

have been years of war. They have permitted of only occasional contacts, and the briefest of contacts, with members of the party, other than immediate colleagues in the Cabinet. These circumstances considered, it is indeed surprising to find, in the numbers here assembled, a gathering no less expressive of the confidence and good-will of the party towards its leader than the gathering of four years ago. It shows how great was the confidence which was built up between us in the years preceding the war, and how firm the faith of all has remained through the trying and testing years of war.

This continuing confidence of the members of the Liberal Party of Canada in my leadership of the party is something for which I am indeed profoundly grateful. I believe I am right when I say that no leader of a political party living today, in any country, has been accorded, over so long a period of time, so continuous an expression of the confidence and regard of his political supporters. That is something I can never forget. It is something that nothing can ever take away. It is something for which I cannot thank you all too warmly. It is a debt of gratitude which, with all my heart, I wish to acknowledge tonight.