

# Leading from the Middle: Manitoba's Role in the Intergovernmental Arena

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## Abstract

*This article uses the concepts of leadership, influence, political friendship and trust to examine the role and impacts of successive governments of Manitoba within Canada's federal system. The place of regions – the West and the Atlantic provinces – is the focus of many studies. However, with the exception of Quebec and, to a lesser extent Ontario, there are not many case studies of how individual provinces approach and carry out their activities in federal-provincial and interprovincial forums across a variety of policy fields. In presenting a case study of the recent role of the province of Manitoba within various intergovernmental forums, this article hopes to encourage the development of a more province-specific approach to understanding the dynamics of intergovernmental relations based on the concepts of leadership, influences, political friendship and trust.*

## Introduction

This article uses the concepts of leadership, influence, political friendship and trust to examine the role and impacts of successive Governments of Manitoba within Canada's federal system. Studies of individual provincial governments in the intergovernmental arena are not that common in the vast literature on Canadian federalism. Most of the available studies focus on federal-provincial relations in general or on the impacts of federalism in particular policy fields. The place of regions – the West and the Atlantic provinces – is the focus of many studies. However, with the exception of Quebec and, to a lesser extent Ontario, there are not many case studies of how individual provinces approach and carry out their activities in federal-provincial and interprovincial forums across a variety of policy fields. The exception is the annual publication *The State of the Federation* from the Institute of Intergovernmental Relations at Queen's University which usually covers one or two provinces. In presenting a case study of the recent role of the province of Manitoba within various intergovernmental forums, this article hopes to encourage the development of a more province-specific approach to understanding the dynamics of intergovernmental relations based on the concepts of leadership, influences, political friendship and trust.

The remainder of the article consists of four main sections. First, the concepts of leadership, influence, political friendship and trust are briefly examined. It is recognized that each of the four concepts is

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elusive, multidimensional and controversial. Second, the notion of the West as a distinct, coherent political community is examined. It is argued that increasingly the West represents four different provincial societies, economies and political cultures. Moreover, Manitoba cannot be seen as simply the most easterly and least affluent of four provinces which are often mistakenly taken to constitute a distinctive region with a shared outlook. Third, the historical and contemporary circumstances of Manitoba within the federal system are examined. In terms of geography, size, its economy, social make-up and political culture, Manitoba can be described as “in the middle” among Canadian provinces. The basic circumstances of Manitoba, it is argued, contribute to the distinctive role played by its premiers and their governments within the federal system. Fourthly, it is argued that Premier Gary Doer and his NDP government, which has held office since 1999, have achieved political influence within the intergovernmental system beyond that which might be expected from a relatively small, less affluent province.

The analysis to follow is based upon the academic literature, documentary and newspaper reports and a small number (six) of elite interviews with politicians and public servants in Manitoba. The conclusion of the article draws its themes together and reinforces the point that case studies of the individual roles of provincial governments within the various intergovernmental processes can deepen and refine our understanding of the dynamics of those processes.

## The Key Concepts

Each of the four concepts employed in the analysis to follow is vague and controversial. Huge volumes of literature exist on the topics of leadership, influence, friendship and trust. Definitions, theories, models and measures of these complex phenomena abound in multiple disciplines. In the space available here, it is only possible to set forth briefly the meaning and the use to be made of the four concepts within the remainder of the article.

Leadership has been described as one of the most studied and least understood phenomenon in society. Many theoretical approaches and applied models of leadership exist in the literatures of many disciplines.<sup>2</sup> At the risk of oversimplification; it is possible to identify two broad approaches to understanding leadership. The first suggests that it is best understood by focusing on the personal attributes, qualities, behaviours and situational responses of individuals who are given the title or claim to be leaders. James Macgregor Burns represents this first approach.<sup>2</sup> He established the distinction between transactional and transformational leaders. For Burns true leadership consisted of elevating followers to a higher moral plane by articulating a purpose which gave meaning to their lives and engaged them emotionally. In contrast, a second approach sees leadership primarily as a group process in which people work together to pursue a common goal and/or to resolve disagreements. For example, according to Robert C. Tucker political leadership consists of diagnosing situations or problems, devising a course of action and mobilizing the community's support to bring about changes.<sup>3</sup> I favour mainly the latter approach of seeing leadership as something larger than the individual leader, but clearly the personal qualities, knowledge and skills of individuals can make them potentially more suited to perform

successfully in leadership roles, whether they are formally designated as leaders or play that role informally.

The public sector – including the operation of the federal system – depends greatly on the quality of leadership found within government. In government, leadership is dual, overlapping and interactive; involving both elected politicians and appointed public servants. The roles, and therefore the knowledge, skills and behavioural repertoires of political and administrative leaders are somewhat different. In principle political leaders play the main role in identifying policy direction, approving policies and mobilizing support to carry them out. Public servants are meant to be experts in formulating policy advice and in implementing policy effectively once it has been decided. It has long been recognized that this simple dichotomy between deciding and carrying out policies does not capture the complexities of interaction and mutual dependence between politicians and public servants during the multiple phases of policy-making.

Federalism has increased the role of public servants in the process of policy formulation and implementation because ministers must grant senior public servants considerable autonomy to negotiate with other orders of government and with interest groups of various kinds. Deals worked out in intergovernmental meetings and committees eventually come before ministers and cabinets for approval, but by then there is considerable momentum in favour of adoption.

While leadership is to some extent shared and collective within the conduct of federalism, the key role played by prime ministers and premiers (henceforth referred to collectively as first ministers) is a central fact of political life. The concentration of power in the office of the first minister is said to result from the prerogatives of being leader of the governing party, the responsibilities for creating and leading cabinets and the fact of being the focal point of media attention for policy announcements and events taking place.<sup>4</sup> First ministers usually assume the lead role on the most sensitive federal-provincial matters.

Talk of one-person rule to describe the power of first ministers is probably an exaggeration.<sup>5</sup> Even with larger political and bureaucratic staffs serving them, first ministers cannot know about all the issues and arrange to be present when all the important decisions are being made within their governments. Even if power has been centralized, first ministers must still respect the traditional norms of collective cabinet decision-making and ensure that there is political support for their actions. Probably the greatest constraint on the freedom of a first minister to single-handedly set and to manage the agenda of his/her government is the need in an unpredictable world to anticipate, and/or to respond creatively to, unforeseen events, including the actions of other orders of government.

The size of a particular government and its financial circumstances will affect the power of the prime minister or premier. In larger, sprawling jurisdictions like the Government of Canada or the Ontario government, the capacity to achieve unified direction, control and coherence will be a challenge, no matter how greatly power is concentrated in the offices of the first minister. In smaller governments like Manitoba there is more opportunity for face-to-face dealings and the premier can play a personal role on more files. Often the cabinet in the provincial setting represents two-thirds of the governing caucus so there are more elected followers who owe a position of influence to the premier. Resource scarcity imposes focus and discipline on less affluent provincial governments making centralization of power in the hands of the premier more justified. Smaller public services may be limited in terms of their policy analysis and networking capacities and they also allow for more direct control and involvement by the first minister.

All large organizations – particularly governments – involve the requirement to identify and accommodate divergent values, interests, ambitions and goals. Conflict is inevitable. This means that leaders in government, both politician and public servant, must be skilled at conflict resolution and the management of power.

Power is also a contentious term. In popular discourse, it carries negative connotations of coercion, manipulation and ego gratification. However, in the vast literature on the topic there is recognition that influence, rather than coercion, is the most widely used form of power. Jeffrey Pfeffer defines power as “the potential ability to influence behaviour, to change the course of events, to overcome resistance and to get people to do things they otherwise would not do.”<sup>6</sup> Pfeffer is one of many scholars who examine power within organizations. Bolman and Deal identify the “wellsprings” of organizational power as position power (authority), expertise (information and knowledge), rewards (patronage, budget control), coercion (threats and penalties), agenda setting (formally and informally), meaning framing (ideas and metaphors) and personal power (charisma and leadership style).<sup>7</sup> The first four “wellsprings” represent a “one-way” vision of leadership power which involves the use of “resources” of various kinds to bring others into line with one’s intentions. The latter four well-springs involve “power with” rather than “power over” others – they represent a persuasive model of leadership based upon cooperation toward shared goals. The two forms of power involve both formal and informal dimensions in their operation.

Measuring the influence of leaders in various contexts has proven to be difficult for social scientists in various disciplines.<sup>8</sup> There is no single approach or set of indicators which precisely captures the influence of individual leaders when complicated events and multiple actors are involved. A structural approach to the measurement of influence is based on the position occupied by a leader, along with the opportunities and resources to exert influence that come with a strategic location. A reputational approach asks others to rank the effectiveness of leaders based upon explicit criteria or their more general impressions of whether leaders are able to persuade others. Often a part of this second approach is to examine the personal attributes, knowledge, skills and behaviours which enable leaders to attract allies and to build coalitions. A third approach is based on outcomes. This involves identifying what a leader sets out to achieve, determining what actually happened and attributing influence on what appears to have occurred within the process. This approach often recognizes that influence may involve not only the achievement of a desired outcome, but also the prevention of an unwanted development. Different approaches will capture different dimensions of the complex and elusive phenomenon of influence. Propositions about the influence of leaders which can be measured empirically and precisely are not usually available.

First ministers must manage relationships of power both inside and outside of the governments which they lead. Internally they have all the power resources identified by Bolman and Deal: authority, rewards, knowledge, threats, agenda-setting and coercion. However, their reliance on their undoubted raw power can be excessive; ideally first ministers prefer to rely upon persuasion and influence to bring their cabinet colleagues and others to their side. Shared goals – including re-election – and loyalty to the leader and the party will cause their followers to limit their challenges and dissent, especially in public.

In terms of external leadership, first ministers clearly benefit from being at the centre of political life within their own jurisdiction. This leads outside groups to target them in terms of transmitting their messages to governments. As head of their respective governments, first ministers are aware of, and often involved with, the activities taking place in the numerous intergovernmental arenas covering various policy fields. However, occupying a strategically important location in government and showing

up at important intergovernmental events does not automatically translate into overriding influence. First ministers vary in their personal attributes and leadership skills. Some adopt more active leadership styles than others, although no leader can be completely passive and surrender the initiative completely to others. The success and influence of individual first ministers will vary over time, depending upon a wide range of factors such as their electoral mandates, the economic and social circumstances in their jurisdiction, the issues on the governmental agenda at the time and their personal popularity with their party followers and other segments in society.

When first ministers represent their governments in the intergovernmental arena, they are dealing in formal terms with people who are their peers. These are not hierarchical relations based upon formal authority, although clearly not all first ministers enter the intergovernmental arena as equals in terms of political influence. Historically, the prime minister and the Government of Canada have controlled the agendas for federal-provincial meetings. However, the rise of stronger provincial governments with more bureaucratic capacity has reduced unilateral federal control, particularly since 2003 when the premiers created the Council of the Federation to promote interprovincial-territorial cooperation and to support their collective leadership role within the federal system. In short, leadership and power in the intergovernmental arena is more dispersed and collective, and fluctuates according to the issues and actors involved.

It has been said of international relations that nations have neither permanent friends nor permanent enemies, only permanent interests. A similar hard-headed realism characterizes most interpretations of contemporary federal-provincial politics.<sup>9</sup> The process is seen to be almost exclusively about the exercise of power and the calculation of how leaders can maximize the benefits for their individual governments and the people they represent, as well as their own reputations as skilful power brokers. Talk about the role that political friendship might play in terms of conditioning, to some not easily specified degree, the dynamics and outcomes of the federal-provincial process is likely to be dismissed in this rather cynical era as old-fashioned and naïve. The suggestion that political friendship could be based on a shared commitment to what are seen as sound public policy ideas would also invite ridicule from many observers. There is no doubt that first ministers must defend the fundamental interests of the governments they lead and the societies they serve. Re-election is always a background consideration. Acting in a way to gain public support is clearly appropriate in a democracy. In short, political friendship cannot trump either fundamental jurisdictional or political interest, but having close personal relationships with other leaders can make a marginal difference in the dynamics and outcomes of the federal-provincial process.

The concept of friendship has been used mainly in disciplines such as psychology and sociology. It was a prominent theme in the writings of the ancient Greek philosophers on politics, but it is rarely discussed in modern political science. It is almost as if politics and friendship are mutually opposed because politics is seen mainly in negative and adversarial terms. In this article, the concept of political friendship is used to denote cooperative and supportive behaviour between or among first ministers who share goals (at times at least), a political space, power, risks and accountability for results. The term political friendship is meant to connote mutual knowledge, understanding, respect, affection and trust.

The last of these relationship qualities, namely trust, has become a popular topic in a wide range of disciplines, including political science.<sup>10</sup> Most of the writing in the political science field has focused on external trust by the public in governments. There is close to unanimity on the view that such trust has been declining over the past three decades and, according to some writers, the rising levels of cynicism are undermining public support for and the legitimacy of the actions of governments. This has produced

a lot of talk about a crisis of trust. Less dramatically, what public sectors leaders, especially politicians are facing is a serious “trust deficit” in terms of their relationships with citizens. This condition affects how they interact in the intergovernmental arena.

The sources of the trust deficit involve both longer-term forces as well as more recent events. Controversy surrounds the causes and significance of the trust deficit, making it too large a topic to explore here. According to informed commentators, however, the failure by political leaders to resolve divisive issues like constitutional changes to accommodate Quebec, and more generally the seemingly constant federal-provincial wrangling over responsibilities and money, has added significantly to the public’s disillusionment with the political process.<sup>11</sup> This put pressure on first ministers and intergovernmental officials to act more cooperatively and constructively to demonstrate that federalism can work.

Interpersonal trust among public officials who operate the federal system is different from the wider public trust towards governments in general. Trust among leaders is based upon more direct experience working over time with one another. In contrast, the public’s attitudes towards government are based upon limited knowledge and appear to be shaped by ideological predispositions and/or fleeting negative impressions left by the media.

Interpersonal trust among “insiders” is closely related to friendship, but it is not exactly the same. In this context, trust refers to positive, confident expectations about the motivations, intentions, behaviours and competence of other actors.<sup>12</sup> There is an element of uncertainty and risk involved in placing trust in others that they will not act to harm one’s interests if it can be avoided. Trust is seen to reduce ambiguity and unpredictability in interactions because one can anticipate some of the behaviour of other actors. Additionally, trust can facilitate the exchange of information, ideas and intentions. It can facilitate cooperation and contribute to the constructive resolution of disagreements. Positive perceptions about the competence of actors to achieve desired outcomes will enhance the levels of trust among actors. In trusting relationships, there is a greater willingness to believe that a breach of trust is not the fault of a “friend,” but can be attributed to the situation or the actions of others.

The relationship between trust and power is complicated and problematic. In some situations trust can be a substitute for power when others both identify with the goals a leader is seeking to obtain, and have confidence in their leader’s capacities. In such circumstances attempts to influence may be unnecessary. On the other hand, if power is used opportunistically and unethically, it can reduce or destroy trust. It is usually argued that the building of trust is a gradual, incremental process whereas the loss of trust can result from a single, dramatic event.

While it was necessary to introduce briefly the key concepts to be used in the analysis to follow, the point needs to be reinforced that each of the concepts is complex, multidimensional, difficult to measure and controversial. In drawing attention the “softer,” more elusive dimensions of intergovernmental relationships, it is not being argued that such factors determine processes and outcomes. Leadership, trust and friendship matter but they do not override the pursuit of fundamental interests. How much they matter is contingent on the issues at stake and the alignment of the different interests, both governmental and non-governmental, which are involved in a policy process which is complex, multi-tiered and dynamic.

The analysis of Manitoba’s role within the federal system will use the above concepts in a qualitative way. As an exploratory undertaking, no claim can be made that the study captures fully and precisely

the separate impacts of leadership, influence, friendship and trust within the dynamic processes of federalism which are driven by a wide range of forces and considerations.

## Manitoba and the West

Historically the West – consisting of the three Prairie Provinces and British Columbia – has been thought of as a distinctive political region bringing a shared set of concerns into the federal-provincial arena. Politicians, the media and scholars still talk about the need to address “western alienation,” the longstanding feeling of being excluded from the national policy process and the perception that central Canada uses the ample natural resources of the region while blocking its aspirations to diversify economically. Over many decades the West has given rise to many protest movements and third parties which have expressed the discontents of the region. There have also been attempts over the years for interests and individuals from western Canada to work within the two main parties at the national level and to reform policy and parliamentary processes to make them less majoritarian and dominated by the claims of Quebec and Ontario. Most recently, during the past three decades, the leading cause of western reformers has been the creation of a “Triple E” Senate – one that is elected, equal and effective – as a way to ensure that the growing populations and increased economic strength of the West (mainly Alberta and British Columbia) are reflected in increased political power in the national policy process. A related development is the insistence by provincial governments in the West (again led by Alberta and British Columbia) that the national government follow a stricter approach to federal-provincial relations which respects provincial jurisdiction, especially over issues of resource development. These are familiar themes. They reflect an historical record and established political tradition which causes people to think of the West as a distinct political community with a shared set of expectations and demands.

The concepts of region and regionalism are inherently complex and subjective, which means that people disagree on their meaning and significance.<sup>13</sup> There are geographic, economic, social, psychological and symbolic dimensions to the concept of region. The argument here is that over time the West has become increasingly four distinct provincial societies, economies and political cultures and less a homogeneous region which approaches the national government and participates in intergovernmental processes on the basis of a shared agenda and common set of concerns. Today the notion of the West is more psychological, cultural and symbolic than it is economic and political.<sup>14</sup> Reflecting their separate geography, histories, traditions, social composition, economic circumstances and political traditions, each of the four western provinces has its own distinct identity, including somewhat different perspectives on its role within the federal system. In all four provinces, a large majority of the population live in large cities with different economic strengths and tremendous social diversity. These “city regions” probably have more in common with one another and with similar centres elsewhere in the country than do the western provinces, in general, with one other.

There is no disputing the place of “the West” in the political consciousness of the region and the country. However, opinion surveys have confirmed that the differences between western Canadians and respondents in other parts of the country on major public policy issues are not great.<sup>15</sup> The greatest differences show up on symbolic issues involving the perceived nature of the country and the place of the region within Confederation. The general public’s perceptions and feelings that the West has not been fairly treated are not supported by a great deal of knowledge about the basic features of the political system, including the federal system, about the actions of different governments or about the outcomes of those actions. In short, there is an undercurrent of regional grievance in the consciousness

of Canadians in the West which is uneven in its breadth and depth, being strongest in the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, and the knowledge base among the general public for feelings of regional alienation is limited. In fact, public opinion polls which claim to tap into regional protest may in fact be measuring alienation from the political system which has other causes, such as poverty or broken promises to Aboriginal peoples.<sup>16</sup>

In addition to the level of public opinion, regionalism could find expression on the elite level, particularly among politicians, public servants and interest group representatives. The evidence of this type of regionalism is spotty and mixed, but there are some indications that among elites within the four western provinces there is less regional thinking and action than there used to be. During the 1970s there were conferences and reports devoted to the topics of "One Prairie Province" and to ways of strengthening the place of the West within Canada as its resource wealth brought prosperity and population growth. A Western Economic Opportunities Conference in 1973 led eventually to the creation of the annual Western Premiers Conference. This last institution still exists, but its level of activity and the willingness of premiers to take joint action has dissipated over time.<sup>17</sup>

A senior intergovernmental official from Manitoba with more than 40 years of experience observed in a 2007 interview that cooperation among the four western provinces was at an all time low and that increasingly the two western-most provinces have focused mainly on their own agendas. When the four provincial economies were more agricultural and resource based, the provincial governments had more in common, whereas today they are more competitive as they seek to attract investment in the "knowledge" industries of the future. In the energy field, Alberta has become an exceptionally fast growth province with abundant revenues. This has caused significant disequilibrium in the complex system of federal-provincial financial transfers. Three of the four provincial governments in the West no longer receive equalization payments, making Manitoba the last "have less" government. Socially the four provinces are all becoming increasingly diverse, but the population of "new Canadians" is urbanized and does not represent a cohesive segment in the way that rural interests did in the past. Aboriginal issues are found on the government agendas in all four provinces, but they loom larger in Manitoba and Saskatchewan because of the percentage of the population of Aboriginal heritage and the existence of strong political organizations representing Aboriginal peoples. The ideology of the ruling parties does not often supersede the fundamental interests of a given province in terms of their willingness to cooperate, but partisan differences across the West probably account in part for the relative lack of regional unity compared to the past. There are different historical experiences and traditions which factor into the contemporary political cultures of each of the four provinces in some not easily discernible way. Finally, the leadership philosophy and style of individual premiers reflect and shape the political culture of their province. On climate change policy, for example, Premier Campbell in British Columbia and Premier Doer have taken a more aggressive policy stance, both, it appears, because of the environmental circumstances of their provinces and the development of personal convictions about the importance of the issue. When they interact in the intergovernmental arena the leadership styles of premiers can be more or less compatible, leading to greater or lesser collaboration. A populist and highly individualistic premier like Ralph Klein in Alberta had a different leadership style than Premier Doer of Manitoba who was driven less by ideological conviction and more by what could be agreed to and would work.

Several recent "defining moments" symbolize the loss of regional unity among elites. One such event was the CF-18 controversy in 1986. When the Government of Canada decided to place a fighter aircraft maintenance contract with a Quebec firm rather than the one in Manitoba, which had been rated superior on technical grounds, an all-party delegation from the Manitoba legislature along with

provincial business representatives went to Ottawa to protest the actions of the Conservative government of Brian Mulroney. Even though this seemed to be a clear case of the West being shut out again by political favouritism towards Quebec, there were no strong protests from premiers or the legislatures in the other three western provinces. A second, more recent example is the internal trade agreement signed between the provincial governments of Alberta and British Columbia. There appears to have been no serious thought given by those two prosperous provinces to extend the agreement to eliminate interprovincial trade barriers to all four western provinces. Of course there are counter examples where the West in the form of the four provincial governments has spoken with one voice to obtain benefits for the region.

### **The Case of Manitoba: “Stuck in the Middle”**

Having suggested that the notion of a cohesive West can easily be exaggerated, the paper argues from this point forward that we should study the roles of individual provincial governments within the federal system, particularly provinces other than Ontario and Quebec which, understandably given their size, economic strength and political clout, have received most of the attention in the past. This section of the paper examines the recent role of Manitoba governments in the intergovernmental arena based upon the integrating theme that the province is in several ways “stuck in the middle” of national political life. Occupying this distinctive political space has caused most Manitoba governments to adopt a conciliatory and constructive approach in their dealings with the national government, other provincial governments, state and national governments in the United States and with business and non-governmental organizations.

Geographically, Manitoba is clearly in the middle of the country which means it looks both East and West in terms of conducting relations with other parties. Historically, the province was settled by migrants from Ontario during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and later by successive waves of immigrants from other parts of the world. As a consequence the province is socially diverse. In many ways it mirrors the diversity of the nation itself. It has a large and fast growing Aboriginal population, with as many as 70,000 Aboriginal citizens living in the capital city of Winnipeg. The province has a significant and politically active Francophone population and it practices a limited form of official bilingualism at the provincial level and within the City of Winnipeg.

Manitoba is a one-city province with Winnipeg representing 60 percent of the provincial population and the Capital Region (Winnipeg and 15 adjacent municipalities) representing close to 70 percent of the provincial economy. 31 of the 57 seats in the provincial legislature are located within the City of Winnipeg. The provincial government has experimented with the design of the urban political system (Unicity, 1971), and is the only provincial government to adopt vertical provincial-municipal tax sharing on so-called “growth taxes,” to promote sustainable development and land-use planning for the Capital Region, to collaborate with the City of Winnipeg and the Government of Canada in tri-level projects to revitalize downtown Winnipeg and to prominently pursue the so-called “cities agenda” at the national level on such issues as the gas-tax transfers to support urban infrastructure upgrades. In short, Manitoba has been at the centre of national debates over how to support city-regions as the focal points for future growth.

In economic terms, Manitoba can also be seen to be in the middle among provincial economies. It is western Canada’s most diversified economy. Historically the economy has demonstrated slow but steady growth based upon agriculture, resource development, hydroelectric power, small to medium manufacturing, a growing service sector and a significant role for public sector investment and

employment, especially through crown corporations. Despite steady GDP growth, Manitoba's economy has recently grown at rates significantly below those posted in the other western provinces. Out-migration to other provinces has been the historical pattern and net population gains in recent years have been achieved on the basis of federal-provincial programs to attract international immigrants. In terms of the sectors represented in the economy and its mixed private/public characteristics, Manitoba comes closest among the four western provinces in terms of mirroring the overall national economy.

Among provincial societies and provincial governments, Manitoba is neither poor nor rich, more like lower-middle class. It is the only province in western Canada currently eligible for Equalization payments from the Government of Canada. Such payments are intended to enable "have less" (a term preferred by a former Manitoba premier over "have not") provinces like Manitoba to provide approximately comparable public services without having to impose undue tax burdens on its citizens. Equalization, combined with the Canada Health and Social Transfer and other transfers, accounted for approximately 34 percent of provincial revenues in 2006.<sup>18</sup> Dependence on federal financial transfers has recently been portrayed by the business community and the editorial board of the leading provincial newspaper as a failure by the provincial government to create the competitive economic conditions necessary for prosperity which at least matches that of Saskatchewan. As is discussed below, the NDP government which has been in office since 1999 does not reject the goal of becoming a "have" province, but argues that policy and financial support from the national government will be needed to complement provincial efforts.

Manitoba's party systems on both the federal and the provincial level involve competition among three parties – the Conservatives, Liberals and NDP – although the Liberals have not been a real contender for power at the provincial level since the late 1960s.<sup>19</sup> In national politics, three-party competition means that, unlike Alberta, there have always been Manitoba MPs in the cabinet and the caucus of the governing party. Manitoba's regional ministers and the provincial caucus have enjoyed success in obtaining benefits for Winnipeg and the province. So successful was Lloyd Axworthy as a Liberal regional minister in the early 1980s that the subsequent Conservative government led by Brian Mulroney felt justified in limiting special payouts to the province for several years after 1984.<sup>20</sup>

Adding to Manitoba's voice in Ottawa and promoting intergovernmental collaboration at the bureaucratic level has been the little noticed Manitoba Federal Council which consists of senior federal public servants working in the province.<sup>21</sup> With the support of a small secretariat, the role of the Council is to coordinate national policy and program initiatives and to gather intelligence on the needs and demands of the provincial government and other sectors of Manitoba society. By reputation the Manitoba Federal Council is rated the best or one of the best among such councils across the country in terms of achieving support for policies and projects which benefit the province.

Assisting regional ministers and federal public servants to serve provincial goals is the fact that much of the time the economic and social concerns within Manitoba society have matched up closely with those on the national policy agenda. In other words, there have not been wide gaps in public opinion on major policy issues between Manitoba and the national picture. According to public opinion surveys, Manitobans are the least alienated among citizens of the four western provinces. Based upon a Peripheral Regional Alienation index constructed by Shawn Henry, Alberta scored the highest while Manitoba's score was much lower, indeed the lowest of all but one of the Atlantic provinces.<sup>22</sup> In general, Manitobans do not judge the national policy process to be severely and permanently "rigged" against them as do Albertans and British Columbians.

History, economic, social and political circumstances have combined to produce a moderate, small-“c” conservative political culture in Manitoba. In the modern era of Manitoba politics which dates from the victory of the Progressive Conservatives led by Duff Roblin in 1958, successful parties and premiers have been mainly pragmatic and cautious in their policy approaches. Provincial elections are always close, with the winning party usually having only a handful more seats than the opposition parties. This has encouraged centrist policies designed not to cause polarization among voters. The exception to this pattern involved the only one-term government in the modern era led by the Conservative Premier Sterling Lyon (1977 to 1981), who adopted the anti-government rhetoric and some of the policy stances of the neo-conservative movement which was beginning to make headway in Canada. In contrast, Gary Doer won a third general election in 2007 after transforming the NDP platform to resemble the “Third Way” made popular by Tony Blair in the UK, by retaining some of the right-of-centre policies of the former Conservative government (such as a balanced budget law) and generally heeding the call of the business community to make Manitoba more competitive by cutting taxes gradually. On the other hand, Doer has spent substantial amounts of money on health care, child care, aboriginal concerns and public sector investments like hydro development and projects in downtown Winnipeg. The overall policy stance of the NDP government, which combines fiscal conservatism with spending to create social opportunities, seems to fit with the provincial political culture. In 2007 Premier Doer had a personal approval rating in the 70 percent range and he increased his majority in the May 2007 election based on capturing 49 percent of the popular vote and winning 36 of the 57 seats in the legislature.

In summary, this section has suggested that geography, history, economics and the political traditions of Manitoba have combined to produce a somewhat distinctive view of the role of the provincial government and the approaches it should follow in the various intergovernmental arenas. The next section examines Manitoba’s involvement with the national policy process.

### **Manitoba and Ottawa**

Going back to the Depression era of the 1930s – when the Government of Manitoba presented a voluminous document called “Manitoba’s Case” to the royal commission studying dominion-provincial financial relationships – the tradition has been for all provincial parties in Manitoba to support a strong national government which has the policy and financial capacity to equalize opportunities across the country. With a few notable exceptions Manitoba governments have accepted a policy leadership and program-standard-setting role by the national government. They have not been offended by intrusions into policy fields which under the Constitution are exclusively or primarily provincial responsibilities. This has caused them to resist proposals intended to place *constitutional* limits on the use of the so-called federal spending power. Even when non-constitutional limits on the use of the spending power have been proposed, Manitoba governments have insisted that such restrictions should not apply to bilateral deals with the national government. For Manitoba, there should be no constitutional prohibition or even strict limits on generosity by the national government, even if that generosity comes with strings attached, provided those strings can be negotiated.

Up to a point, Manitobans share the suspicion of other western Canadians that “central Canada” calls most of the shots in national policy-making. This attitude is crystallized and reinforced by events like the earlier mentioned CF-18 decision to send the maintenance contract to Quebec. Like other provincial governments, Manitoba has complained about unilateral decisions by the national government to launch new shared-cost programs, to modify or terminate existing programs or to cut back on federal financial transfers. Generally, however, Manitoba has not endorsed the idea, popular with more

“provincial-rights” minded jurisdictions, of “disentanglement” leading to a stricter form of federalism in which each order of government has clearly delineated taxing powers and spending responsibilities.

An exception to Manitoba’s usual orientation took place in the mid-1990s when Conservative Premier Gary Filmon (1988-1999) and his finance minister called for Ottawa to cede more tax room to the provinces and for a reduction in the interlocking activities of the two orders of government. This shift reflected the anger among provincial officials arising from the drastic cuts to federal transfer payments made as a result of the Program Review exercise (1994-1996) taking place at the national level. The Manitoba government was already facing financial stress as a result of slow economic growth, tax cuts it had introduced and the balanced budget law which it had adopted. Strong language about breaking a bargain and a betrayal of trust was used by Manitoba officials to describe the actions of the Liberal government of Jean Chrétien. An examination of the more recent stance of the NDP government led by Gary Doer illustrates a return to the more traditional approach followed by the province.

### **Leadership, Friendship and Trust**

Gary Doer became leader of government only after serving eleven years in opposition in the Manitoba legislature. He was first elected in the provincial election of 1986 when the NDP government of Premier Howard Pawley was re-elected to a second term. Prior to his election, Doer had served since 1979 as president of the Manitoba Government Employees Association and held prominent positions in the Manitoba Federations of Labour and the National Union of Provincial Government Employees. This experience helped Doer develop and refine his leadership skills of strategic thinking, communication, negotiation and conflict management. Appointed as Minister of Urban Affairs in 1987, he was required to maintain harmonious relations with the City of Winnipeg and as the minister responsible for the government-owned Manitoba Telephone System he dealt with a scandal involving a failed investment in Saudi Arabia. Within two years in office he had the reputation of being a “fixer,” working as a trouble shooter on the difficult issues, and was being mentioned as a future leader. When the NDP government suffered a surprise defeat on its budget in March 1988, Howard Pawley resigned as leader, an election was called and a rushed leadership race saw Doer emerge as leader. At the time, the party’s fortunes were at a low ebb and it ended up winning only twelve seats, while the Progressive Conservatives formed a minority government with 25 seats to the Liberals won 20 seats.

The dominant issue during the minority government period which lasted from 1988 to 1990 was the Meech Lake Accord which proposed to recognize Quebec as a distinct society and to devolve powers from the national government to the provinces.<sup>23</sup> Doer was part of an all-party panel which held public hearings on the Accord and he was part of the Manitoba delegation which participated in a compromise deal brokered by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney. For Doer and his NDP colleagues, restrictions on the use of the federal spending power was a greater concern than recognition of Quebec as a distinct society, although that provision within the Accord did become a lightning rod for protest across the province, especially among Conservative Party supporters. Eventually the resolution to approve the Accord failed to pass in the Manitoba Legislature when an Aboriginal member of the NDP prevented a vote. Doer described the MLA’s action as a matter of conscience and blamed the defeat of the Accord on the unprincipled negotiating tactics of Prime Minister Mulroney. Doer would bring his party back to the status of Official Opposition in the 1990 election, but would fail to capture power then or again in the 1995 election. So it was not until after the 1999 election that Gary Doer became the 21<sup>st</sup> Premier of Manitoba. After eleven years in opposition he was better prepared in terms of knowledge and skills to lead the provincial government and to assume an effective role on the national stage.

Gary Doer's approach to intergovernmental relations reflects his style of governing in Manitoba. It is pragmatic, problem-specific, cautious and driven by the political dynamics of the issue under consideration rather than by some overarching theory of federalism. Solutions are to be found on the basis of what is feasible in terms of the nature of the issue, the policy knowledge available, the administrative capacities of governments, the budgetary requirements and, most importantly, the prospects for agreement among governments and the other actors involved. In short "good policy" is not defined simply in an abstract manner, but also in terms of the level of conflict a proposed action will arouse and whether a consensus can be found. Networking, negotiations, the mobilization of support and the creative accommodation of differences are central to this approach. Avoidance of strong, fixed initial positions and of personalizing disputes are also features of the approach.

As practiced by a smaller province, the approach requires intelligence gathering, policy analysis, the identification of potential allies and trade offs. The development of friendships and trust relationships on the political and bureaucratic level is also key to the success of this approach. These processes are time consuming and uncertain. They tend to produce incremental changes, not dramatic policy shifts. Influence depends upon a wide range of factors: what is at stake, the positions of the parties involved, past precedents, the capacities of politicians and public servants to identify compromises, the credibility and trustworthiness of leaders and timing, particularly in terms of where different governments are in the electoral cycle. It is also the case that influence is a two-way street, attempting to influence others leaves the Government of Manitoba open to the influence of others. Success does not necessarily mean always achieving the province's goals. It can involve blocking harmful actions, mitigating potential negative consequences, achieving partial victory, creating the opportunity to revisit issues and not forsaking longer-term influence for the immediate gratification of attacking other parties involved.

Gary Doer's first major appearance on the federal-provincial stage as Premier of Manitoba took place at the Annual Premiers Conference (APC) in Winnipeg in August 2000. As host for the event, Doer chaired the meeting as a rookie premier, having been sworn into office in October 1999. Media accounts suggested that despite his inexperience he did well. According to Peter Meekinson's analysis, the agendas for the APCs have shifted since the 1980s from inter-provincial matters to more of a focus on federal-provincial issues.<sup>24</sup> Often described in the media as a chance for the provinces to gang-up on Ottawa, the APC has been used over the years by Doer to develop the case for a pan-Canadian approach to issues and to deal with unilateral actions by the national government. He has found allies in these causes among other premiers including Bernard Lord (Progressive Conservative) of New Brunswick and Jean Charest (Liberal) of Quebec.

In 2001-02 Doer was very active in promoting the creation of the Premiers Council on Canadian Health Awareness, a body with a small budget and staff. Its purpose was to make Canadians aware of reductions in federal financial support ("the 14 cent campaign") and of innovations in the health field at the provincial level. According to Quebec journalist Chantal Hébert, Doer also played a key role in persuading other premiers to support a proposal from Quebec Premier Jean Charest for a Council of the Federation.<sup>25</sup> Established in 2003 the Council was intended to promote interprovincial-territorial cooperation and a more constructive and cooperative federal system. It brings together the premiers of the ten provinces and the three territories twice a year, with the premiers taking turns acting as chair for one year. A small secretariat supports the Council. It subsumed the responsibilities of two existing bodies: the Canadian Council on Health Awareness and the Secretariat for Information and Cooperation on Fiscal Imbalance. In 2004 the Council agreed on a list of priority areas, with federal funding for health being one of the most important.<sup>26</sup> In calling for federal funding for a national pharmacare program, the Council acknowledged Quebec's right to opt out and receive full financial compensation – a compromise

which Premier Doer had promoted. Doer has argued that the new cooperative mechanism of the Council would enable the provinces and territories to participate more effectively in national decision-making to promote a stronger economic and social union and to avoid a strict “go-it-alone” approach to federalism.

Mechanisms like the Council of the Federation have their limits in terms of resolving fundamental disagreements and achieving consensus. In its first three years, the Council maintained an appearance of unity, even if it only amounted to agreement on carefully crafted, ambiguous communiqués. The issue of fiscal imbalance – including problem definition and its resolution – divided provincial governments into “have” and “have not” camps and led to the creation of an expert panel to find a compromise. Eventually, at their 2006 meeting the premiers were forced to acknowledge a lack of agreement on the fiscal imbalance and on Equalization. At the 2007 meeting the divisive issues was climate change and a proposal for a “cap and trade” system for greenhouse gas emissions. Led by Alberta, the four provinces with oil and gas reserves opposed the system whereas the three provinces with hydroelectric power (B.C., Manitoba and Quebec) came out in favour. Ontario, where the auto industry is concentrated, could accept a cap-and-trade system, but only if Ottawa subsidized the development of “clean cars.”

In addition to participating in interprovincial forums, Premier Doer has conducted extensive bi-lateral relations with other premiers and their governments. Despite having a national image as a province which periodically exhibits intense anti-French and anti-Quebec sentiments, Manitoba’s political and administrative elites probably collaborate more with their Quebec counterparts than with any other province. The basis for those close relationships begins with the similar structures of the two provincial economies. Both are resource-based economies, with significant hydroelectric sectors. There is a significant aerospace industry in both provinces and they have targeted similar “knowledge industries” for the future such as biotechnology and nutraceuticals. As Equalization recipients, both provinces are dependent on financial transfers from Ottawa. Both provinces have sizeable Aboriginal populations and Manitoba has one of the most concentrated Francophone communities outside Quebec. In addition to these shared economic and social characteristics, the premiers are friends who respect and trust one another.

The friendship between the two premiers dates back to the Meech Lake process when Jean Charest, then a Conservative MP, led a parliamentary committee to Manitoba to conduct public hearings and met Gary Doer, then Opposition leader. They discovered a shared belief in a new style of politics which abandoned traditional left-right debates and searched instead for governing approaches which would work better and were affordable. When Charest gained power as a Liberal leader in Quebec his first visit outside of the province was to Manitoba. Over the years since, they have often been allies in the intergovernmental process. Some examples of their collaboration are the following:

- the creation of the Council of the Federation in 2003;
- the 2006 compromise arrangement reached with Prime Minister Paul Martin and the other premiers which would accommodate Quebec’s distinctive circumstances by allowing for “asymmetrical federalism” in the health care field;
- the climate change issue which saw the two premiers write a joint “op-ed” piece in *The Globe and Mail* and co-host an international summit on the topic (December 2006);

- shared leadership in the Federal-Provincial-Territorial and Aboriginal policy process leading to the Kelowna Accord signed by Prime Minister Paul Martin in 2005 (and subsequently rejected by the Harper government);
- child care issues and federal money for early childhood development programs at the provincial level;
- the promotion of the biotechnology industry in Canada by joint attendance at the BIO conferences in Philadelphia (2005) and Chicago (2006);
- the sharing of policy ideas and administrative practices at the political and bureaucratic levels on topics such as Aboriginal employment, hydroelectric development, lotteries and government auto insurance
- on the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative intended to deal with crossborder security issues, the two governments jointly hired a lobbyist in Washington and offered Ontario and New Brunswick an opportunity to join the campaign to limit negative impacts.<sup>27</sup>

Based on this pattern of interaction, a Manitoba official observed that: “If you asked Quebec officials which provincial government they felt closest to in the West – indeed in all of Canada – they would likely say Manitoba.”

Friendship and trust means that the two premiers support one another whenever possible. For example, in 2006 when Prime Minister Harper had Parliament pass a resolution recognizing Quebec as a “nation” and promised to give that province a “unique” role at UNESO (the cultural arm of the United Nations), Doer defended the actions as leading to more positive relationships between Ottawa and Quebec City. Even when the historical positions of the two provincial governments clash, as for example on the use of federal spending power in areas of provincial jurisdiction, there is a strong inclination to search for a compromise. Manitoba has opposed constitutional limits on the spending power, but has been prepared to accept non-constitutional requirements to prevent unilateral federal intrusions. It has also opposed restrictions on the right of provincial governments to negotiate bilateral deals with the national government.

A Manitoba intergovernmental official with decades of experience observed in 2007 that over the past ten years the province has more often looked East than West to find allies on intergovernmental issues and to engage in “policy borrowing” from other jurisdictions. Quebec was the leading example. However, Premier Doer also had a personal friendship with Premier Bernard Lord of New Brunswick (1999-2006) and there have been good working relations among public servants from the two provinces. Not surprisingly given its proximity, the many issues in common and the presence of another NDP government, there have also been frequent contacts at the political and bureaucratic level with Saskatchewan. Being a careful strategist, Doer would never deliberately antagonize another premier, but from the interviews conducted and the newspaper accounts reviewed, he has shared fewer views with, and had less trust and confidence in, former premier Ralph Klein of Alberta and premiers Danny Williams of Newfoundland and Labrador, Gordon Campbell of British Columbia and Dalton McGuinty of Ontario. One might infer that he saw those provincial governments as too self-interested in their stance on national issues and too opportunistic and unreliable in their behaviours.

## Manitoba's Cross Border Links

Manitoba has applied the networking approach to expand the range of its activities in the international arena. Most of these activities are in the United States and the premier is usually the lead in dealing with officials in Washington, D.C., governors' offices and state legislatures and regional associations, such as the Western Governors' Association. Premier Doer has also participated in Team Canada and Western Team Canada trade missions to the United States and other parts of the world. In November 2003 the Department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade was created to develop a coherent strategy (*Reaching Beyond Our Borders*) for Manitoba's international activities and to provide a single point of access to the provincial government by international actors. It was hoped that the new department would lead to greater effectiveness with available financial and staffing resources. The most extensive and continuous relationships maintained by the province are in the various policy fields among working-level public servants. Memoranda-of-Understanding are the most widely used instruments to ratify arrangements.

Water diversion, flooding and environmental damage in the Red River system flowing from North Dakota into Lake Winnipeg have led to acrimonious disputes involving national and sub-national governments in both countries. Premier Doer was successful in garnering support at all levels in Canada to block the Devils Lake diversion project, even persuading Prime Minister Martin to raise the issue at a joint press conference with U.S. President George Bush in 2005. Doer has teamed up with other premiers to advance Manitoba's trade agenda; for example, conducting joint trade missions to Chicago, Atlanta and Huston with then Premier Lord of New Brunswick. In 2001 Doer outmanoeuvred the premiers of Alberta and British Columbia by gaining a personal audience with the Republican governor of Texas while the other premiers were limited to working the state legislature. Doer has also developed close ties with Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor of California, particularly on climate change issues, and he was invited to speak at the annual meeting of Republican governors. In May 2006 when the western premiers held their annual conference in Manitoba, they were joined by governors from across the United States and Mexico, as well as by the ambassadors to Canada from those two countries, and the agenda's main theme was the region's future in an increasingly global economy.

Manitoba is not alone in expanding the range of its international activities; all provinces have done so. However, as a smaller province, Manitoba appears to have benefited from the energy and leadership skills of Premier Doer to gain audiences with the key actors, especially in the western region of the United States. Larger provincial governments like Quebec, Ontario and Alberta have long maintained offices outside of Canada and sizeable divisions within their public services to plan and coordinate their international strategies and activities. In comparison, the Manitoba government does not operate any full-time office outside the country and its planning and coordinating department of Intergovernmental Affairs and Trade is relatively small with approximately 70 staff. The roles of such staff have been crucial to the success of Manitoba in a number of intergovernmental arenas. As noted earlier, leadership is usually shared and collective so that even as capable a political leader as Gary Doer could not achieve what he has without experienced, capable and committed intergovernmental public servants. Mutual understanding, trust and confidence between the premier and senior public servants have been an important basis for the scope of activity and degree of influence achieved by Manitoba. For example, Mr. James Eldridge, Manitoba's most senior intergovernmental affairs public servant who has served successive Conservative and NDP governments over four decades was a key figure in developing and maintaining both domestic, bilateral and even international links which a skilful leader like Premier Doer could then work to the advantage of the province. Activity does not necessarily equate to influence and the achievement of desired outcomes, but the available evidence suggests that skilled leadership,

friendships and trust relationships make a significant difference to the success of a smaller provincial government like Manitoba.

## **The Harper Government, “Open Federalism” and the Future**

The first Throne Speech of the Harper government in 2006 announced a commitment to the concept of “open federalism.”<sup>28</sup> There is inadequate space here to discuss in detail this new direction by the national government. The essence of open federalism is a stricter, “respectful” approach to federal-provincial relations which will clarify the roles of each level of government, respect areas of provincial jurisdiction, place limits on the use of the federal spending power and tackle the fiscal imbalance between the spending responsibilities of the provincial governments and their revenue raising capacities. The declaration of open federalism, along with the government-sponsored resolution passed by Parliament to recognize Quebec as a nation within Canada, was clearly designed to support the Charest government in Quebec and to build on the limited Quebec breakthrough of Harper’s Conservative Party (10 seats) in the preceding federal election.

It is too early in the development of the practicalities of so-called “open federalism,” and the potential impacts are so wide ranging that only some brief speculation about the significance of the new approach for Manitoba is possible here. In their initial dealings with the Harper government, Manitoba officials found it to be tightly controlled, secretive and unresponsive especially compared to their most recent dealings with the short-lived Liberal government of Paul Martin where there was a willingness to match talk with action and money on crucial files for Manitoba like the Kelowna Accord, health care spending, the “cities agenda” and child care. It was acknowledged that a new government with minority status needs to be cautious and ministers need time to settle into their jobs, but Manitoba public servants working the intergovernmental networks complained initially about a lack of consultation by the Harper government, even in areas of provincial jurisdiction. Progress on a number of bilateral issues was slow, but by the second half of 2007 there was renewed momentum on issues like the Devils Lake diversion, the future of the Port of Churchill and the issue of urban crime. Doer and Harper have not developed a close working relationship to this point. When the Prime Minister had Parliament pass a resolution recognizing the Quebecois as a “nation,” the other premiers in the West spoke about the dangers of any appearance of favouritism to Quebec. Premier Doer made no such comments; in fact, he applauded the efforts to strengthen federalist forces in that province.

Re-elected to his third term in June 2007, Gary Doer is the most experienced premier in the country and he sees himself as a national statesman promoting pan-Canadian causes. Up to a point, his government will support a process that “respects” provincial jurisdiction. It would be prepared, for example, to accept a more principled and rules-based approach to the calculation of Equalization payments, rather than the deal-making negotiations with individual provinces which has been the pattern in recent decades. The Social Union Framework Agreement (SUFA) of 1999 has not been effective in controlling the use of the federal spending power in provincial fields and Quebec refused to sign that deal. Manitoba would accept negotiated rules to regulate the spending power, but would oppose enshrining such rules in the Constitution because of the loss of flexibility that would ensue. Strengthening post-secondary education and training is a priority for Doer and he was active in staging a summit of premiers with education authorities. The form that federal policy and financial involvement in the post-secondary policy field would take could become contentious. Open federalism might suggest that tax credits and tax transfers to the provincial governments will be the direction chosen by the Harper government to

support higher education, but depending upon their design these approaches might put Manitoba at a disadvantage compared to richer provinces.

Tax cuts at the national level could be the main way to address the so-called “fiscal imbalance” because the national government would have smaller or no surpluses and the provincial governments would be “freer” to raise their tax rates. As a “have less” province, Manitoba insists that any future approach must deal with not only the vertical fiscal imbalance between the federal and provincial governments, but also with the horizontal fiscal imbalance between the rich and poorer provinces. This will cause the Doer government to insist that not all federal financial transfers should come in the form of tax room. Also, under Mr. Doer’s leadership, Manitoba has not abandoned the philosophy that there are national policy goals and even program standards which cannot be achieved by having each level of government operate in isolation from one another. Having each provincial government pursue its own self-interest and hoping national policy direction will arise mainly out of interprovincial cooperation is not a realistic approach according to the Manitoba officials interviewed for this study.

## Conclusion

General discussions of federal-provincial relations and even regional approaches to the analysis of the dynamics of Canadian federalism have their limits in terms of capturing all the dimensions of those processes. This article has argued for a province-specific approach to the study of federalism and has examined the historical and contemporary role of the Government of Manitoba within the federal system.

Manitoba is not simply one province in the wider grouping referred to as the West. Increasingly the four western provinces have gone their separate ways in terms of dealing with the national government and in their bilateral relations with governments in the United States and elsewhere.

As a smaller, less affluent province, Manitoba has historically supported a strong national government which is able to provide policy leadership and financial support in order to equalize public services and opportunities across the country.

Like other provincial governments Manitoba has expanded its range of intergovernmental and non-governmental contacts over the past several decades. Employing the concepts of leadership, influence, friendship and trust and examining the case of Gary Doer who has been premier since 1999, the article presented evidence to suggest that Manitoba has in boxing terms “punched above its weight” within the federal system. In highlighting the importance of leadership skills, personal friendships and trust relationships, the article is not claiming that these factors can completely offset handicaps facing a particular provincial government or the actions of other jurisdictions. However, I hope to have shown that the more intangible, human factors have become more important as interdependence among governments and non-governmental actors grows and approaches based upon networking and collaboration become more prevalent.

## Endnotes

1. The literature on leadership is too vast to be listed here. A good collection of the leading perspectives is found in Gill Robinson Hickman (ed.), *Leading Organizations: Perspectives For A New Era* Thousand Oaks, Ca. Sage, 2003.

2. See James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership*. New York, Harper Torchbooks. 1978.
3. See Robert C. Tucker, *Politics as Leadership*. Columbia, MO. University of Missouri Press, 1995.
4. The leading source on this topic is Donald J. Savoie, *Governing From the Centre: The Concentration of power in Canadian Politics* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999.
5. See Paul G. Thomas, "Governing from the Centre: Reconceptualizing the Role of the PM and Cabinet" *Policy Options* December, 2003-January, 2004. 79-85.
6. Jeffrey Pfeffer, *Managing With Power: Politics and Influence in Organizations* Boston, Mass: Harvard Business School Press, 1992.
7. Lee G. Boleman and Terrence E. Deal *Reframing Organizations: Artistry, Choice and Leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1997.
8. Pfeffer, *op.cit.* Chapter 3. See also Gibbert Firholm, *Organizational Power Politics: Tactics in Organizational Leadership* London: Praeger, 1993. A classic on the topic still worth reading is James G. March, "An Introduction to the Theory and Measurements of Influence" *The American Political Science Review* 49, 2 June 1955 pp 431-451.
9. There is a vast literature on Canadian federalism. The classic study, which has recently been reprinted with a new afterword, is by Richard Simeon, *Federal-Provincial Diplomacy: The Making of Recent Policy in Canada* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006. Another useful source on the institutional arrangements and processes of the federal system is J. Peter Meekinson, Hamish Telford and Harvey Lazar (eds.), *Canada: The State of the Federation, 2002, Reconsidering the Institutions of Canadian Federalism*. Montreal: McGill-Queens Press, 2004.
10. The literature on trust is found in many disciplines and is voluminous. A relevant source in terms of this topic is Jurion Edenbos and Erik-Hans Klyn, "Trust in Complex Decision-Making Frameworks: A Theoretical and Empirical Explanation" *Administration and Society* 39, 1 (March, 2007) pp 25-50. See also Paul G Thomas "Trust, Leadership and Accountability in Canada's Public Sector" in *Canadian Public Administration* (Forthcoming, 2008).
11. David E. Smith, *The People's House of Commons: Theories of Democracy in Contention* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007. Chapter 15.
12. Thomas, *op.cit.*
13. The general notion of a region is fraught with conceptual difficulties and controversies. Similar controversy surrounds the issue of whether the West remains a distinctive region. See Gerald Friesen "Space and Region in Canadian History"; Gerald Friesen, "Defining The Prairies: Region, Culture and History. Winnipeg, University of Manitoba Press, 2001. pp 22-36. Roger Gibbins, *Prairie Politics and Society: Regionalism in Decline*. Toronto: Butterworth, 1980; Roger Gibbins and Loleen Berdahl, *Western Visions, Western Futures: Perspectives on the West in Canada* Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 2003; Paul G. Thomas, "Parties and Regional Representation" in Herman Bakvis (ed.), *Representation, Integration and Political Parties in Canada* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 1992; Bill Waisen, "Introduction: Place, Process and the New Prairie Realities" *Canadian Historical Review* 84, 4 December, 2003. pp 509-516. and Lisa Young and Keith Archer (eds.), *Regionalism and Party Politics in Canada* Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2002.
14. See Harold D. Clarke, Jon. H. Pammett and Marianne C. Stewart, "The Forest for the Trees. Regional (Dis) Similarities in the Canadian Political Culture" in Young and Archer (eds.) *op.cit.* pp 43-73.

15. Richard Johnston, *Public Opinion and Public Policy in Canada* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.
16. Shawn Henry, "Revisiting Western Alienation: Towards a Better Understanding of Political Alienation and Political Behaviour in Western Canada" in Young and Archer (eds.) *op.cit.* pp 77-91.
17. J. Peter Meekinson, "The Western Premiers' Conference: Forging a Common Front" in Meekinson, Telford and Lazar (eds.) *op.cit.* pp 183-209.
18. Hon. Greg Selinger, Minister of Finance, Manitoba Budget, 2006.
19. See Christopher Adams, *Politics in Manitoba: Parties, Leaders and Voters* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2008.
20. See Herman Bakvis, *Regional Ministers: Power and Influence in the Canadian Cabinet* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991
21. Herman Bakvis and Luc Julièn, and Michel Logacé. "A quarter Century of Collaboration: The Manitoba Federal Council, 1982-2007. (unpublished paper)
22. Shawn Henry, *op.cit.* p 85.
23. Gerald Friesen, "Manitoba and the Meech Lake Accord" in Roger Gibbins (ed.), *Meech Lake and Canada: Perspectives from the West* Edmonton: Academic Printing and Publishing, 1988 pp 51-62 and Paul G. Thomas, "Manitoba: Stuck in the Middle" in Ronald L. Watts and Douglas M. Brown (eds.), *Canada: The State of the Federation* Kingston: Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, 1989. pp 75-106.
24. Meekinson, *op.cit.*
25. Honourable Gary Doer, Policy Challenges for the New Century: The Manitoba Perspective. Kingston, Queen's University, The 2000 Gow Lecture and The Honourable Gary Doer, "Manitoba's Role in Federal-Provincial Relations" downloaded from [www.ecclectica.ca/issues/2005/3/index.asp](http://www.ecclectica.ca/issues/2005/3/index.asp)? Article = 19 on 1/16/07.
26. Gerard Boychuck, "How Ottawa Gambles: Rolling the Dice and the Politics of Health Care Reform in 2004" in G. Bruce Doern (ed.), *How Ottawa Spends 2005-2006: Mandate Change in the Paul Marten Era* Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005 pp 41-57.
27. This list of activities is derived from a search of newspaper reports using the search engine Factiva and follow-up interviews about the events with public servants in Manitoba.
28. See Adam Harmes, "The Political Economy of Open Federalism" *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 40, 2 (June, 2007) pp 417-437 for a theoretical critique of Harper's concept of "open federalism".

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