

HEAD WITHOUT BODY MAY COME IN LEGISLATURE

Premier May Have to Get Civil Servants Bill Through Without U.F.O. Aid

ANOTHER LETTER OUT

Call Goes to U.F.O. Clubs to Oppose Superannuation Bill

If Farmer members of the Legislature submit to the views of the head office of the U.F.O. organization in Toronto, Ontario may witness the Drury Government putting through the superannuation for civil servants measure with Liberal, Conservative and Labor backing.

The call has gone out to the United Farmer clubs of Ontario requesting that they ask their representatives in the Legislature to oppose the bill. It is the second time this session that the U.F.O., through its Secretary, J. J. Morrison, has stepped into Ontario political affairs. The first was on the question of sessional indemnities for members. On that point the Cabinet itself was in accord with the U.F.O. organization, although a majority of the U.F.O. private members were not, because they signed the "round robin" for the increase.

Now the U.F.O. has the daring to oppose a measure brought in by a Farmer Cabinet of its own making. Most Farmer members, not having expressed any views on the bill when it was last discussed in the House, may feel free to oppose the measure at the request of the U.F.O. clubs of their riding. Liberals and Conservatives are already committed to superannuation, and, indeed, received the bill warmly when it was introduced by the Premier. It will be a unique situation in Canadian politics if a Government, forsaken by its elected supporters, should be obliged to depend on the support of an Opposition to get the bill through. Labor will support the bill.

Opposed it Before.

J. M. Webster (West Lambton) took the stand during the first debate on the act which the U.F.O. in its circular letter to the Provincial clubs is taking now. In the House his attitude was the object of criticism. Whether or not he will be reinforced in opposition through the influence of the parent U.F.O. body remains to be seen.

Whether it was the Cabinet action on increased indemnities or something beyond that, the fact remains that many Farmer members are adopting independence of action in the Legislature, even at the cost of Government prestige. Premier Drury last night would say nothing in reply to the Morrison letter. However, it may be taken for granted that the bill will not be withdrawn, nor will there be any change in the principle of the bill.

There is a rumor at the Buildings that there may be a bonus in the indemnity for this session of the Legislature, and that the increased indemnity could then await another session, and leave the members to go back to their homes and consult

their constituents every day for nine or ten months on the question.

Text of Letter.

After quoting clauses from the Superannuation Act, the letter, signed by J. J. Morrison, Secretary of the U.F.O., contains suggestions as follows:

"It appears that there is only one course that we, as an institution, can follow. Our motto says: 'Equal rights for all—special privilege to none.' Superannuation and retiring allowances are class privileges, as we all cannot be civil servants. One of a pair of twins may become a civil servant, and when he reaches the age of sixty-five he will enjoy this pension. The other, an equally good citizen, must, all through his life as a taxpayer, contribute to the fund for the payment of his brother and other civil servants, and when he grows old either go to the poor-house or be kept by his relatives if he has not sufficient to keep himself. Is it wisdom for a permanent class distinction to be created in this country, especially by a U.F.O. Government claiming to be the embodiment of democracy?"

"We have looked up in the public accounts the number of civil servants of sixty-five or thereabouts, together with their present salaries. Out of sixty-two that we found thirty-five are getting more than \$1,800 a year, and twelve more than \$3,000 per year. These are the men whose old age is being provided for in the bill. What farmers enjoying such salaries until they are sixty-five years of age, living as they do, require to be supported by the people? Moreover, when a man is superannuated at \$2,000 a year a vacancy is created which must be filled by a young man at, maybe, \$4,000 per year. Therefore, you are paying \$6,000 a year to keep the position filled. Is not such an act wrong in principle?"

"If you think so, once more we ask you to get after your representative as quickly as possible, remembering that this is your business, and that this means of direction of your sitting member is in the interests of democracy, for which our institution stands."