

in ten years. When the province can go so far as to grant clear title in ten years, with no encumbrance whatever, not even taxes, surely this federal government can do a little better than it has promised to do for our veterans of this war, as well as the veterans of world war No. 1. The provincial government has not the money the federal government has, nor has it, thanks to this government, the ways of raising money that are open to the federal authority. Not only has Alberta agreed to give the returned men of that province who desire it a half-section of land, free of all taxes and other encumbrances at the end of ten years; it desires to go a little further than that. If the federal government will cooperate a little in the interests of the returned men Alberta is prepared to give each veteran forty acres of land broken and cleared. All the province asks is that the federal government pay half the cost. I do not think that is loose sentiment at all, but something to which these men are entitled. Surely, if Alberta can do that it is not being sentimental. Not at all; it is doing so because it is good business.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I do not wish to interrupt my hon. friend, but has he had an opportunity of reading the order in council tabled this afternoon in regard to provincial crown lands?

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I have not, but am I to understand that the federal government is agreeing with the province of Alberta—

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): The federal government had a conference with officials of the province of Alberta, among others, and as a result of careful consideration an order in council was prepared and tabled in this house this afternoon, dealing with this very question of provincial crown lands.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I am very glad an order in council has been passed, but we have not had a chance to look at it. Would the minister tell us the contents of the order in council?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I am sorry I have not the order in council before me at the moment, but we had a conference with representatives of the western provinces, and, I think, some of the eastern provinces as well. The discussion lasted for two or three days; certain principles were agreed upon, which were submitted to the government, and finally an order in council was drawn up providing for cooperation with

the provincial authorities in order to make it easier to place soldier settlers upon crown land.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): Does the order in council provide for the federal government sharing the cost of clearing and breaking forty acres?

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): No.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I believe the federal government should give that suggestion a great deal of consideration. As I was pointing out, the government of Alberta is not doing this from a sentimental point of view.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): I think my hon. friend will find that this order in council will be of great benefit to settlers in Alberta.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): I hope it will be. Perhaps, as an hon. member suggests, this is a death-bed repentance on the part of the federal government.

Mr. MACKENZIE (Vancouver Centre): No; it is the promise of the dawn.

Mr. JOHNSTON (Bow River): As I was pointing out a moment ago, the government of Alberta is not doing this from any sentimental point of view. I think experience has shown that if the federal government at the end of the last war had granted clear title to every one of the soldier settlers who wanted that land, it would have been dollars ahead, because of the tremendous overhead in administration. Even if they were to grant clear titles to those soldiers who got land under the soldier settlement board, I am quite positive the federal government would, in the long run, be dollars ahead.

The provincial government have gone into this matter carefully and have come to the conclusion that it is cheaper for them as a provincial government to give the soldiers one-half section of land, absolutely free at the end of ten years. It has been cheaper, they consider, to give the soldiers clear title, without one penny owing, than it would be to set up a tremendous administration to carry on the work of administration for years to come. That is not sentimentality; it is good logic and good business.

Surely, if one of the prairie provinces, one of the poorest provinces of the dominion, can be so generous to the soldiers, the federal government could loosen up a bit. There would be no great difficulty in the federal government's financing such a proposition, and