

## Note

# Urban Decision-Making and the Legislative Environment: Toronto Council Re-examined

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Recent years have witnessed an increased attention toward legislative decision-making in urban Canada. Various studies have been undertaken which attempt to analyze the fundamental patterns of city council voting in different Canadian centres. Although influenced theoretically by discussions in the American legislative voting literature, they have frequently detected trends at variance with findings in the United States. Nevertheless, the direction of such Canadian studies has tended to be less focussed, with hypotheses and theoretical approaches frequently being rejected. This particular work was undertaken in an attempt to break out of a predictable mould which has tended to feature replications of similar research modes across the range of cities. The goal here is to redress the lack of theoretical initiative and to develop new explanations for the dynamic that underlies the municipal decision-making process.

Among the negative findings that have preceded this inquiry can be included the author's study of the Council of the City of Toronto. It investigated the applicability of a series of hypotheses dealing with the personal backgrounds of local representatives as explainants for municipal voting factions.<sup>1</sup> This work borrowed heavily from the conceptual framework of Wahlke et al. in *The Legislative System*.<sup>2</sup> It found that such background variables as occupation, religion, national party and degree of seniority were not particularly associated with local cleavage patterns, at least during the council term of 1967 through 1969 when the study was conducted. A comparison of Toronto and Winnipeg

1 Barry J. Kay, "Voting Patterns in a Non-partisan Legislature: A Study of Toronto City Council," this JOURNAL 4 (1971), 224-42.

2 John C. Wahlke, Heinz Eulau, William Buchanan, and Leroy C. Ferguson, *The Legislative System: Explorations in Legislative Behavior* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1962), 221-23.

city councils between 1972 and 1974 also revealed a lack of consistency in the relationship of personal characteristics and the factionalized voting cleavages in both legislatures.<sup>3</sup> One caveat to this general assessment related to national party affiliation, where New Democratic party members were a distinctly more cohesive group, unlike the case of Toronto during the earlier period studied. However, this pattern tended to be offset by the lack of cohesion among other party supporters.

Jack Masson discovered similarly inconsistent results in his Edmonton study, which showed a volatile pattern of council decision-making with no specific variables being consistently associated with legislative votes.<sup>4</sup> Studies in other Canadian cities tend to be more directed to the possible emergence of factional voting than to a demographic analysis of the personal backgrounds of municipal council members. However, Easton and Tennant do compare social and economic differences among local activists involved in Vancouver's various civic political movements.<sup>5</sup> They discovered identifiable distinctions in these backgrounds particularly between the Non-Partisan Association and the Electors Action Movement. In a subsequent report Tennant did find differences in the voting patterns of NPA and TEAM aldermen, but he was unable to draw inferences about the council members from the study of the civic activists.<sup>6</sup> Alan Alexander examined council members' predispositions in the communities comprising Thunder Bay, but in so far as he was able to test it, found little explanation for attitudinal differences that did exist.<sup>7</sup> Donald Higgins analyzed Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, but saw little sustaining character to the divisions that existed there, and found that even council members representing the same ward were no more likely to agree on votes.<sup>8</sup>

From this diverse array of municipal legislative studies, it is difficult to extract much in the way of positive recurring themes. The conclusions to be drawn from these works include the low level of voting competitiveness in many cities, and the idiosyncratic nature of the divisions that did exist. This lack of consistency can be illustrated in

- 3 Barry J. Kay and Philip H. Wichern, "Legislative Decision-Making in Two Canadian Cities: Toronto and Winnipeg Compared," a paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Saskatoon, 1979.
- 4 Jack K. Masson, "Decision-Making Patterns and Floating Coalitions in an Urban City Council," this JOURNAL 8 (1975), 128-37.
- 5 Robert Easton and Paul Tennant, "Vancouver Civic Party Leadership," in Jack K. Masson and James D. Anderson (eds.), *Emerging Party Politics in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), 110-23.
- 6 Paul Tennant, "Vancouver City Council Roll-Call Analysis," comments for the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Edmonton, 1975.
- 7 Alan Alexander, "The Institutional and Role Perceptions of Local Aldermen," in Masson and Anderson, *Emerging Party Politics in Canada*, 114-40.
- 8 Donald J. H. Higgins, "Mother Stubbs and her Fourteen Alderchildren: A Short Story of a Happy Family that Fell Apart," a paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Edmonton, 1975.

more detail by focussing upon Toronto council during the three council sessions spanning 1967 through 1974, a period in which the composition changed dramatically.<sup>9</sup> Table 1 consists of summaries that depict the tendency for council members who share a given personal trait to agree with each other on competitive council votes relative to the agreement level of all members. The figures in the table reflect the average deviation among the agreement percentage of the pairings from the overall mean of all council pairings.<sup>10</sup> Where relatively high scores occur, they seem attributable to the disproportionate presence of aldermen sharing certain traits in distinctive voting factions during particular council terms. This is true of the more senior members as well as businessmen from 1970 to 1972, and NDP supporters from 1973 to 1974, but the patterns are not sustained over time and they appear idiosyncratic. The conclusion to be drawn from these data is that there were no uniform significant relationships between municipal decision-making and the background variables tested in Toronto City Council during this period. Although there were a few cases of high scores during particular sessions, none of the variables proved to be significant in difference of proportions tests for more than one of the three council terms. Accordingly, the evidence seems to indicate that in Toronto and other Canadian centres, individual demographic considerations exert little influence on shared legislative decision-making patterns in so far as could be determined by council voting.

What then does influence urban decision-making? Higgins gives this discussion some focus with his typology outlining the maturation pattern that exists in city council development.<sup>11</sup> Ultimately his research leads him to conclude that progression through the various stages of

9 This particular period was selected for analysis because of the volatility in Toronto City Council membership at this time which witnessed a turnover of 11 members out of the 23-person body between the 1967-1969 and 1970-1972 terms, and a turnover of 9 members between the 1970-1972 and 1973-1974 terms. By contrast, the council terms preceding and following the period of investigation saw changes that resulted in turnovers of four members each. Moreover, since 1974 the relative factional balance on Toronto City Council has not altered substantially.

10 These data are drawn from competitive roll-call votes recorded in the City Council minutes. Competitive votes were defined as those resolved by a majority not greater than 75 per cent of those members present and voting. The 1967-1969 term scores were based upon 187 competitive votes whose mean agreement was 51.8 per cent. The 1970-1972 term scores were based upon 540 competitive votes whose mean agreement was 51.6 per cent, and the 1973-1974 term scores were based upon 570 competitive votes whose mean agreement was 52 per cent. The agreement scores were based upon 253 possible pairings of council members taken two at a time. The shorter duration of the 1973-1974 council term is attributable to a change mandated by the provincial government's desire to synchronize local elections in Ontario municipalities.

11 Donald J. H. Higgins, *Urban Canada: Its Government and Politics* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), 273-80.

TABLE 1

AVERAGE PER CENT DEVIATION FROM COUNCIL MEAN OF  
LEGISLATIVE PAIRINGS SHARING BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS  
DURING THREE COUNCIL SESSIONS

	1967-1969	1970-1972	1973-1974
Age	3.5	1.6	7.1**
Religion	1.0	-1.1	1.1
Occupation	0.8	17.9*	5.8
Constituency income	0.4	-1.5	-0.3
Seniority	0.1	17.3*	4.1
National party	-0.2	4.7	8.6**

\* Significant at .01 level.

\*\* Significant at .05 level.

legislative development is related in part to the size of the council. He states that "as a city's council is increased in size, the probability of split voting increases, consensus-seeking falters and is displaced by caucusing within parties or blocs, and council becomes polarized."<sup>12</sup> Higgins does not suggest that legislature size is the definitive determinant of local decision-making. But by hypothesizing about its relationship to legislative development, he indicates a direction in which a broader understanding of the matter may be pursued. If institutional structure can influence the nature of municipal deliberations, then by extension any aspect of the legislative environment can determine urban decision-making and may be related to the incidence of council factionalism that pertains.

The concept of legislative environment is distinct from that of the legislator's background in that it connotes factors beyond the influence of the individual representative. It refers instead to the setting or environment which define the "rules of the game," both formal and informal, under which the council operates. It can include considerations as diverse as the changing character of public opinion, the intensity of interest group pressure, media coverage, the nature of the electoral system, and the factional alignment within the legislature. Eulau and Hinckley categorize this as falling within the "outside model" of legislative decision-making, because it is rooted in matters external to the individual legislator's attributes.<sup>13</sup> Within the context of David Easton's "political system" the environment is a boundary of the

12 Ibid., 279.

13 Heinz Eulau and Katherine Hinckley, "Legislative Institutions and Processes," in James A. Robinson (ed.), *Political Science Annual*, Vol. 1 (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill, 1966), 87.

decision-making process and being beyond the actual process itself constitutes an element of the cultural milieu within which it exists.<sup>14</sup> Although there is not an abundant literature on the topic, the potential impact of boundary delimiters upon the mechanism of decision-making is not a particularly complex concept.

This can first be illustrated by reviewing the one environmental constraint that has been studied extensively, the electoral system. Douglas Rae has shown that the nature of electoral structure does indeed have considerable impact upon the types of legislators and governments elected and on the policies they produce.<sup>15</sup> If the electoral system can influence who is elected, then it can also weigh mightily in the electoral calculations of legislators and the policy positions they take in anticipation of facing the voters. To illustrate with an example provided by Banfield and Wilson, municipal representatives elected from at-large districts are likely to take their cues disproportionately from the middle class interests who turn out to vote in greater numbers. Conversely, officials elected from homogeneous wards must be sensitive to whatever ethnic or economic groups that predominate there.<sup>16</sup>

Since the political environment completely surrounds legislative deliberations, this atmosphere can take on a variety of forms that vary with the specific institutions of a given body. In a forum such as the United States House of Representatives, the committee system can be critical within the decision-making environment, whereas Canadian House of Commons committees might be said to be of relatively minor importance. Because of this variation among legislatures, it is impossible to delineate, much less test, a comprehensive set of environmental variables pertaining to all. The particular environmental elements to be examined should be those in which variance is observable, since otherwise such factors cannot be systematically measured. It is not normally commonplace for legislatures to be conducive to the investigation of much structural variance, since important changes usually take place gradually over a sustained period.

However, the provincial government's intervention in the framework of Toronto area municipalities has afforded the opportunity to study the behaviour of representatives at both the metropolitan and city levels of government. Moreover, the period under investigation, 1967 through 1974, witnessed extensive turnover not just in membership but also in the factional array of council composition.<sup>17</sup> This

14 David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems," *World Politics* 9 (1957), 383-400.

15 Douglas W. Rae, *The Political Consequences of Electoral Laws* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971), 133-48.

16 Edward C. Banfield and James Q. Wilson, *City Politics* (New York: Vintage Books, 1966), 89-96.

17 This change is documented in such works as Jon Caulfield, *The Tiny Perfect Mayor*

circumstance permits a more fruitful consideration of changes wrought by the passage of time within Toronto City Council. These two variables, distinction in council composition over time and distinction by system level, are only two of the many factors that relate to the legislative environment. They are featured here simply because they illustrate legislative conditions that were amenable to analysis in Toronto's municipal decision-making; they provide a counterpoint to the personal background variables that have been studied previously.

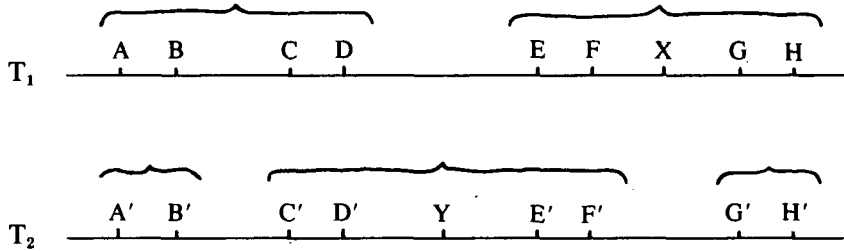
### Change in Council Composition Over Time

Consideration of the relationship between municipal decision-making and the dynamic of time takes account of the turnover in legislative composition. It suggests that legislators will be influenced in their relationship with each other—by the environment created by the presence of still others. Elite studies in the United States found that personnel changes within the body had ramifications far beyond the alternation of one member for another, since it could influence the behaviour of others present in the group. These changes may result from newcomers tending to broaden the body's overall conceptual framework. Accordingly, a dynamic is introduced into the forum through the transition, which in turn facilitates movement between pre-existing pairings and factions.<sup>18</sup>

Stuart Teger has provided one model of the specific form this process takes as he draws the setting of cliques on the court representing communities of interest, as measured by their respective members' utility functions.<sup>19</sup> However, the introduction of just one new member, in a critical pivoting position vis-à-vis the others, can upset the previously constructed pattern of factional interrelationships. This theoretical phenomenon is depicted below by the arrangement of hypothetical members' positions along a unidimensional plane over two points in time,  $T_1$  and  $T_2$ .

(Toronto: James Lorimer and Company, 1974); John Sewell, *Up Against City Hall* (Toronto: James, Lewis and Samuel, 1972); and Stephen Clarkson, *City Lib* (Toronto: A. M. Hakkert, 1972).

- 18 This discussion is shaped by the literature pertaining to the United States Supreme Court, a forum which, although not an elective legislature, functions as an elite political body, whose members' personal interactions are analogous to those occurring on a nonpartisan council. See, for example, John D. Sprague, *Voting Patterns of the United States Supreme Court* (Indianapolis: Bobbs Merrill Co., 1968), 146-47; and Eloise C. Snyder, "The Supreme Court as a Small Group," *Social Forces* 36 (1958), 238.
- 19 Stuart H. Teger, "Presidential Strategy for the Appointment of Supreme Court Justices," *Public Choice* 21 (1977), 1-22.



The factional groupings that emerge from the use of a cluster bloc type analysis over the hypothesized time interval indicate the formation of quite different blocs, despite the alteration of only one member.<sup>20</sup> At  $T_1$ , the natural factions that form include E, F, X, G, H; and A, B, C, D. However, at  $T_2$ , the replacement of X by Y in a more central position creates a new moderate bloc C', D', Y, E', F', composed of elements in divergent groups at  $T_1$ , and leaving A', B' as well as G', H' as smaller and more extreme blocs.

The above discussion is both hypothetical and simplified as real world situations relate to a great many dimensions, not to mention being subject to the turnover of more than one legislature member, and to changing positions among the legislators who remain. However, if the movement of just one person can dramatically alter the factional structure of a body, it should not be difficult to imagine the potential for change when all these varied factors come into play as they do over different council sessions. One such area of variation in decision-making is the evolving state of public opinion, and the electoral climate. In a legislature where interviews revealed that members predominantly subscribe to the constituent-oriented representational role of delegate rather than that of trustee, changing moods in the community might be thought to be reflected in the council. No serious attempt can be made to parcel out the contribution of each element to the overall impact of time. More important is the fact that for the above described reasons, the intersessional progression of time seems to be related to changes in the nature of council decision-making.

By examining changes in the agreement scores derived from pairings of council members, both of whom served during the succeeding terms, this question can be tested. Table 2 presents the shared scores attained by the 12 members of Toronto City Council who served during the 1967-1969 term, which was relatively free of consistent factional divisions, and the 1970-1972 term, which was much more highly polarized due to the arrival on council of a "reform" caucus identified

20 This procedure is based upon the Rice-Beyle cluster bloc technique, and emphasizes the proximity of the next closest member. Hence at  $T_1$ , because  $CD < DE$  and  $BC < DE$ , then A and D are joined in one group while D and E are not, even though  $DE < AD$ .





TABLE 2—Continued

Brown	28.5	49.2	Lampport
	40.0	49.0	Bruce
	52.3	45.6	Beavis
	57.8	50.4	Marks
	50.5	51.9	Grys
	66.1	47.1	Piccininni
	54.5	48.2	Dennison
	60.8	44.9	Wardle
	61.5	53.8	Rotenberg
	40.7	44.6	Pickett
	58.7	54.3	O'Donahue
			Brown

with John Sewell. The value for the earlier session appears above the later score in each cell of Table 2.

The 66 individual cells created by pairing these 12 legislators indicated that their mean agreement level for the 1967-1969 session was 52.4 per cent, which approximated that of the entire 23-person council averaging 51.8 per cent. However, dramatic increases were recorded by most of these same 66 pairings during the 1970-1972 term such that their new mean agreement jumped to 74.5 per cent, compared to 51.6 per cent for the whole council. This 22.1 per cent mean rise included individual increases as great as 55.8 per cent, and proved to be significant in a difference of proportions test, comparing the 66 cells over the two terms, at the .01 level. The increasingly high degree of cohesion among this 12-person aggregation points up the fact that most of their number were identified as members of the same voting bloc in the 1970-1972 session. This in large measure accounted for by the obviously changed political environment during the two terms that facilitated such a difference in voting patterns. It has been argued elsewhere that this trend toward voting cohesion by the council holdovers was largely a reaction to the professed "reformist" sympathies of the incoming aldermen. This fear caused them to put past differences aside, and to act within this new context as if they were following the adage "the enemy of my enemy is my friend."<sup>21</sup>

The examination of council members elected for both the 1970-1972 and 1973-1974 terms was conducted in a manner similar to that in Table 2 for the previous comparison. Table 3 shows the agreement values for each of the 91 pairings among the 14 officials elected to both councils, with the score for the 1970-1972 term located above that for the following session within each cell.

Unlike the previous comparison between the 1967-1969 and 1970-1972 terms, no one single trend can be detected in Table 3 as pervading the paired relationships among the 14 legislators elected to both council sessions. The mean agreement scores emerging from the 91 cells of the table rose only a modest 2.9 points over the period, from 50.5 per cent to 53.4 per cent. However, by distinguishing between the eight aldermen who comprised the reformist Sewell faction during 1970-1972, and the remaining six council members who served both terms, certain latent undercurrents are revealed which were masked by the overall figures. For example, the six non-reformist aldermen whose agreement scores are located above the horizontal dividing line in Table 3, register increases in each of the 15 cells whose average rise is from 69.1 per cent to 84.9 per cent between the two council sessions. Conversely, the 28 cells located to the right of the vertical dividing line detail the decline in

21 Barry J. Kay, "A Model of Non-partisan Legislative Bargaining and the Impact of Toronto Council's Partisanization 1967-1972," a paper presented to the annual meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Toronto, 1974).

cohesion among what had been the 1970-1972 Sewell voting bloc. The mean agreement score for this group fell from 77.6 per cent in 1970-1972 to 66.2 per cent in 1973-1974, when they were joined by enough reformist colleagues to create a wide majority. Instead they responded by splitting into two factions, a moderate element centred around David Crombie, and a more radical group closer to John Sewell.<sup>22</sup>

Had these intervals in agreement of 15.8 per cent and 11.4 per cent respectively been directionally consistent, they would have easily satisfied the difference of proportions test. However, because the differences were in opposite directions, the values could not be combined, and individually each set was based on too few cases to prove significant. Nevertheless, the highly significant results measuring the change in council members between 1967-1969 and 1970-1972, together with these less dramatic results between 1970-1972 and 1973-1974, leave little doubt that the change in council composition over time is indeed related to legislative decision-making.

### Change in System Level

The government of Metropolitan Toronto is a two-tiered structure designed to recognize the individual autonomy of each area municipality, while also providing coordination for local services thought to be metropolitan in scope. The Council of Metropolitan Toronto consists of representatives from each of the area municipal councils so as to facilitate cooperation between the different governmental levels. The City of Toronto's contingent includes 12 of the 23 members elected to City Council, the mayor and the alderman topping the polls in each of the 11 wards. During the period of this study, the city's proportion of Metro Council membership had declined to 37.5 per cent of the body's 32-person allotment, a reflection of the relative change in population. Accordingly, the city's members came to Metro Council from a minority perspective in the city-suburb division that typically characterized cleavage in the regional body.<sup>23</sup>

This minority perspective may be thought to have a substantial impact upon the differing predisposition of this same group of 12 representatives that sat upon both of these bodies. The fact is that little theoretical guideline has been laid down by others to chart the behaviour of individuals sitting simultaneously in different legislatures. In some circumstances one could expect that differing institutional norms would

22 This phenomenon seems in line with the notion of the size principle limiting the formation of coalitions to that of a minimal winning majority as expressed in William H. Riker's, *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1962).

23 This city-suburban split was reported by Harold Kaplan in his earlier study of the body, *Urban Political Systems: A Functional Analysis of Metro Toronto* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), 217.



TABLE 3—Continued

Kilbourn	10.8	14.5	11.6	30.8	30.6	45.9	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Sewell
	30.8	27.8	29.1	33.3	26.7	30.2						
Jaffary	7.0	10.9	10.4	28.6	29.8	41.7	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Kilbourn
	19.5	18.2	16.7	22.8	23.3	22.5						
Sewell	6.7	12.8	8.6	29.5	27.8	41.1	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Jaffary
	11.7	13.8	10.8	20.6	14.7	20.5						
Eggleton	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Sewell	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Chisholm
Hope	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Kilbourn	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Chisholm
Crombie	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Jaffary	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Crombie
Archer	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Sewell	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Archer
Boytchuk	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Kilbourn	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Boytchuk
Pickett	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Jaffary	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Pickett
Piccininni	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Sewell	65.7	69.7	77.0	83.0	89.3	Piccininni
Clifford	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Kilbourn	66.1	72.9	78.8	86.2	91.1	Clifford
Beavis	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Jaffary	67.2	71.3	79.7	80.0	88.8	Beavis

affect a new member's socialization within a body which could in turn influence his relationships with other members. Such a notion might account for one elected official looking toward a more senior member for voting cues, while another consults a legislator of equivalent seniority. However, behaviour of that sort is not likely to occur in municipal legislatures where attrition rates preclude the institutionalization of such norms. The absence of precedent for this type of analysis occurs because the simultaneous presence of a representative in more than one level of government is unusual, and its mandated occurrence is exceedingly rare outside Ontario. Accordingly, the ability to compare the performance of Toronto's representatives at both Metro Council as well as in their home City Council is a unique opportunity provided by the Metropolitan system of government.

The City of Toronto's delegation to Metro Council for 1973-1974 was generally reflective of City Council's overall complexion. The institutional differences that faced the members of Metro Council are difficult to delineate fully since many of the distinctions are subtle. The subject matter does vary substantially, and those areas that come under Metro's jurisdiction tend to be the largest budgetary items such as social services and the Toronto Transit Commission. Fewer recorded votes were held in Metro Council, and the existence of the various borough groupings at Metro created stronger cleavage lines than did any comparable intra-city regionalism on City Council.<sup>24</sup> Perhaps the most significant factor to the city's representatives, however, was the anti-reformist approach of Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey, which they felt was fundamentally opposed to their orientation toward local government.<sup>25</sup> This antagonism toward the Metro chairman was frequently referred to in personal interviews with Council members and manifested itself over a broad range of issues.

Set against this backdrop, the agreement level of the 12-person Toronto delegation to Metro Council is compared to the relative behaviour of these same 12 on Toronto Council in Table 4. The percentage agreement score on Metro Council is located above that for City Council in each of the 66 cells pairing Toronto's representatives, and it can be readily observed that for most pairings, the agreement at

24 The mean agreement score for the 101 pairings of Metro councilmen from the same borough was 66.6 per cent, while the mean score for the 395 pairings from different boroughs was 48.7 per cent, a variance that easily satisfied the difference of proportions test at the .01 significance level. The Metro Council data are drawn from 152 competitive votes during the 1973-1974 term where the mean overall agreement was 52.3 per cent.

25 Godfrey was chosen to succeed Ab Campbell as chairman by Metro Council in July 1973. His support was almost exclusively suburban. His anti-city predisposition can be traced back to his previous role as a North York controller where he had the third lowest record of agreement with city members among any of the 20 suburban delegates on Metro Council.

Metro is much higher. In fact, only 8 of the 66 cells provided exceptions to this pattern, and overall Toronto representatives average 70.6 per cent agreement at Metro is compared to 56 per cent among the same group in City Council, a difference of proportions significant at the .05 tolerance level.<sup>26</sup>

There are at least two plausible explanations for this significantly higher level of agreement and cohesion at Metro Council. The first is indicated by information obtained in personal interviews that 10 of the 12-person Toronto delegation had a conscious representational focus favouring the City in conflicts between it and Metro's interests.<sup>27</sup> Such a common allegiance to their home municipality in Metropolitan decision-making should not be assumed to be a natural consequence of Metro Council's framework as an arena for six divergent borough positions. After all, this same group produced only three aldermen who subscribed to an unqualified pro-ward stance, the analogous orientation, in ward versus city conflicts on Toronto Council.

This degree of city consciousness at Metro Council was related to the widespread antipathy toward the Metro Chairman, and a feeling of isolation for the city's position from the suburban majority. Evidence that this city-oriented focus at Metro is associated with greater bloc cohesion can be gained from a closer inspection of elements in Table 4. Among Toronto's representatives who shared the same representational focus at both council levels, there existed a modest increase in agreement of 8.8 per cent at Metro, whereas among those without a common orientation at the city level the increase was 15.5 per cent.<sup>28</sup> These figures suggest that the increase in cohesion at Metro among Toronto delegates sharing a pro-city focus was much more dramatic if they did not also share the same focus at City Council. This difference, while not statistically significant, is consistent with the hypothesis that legislators' representational foci are associated with their behaviour in the two bodies.

An alternative explanation for the greater agreement among city representatives at Metro Council relates to their comparative numerical

26 The possibility that the greater cohesion at Metro Council might be attributable to idiosyncratic behaviour occurring on specific issue dimensions was checked by examining the issues most comparable at both council levels, Transportation and Budget and Bureaucracy. In both cases, however, the agreement at Metro Council was higher by an amount approximating the average level for all votes.

27 This included all City representatives except Aldermen Archer and Beavis. The use of representational focus is derived from Wahlke et al., *The Legislative System*, 291.

28 The 10 cells in Table 4 which represented pairings of legislators with a pro-city allegiance at both Metro and City Councils, saw an increase in agreement at Metro from 68.7 per cent to 77.5 per cent. However, the 35 cells in which at least one member did not have an unqualified city orientation at Toronto Council, witnessed a mean jump from 64.3 per cent to 79.8 per cent. Since Aldermen Archer and Beavis did not possess a pro-city position at Metro, pairings including them are omitted from these calculations.





TABLE 4—Continued

Beavis	39.3	41.1	50.0	36.3	34.4	40.0	48.4	51.9	46.7	52.5	72.5	Beavis
	13.9	30.8	19.5	23.0	31.3	50.0	54.1	52.7	28.9	40.4	81.2	Archer
												Chisholm
												Hope
												Scott
												Eggleton
												Crombie
												Eays
												Johnston
												Jaffary
												Kilbourn
												Goldrick

strength in the two legislatures. This approach draws on the size principle employed by William Riker in *The Theory of Political Coalitions* which, put briefly, states that in social situations similar to n-person zero-sum games with side payments, participants create coalitions just as large as they believe will ensure winning, and no larger.<sup>29</sup> Essentially this means that in a situation where there are winners and losers, the greater the number of losers, the greater the gains of the winners.

The application of this theory for Toronto's municipal decision-making can be seen by contrasting the majority position of Toronto's "reformers" on City Council with their minority status on Metro Council. In the former situation, there existed a surfeit of council members predisposed to support reform legislation, such that majorities could be readily attained. Accordingly, there was no need to invoke voting discipline, or to pander to less-committed legislators in order to secure majorities. Hence cohesion was lower on City Council among the "reformers." On the other hand, at Metro Council, the city "reformers" were too few to depend upon their own number to win votes, and hence could not afford the luxury of disunity. They had to remain a solid bloc themselves while hoping to attract the support of sympathetic suburban legislators, if their view was to prevail.

This approach is supported by data in Table 5, which portrays the city's superior record of success at Metro Council. Table 5 indicates that despite the built-in suburban majority during the 1973-1974 council term, city members were seen to be on the winning side of competitive Metro votes more frequently than suburban representatives, by a proportion of 64.2 per cent to 61.1 per cent. This does not negate the fact that the three smallest suburban delegations had higher success scores than did the city, but overall the aggregation of suburban members was less successful. The primary explanation for this finding appears to be the greater level of voting cohesion among city members.<sup>30</sup> From the Table it can be seen that the mean agreement level of city legislators, 70.6 per cent, exceeded that from any of the Toronto boroughs except for the two-member East York delegation, and averaged 13 per cent greater than the overall suburban contingent. This relationship between group agreement and winning percentage also seems to account for the relative voting success among the three smaller suburban delegations.

The greater cohesion among city representatives was demonstrated in all issue categories. However, where city agreement was highest

29 Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, 32-33.

30 An alternate hypothesis that success in winning votes might be attributable to better attendance among city representatives is contradicted by the evidence. In fact, suburban members were present 84.2 per cent of the time for competitive votes, compared to 78.7 per cent for their city counterparts, thus creating an additional obstacle to the City of Toronto's voting success on Metro Council.

TABLE 5

TORONTO BOROUGH VOTING SUCCESS AND COHESION AT METRO COUNCIL, 1973-1974 (in percentages)

Agreement	Membership on Council	Overall winning	Transportation winning	Parks and Social Services winning	Budget and Bureaucracy winning	Legislation and Planning winning
70.6	12	64.2	57.2	64.2	60.5	77.6
57.4	20	61.1	61.8	62.2	61.2	58.9
54.9	6	55.7	59.7	59.8	47.0	54.5
57.8	5	54.4	57.7	55.2	52.5	49.8
67.0	4	69.5	66.6	69.9	78.2	62.6
62.2	3	65.6	62.3	67.5	70.2	63.3
71.9	2	70.7	67.9	63.2	78.3	71.5
	Toronto agreement percentage	70.6	74.2	68.6	65.0	74.7
	Suburban agreement percentage	57.4	62.1	56.8	57.7	53.1

while suburban cohesion was low (as in the case of Legislation and Planning votes), the Toronto members achieved their greatest success level, 77.6 per cent. Conversely, where the cohesion of the city delegation fell (as with Budget and Bureaucracy matters), or where suburban agreement increased (as in the case of Transportation votes), the city success rate fell proportionately. Transportation seemed a natural type of issue to reveal a city versus suburb cleavage, since it frequently reduced to a public transit against automobiles argument, with suburban constituents living further from the city core being much more disposed towards use of the car. Budget and Bureaucracy votes frequently turned on support or opposition toward Metro Chairman Paul Godfrey whose strength lay in the suburbs, and the measure of suburban voting success on these issues was probably attributable to his influence with them.

### **Summary and Implications**

In reviewing the work reported here it is important to keep in mind the context within which this investigation was undertaken. Previous research in Canadian municipal decision-making has not produced any consistent explanation for the behaviour of civic legislators and this study attempted to suggest another direction for exploration, the environment surrounding legislative deliberations. The notion of the legislative environment is subject to widespread interpretation that can range from the institutional structures of the legislature to the popular mood of the electorate surrounding local issues. The basic constraint in applying this concept of environment is the ability to operationalize it so as to provide a distinguishable degree of variation, and hence to be able to gauge its effects upon the local council members.

The restriction has limited the study to a consideration of the environmental changes occasioned by differences in the personal composition of the legislature. The alterations examined here resulted from the changing factional patterns associated with the ascendance of "reformist" membership on Toronto City Council during the three terms dating from 1967 through 1974, as well as the differences facing the city's elected representatives at Metro Council in comparison with City Council during the 1973-1974 session. The council voting records of comparable groups of Toronto aldermen were isolated for each of these tests, and the evidence clearly indicated significant differences in their patterns of agreement being related to the legislative settings which served as the controlled independent variable. This research has limitations that are readily apparent, since it represents only a small subset of examples that fit the definition of legislative environment.

If the study undertaken here is to make a distinctive contribution within the realm of municipal legislative inquiry, it should be suggestive

of alternate paths that can be followed in developing a greater understanding of the legislative environment: As tempting as it is to speculate about future research addressing the varied elements of this concept, it is important to remember the practical methodological limitations involved in such a pursuit. Among the general components of the legislative environment can be included structural factors, interpersonal factors and community cultural factors. The consideration of structural aspects of the environment would involve a study of variation in the institutional framework. This could be illustrated by changes in the electoral system (for example, at-large election to ward boundaries), in the form of executive selection (change from a popularly elected Board of Control to a council selected Executive Committee), or change in system level (the minority situation facing City representatives at Metro Council).

The interpersonal environment deals with changes in legislative behaviour related to personnel changes within the council, as explored in this work, or to differing attitudes among elected members toward each other. This approach could perhaps better be examined if accompanied by personal interviews so as to help determine the role of personal friendship or the differing influence of council members in accounting for voting decisions made. The notion of the community culture concerns the immediate political milieu perceived by legislators. Examples of relevant variables that could be investigated include changes in the state of public opinion, the intensity of interest group lobbying, or the degree of attention provided by the local media. In each of these suggested cases, the potential measurement problems that pertain to the operationalization of appropriate variables should not be overlooked. However, once these difficulties have been dealt with much greater light can be shed upon the uncertainties of urban decision-making and on the related role of the legislative environment.