

contempt for any man, but if ever I felt like doing so in my life it was on the occasion of this assertion. If these be candidates of the Liberal party, I felt, how is it possible for us, who think differently from them, to march in double harness with them again unless they change their minds? We could not endorse any policy of non-support of our men who were in the war and so there was an election. Now, mark this: The Liberals who left their party were as convinced as those who remained in it that conscription was an unpopular issue. They thought that they would be defeated, but apprehension of defeat did not alter their intention and determination that the war should be fought to a successful issue. So it came about, in an imposing outburst of public enthusiasm, that the Union Government, which was pledged to continue the war, was sustained except in one province. None were more surprised than the Liberals who had run as candidates in support of the Union Government, and I must say that the result was gratifying to them. When a prominent member on the other side made a remark in Ottawa last winter that the Liberals who left their party had done so for their personal aggrandisement I assured him he was wrong. We were elected through the patriotism of the people, in Ontario at any rate; but at the time we ran there was no idea of personal gain at all. We had played the political game before, but on that occasion we claim that we played the game of what was right for Canada without regard to the political party to which we belonged. I therefore give no credit to men like the three of whom I have spoken; they were wrong in their heads as well as in their hearts. They made a bad guess politically. They thought they were going to win and they lost, and I give them no credit for possessing any right principle or anything else to boast of. It was a pure political game with them. As I say, they were of opinion that they would win, but they lost; and it now ill becomes them to throw slurs at those who thought or acted differently from them.

I shall now conclude by saying that while this is not a political party on this side of the House—most of us have voted against the Government repeatedly, although the Government has not been sensitive on that point, knowing that our hearts and our allegiance were generally in the right place—while we are not a party, I do not see why we should not become one. Men of like opinions, men with the same ideals in re-

[Mr. Mowat.]

gard to the future of Canada, men who do not wish to see racial dissension or cleavage in the country, if they can meet on this side for two years and have no serious disagreement as to what is needed for good government, regardless of former party shibboleths, may very well compose a party. While therefore we are not yet a party, if there is any proposal that we should become a party and the leaders can devise a policy consistent with the ideals I have seen on this side, I want to tell you, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal-Unionists are going to join that party. We are assured there will be nothing new which will be inconsistent with anything we were ever told in political meetings on the Liberal side. I ask my hon. friend (Mr. Mackenzie King) now seriously—nay, humourously—did he ever hear political principles of a liberal kind discussed in a Liberal political meeting? No, he did not. Well, neither did I. We always played the party game. We were party men; and what a lot of rot it is to talk about Liberal principles or Conservative principles all the time! We were party men. But sometimes in a crisis we cannot be party men, and if we can find something better to substitute for what exists there is no reason why we should not take it. And we will take it. I, in common with the Liberals on this side, have had pleasure in supporting this Government, and supporting it enthusiastically, even though it be unpopular. During war I do not want to support a Government merely because it is popular. I want to support a Government that does the right thing even if it is going to be unpopular. And what a number of unpopular things this Government has had to do! One thing after another, which would almost strain to breaking point the ordinary man, these men in the Government benches, heedless of party politics, caring not whether their actions might incur the disapproval of their supporters or constituencies, or what effect those actions might have in the event of an election, have day in and day out framed policies and passed measures—Orders in Council, if you will—that were bound to be unpopular, but which were in their belief for the ultimate good of the country. The only thing that saved Canada during the war was the fact that there was a Government that was not afraid to do things that would be unpopular. And I mistake very much the temper and the generous spirit of my fellow-countrymen if they will not ultimately support a body of men such as compose the present