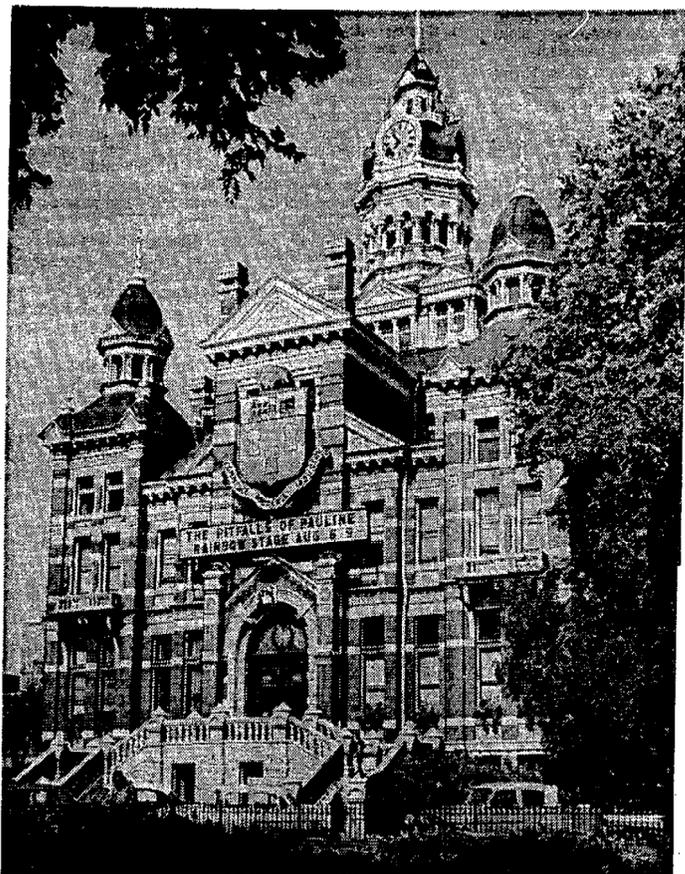


# Speaker's Ruling Sparked Brief Outbreak Of Violence In Winnipeg 98 Years Ago



Winnipeg city council operated in this city hall from 1886 until it was torn down to make room for the present Civic Centre built in 1964.

By DOUGLAS MacKAY  
AND BOB LISOWAY

The City of Winnipeg was incorporated by the Manitoba legislature Nov. 8, 1873, after a political — and sometimes physical — battle which continued for more than a year.

Moves to turn the settlement of fewer than 2,000 people into a city had begun early in 1872. The proponents of the scheme were men who saw that the population would expand so quickly there wouldn't be time to go through the intermediate stages of creating a village and town. Opposition to incorporation came from the settlement's large landowners who feared municipal taxation.

Strong feelings on both sides created tension in the community that, on at least one recorded occasion, gave way to violence. In March, 1873, a bill to incorporate the city was sent from the assembly to the upper house, or legislative council of Manitoba, for final approval. The Speaker of the upper house, Dr. Curtis J. Bird, ruled the bill unconstitutional on the grounds it infringed on the province's taxing powers.

The night of his ruling, a group of unidentified advocates of incorporation visited Dr. Bird's home. The Speaker was taken to Point Douglas and tarred. No one was ever convicted of the crime, despite Dr. Bird's offer of a \$1,000 reward, but incorporation was accomplished that autumn.

The legislature approved

incorporation Nov. 8. The name of the city, suggested by the publisher of The Nor'Wester, was to be Winnipeg, after the lake. The word is derived from the Cree "winna," meaning muddy and "nipee" meaning river.

The original city limits were the Assiniboine River on the south, the Red River on the east, Burrows Avenue west of Main Street and Aberdeen Avenue east of Main on the north, and Maryland Street, Notre Dame Avenue and McPhillips Street on the west. Four wards were created, with three aldermen to be elected from each ward.

Francis Evans Cornish, a lawyer from London, Ont., was elected Winnipeg's first mayor in the civic election Jan. 5, 1874. There were 388 eligible voters in the election, but a total of 582 votes were cast — a tribute, perhaps, to the city's first leader's ability to adapt to that era's brand of politics. It was reported that all 35 employees of one local company voted in each of the four wards. Four bobsleighs loaded with Cornish supporters visited every ward.

The original 12 aldermen were: M. Thomas Scott, H. Swinford, J. McLenaghan, Andrew Strang, W. B. Thibadeau, Stewart Mulvey, Archibald Wright, James H. Ashdown, John Higgins, Alexander Logan, J. B. More and W. G. Fonseca. Messrs. Scott, Logan and Ashdown later served terms as mayor.

The new city council held its first meeting at noon, Jan. 19, 1874, in a second-floor room of "Bentley's new building", a hardware store at the northwest corner of Portage and Main.

The cornerstone for Winnipeg's first city hall was placed June 17, 1875, on the present Civic Centre site. Completed the following year, it included a theatre and a ballroom.

The building collapsed several years later and a second city hall worth \$80,000 was erected in 1886. It remained until the site had to be cleared to make way for the city's present Civic Centre, which was finished in 1964.

The inauguration of city council in 1874 also marked the beginning of Winnipeg's minor boom period. In the year of its incorporation, the city's population rose to more than 3,700, according to the Winnipeg Board of Trade's sixth annual report in 1885. Despite depression years in the late-1970s, settlers still moved west to Manitoba.

Wheat exporting from Manitoba to Europe began in 1877. In 1878, rail service to St. Paul, Minnesota was started.

Between 1874 and 1882, the population grew to more than 20,000 from fewer than 2,000. In those years, the city's total property assessment jumped to \$27 million from \$2 million. There was a collapse towards the end of the 1880s, revealing the speculative nature of much of the city's first financial boom, but the major businesses survived. The real boom, pushing the city's population to 203,255 in 1914, was to begin in 1896.

City council urged the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1881 to bring its transcontinental railway through Winnipeg, rather than Selkirk. Many people at the time were sure Selkirk, not Winnipeg, would be the city of Manitoba's future.

The railway, however, wanted a \$200,000 subsidy, a municipal tax exemption and land for its rail yards. The city's ratepayers overwhelmingly approved the deal in July, 1881. The railroad reached the Red River in 1884. The first transcontinental train, pulled by the Countess of Dufferin, passed through Winnipeg July 1, 1886.

In 1886, the city's original charter was repealed and, until 1902, the city's affairs were administered under the Manitoba Municipal and Assessment Acts. The existing charter, now brought up to date, was then established.

Periodic boundary extensions took place throughout Winnipeg's early history. The first extension was only one year after incorporation. In 1883, Fort Rouge became part of Winnipeg. Elmwood was included in 1906, creating a total of seven wards.

From 1907 to 1918, the city was run by a board of control, composed of the mayor and four controllers elected at large. The board was abolished by referendum in 1918. The existing three-ward system with three aldermen each was established in 1920.

Electricity came to Winnipeg in the 1890s, when

several private companies were incorporated to promote its use. The first electricity for three street lights on Main Street was provided by Hudson's Bay Company grist mill in 1882.

In 1892, the Winnipeg Electric Street Railway Company was formed and began merging existing suppliers of electricity. The firm built Manitoba's first hydro-electric generating plant at Pinawa on the Winnipeg River in 1906.

The city decided to get into the business in 1906. Its hydro-electric plant at Pointe du Bois was completed in 1911. The plant is still in use. A second generating plant at Slave Falls went into operation in 1931. City Hydro, now Winnipeg Hydro, has since proven to be a profitable utility, its annual surplus having been used on occasion to keep property taxes down.

Winnipeg Electric, the private utility, was purchased by the provincial government in 1953. The province sold the company's distribution system to Winnipeg Hydro in 1955. An agreement was drawn up making Winnipeg Hydro the sole distributor of power in Winnipeg, with Manitoba Hydro supplying additional power needed at cost.

The city assumed responsibility for bringing water to its citizens in 1869 when it purchased the Winnipeg Water Works Company's distribution system. Initially, water had been taken from the Assiniboine River south of Maryland Bridge. The city dug artesian wells. In 1919, an aqueduct was completed, bringing water from Shoal Lake, 84 miles away.

The aqueduct cost more than \$13.5 million. It was designed to serve 850,000 residents. The city's population when plans were laid had been only about 100,000. The system was so well designed that no addition was required until 1950. Metro took over responsibility for the distribution of water in January, 1961.

In 1940, Winnipeg citizens endorsed complete adult suffrage in civic elections. By a vote of two to one in a referendum Nov. 22, the civic franchise was awarded to all British subjects 21 years of age and older, regardless of property holdings.

Winnipeg's second city hall — the one completed in 1886 — had by 1949 decayed to the point where talk of replacing or repairing it extensively was rampant. Nothing substantial was done immediately, however. It wasn't until 1957 that the ratepayers approved a bylaw permitting the city to

raise \$6 million for the construction of a new city hall.

Shortly afterwards, the clock tower of the old building had to be condemned for fear it would collapse. Between 1949 and 1962, several sites were suggested for the new city hall, including a property on Broadway, the University of Winnipeg site, and the old city hall site at Main Street and William Avenue.

In 1962, a contract was finally awarded for construction of the present Civic Centre complex at Main and William. The centre was officially opened by Mayor Steve Juba Oct. 5, 1964. The adjacent Public Safety Building, which included a police station, was opened May 18, 1966.

When Metro — the Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg — was created by the provincial



MAYOR JUBA

## THE FINAL COUNCIL

The existing city of Winnipeg, which will be replaced by the enlarged new city Saturday, was governed by a 19-member council.

Members of the final city council are:

Mayor Steve Juba  
Ald. E. A. Brotman  
Ald. Robert Taft  
Ald. June Westbury  
Ald. Warren Steen  
Ald. Magnus Eliason  
Ald. Gordon R. Fines  
Ald. Lillian Ballonquist  
Ald. Lloyd Stinson  
Ald. Alan C. Wade  
Ald. Robert Steen  
Ald. Joseph Cropp  
Ald. Max Mulder  
Ald. Paul Parashin  
Ald. Joe Zaken  
Ald. Slaw Rebchuk  
Ald. Nick Malanchuk.

Two other seats were vacant after the deaths of Ald. Leonard H. Claydon and Ald. J. Gurzon Harvey while in office.

government in 1960, it took over water distribution, sewage disposal, major roads and bridges, planning and zoning, weed and mosquito control, major parks, and emergency measures. These were considered to be services of joint concern to all the municipalities of Greater Winnipeg. Responsibility for garbage disposal and some rivers and streams authority was also to have been included in Metro's jurisdiction, but those portions of the Metro Act were never proclaimed.

Winnipeg's longest-serving mayor is its present one, Mayor Juba, who has been in office for 15 years since 1957. He was elected for a three-year term Oct. 6 as mayor of a new enlarged and centralized City of Winnipeg.

The previous record-holder was Mayor Garnet Coulter, who was in office for 12 years from 1943 to 1954.

Mayor David J. Dyson served the shortest term as mayor: five days in 1917. He was replaced by Mayor Frederick Harvey Davidson after a recount.

The city's longest-serving alderman was Ald. Jack Blumberg, who was on council from 1921 to 1956. Ald. Slaw Rebchuk, now on Winnipeg city council and elected to the new one, has served continuously since 1950.

Until the early 1920s, there were no parties in civic politics. Candidates ran as Independents. The situation changed when the Independent Labor Party, a forerunner of the CCF and later the New Democratic Party, began running candidates.

The Civic Election Committee, later called the Greater Winnipeg Election Committee and now the Independent Citizens' Election Committee, was organized in 1924 to oppose the labor-oriented socialist candidates.

In 1970, the annual elections were not held because of the impending reorganization of government. Aldermen retained their seats. Also, no by-election was held to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Ald. J. Gurzon Harvey in November.

In March, 1971, council gave approval-in-principle to the concept of a single city government for all of Greater Winnipeg. There were divisions over certain aspects of the provincial government's proposals for reorganization, but councillors wholeheartedly endorsed the idea of a unified government.

## Government Ends Vacillating By Introducing New City Act

By BOB LISOWAY

Greater Winnipeg's new form of urban government officially begins operating Saturday, 374 days after the basic idea was announced in a white paper prepared by the Manitoba government.

In comparison with the years of vacillating over urban reform prior to the introduction of the central city idea, the provincial government implemented its plan with dazzling speed.

In fact, many officials and residents claim the provincial government moved too rapidly.

But preparations, which hopefully will lead to a smooth changeover in urban government, have been made despite the tight timetable imposed by the provincial government.

Metro and 12 Greater Winnipeg municipalities cease to exist after today. They will be replaced by a single urban government called the City of Winnipeg.

The new city will be governed by a central city council, made up of Mayor Steve Juba and 50 councillors, which will be responsible for all urban fiscal and taxation policies and will have jurisdiction over bylaws. Thirteen community committees will supervise local services and will provide liaison between residents and the city council.

### Public Meetings

The central city concept was made public Dec. 23, 1970.

After a series of public meetings to explain its proposal, the provincial government introduced Bill 36 — the legislation based on the white paper proposals — for first reading in the Manitoba legislature on April 12. The bill received final approval from the legislature by a 22 to 14 vote on July 24.

The New Democratic Party had promised urban reform in Greater Winnipeg as part of its platform in the June, 1969 provincial election.

When the NDP government released its white paper last December, government officials said they were fulfilling their election promise.

The 40-page white paper, called Proposals For Urban Reorganization In The Greater Winnipeg Area, said the urban area's difficulties stemmed from three main roots: "fragmented authority, segmented financial capacity and lack of citizen involvement."

The provincial government said its white paper

proposal was the best available method of restructuring the area's government to enable it to live up to its fullest potential as an urban community and yield the maximum benefit to its residents and to all Manitobans.

The solution — the central council and community committees — proposed in the white paper received a mixed reaction from civic officials and Greater Winnipeg residents.

Representatives of 10 Greater Winnipeg municipalities recorded their opposition to the plan at a meeting Jan. 22. Metro council, East Kildonan city council and, eventually, Winnipeg city council were the only municipal bodies to endorse the plan.

### Opposition Voiced

Fort Garry municipal council distributed a brochure entitled You Will Lose to Fort Garry residents to explain why the council was opposed to urban reorganization.

Several other municipalities called for a referendum.

Ironically, many of the civic officials who were most vehemently opposed to the plan were elected in October to the new central city council.

More than 5,000 Greater Winnipeg residents attended a series of 14 public meetings held in January, February and March by the provincial government. The turnout at the explanatory meetings ranged from 18 at one meeting in Winnipeg proper to 900 in Fort Garry.

The reaction at the meetings ranged from outright support to complete opposition. Residents in Winnipeg proper seemed mainly to support the plan while residents in other Greater Winnipeg municipalities were opposed, or at least objected to the plan.

Finance Minister Saul Cherniack, the minister appointed responsible for urban affairs at the time the white paper was released, was forced to stop speaking on several occasions at a Feb. 4 meeting in St. James-Assiniboia because of heckling and booing from the 850 residents in attendance.

Among the main arguments presented by opponents against the plan were: that local identity would be lost in some municipalities; that taxes would climb as the result of equalization of mill rates; and that an uncontrollable bureaucracy would be created to administer civic affairs.

But provincial government officials said only a small minority of Greater Winnipeg residents were opposed to the plan. They said the basic concept would remain unchanged although changes would be made to some of the specific details.

Because of accusations of gerrymandering involving ward boundaries, the provincial government appointed a three-man independent review commission to study the ward system outlined in the white paper.

The review commission recommended on April 15 that 50 single-member wards be established and that they be grouped into 13 community committees. The white paper originally proposed 48 wards in 10 community committees.

The provincial government said it would accept the recommendations of the review commission.

Draft legislation, which closely conformed to the details outlined in the white paper, was presented to the legislature April 23.

Mr. Cherniack launched the official debate on the urban bill in the legislature June 3.

The bill received second reading — approval in principle — by a 31-to-15 vote July 9. A Liberal and an Independent joined the NDP members of the legislature in supporting the bill in principle.

The bill was then referred to the legislature's municipal affairs committee, which heard a long list of briefs from civic officials and citizens before it endorsed the bill July 21.

The bill was finally approved by the legislature July 24 with a Progressive Conservative voting with the government in support of the bill.

### 200 Changes

About 200 amendments were made to the bill but most were of a minor technical nature.

But the provincial government did agree to amend the bill to allow for the election of a mayor by Greater Winnipeg residents rather than by the councillors from among themselves.

Although there were some heated words spoken, the debate in the legislature seemed almost an anticlimax after the opposition that was voiced when the white paper was first released.

In the seven-month period between the release of the white paper and final approval of the actual legislation, a multitude of alternatives to the government proposal were offered.

Seventeen days before the white paper was announced, the local government boundaries commission, which was appointed by the provincial government under former Conservative premier Duff Roblin in 1966, recommended more powers for Metro and the establishment of nine cities through partial amalgamations of existing municipalities.

Many of the alternatives suggested a course similar to that recommended by the boundaries commission.

But the provincial government rejected the alternatives.

And so, the new City of Winnipeg Act received Royal assent July 27. The provincial cabinet proclaimed the sections of the act dealing with the transitional period of the new government, to come into effect July 30 and clear the way for the fall election of the central city council.

### Election Oct. 6

The government called the election for Oct. 6.

The NDP organized a civic wing to run candidates in the municipal election while a group of citizens established the Independent Citizens' Election Committee to endorse candidates.

Meanwhile, the provincial government established 10 task forces to prepare reports on various aspects of the new government for the new council to help it plan the changeover.

When nominations for the civic election closed on Sept. 15, a total of 168 candidates had filed nomination papers — five for the mayor's position and 163 for councilors' seats.

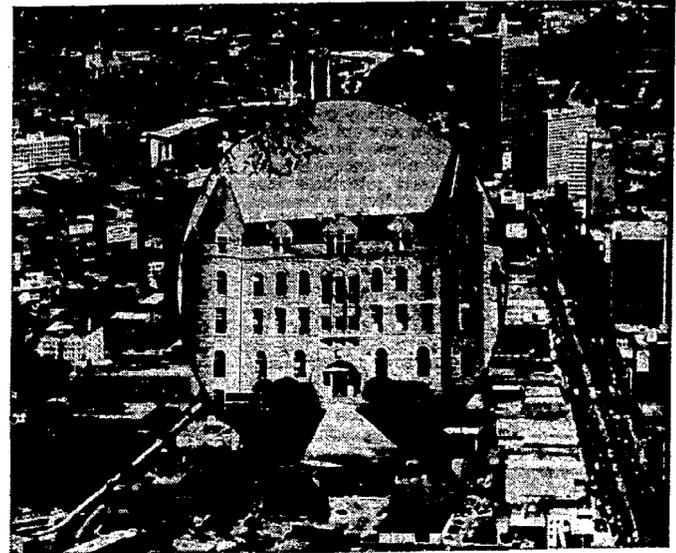
Mayor Steve Juba won an overwhelming victory in the mayoralty contest and the Independent Citizens' Election Committee candidates won 37 of the 50 seats on council. The NDP elected seven candidates, five Independents won seats and one Labor Election Committee candidate was elected.

The mayor and councilors were sworn in Oct. 8 and began meeting Oct. 12 to organize the changeover in government.

The working sections of the new act were all proclaimed by the provincial cabinet Nov. 12 to make the changeover official.

To mark the official implementation of the new government, the new council will hold its inaugural meeting Jan. 4 as a ceremonial event.

The next day the council will begin the job of governing Canada's third largest city.



## Growing together: A city and its university.

Winnipeg's 98 years old.

We're 101.

We've grown up together: for more than a century our ten thousand graduates have shared in building this city. And Winnipeg has helped us build a fine University. From a University that's just past the century mark, to a city that's just approaching it — congratulations.

