

friends when they took money in lieu of lands and will be able to grant what I believe we all so much desire, the restoration to those provinces of their public resources.

Mr. D. B. NEELY (Humboldt): Mr. Speaker, if any one listening to this discussion wanted to be convinced of the exceedingly unfortunate and humiliating position in which the Government and their supporters find themselves on this question, they would have only to listen to the halting apologies that have been made by the hon. gentlemen who so far have undertaken to defend them in their present attitude of inactivity so far as carrying out the promises of the Prime Minister to western Canada is concerned. I must give the hon. member for Souris (Mr. Schaffner) the general credit of being more candid if not in his statements at least in his admissions, and I am sure that the same fervent hope that he expressed, that the Prime Minister would find some way of extricating himself and his Government from the unfortunate position in which they find themselves as the result of the Prime Minister's statements and promises before he came into office, I am sure my hon. friend is expressing exactly the prayer and the feelings of every hon. gentleman on the other side of the House.

Mr. SCHAFFNER: That is what I did not say.

Mr. NEELY: My hon. friend may not have used the words that I did, but he certainly gave the impression, and I think I am not drawing any unfair inference from his words. I quite appreciate the fervent desire of my hon. friend to see the Government extricated from this humiliating position. But the hon. gentleman must remember that no one on this side of the House is responsible for that position. My hon. friend tells the House that certain financial arrangements were made with the prairie provinces when they were given their autonomy in 1905, and that the provinces accepted those arrangements. That is all very well and good, very good indeed; but that does not alter or change the fact that in 1911, six years after the autonomy Bills were put into effect, the present Prime Minister of Canada, then leader of the Opposition, made a tour of the western provinces. He said to the people of those provinces: I am the leader of the Opposition, but I hope some day to be the leader of the Government in this country;

and I tell you the men of the West that I do not think, and I never did think, that the people of the prairie provinces were fairly treated so far as the question of natural resources is concerned. I am not repeating the words of the Prime Minister, but that is the idea.

I do not wish to repeat, but some of these utterances of the Prime Minister were remarkable for the emphasis that he laid on the point that he did not consider the arrangement made with the prairie provinces when they were given their autonomy to be just and right. That was his view and his contention, that they should have been given their natural resources, and he made a pledge, as definite and as absolute as words could make a pledge, that as soon as he came into office he would right the great wrongs that had been done to the western prairie provinces by his predecessors in office when he, by the mandate of the people of Canada, became Prime Minister of this country. If it were something that he had promised for the far distant future it would be a different question. What does the right hon. gentleman say? How emphatic does he make his statement? These statements are so emphatic and so absolute in their words that I do not wonder that hon. gentlemen, in undertaking to defend the Prime Minister's position, absolutely refuse to refer to these pledges and promises. Speaking at Battleford in the tour of 1911, the right hon. gentleman said:

If it should be the will of the people of Canada to impose upon me the great responsibility of being called upon to form a Government in Canada, and after that Government has been formed, the policy I have outlined will be carried out by the Government as I have stated, or one man of the Government will go out of public life.

He will go out of public life. I think the hon. gentleman is something of a prophet, I think he will go out of public life before very long when the people have an opportunity of passing on a Government that has so failed to implement its pledges as this Government has done. But here is the emphatic statement of the Prime Minister that if, after forming a Government, that Government would not support him in his promises to the people of western Canada to restore to them their natural resources he, a member of the Government, would go out of public life. There are no words in the English language that could make a stronger pledge or promise than this. Similar statements were made at other