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Fall 2012

## Review of *Keep True: A Life in Politics*. By Howard Pawley. Foreword by Paul Moist

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Saunders, Kelly, "Review of *Keep True: A Life in Politics*. By Howard Pawley. Foreword by Paul Moist" (2012). *Great Plains Research: A Journal of Natural and Social Sciences*. 1253.

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**Keep True: A Life in Politics.** By Howard Pawley. Foreword by Paul Moist. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2011. ix + 278 pp. Photographs, notes, index. C\$27.95 paper.

Howard Pawley served as premier of Manitoba from 1981 to 1988, a period that stands to this day as one of the most controversial and turbulent in the province's modern history. *Keep True: A Life in Politics* traces Pawley's life and political career from his birth in Brampton, Ontario, to the defeat of his government in 1988 at the hands of one of his own caucus members. Educated as a teacher and lawyer, Pawley became active in the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (which later became the New Democratic Party) as a young man before turning his sights on a political career. In a campaign fought largely from a hospital bed (the result of a car accident in which he was injured), Pawley was elected in the provincial election of 1969 that brought Ed Schreyer and the NDP to power in Manitoba.

During his time as a cabinet minister in the Schreyer administration, Pawley oversaw what would be the first of many contentious issues that would mark his years in office, including the introduction of public auto insurance (commonly referred to as Autopac) in Manitoba. This would be followed by battles concerning French-language rights in the province, changes to Manitoba's labor, marriage, and human rights legislation, and, on the national stage, the proposed free trade agreement between Canada and the United States.

Particularly compelling is Pawley's recounting of the negotiations surrounding the Meech Lake Constitutional Accord. His firsthand account of these proceedings, which represent a key event in Canada's modern political history, captures much of the high drama that is constitutional politics in the country. In March 1988, less than a year after the Meech Lake Accord was negotiated by the provinces and the federal government, Pawley would go down in defeat on a vote of no confidence over the provincial budget. After an unsuccessful bid for a House of Commons seat, he commenced an academic career at the University of Windsor in Ontario where he taught courses in politics and law until his retirement in 2000.

Written in a straightforward yet engaging style, *Keep True* speaks to Pawley's attempts to remain true to his principles in the face of the challenges and compromises necessitated by a life spent in politics. While a few of his statements come across as somewhat self-serving or intentionally naive (for example, his government's ill-fated decision to impose hefty increases in Autopac rates are blamed on bureaucrats and an "icy winter that produced more crashes"; in another instance, he maintains it was their inability to understand the intricacies of the

province's taxation system that explains the public's negative reaction to increases in personal income taxes introduced during his premiership), Pawley nonetheless presents a fascinating look inside the life of a provincial premier in Canada. This book will be of interest to anyone intrigued by Canadian politics and the interplay—sometimes hostile, sometimes cooperative—between the provinces and the federal government.

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