

points. I am sure that the Minister of Public Works will remember the fairly strong statements by the Prime Minister in the great reception for which I think my hon. friend was largely responsible, given the present leader of the Government when he commenced his western tour at his meeting in Winnipeg.

Now, our hon. friends across the way, including the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior, are trying to draw a red herring across the trail by saying to the Liberals in this House: You took a certain position many years ago on this question and we are but following in your footsteps. But the very point of the situation is in this, that the right hon. gentleman who leads the Government took a different position from the Liberal party many years ago when the two new prairie provinces were being formed. He held that position of his consistently up to the last general election and even as late as 1911, after arrangements had been made with the prairie provinces. If there is discontent and trouble in the West over the restoration of the natural resources, I ask who is responsible to a very large extent for it? It is hon. gentlemen like my hon. friend who has just taken his seat, and like the Minister of the Interior and the Prime Minister himself who, year after year, toured the West and told the people that they had not been fairly dealt with by the late Liberal Administration, and that if they would put the Conservatives into office they would get a square deal. Yet these same gentlemen are apologizing to-day for the inactivity of the Prime Minister in implementing his pledges. The Prime Minister last year, in answer to a question by the hon. member for Regina (Mr. Martin), admitted that he had made such statements to the people of the West. After the defeat of the Liberal party at the last election there was this need of comfort to the people of the West, at all events to the people of the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta who were so strongly in favour of the trade agreement arranged by the late Government; that if they were not granted free trade in natural products with our nearest neighbours, at least they were getting, so they thought, control of their natural resources. That in some measure would atone, they thought, for their loss in the defeat of reciprocity. There is no doubt in my mind that the leader of the Government and his friends got many votes in the West by the straight and definite pledge of the Prime Minister, that when he came into

office he would give those western provinces control of their natural resources.

Mr. BURNHAM: Does that imply a condemnation of the policy of the hon. gentleman's own leader?

Mr. NEELY: I am discussing the attitude of the Government in regard to the pledges given the people of western Canada. If the late Administration did not make pledges they were not responsible for carrying them out, but the leader of the Government is not in that position. He is in the humiliating position of having made a promise and having to come here session after session, and telling the men of the West that he does not yet find himself in a situation to implement his promise given in the tour of 1911. I had not the pleasure of hearing the Prime Minister address any of the gatherings; but, from the emphatic statements and definite promises he made, I would have it in my mind that he made those statements and gave those pledges knowing all the time the difficulties that stood in the way of implementing them, and having knowledge of the difficulties that my hon. friend from Souris (Mr. Schaffner) has just alluded to. Would not that be a fair inference? He makes a promise to the people of the West. Year after year he sat in this House as leader of the Opposition; he had considered this question from every standpoint; he did not utter a single word about the Maritime provinces when he toured the West in 1911; he did not have to go down to the Premiers of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick to find out what was right and just for the people of the West. Oh, no, he had solved the whole question himself. He knew the difficulties in the way; he knew that certain financial arrangements had been made in 1905 by virtue of the passing of the Autonomy Bill. I would not like to say that it was purely for the purpose of catching votes that he made those pledges. Will my hon. friend say it was for that purpose, and that the Prime Minister gave those pledges knowing all the time that he could not carry them out? His leader was thoroughly conversant with affairs and with the financial arrangements made by the two prairie provinces, and with every disposition in the natural resources either as gifts to railways, or corporations that had been made since the Government of Canada administered our western lands. With all these facts in mind, the then leader of the Opposition made these definite promises to the people of the West, and in view of that it is not at all strange that my hon.

[Mr. Neely.]