

A record of which to be proud

In the years from 1921 to 1946, the last half of that half century, there have been seven general elections. In six out of the seven, the Liberal Party has been returned to office. This has taken place despite the fact that six of those years were years of war. Within the period of war, two of the general elections were won. Moreover, in two general elections of that period, the Liberal Party returned to Parliament the largest number of members any party has ever elected to the House of Commons. As Liberal leader, I have had, in two Parliaments, the largest following given any Prime Minister in the history of politics in Canada.

Mr. Ilsley, with his skill in using figures to demonstrate significant truths, has calculated that, since 1896, the Liberal Party, with two leaders, has lost only two elections; that the Conservative Party, with ten leaders, has lost ten elections. In this count, Mr. Ilsley omits, of course, the elections of 1917 at which time the Government was a coalition of members of both parties. Expressing the results of Mr. Ilsley's calculation in terms of gains instead of losses, the Liberal Party, over the last fifty years, with two leaders, has won ten elections; while the Conservative Party, with ten leaders, has won only two. This is a record of which, indeed, we may all be proud.

Tonight, we are assembled to do honour to one of our number to whom, in very special measure, we are indebted for the Party's record being what it is today.