

Prairie Manifesto Project

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Province: Alberta Saskatchewan Manitoba

Party: LIB Election Year: 1969

AA = Alberta Alliance
CON = Conservative Party
LP = Liberal-Progressive Party
PC = Progressive Conservative Party
SKP = Saskatchewan Party
UFM = United Farmers of Manitoba

CCF = Cooperative Commonwealth Federation
LIB = Liberal Party
NDP = New Democratic Party
SC = Social Credit
UFA = United Farmers of Alberta
WCC = Western Canadian Concept

Type of Document:

- Platform Constitution
 Speech Brochure / Leaflet
 Newspaper Advertisement
 Other: _____

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Source: MB-PARC (P3414-f.2)

AB = Alberta
SK = Saskatchewan
MB = Manitoba

UofA = University of Alberta
UofC = University of Calgary
UofR = University of Regina
UofS = University of Saskatchewan
UofM = University of Manitoba
BU = Brandon University

PARC = Provincial Archives
LEG = Legislative Library
SPC = Special Collections
ULIB = University Library

Bobby Bend Talks Policy

AN AGENDA FOR THE PROVINCE

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White Paper on Policy GOVERNMENT

I want to talk about the kind of government that Manitobans need, and the kind of government the Liberal Party can provide.

I am asked as I travel about the province how the Liberals would be different from Mr. Weir in the way they would govern this province.

My answer is simple. As your premier, I would make certain that our government would be open, honest, and responsible to the people — and above all, based on integrity.

The present practises of hidden reports, meetings behind closed doors, decisions without discussion, fancy book work to show budget balances that aren't there, would not be part of any administration I formed.

There is no greater danger in a democracy than a government that has been in power too long and as a result becomes *arrogant and irresponsible* in dealing with both people and facts. I want the people of this province to know what is going on, to have their basic rights protected, and to participate in the vital decisions which affect them as individuals.

I want to make sure that we are getting full value for every tax dollar spent. We must keep the closest scrutiny on the *growing costs of education, welfare, health, roads and industrial development*. We must see what programs are out of date, too expensive, or *aren't doing the job they are supposed to do*.

We have to ask the simple question — *What is the objective of a particular program*, and is that objective being carried out in the most effective way?

Too often our methods, our approaches, and our ideas are carryovers from the past, and what was a good program 20 years ago is antiquated today. It must be remembered that I am not suggesting new ways of spending money.

I am stressing methods whereby re-organization can take place to allow us to get a better return for our money. I do not anticipate it will be necessary to add new cabinet portfolios, but simply re-organize the present ones in such a way as to develop a more efficient method of meeting today's programs.

We must modernize our provincial government, plan our priorities, develop an efficient system of assessing cost effectiveness of all government activity.

On my travels across the province, I have found everywhere a growing concern about the increasing size and power of the bureaucracy. We need a public service of high calibre. In the last few years, it has grown to vast proportions, increasing by 16% in the last two years. A Liberal government would undertake a thorough review and restructuring of government organization. If necessary, we would re-organize the departments to ensure that they are designed to solve a particular problem, with *no excess manpower or fancy frills*.

We would ensure that citizens' rights are fully protected in dealing with government by the appointment of a *civil rights commissioner*, by providing required *legal aid* for citizens in dealing with government, and the establishment of an ongoing committee of the legislature on the *public service*, with full powers of inquiry. We would ensure that it is the elected representatives of the people who make decisions, not the administration.

Manitobans have always been proud of their contributions to the development and growth of Canada. We must not fall victim to negative criticisms or parochial self-interest.

Manitobans will find no stronger defender of their interests than myself. But I will also support those policies on language, constitutional amendment, and

BOBBY BEND PRESENTS LIBERAL POLICIES FOR A GOVERNMENT OF ACTION AND ACCOMPLISHMENT IN MANITOBA



White Paper on Policy URBAN PROBLEMS

The people of Greater Winnipeg need attention. Their problems and concerns have gone unattended too long.

Winnipeggers suffer from high taxation, divided local government, a shortage of low-cost housing, increasing difficulties in public transportation, and the continued existence of serious poverty among many of our people.

This is not a situation that can go on indefinitely. Winnipeg is the key to the prosperity and development of Manitoba. If Winnipeg is not healthy and vibrant, then the whole province suffers adversely. It must not be forgotten that the welfare of over half our population is involved. The kind of homes they live in, the ease of life they enjoy, the kind of choices they can make is challenged by the problems of modern urban living. That is why a Liberal government puts as a top priority — the solution of urban ills.

We would start by re-organizing the provincial government to put under one department of housing and urban affairs, all those services that affect the social, economic, and legal aspects of urban living. We would put at its head a cabinet minister whose instructions would be to move with speed and initiative in dealing with city problems. You would be surprised at what a difference some imagination, energy and commitment can make, compared to the present government's hesitation and evasion.

Reform is necessary in Greater Winnipeg. Metropolitan government is not working. There is far too much duplication, and too little planning. There are unequal tax burdens, and uneven development in different parts of the city.

It is the responsibility of the province to make every effort in solving these problems. There must be a re-organization of government in Winnipeg, but it must be done with the approval of a majority of Greater Winnipeg residents. The first task of my minister of urban affairs will be to prepare plans for re-organization and through a process of consultation and popular referral, bring them into effect.

We must deal with the problem of taxes. The major portion, if not all of the foundation costs of education will be removed from the property tax. This must be followed by a more equitable financial re-distribution by means of a common sharing of industrial revenues, equal apportionment of municipal services and a common mill rate.

A new look at assessments must be taken to see if some exemption can be made for lower income groups, and to adjust the present assessment system that penalizes property improvement.

I am concerned about those who can't find decent accommodation at a reasonable price. The record of this province in using Federal funds for low income housing is poor and it shows. We have a shortage of some 14,000 low cost units in the Greater Winnipeg area. There has been a 40% rise in land values. In the last few years rents have been jumping 10% or 20% annually.

New Federal legislation will give us the opportunity to undertake major programs of rehabilitation of existing housing and to assemble large tracts of cheap land. It will be our responsibility to reform the public housing program to better suit the needs of people and to build more units for the money now spent.

My aim is to provide clean, warm, decent accommodation for every Manitoban — and our actions will lend support to that aim. At the same time, I believe that the large expenditures we are now making in welfare and social services (\$37.7 million in provincial budget) can be better used. Our social welfare policies must aim at development of the individual, not just his maintenance.

This province does not have a decent program for preserving and developing

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Manitobans will find no stronger defender of their interests than myself. But I will also support those policies on language, constitutional amendment, and federal-provincial division of powers that are required to strengthen and enhance the unity of this country.

I don't believe that Manitobans want a government that just criticizes and complains. I believe they want one that will go to the constitutional conference table with constructive proposals, and a sense of how this province can do its part to build a greater Canada.

This is the kind of government the Liberal Party would provide. It would be one that is open and honest, one that is modern and effective, one where democracy, not bureaucracy prevails, one that will stand up for Manitoba and for Canada, and above all, a government in which *integrity* is the key word.

I see government as a dynamic instrument to solve the problems of people; the problems of the *Little Man*. A far cry from the kind of administration this province has today. We can do better in Manitoba and I hope you will help me bring this change about.



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This province does not have a decent program for preserving and developing open spaces, parks, recreation areas. We are allowing our air and water to become polluted. We are not supporting a strong program of downtown development.

I want this to change and will put every effort of my government behind programs to build a good city. For example, the recent budget announcements by the Federal government restrict any commercial building in Eastern Canada and the far West, offering Winnipeg a great opportunity for a major building boom, if we take advantage of it.

My government would work with civic officials and developers to ensure that every feasible incentive would be offered to bring new construction money to Winnipeg.

This city must become a place where everyone has an equal chance to share in what might be called the good things of life. With your support and help we can begin building in Winnipeg the kind of city that will make Manitoba proud, and be a place of quality, choice and opportunity for this and future generations.

White Paper on Policy FARM PROBLEMS

One of the most serious problems we face today is the situation of the grain farmer. Unless some decisions — and they must be right decisions — are made immediately to help grain farmers, we will see the beginning of an exodus from rural Manitoba that will be truly serious.

We must face facts and realize that the future outlook for grain sales is not bright. Indeed, many experts in the grain field cannot see a delivery quota greater than 5 bushels for some time to come. This being so, there are several important decisions to be taken.

First, if we can't sell grain through the elevator, it can be fed to livestock. Second, we need a way to help the grain farmer who decides to shift over to livestock. And third, farmers should be helped to own and run their own livestock operations rather than have this help extended only to large industry oriented farm corporations.

The following is our Liberal farm program:
Firstly, we will press for a fair and equitable system for two-price wheat. I would hope that progress on this matter could be achieved right away. If there is no immediate action by the Federal Government, then I would go with the premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta to Ottawa to personally ask for two-price wheat.

Did you know that on the afternoon of last April 25, every member of the Weir government, without exception, voted against two-price wheat? If a Conservative member represented you in the last House, ask him why.

Certainly, two-price wheat is no overall answer to all our farm problems, but this could mean several hundred more dollars to every wheat grower in this province. Certainly wheat growers, in an age when every commodity they buy is protected and inflated in price, have a right to a fair price for domestically used wheat.

Secondly, our livestock program. Our aim is to help grain farmers and small livestock producers to expand and diversify. This should be done without jeopardizing the markets of established livestock producers. The Conservatives agree that livestock production should be expanded but they prefer that industry and foreign money do the expansion.

The Liberal program is aimed at the average farmer, and not at big industry. We want the Manitoba farmer to have another market for his grain and here are the ways we plan to help:

1. Help the bona-fide Manitoba farmer who wishes to expand in livestock or begin new herds to gain a reduction in interest and an extension of payment periods.
2. Assistance, both monetary and advisory, to bona-fide farmer-owned feedlots.

White Paper on Policy TAXATION

Many of our present taxes are unfair in Manitoba because they do not take into sufficient account the ability to pay.

Tax reform is one of the most important issues facing us in this province today. It is a matter which concerns every Manitoban and it is one which must be tackled by positive action now. Indeed, it is this question of taxation which was one of the main reasons for my decision to return to the political field.

I have stated many times since my return that the present administration has shown no real concern with respect to "the small man and his problems". I pledged myself to this cause when I accepted the leadership of the Liberal Party in Manitoba, and now as we move toward the June 25th election, I am appealing to all Manitobans, regardless of their party affiliation, to help me implement this pledge.

A complete review of the whole tax situation in Manitoba must be made and from this review a more equitable tax structure must be devised.

I am well aware that our tax reform program cannot be completed in full until we generate new economic activity — but the process of overhaul must be started now.

There is one specific change that must be made immediately. I refer to the tax on property.

For most people, and especially those on low and fixed incomes, it is the most crushing of all. It has skyrocketed in all parts of Manitoba during recent years. This has been due to the fact that property is the chief source of revenue for the financing of our education program. There is absolutely no rhyme or reason for education costs to be assessed primarily against property.

Education is not a property service and the greater proportion, if not all its cost, must be transferred from the property tax to the broader provincial tax base. This is one of the pledges I make — help me to bring it about.

The 5% sales tax must be removed from at least the following items:

1. Children's clothing.
2. Used clothing.
3. Shoe repairs.
4. Certain school supplies.
5. Soaps.

The utility tax on electricity must be removed. Electricity is a necessity not a luxury and its imposition certainly shows how much this government cares about our older citizens, those who are retired on fixed income, and those in the lower income brackets.

The present government's policy, or rather, lack of policy, is no more clearly shown than its fumbling, bumbling approach to the federal estate tax. As soon as this tax was announced by Ottawa, we should have joined the other Western

White Paper on Policy ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The major economic challenge facing our province during the 1970's will be to provide Manitobans with a standard of living and quality of life second to none in Canada.

Manitoba has the resources needed to meet this development challenge. We have one of Canada's major metropolitan areas . . . immense mining, forestry and tourist resources in our north . . . and we have one of Canada's best agricultural areas.

Manitoba's great potential was well described in the recent TED report. It stated very clearly that the one factor which could limit our growth during the 1970's would be a constraint of the spirit.

I have not found Manitobans lacking in spirit. As your premier, it would be my task to see that we are confident, positive, and determined in our approach to Manitoba development.

Manitoba voters have become skeptical about politicians talking development. So far the voters have received little more than slogans. For too many voters, all that appears to be *growing to beat '70* is their taxes, their premiums, and their general cost of living.

I realize that this skepticism exists. To overcome it, we have to get beyond the slogans — we've got to be blunt and start adopting new policies.

We must direct our development policies so that a better quality of life is brought to all the people in Manitoba — to the poor as well as the rich, to the rural areas as well as to Winnipeg, to the north as well as the south.

We must look at the facts and they show that the wealth and prosperity of this province are not shared equally. Incomes may be relatively high in Metropolitan Winnipeg but extremely low in our rural regions. Over 350,000 people live in these rural regions and must have policies directed to their special problems — to their farm problems, to the problems in the declining small towns, and certainly, we can't hide the special problems and opportunities of our northern people. The Liberal party would create three separate ministers in our Manitoba government — a minister for the north, a minister for the rural areas, and a minister for urban affairs dealing with the Winnipeg region. These are Manitoba's three main regions — each of them is distinct; the people in each of these regions deserve special and distinct attention. Let me stress — this will be a re-organization of government, to make it more effective, not the creation of additional cabinet portfolios.

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1. Help the bona-fide Manitoba farmer who wishes to expand in livestock or begin new herds to gain a reduction in interest and an extension of payment periods.
2. Assistance, both monetary and advisory, to bona-fide farmer-owned feedlots. Why should the Manitoba government help U.S. and Swiss interests get into 2,000 to 5,000 head feedlots? Instead, why not help farmers in a local community to organize their own feedlot so that every farmer in the community could feed his cattle through this feedlot? We want to make sure farmers themselves produce this livestock, not just big industry.

If elected, I would also improve the government's assistance in farm management planning. A good beginning would be to transfer that section of the provincial industry and commerce branch dealing with establishment of industrial-owned feedlots to the department of agriculture, thus eliminating duplication and at the same time, reducing personnel. As well, we would certainly see that misleading advice such as that given by the Conservatives several years ago in advising against increased livestock production would not be given. I would like to develop for Manitoba farmers, an effective informational system on land utilization, so that crops can be planned with accurate knowledge of market needs.

The third part of the Liberal farm program is aimed at boosting prices and sales of oats and barley. The provincial government has a right and responsibility to work with the Federal government for a more effective system of coarse grain marketing. It is totally unfair that the wheat board price for barley should be 30c a bushel above non-board prices. Furthermore, why should quotas for barley and oats be the same as for wheat? Why should feed grain exports be only 3% of the world trade? We might be locked into a world problem when it comes to wheat but I don't believe that sufficient pressure has been exerted in the case of oats and barley. These are important questions which reveal that many constructive changes can take place in the neglected area of oats and barley marketing.

This is the general direction of some of our farm policy. I want to emphasize again that the Liberal party wants to see livestock operations in Manitoba expanded and the grain farmer helped in the task of diversification. We want to see farmers prosper — not just big farm industry.

The Liberal Party stands for the average man and that's what Liberalism means.

TAXATION

Many of our present taxes are unfair in Manitoba because they do not take into sufficient account the ability to pay.

Tax reform is one of the most important issues facing us in this province today. It is a matter which concerns every Manitoban and it is one which must be tackled by positive action now. Indeed, it is this question of taxation which was one of the main reasons for my decision to return to the political field.

I have stated many times since my return that the present administration has shown no real concern with respect to "the small man and his problems". I pledged myself to this cause when I accepted the leadership of the Liberal Party in Manitoba, and now as we move toward the June 25th election, I am appealing to all Manitobans, regardless of their party affiliation, to help me implement this pledge.

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The present government's policy, or rather, lack of policy, is no more clearly shown than its fumbling, bumbling approach to the federal estate tax. As soon as this tax was announced by Ottawa, we should have joined the other Western provinces in rebating the provincial share. These are the provinces with which we have to compete. This is vital if we are to attract new, and retain existing development capital in Manitoba. Without capital, we cannot create new jobs for our people.

We must not forget as well that the rebate will help protect the position of small estates, family farms, and small businesses. It is interesting to note that prior to the February 20th by-elections, Mr. Weir promised that action similar to that in Saskatchewan and Alberta would be taken in Manitoba. This promise was repeated by the provincial treasurer June 3rd. We cannot help but wonder if they mean it this time.

Finally, what about medicare? At present, premiums are \$9.80 married and \$4.90 single with hospitalization premiums of \$7.00 and \$3.60 to be added in the near future. In short, a family will have to pay \$204 per year for this protection. This is far too high, especially for those in low incomes.

Consequently, under a Liberal government, medicare will be financed on formulas based on ability to pay.

There are inequalities and deficiencies in many other taxes, but the above are the main concerns. I know, and you know, that they cannot be corrected overnight. But the process of tax reform has to be started immediately.

To sum up — in bringing about tax reform in this province, there are four basic musts that have to be done:

1. We must redistribute the burden of taxation — with greater reliance on ability to pay.
2. We must negotiate a better deal for Manitoba in Federal-Provincial fiscal arrangements, to reflect regional differences and disparities.
3. We must create new economic development at a much faster pace.
4. We must review all existing provincial programs and have the courage to discontinue those which are no longer required, to ensure that we are getting the best value for our tax dollars.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Manitoba's great potential was well described in the recent TED report. It stated very clearly that the one factor which could limit our growth during the 1970's would be a constraint of the spirit.

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During the last legislative session which the Weir government ended so abruptly and irresponsibly, the Liberal party endorsed the TED report's major development recommendations. We urged Premier Weir to create a new standing committee on economic development in the legislature, to appoint a high-level advisory council on economic development, to establish in Ottawa an office of Manitoba economic affairs. We are still waiting for action from the province — action which could have been taken and which we were prepared to support a few months ago. There are a number of positive development policies which the Liberal party is prepared to act on today:

— We must, as a top priority, build a major roadway to the north direct from Winnipeg to Thompson through the Interlake.

— Air travel is a key to northern development, hence it will be our responsibility to develop a good system of northern air travel in co-operation with the private airlines and the federal government.

— Finally, we will implement the new industrial policies recommended by TED, development policies for the mining, tourists, trade and business industries.

My aim has been to provide an indication of the broad strategy and concerns for Manitoba development which the Liberal party is asking you to endorse on June 25th. Our objective is to fight negative thinking in Manitoba, to begin programs which will develop the province for the benefit of all our citizens.

Selective regional programs will develop all of Manitoba's resources. We will build Manitoba into the kind of province required for our second century. If we combine our efforts, we will show leadership for Canada and the west — leadership which will then attract and retain the youth, the talent, the attention, and the recognition which Manitobans deserve.

We must think of the future. After all, we will spend the rest of our lives there!

Elect Manitoba Liberals on June 25th

Authorized By The Manitoba Liberal Election Committee.

