

members of all political parties regardless of differences that may exist between the principles and policies we respectively advocate.

I can assure you, Mr. Speaker, that no one is more surprised than I am, looking back upon the convention of 1919 to which reference has been made this morning, to find myself still head of the Liberal party. It has been a long road. I was going to say it has been a long period of time, but as I look back the time seems indeed very short. If I asked myself how it has all come about, I would have to re-echo the statement I have just made; it has been the associations, personal and political, that I have been privileged to enjoy during my life. As I think of my home in my early days, I recall that there social service, problems of social well-being and other public questions formed part of the daily conversation of the household. In that way I suppose it was, I became interested in public affairs. Later came the association, which has been referred to by the hon. member for Chambly-Rouville (Mr. Dupuis), with Sir Wilfrid Laurier, the members of his government and the members of the House of Commons of that time; and throughout the twenty-one years since 1919 there has been the association with the most loyal and devoted body of associates that the leader of any political party could ever wish to have. My friend and colleague the right hon. Minister of Justice (Mr. Lapointe) has spoken of that association. Any good fortune I have had in the leadership of the party is due in large measure to him; it is something I owe as well in the greatest possible degree to every colleague with whom I have been associated during the time I have been privileged to be at the head of the party and to have direction of public affairs in parliament.

I do not know that at this moment I should attempt to say more. I believe, however, I can honestly state that in these twenty-one years of responsibility in leadership, I have tried above everything else to keep before me two aims which I believe to lie deep in the hearts of the Canadian people. One is that to which reference has already been made, namely to preserve the unity of our country, to do or to sanction nothing which would tend to destroy that unity; but rather to do everything which lies within one's power to further it. The other has been an aim equally dear, I believe, to the hearts of Canadians generally: it is to maintain, to extend and to defend freedom in its many individual and national aspects. This I have sought to do to the extent of my ability. I have had before me also in my public life one other aim which I hope I have been fortunate enough to carry

[Mr. Mackenzie King.]

out at least in some degree. It has been that no word of mine uttered in political discussion, either in parliament or on the platform, would ever inflict a wound in the breast of any political opponent or indeed injure the feelings of anyone with whom I might be drawn into public controversy.

Once again, Mr. Speaker, to those who have been so kind as to speak as they have this morning, particularly to my hon. friend the acting leader of the opposition (Mr. Stirling) for the words he has spoken on his own behalf and on behalf of the leader of the opposition; to my hon. friend the leader of the Social Credit party (Mr. Blackmore), who also has spoken on behalf of other hon. members opposite; and to the other hon. members and to my colleagues, who have spoken on this side, and to all who have so generously shown their approval of these many expressions of good will, may I say that I am indeed more than deeply grateful. I suppose the greatest of all rewards that can come to anyone in public life is to be worthy of the esteem and regard of one's fellow men. If in the slightest degree I have earned that regard over these twenty-one years I shall feel that I have had more than my full share of reward for such public service as it has been possible for me to render during that time.

#### THE ROYAL ASSENT

A message was delivered by Major A. R. Thompson, Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod, as follows:

Mr. Speaker, the deputy of His Excellency the Governor General desires the immediate attendance of this honourable house in the chamber of the honourable the senate.

Accordingly, Mr. Speaker with the house went up to the Senate chamber.

And having returned,

Mr. SPEAKER informed the house that the deputy of His Excellency the Governor General had been pleased to give in His Majesty's name royal assent to the following bills:

- An act to amend the Salaries Act.
- An act respecting The Ottawa Electric Company and the Ottawa Gas Company.
- An act respecting The Cedars Rapids Manufacturing and Power Company.
- An act to amend the Yukon Act.
- An act to amend the Northwest Territories Act.
- An act respecting The Detroit and Windsor Subway Company.
- An act to amend the Naval Service Act.
- An act to amend the Civil Service Superannuation Act, 1924.
- An act to amend The Department of Munitions and Supply Act.
- An act to incorporate Pool Insurance Company.