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Sommario/riassunto	It is usually assumed that the decline of the Liberal party on the Canadian prairies began in 1957, following the electoral triumph of the 'beloved prairie son,' John Diefenbaker, and the Progressive Conservatives. According to Robert Wardhaugh, however, the disintegration of Liberal fortunes in the prairie west began much earlier, during the tumultuous era of William Lyon Mackenzie King. Guiding us through a maze of western issues, from tariffs to freight rates, Wardhaugh analyzes the political management of the prairie west by Canada's longest-serving prime minister. He argues that Mackenzie King courted the prairies as long as western settlement was central to national economic development, but changed his attitude during the

Depression years when the region became a financial burden. King's sympathy for western concerns abated even further, says Wardhaugh, during the years of war and post-war reconstruction, when the emphasis was on industry and, more precisely, the manufacturing concerns of central Canada. The decline of Liberal Party's influence in the west thus paralleled the growing divide between the region and central Canada. This study provides a meeting ground for a number of interlocking themes. In analyzing Mackenzie King's treatment of the prairies, Wardhaugh creates a comprehensive view of the process of western alienation, at the same time clarifying the differing political interests of the three prairie provinces.
