

its own in the then pending election, the province of Manitoba should have its own lands. This having been his language, can he explain why the province was not given its lands?

There is only one explanation for it; the policy to which he had declared his adherence—which was the policy of Sir John A. Macdonald—was so far-reaching that, not daring to carry it out, he came back to the old policy which he has so long combated.

My right hon. friend has told the House that I was asked by the Premiers of the western provinces to restore to the provinces their lands and natural resources. I do not think that any exception can be taken to what I said in my letter to Mr. Sifton, which was read by my right hon. friend. I stand by that letter. I said to Mr. Sifton: You say you do not want the lands which are ready for settlement; you want the timbers, the water-powers, the gas, and the minerals; if you want these resources, which would be assets to the province, it is only fair that we should consider the representations you make. If I were again in office, I would be ready to discuss the matter again upon those terms. But I am not now in that position; the responsibility is upon my right hon. friend, who does not show much zeal or enthusiasm in the matter of restoring to the free men of the West the land, to which they are entitled. He showed far more zeal when he had less responsibility. When a man has no responsibility it is very easy to be patriotic and to make wide and sweeping assertions. When my right hon. friend said to the people of the West: You are free men, we will give you your lands, he knew that he was making a promise which he could not implement, but he did not know at that time that he would so soon be called upon to put his words into effect. The responsibility is now upon my right hon. friend, and he is taking advantage of every subterfuge, if I may use the word, not to do what he said he would do for the free men of the West.

But if my right hon. friend were to implement his promise the Maritime provinces would have a right to complain. They would say: It is not fair that you should give them their lands and give them money terms also. I have no objection to my right hon. friend conferring with the Premiers of the Maritime provinces, but I am surprised that he did not bring the matter up at the conference of provincial Premiers. I charge this against him: it is not sufficient for him to say that the matter was not taken up at the conference; if the matter

was not taken up, it was his duty to bring it up. In his Halifax platform he said that if he were put in office he would restore the lands to the people of the western provinces on fair terms. Having made that contract with the people of western Canada, it was his duty to implement it. It is for my right hon. friend, not the provinces, to take the initiative; it is for him to say: You are entitled to these lands; you are free men, and you must have them. It is very easy for my hon. friends to talk; it is not so easy to act. For my part, when we were in office I took a position in this matter which was not popular with my own friends, but I did what I thought I should do for the sake of the country at large, and it is now incumbent upon my right hon. friend to take the initiative in this matter, and to act as bravely as he spoke when he was in opposition.

Hon. W. J. ROCHE (Minister of the Interior): The question of the restoration of the natural resources of the western provinces is one which has engaged the attention of the House on numerous occasions in the past. When the autonomy Bills for the two provinces were discussed in this House; prior to that time, when the autonomy Bills were mooted, and on several occasions since, the matter has engaged the attention of Parliament. I do not know why the hon. member for Medicine Hat (Mr. Buchanan) has brought the matter to the attention of Parliament at the present time, unless it is to endeavour to make some party capital on behalf of his own political friends. I think one may search his speech in vain to find just exactly where he stands on the question of the restoration to the provinces of their natural resources. I followed his remarks quite closely,\* and although he reflected upon the Prime Minister of this country by alleging that he did not keep his word, and tried to fasten upon him the accusation of insincerity, he sat down without letting the House know whether he is in favour of the arrangement which he has been supporting all these years, and which was supported by his party, or whether he is in favour of the policy which was formerly enunciated and is still adhered to by the Prime Minister of this country. We do, however, know where the present leader of the Opposition stands. We have found that the right hon. gentleman can be on all sides of a question at the same time, but with regard to this matter he wishes to impress upon the people of the country, through Parliament, that he stands exactly where he stood at the time the