

gether at as early a date as expanding employment opportunities permit.

Of the last sentence I have no criticism at all to offer. It does not take a prodigious mind to conclude quickly that the camps were erected with the intention that they would be closed at the earliest possible date, and that no one hoped for their early closing more than those who erected them. Therefore to this policy the House will take no exception. But the first part of the pronouncement is more dubious in its wisdom:

Transfer of the camps established for the care of single homeless men from the Department of National Defence to the Department of Labour is in process of being effected.

I have no reflection to make on the Minister of Labour, and none at all on the Minister of Defence. But in this connection one has to inquire just what was the purpose of the camps and what is the principle of their operation. It never was the original purpose to provide labour. They are not sustained on a labour basis. If they were, the cost would be such that this country could not stand under it. Labour would have to be paid on a basis of prevailing labour costs. Were that the case, or were the purpose to find work, one could understand a transfer to the Department of Labour. But the feature in mind was the taking care of men under discipline, to preserve, by discipline, all those elements of manhood that were disintegrating while the poor fellows walked our streets; and such seemed to be the work of the Ministry of Defence. The House will await evidence to show that this purpose may be better effected by the Department of Labour.

I was glad to note in the Speech from the Throne a reference to legislation to effect a better co-ordination of provincial and federal finances. I welcome that pronouncement. As far as I have been able to divine the intention of the Administration in this respect, it seems to be defensible and wise. If I apprehend it correctly it is this. Means will be provided under the British North America Act by which the Government of Canada may establish a Loan Council, which will in certain eventualities have control of the issue of securities by provinces, and possibly by municipalities. Provinces may or may not, as they choose, come within the purview of that Loan Council. If they come within its purview they will obtain such advantages as the Loan Council can afford, possibly the advantage of Dominion guarantee of credit, and of lower interest as a consequence; and if they choose to stand outside, that is in the exercise of their undoubted right and they will proceed as they

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

are proceeding to-day. To this principle I can see no objection, and it seems to me it ought to result finally in a more harmonious operation of the whole system of provincial and federal credit, and in the checking of certain tendencies which even in our country—I call the West ours still—have brought about extravagant expenditures and those immense difficulties which follow in their wake. There is something to be hoped for from a movement of this kind, and I certainly promise the Administration all the co-operation I can give, and I am sure that of honourable members on this side of the House, in bringing about this result.

As to the succeeding subject, the modification of our constitutional charter by ourselves instead of by the process we have always followed, I cannot say that I am going to take up any bayonet and fight against it. With equal certainty I cannot say that I can get enthusiastic over it. I do not think it makes a great deal of difference. We can get any amendment we want to our charter at the present time, and we have been able to get that for tens of years. But if it is better suited to the situation in this day to effect any amendment directly rather than through the old process, let us do so. There are those who object. For their opinions I have every regard. But I do not see in this any subject of such profound and great consequence as to challenge the attention of the honourable senator from Lethbridge (Hon. Mr. Buchanan). It seems to me pretty much a matter of playing with constitutional trifles.

We shall receive the legislation of the Administration in the spirit in which—I say it with all appreciation—honourable members opposite received ours in the years that have gone by. In this House we have made an effort, which has been common to both sides, to review carefully and to improve legislation with a single eye to the good of Canada. In that work we had the assistance—the industrious assistance—and the utmost co-operation of the honourable senator who now leads this House (Hon. Mr. Dandurand) and of those associated with him. We owe it to them that we now reciprocate to the full. We owe it to them that we utterly abandon prejudice and deal with legislation on its merits. We owe it to them that we make the committees of this House a medium by which all persons peculiarly and directly interested in and affected by legislation may have their arguments heard and make their wishes known, to the end that our legislative product may be the more acceptable. Such service we have endeavoured to perform and we shall en-