

# MR. PROUDFOOT DENIED A HEAR BY COMMITTEE ON PRIV

**Mr. Nesbitt's Summary of Evidence by Hand-picked Witnesses is Accepted, Calling Maisonville "Slimy" and Proudfoot "Pale-faced."**

**Mr. Proudfoot Defies Attempts at Coercion, Refuses to Submit to Committee and Will Carry Matter to the House—Sees in Absence of Fair Treatment No Other Course.**

Chairman Ferguson continued his high-handed methods at the resumed sittings of the Committee on Privileges and Elections at the Parliament Buildings yesterday. Ere the session had progressed many minutes he came into open and bitter conflict with Mr. Proudfoot. The member for Centre Huron had been served with a subpoena to attend and give evidence of what he knew concerning the charges that he had preferred against the two Cabinet Ministers, but Mr. Proudfoot was too wary to be drawn into what was obviously a trap where he would have been at the mercy of the fighting counsel for the defence, Mr. Wallace Nesbitt. Mr. Proudfoot attended, and as he walked into the room he was followed by the Liberal members, who filed into their places. Their presence, after the withdrawal of Wednesday, was in no sense a retraction of their former position, but was done in order that a minority report might properly be prepared for submission to the House.

Mr. Proudfoot was called to the stand, after Mr. David Fasken, K.C., had briefly testified about a consultation with Mr. Thorne in connection with his award.

#### Mr. Proudfoot Wants to Speak.

As Mr. Proudfoot advanced, the Chairman proceeded to administer the oath. The member for Centre Huron hesitated and explained: "I want to make a statement."

This was something the committee had not reckoned on. The Chairman hesitated, and informed Mr. Proudfoot that he would not be permitted to make an address. "The committee have asked you to come here as a witness."

Mr. Proudfoot—But I want to make a statement.

The Chairman—You have been summoned here to give the facts which you can give to help the committee come to a proper conclusion with reference to the charges you made on the floor of the House, with which we are assembled here to deal. I need not tell you that the committee have conduct of the proceedings and will proceed regularly. (Liberal laughter.) That is the reason I summoned you here and we expect you to give us the benefit of your evidence in the matter. This is not an occasion for an address.

Mr. Proudfoot—I won't make an

address, but I want to make a statement.

#### Defies Chairman.

The Chairman—I expect you to submit to the will of the committee in that respect. I hope you will.

Mr. Proudfoot—No, I want to make a statement.

The Chairman—I expect you to pay proper respect to the Chair and observe the ruling I will have to make if you persist in contravening the rules of order. You understand the responsibility you assume?

Mr. Proudfoot—I have had no opportunity of presenting the charges I started out to prove.

The Chairman—You perfectly understand the responsibility you take.

Mr. T. H. Lennox (North York) here suggested that the Chairman formally ask Mr. Proudfoot to take the oath and submit himself to examination.

"I want no lecture from you, Mr. Chairman, as to my responsibility and what responsibility I am taking."

The Chairman—I do not propose giving you a lecture.

Mr. Proudfoot—That is what you are trying to do.

The Chairman—I simply ask, Do you propose to disobey the summons of this committee and refuse to appear here and give evidence before them? Then that is a matter for the committee to consider and see what further steps they will take under the ordinary procedure of the House to force you to give evidence. If you won't be sworn there is no object in your making a statement. If you refuse to take the position of other witnesses, I cannot allow you to make a statement.

Mr. Proudfoot—I want to give you my reasons now.

#### Proceeds to Read.

Suiting the action to the word, Mr. Proudfoot drew a manuscript from his pocket and began to read from a prepared statement: "Yesterday I withdrew from this committee—"

"Order, order," came from the Conservatives.

"Don't take that down," shouted Mr. Elliott, assistant counsel, to the stenographer.

The Chairman was in a quandary. "Mr. Proudfoot," he started as soon as his voice could be heard, "I ap-

(Continued on Page 2, Col. 1)

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VILEGES