



Political life

The Manitoba Act, which brought Manitoba into Confederation in 1870, provided the province with two legislative houses. Six years later this system ended and ever since, the province has had a single-chamber, elected legislature. There are 57 members sitting in the legislature.

The first political party to form a government was the Conservative party, elected in December 1899 and taking office in January 1900. The province has seldom been without at least three political parties since World War I.

A succession of parties flourished in Manitoba, some of which have since passed into oblivion. They were the United Farmers, the Liberal-Progressives, Social Credit and the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (the CCF — predecessor of the New Democratic Party).

Today, the main political parties in Manitoba are the Conservative Party, the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party.

At times there has been bitter political debate. The "Manitoba School Question" concerning publicly financed denominational education in the 1890s is one example.

Conclusion

From its beginning as the "postage stamp province" in 1870, Manitoba has grown at a varying rate. It now is eight times its original size and since the earliest days of the dominance of the fur trade, it has developed a diversified economic base.

The diversification of the province's economy, its successful mixture of primary and secondary industries and the strength and determination of its people have been keys to Manitoba's steady development. These will also be the main factors influencing Manitoba's future progress.