

problems of our country, giving first importance to its big problems? And the biggest of all is unemployment. Is it not Parliament's duty to study and under the direction of the Government to evolve policies to be pursued? And is it not the duty of the various services of government—and surely we have enough—to administer these policies under the direction of Ministers?

If there is something you have to move from immediate political control to have it under the general supervision of the Administration, there is a purpose to be served; but I have never heard in this country in the years past, or under the old Government, that there was any object to be served by moving unemployment out of political control. It has not been corrupted; it has not been reduced to helplessness and uselessness. There has been no bedevilment of our unemployment service. Why should it be removed? The first function of the Administration at this time is to deal with the first problem of Canada, and I humbly suggest that though it may be committed to the policy, as it is called, of establishing this finely adorned commission with all sorts of members, and with advisers standing by, it should not put too many powers into the hands of the commission, or anchor it too far off from the watchful eye of the Administration itself, and especially that it should not place it too far from the Minister of Finance.

I have nothing to say at the moment, and I do not know that we shall have very much to say in this House, with respect to some other features of the Speech from the Throne, which deal with matters not directly under our purview. I refer to the question of the treaty with the United States in respect of tariffs, and to the statement that certain difficulties with Japan in respect of customs and dumping laws have been adjusted. It is not too much to observe, however, that treaties, though in the right direction, though moving toward a reduction of those barriers that impede the trade of nations, must be negotiated very carefully and with a most punctilious consideration of the interest of Canadian producers in all lines, or they may eventuate in more harm than good. I do not say these treaties will; but it does not follow that because they are moving down the right way they are going to end our difficulties. I sometimes fear that the decisions were arrived at too hastily, both in respect of the details of the treaty with the United States and particularly—and this gives me the more concern—in respect of the settlement of the difficulties

Right Hon. Mr. MEIGHEN.

with Japan, for which credit is taken in this Address. I hope my fears will turn out to be groundless. I hope, indeed, that honourable gentlemen who over long years have kept to the pure milk of the word of Liberalism in respect of tariff matters will now feel themselves empowered to give expression to the doctrines which they so long have loved. They cannot complain now that their efforts will be impeded by provincial governments or provincial labour legislation of any kind. There is nothing in the long road ahead, I think, to stop them in the pursuit of their great and lifelong desire.

The honourable senator from Lethbridge (Hon. Mr. Buchanan) has expressed the view that one of the first considerations of this Chamber is to let the goods of other nations in, so that the people of the West may find markets for their grain. I listened about a week ago to an address, very able in point of diction, very beautiful in form, and certainly very earnestly delivered, by a late distinguished member of the House of Commons now defeated. Never since the day of Michael Clark had I heard the doctrine of free trade so powerfully presented. The speaker believed that no industry was worth preserving which could not preserve itself in competition with everybody over the face of the globe. By its ability to preserve itself, and by that alone, had any industry the right to live. He believed there should be no paternalism, no kindly parental eye watching the difficulties of industries in order that the Government might help them to survive. All this he brushed aside with ponderous thunder and apparent logic. But he left out one consideration, a consideration which we do not have to refer to much in Western Canada, but which nevertheless is very practical and vital to this Dominion. His whole fine structure of political economy rested upon one premise, namely, a free market for labour. There can of course be a free market for labour's products if we are prepared to admit a free market for labour itself. I thought that in the presence of great labour organizations of this country, and in the presence of the employers of labour in tens of thousands, it would have been more frank to say that all these things are impossible unless we are prepared to admit, and to print in our legislation, the doctrine of a free market for labour.

I wonder what would happen in Canada if that were to be proclaimed by Government. If it is not the will of Government to proclaim it, then I do not think it is going to be the will of Government to move very far in the direction pointed out by the