

When such changes have been discussed in the past the suggestion has been that a Constituent Assembly or convention should be given the task of working them out, including the nice questions of what amendments to the constitution in future should require the approval of all provinces, what of a majority and what of ~~the~~ one particular province. Wartime is scarcely the right time for such extended deliberations and, however, desirable far-reaching changes may be deemed by the conference it is unlikely to take the responsibility of initiating them itself or set in motion machinery which would work slowly over a period of years.

For what is involved in a patching up of the B.N.A. act to make possible the attainment of particular objectives the recent precedent ~~of~~ unemployment insurance would provide a precedent. The first unemployment insurance measure was enacted by the federal parliament in ~~1935~~ 1935 and proceeded on the assumption that the dominion could act in the field under its power to impose both direct and indirect taxation. The courts thought differently, however, and held the statute unconstitutional on the ground that it invaded the provincial legislative sphere of "property and civil rights". In 1940 with the consent of all the provinces an amendment was secured to the British North America Act adding "unemployment insurance" to the group of subjects on which the dominion has power to legislate.

Before that consent was given, however, it is to be presumed the provinces were convinced that unemployment insurance was a good thing and that it could be operated to best advantage on a national basis.