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ern Canada and the commitments and responsibilities of the Government of Canada to the people of that part of our country. Our commitments will be fulfilled, our transportation system will be improved but any reduction in the financing of these programs which had been discussed at length two days ago, could jeopardize the government plans. I thought that matter was settled once for all but it cropped up again today even though the situation now is quite different from what it was in 1981-82. However, Mr. Speaker, that exercise did serve a useful purpose because Canadians will be aware, from what has been said today on the government and the official Opposition sides that there is quite a gap between a responsible government and opposite members who would readily promise all sorts of goodies without being able to give any. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** Are there any questions or comments on the remarks of the Hon. Member?

[English]

We shall resume debate.

**Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, this is an extremely important issue and I commend the Hon. Member for Vegreville (Mr. Mazankowski) for having brought it to the attention of the House today, and hence to the attention of the people of Canada. I wish to speak to the issue as a westerner, as a Manitoban and as someone who is an historian and very familiar with the history of the West and with the neglect of western Canadians during the many years the Liberal Party has been in power.

You will know, Mr. Speaker, and perhaps some of those on the other side of the House will, deep in their hearts, even regret the fact that one Party has been in power for 51 of the last 63 years. That is unfortunate because the results of that are evident in the neglect of transportation and the neglect of agriculture.

However, the issue before us today is the history of the neglect by the present Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) of the transportation needs of western Canada. In the few moments which are remaining, Mr. Speaker, I plan to address some of the most important areas in which this Minister of Transport has failed western Canadians.

I must begin by noting the Minister's absence during the course of this extremely important debate. I regret that very much. I would like to compliment my friend, the Hon. Member for St. Boniface (Mr. Bockstael), who himself represents 50 per cent of the Liberal caucus from western Canada, for his attendance because his presence suggests that he cares about western Canadians. I can only assume that the absence of the Minister of Transport implies the opposite. Perhaps he is seeking support for his favourite candidate, Mr. John "Deficit" Turner, as I think he should be known.

**Mr. Mazankowski:** Would you buy a used Government from that man?

**Mr. Clark (Brandon-Souris):** I am sure that Canadians will not buy a used Government from either one of those two men. However, the issue before us is a history of neglect. Unfortunately, that is so evident today with the declining economy in western Canada. Many western Canadians hoped that when the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Fort Garry became Minister of Transport, replacing the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Carleton (Mr. Pepin), the new Minister would be more sensitive to the needs of western Canadians. Unfortunately, that does not seem to have been the case. In fact, western Canadians are discovering already that some of the promises made to them during the course of the Crow debate in the fall are being broken.

Part of the package which was offered to western Canadian farmers in return for losing the Crow rate, one of their few privileges in Canadian history, was the fact that the railways would pump a great deal of money into the improvement of the railway transportation system. It has become painfully evident now that the railways are breaking that promise and it would appear as if this Government, and particularly the Minister of Transport, is doing nothing to force the railways into maintaining the pledge which it made. Therefore, the credibility of the Government is at stake.

The Hon. Parliamentary Secretary who has just spoken is doing her best, and I commend her for trying to make the best of a very bad situation. She is disappointed that the people of Canada are skeptical of promises made by the Government at this point in time. I am afraid it is perfectly understandable why that skepticism remains and is so strong. Promises made in the past have not materialized.

There are two or three things which are extremely important at this point. One, of course, is the question of deregulation. This question has already been addressed at some length today, but I would simply like to make two or three comments about the problems of deregulation as they affect smaller communities, particularly those in western Canada.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, I represent the constituency of Brandon-Souris. It is only recently and thanks in large part to the efforts of the Hon. Member for Vegreville who held responsibilities in a previous administration and was very familiar with and sensitive to the plight of western Canadians that we in western Manitoba received jet air service.

As a result of those efforts in the past, PWA established a service between Calgary, Brandon and Toronto. That service is much appreciated by the people of western Manitoba. It is well utilized by the people of western Manitoba and the people of eastern Saskatchewan. However, the people in those communities recognize that if we move to a system of irresponsible deregulation, smaller communities like theirs may well lose the services which they already receive. In fact, the industrial commissioner for Brandon, Mr. Reg Forbes, made a representation to the committee just a few days ago arguing very effectively the concerns of smaller communities. We realize that deregulation will work to the advantage of the large metropolitan communities and will often work to the disadvantage of the small communities where the level of traffic is not sufficient to attract more than one carrier.