

The NDP now has forty-four of the sixty seats in the provincial legislature, a very strong majority. Saskatchewan, which has 910,000 people in an area as big as Texas, is Canada's "Breadbasket" since it is the major producer of wheat. Its bottom half is farm land, its top a wilderness of lakes and trees. It has been losing population and compared to the rest of the West it is poor.

Since the 1971 election Premier Blakeney's government has concentrated on saving the family farm. The movement from the farm is a phenomenon found throughout North America. As one official in Regina put it, "every farm has at least one channel of television, some have four or five. The young people get restless." In Saskatchewan the problem is of greater significance than elsewhere since the province is heavily rural. Consequently, the government has found the question of 'how do you keep them down on the farm after they've seen TV' of primary urgency. The first \$100-million step has been a program to buy farms from older men who wish to retire and to lease them to young men, often the farmers' sons. The younger men pay a reasonable rent and have options to buy. The government is also sustaining hog and feed marketing boards with the purpose of subsidizing farmers when feed prices go up faster than hog prices. The government has also formed Saskoil, an oil exploration and producing company whose basic purpose is to make sure the province's highly mechanized farms have fuel for the future. Saskatchewan has limited oil reserves and it plans to reduce rather than add to its production. Saskoil is about a year old and much of the time was spent in recruiting persons with the technical skills necessary for exploration. Its teams are now assembled and it expects to be the biggest explorer in the province by year's end.

The government is also "increasingly concerned" with the 25,000 Métis (people of mixed Indian and white ancestry) and Indians who live in the non-farming half of the province. It is currently developing plans to give them a full measure in running their own affairs.

[MANITOBA]

The NDP, elected in Manitoba in 1969, defeated Duff Roblin and the Progressive-Conservatives who had been in office for twelve years. Edward Schreyer, thirty-eight, became Premier. He is a graduate of the University of Manitoba and was a university teacher. He was elected to the provincial legislature in 1958 and to the Ottawa House of Commons in 1965 where he served until 1969. He was chosen Leader of the NDP in Manitoba in 1969. Premier Schreyer's government was

re-elected in 1973, getting 43 per cent of the popular vote, the highest in the province's history, and taking thirty-one of the fifty-seven seats in the provincial legislature. The bulk of the seats came from Winnipeg, a bustling city and the metropolis of the Prairies, but the NDP showed surprising strength in the rural areas, the traditional PC stronghold. The PC's are the official Opposition party with twenty-one seats.

Manitoba has a population of 993,000 and is about the same size as Saskatchewan, but its economy is more varied, including considerable manufacturing and construction. Premier Schreyer's government has established itself in oil, gas, mining, lumbering and manufacturing. It has set up compulsory state auto insurance (no-fault, \$200 deductible), invested in public and senior-citizen housing, abolished medicare premiums, put nursing homes under medicare and established pharmacare, a program supplying drugs and medicine at low cost to those over sixty-five. It also passed a law requiring pharmacists to fill all prescriptions with the least expensive generic drug unless the doctor has specifically prescribed a brand name. Schreyer has rejected proposals that the government take over the mining industry but has said the province intends to get a larger share of mining company earnings by increased resource taxes. He has shifted the tax support for schools from property to income by initiating tax rebates to property holders.

There was strong resistance to the NDP from the business community in 1969, but since then Premier Schreyer, who calls himself a "social democrat" rather than a socialist, has said that the province should neither "kneel at the altar of private enterprise nor . . . be overly reliant on the government."

[BRITISH COLUMBIA]

In 1972 the NDP under David Barrett turned out a staunchly private enterprise Social Credit government under W.A.C. Bennett which had been in power for twenty years. In a major upset the NDP took thirty-eight of the fifty-five provincial legislature's seats. It passed more than one hundred major new laws and amendments in its first year. Mr. Barrett, forty-three, was born in Vancouver and educated both in British Columbia and the United States, graduating from Seattle University with a B.A. and from St. Louis University with a Master's degree in social work. He worked as a social worker in St. Louis and subsequently became the supervisor of social training for Haney Correctional Institution and supervisor of counselling services for the John Howard Society of British Columbia, an organiza-