

chewan was part of Rupert's Land, a vast territory controlled by the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1870, the territory was purchased by the new Dominion of Canada.

In 1874, the North West Mounted Police were established and implemented the ordinances of the first provisional government, the North West Council, which was appointed by the Government of Canada. With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway in 1882, settlers came in increasing numbers. Finns, Czechs, Chinese, Hungarians, Irish, Italians and Slovaks arrived, lured by the offer of land for settlement.

The *Métis*, persons of mixed Indian and European ancestry, lived in the northern part of Saskatchewan near Batoche and Cumberland House. With the influx of so many settlers, a struggle emerged between old and new inhabitants. The Federal Government began to sell tracts of land to help pay for the railway. The *Métis*, fearing the decline of the fur trade, established a provisional government to voice their claims. Louis Riel, president of this provisional government, seized power and a series of armed clashes erupted between the *Métis* and the newly-arrived settlers and police. Peace was restored in 1885 following a battle at Batoche during which Riel was defeated.

By 1900, the lure of free land drew settlers from Scotland, the United

States of America, the Ukraine, France, Belgium, Russia and Scandinavia. In 1905, Saskatchewan, with its quarter of a million residents, gained provincial status. Regina became the capital. Saskatchewan's prime industries were wheat-growing and cattle-raising.

Saskatchewan soon developed its own political and social institutions, distinct from those of the two neighbouring prairie provinces. The co-operative movement sprang up early in the province's history and received additional impetus during the drought and depression years of the 1930s, which hit Saskatchewan harder than any other part of Canada. Today the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool, a farmer-owned co-operative for grain purchasing, is the largest organization of its kind in the world.

For similar reasons, Saskatchewan was fertile ground for third-party reform political movements. One of these, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a social democratic party, was first elected to office in 1944 and has held power for 28 of the intervening 35 years, changing its name to the New Democratic Party (NDP) in 1961. Saskatchewan introduced the first state hospital and medical and automobile insurance plans in North America.