

## HON. MR. PROUDFOOT

## PERSONAL STATEMENT

On the motion to adjourn:

Hon. WM. PROUDFOOT: By leave of the House, I desire to say a few words of a personal nature.

As some of you are aware, I was appointed to this House by the Union Government, and sat on what is known as the Government side of the House. At the late election that Government was defeated, and following its defeat the present Government, pursuant to the terms of The British North America Act, appointed a Speaker for this House. They also, according to custom, went a step further and appointed a leader of what is known as the Government side of this House. The members of this body still following the custom, have changed from one side of the House to the other.

The Senate is to my mind an independent body, and the members should not be trammelled with allegiance to any party inside or outside of the House. I trust the time is not far distant when the result of an election will not mean the shifting of seats from one side to the other by members of this House. In the last election in which I ran I did so as an Independent, being opposed by a Liberal and a U. F. O. During the time I have had the honour of being a member of this House, I gave the late Government an independent support; and I continued that support at the last election. As stated, I stood by the Union or National Liberal and Conservative Government in the late election. Since then its only change was in dropping the word "National" and restoring the old name, the "Liberal Conservative Party." Everyone who has read Canadian history knows that this name was first used in Canada when the coalition Government of 1854 was formed. It was known as the MacNab and Morin Administration, and was composed of six Liberals and four Conservatives. This name was used more or less until the formation of the Union Government; and now that name disappears and the title of 1854 is restored, it is simply a continuation of the Union Government under a different name.

As stated, I gave that Government an independent support. It was defeated. Such being the case, I think it would be an ungracious act on my part at this stage to leave them. If I did so and took a seat with the Liberals, those who were un-

friendly to me in the Liberal ranks might very well say, "He ran to cover at the first opportunity on the Liberal Party securing power."

When I reached Toronto at the end of last week I found that the Toronto Daily Star, under the head of Ottawa news, contained a statement that I had decided at the present session to throw in my lot with the Liberals and to sit with them; the Globe also contained a statement that I had given my allegiance to the Liberal party; but, much as I would appreciate being fully in accord with my old political friends of many years' standing, I am not at present prepared to go that far. I at once wrote the following letter to the Globe:

To the Editor of the Globe:

On my return to Toronto my attention was drawn to a photo of myself (Friday issue), and below it a statement "that I had given my allegiance to the Liberal party, etc." This statement is not correct. I have not given my allegiance to the Liberal party, and have no intention of doing so. In the last election for the Local House I ran as an Independent. I was appointed to the Senate by the Union Government. I gave that government an independent support. I have always felt that the Senate should be an independent body, and intend to continue that attitude.

When the Senate resumes on Tuesday next, I will fully define my position.

I would like you in your Monday issue to correct statement you made in as open a manner as it was published.

W. Proudfoot.

Toronto, Ont.

A similar letter was written to the Star.

The Globe published this letter in its issue of the 13th, but so far as I can learn the Star did not. I do not see that with any degree of consistency or fairness any other course but the one I have taken was open to me.

I am informed that it is the intention of the Liberal-Conservative party at an early date to call a Dominion-wide convention of that party. When that convention meets, if it is determined that the party will go back to its old alignment as the straight Conservative or "Tory" party, I reserve to myself the right to consider my position and the course I shall then take. In the meantime I will pursue the course I mapped out when I detached myself from the Liberal party—that is, an independent one—and in doing so I will treat from that standpoint all measures which come before this House, no matter from what side they come, advocating and supporting what I believe to be in the best interests of our common country.