become an escalator between the community committee if you give them the powers of first decisions and the central council only the power really of review, then

you may find that you have optimum of having a decentralized system that reflects local needs and reflects local planning concerns, the ability is still connected to, in a realistic fashion, to area planning measures. Now that's our solution fo Winnipeg because we have Unicity and we've got to do something about it, it's not working very well. I can only close by saying this may all be academic anyway. The Provincial Government set up a Task Force, another one to revue Unicity, they will be reporting in a matter of weeks I suppose. We'll be debating the legislature, and my prediction is probably nothing will change, but that's my own guess.