

MORRISON A RASPUTIN, SAYS LIBERAL MEMBER

R. R. Hall of Parry Sound Wants Premier Drury to Stop Letter-writing Activities of J. J.

Condemning J. J. Morrison, United Farmers of Ontario Secretary, as the "Rasputin" behind the Drury Government, R. R. Hall, Liberal member for Parry Sound, arose in his seat in the Legislature yesterday and demanded that the Government take steps to "suppress the letter-writing activities of that gentleman."

For the last several days, declared the fiery Northerner, "I have been receiving letters asking that I should vote in a certain direction, that I should vote against the Honorable Premier's bill and against the Government. It seems to me a very high-handed proceeding. It seems to me there is something wrong somewhere, and after making inquiries I find that this thing emanates from one man. The key to the whole situation will be found in The Farmer's Sun in the last issue, where we find a letter over the signature of one J. J. Morrison."

Mr. Hall proceeded to read a circular letter which he had received from the U.F.O. Secretary, which concluded: "We hope and pray you will do your best to defeat the bill," referring to Bill 181, regarding superannuation allowances for civil servants.

Will Think for Himself.

"I have no desire to defeat that bill," he continued. "I have spoken in favor of it, and I am not going to retract. But there is something behind it that is important to the Government. It is a matter of government in or government out.

Here are men who say the present Government is their Government, that they elected the gentlemen to the positions which they now fill, and here we have a man behind the throne, the 'Rasputin' of the Farmers' Union, a man who assumes the role of dictator, a man who is not satisfied to dictate to his own class, but who undertakes to dictate to those who are not of his class, and also to dictate to those who are farmers and who are not in the pay of somebody else to obtain a livelihood. I farm for my living, and I am not going to permit J. J. Morrison to think for me.

"The bearing of this conduct on the Government is a very serious matter for the Province at large, as well as for the Government. If the people responsible for this thing would think for one moment what it means these letters would never have been issued. It means this bill, which they hope, and actually pray, I will have common sense enough to oppose, and to vote against, means the defeat of the Government, if there are enough of us here to pronounce on the bill in that direction. It would be tantamount to a vote of want of confidence, and no self-respecting Government could remain in office. It would have to go back to the country, and the country would be put to the turmoil and expense of a new election.

"I think," he concluded, "it is up to the Government to do something to suppress this kind of thing. It is worse than newspaper talk. I hope somebody will teach this man a little common sense, if he has not got it."

OPTIONAL TAX REFORM BILL IS APPROVED BY COMMITTEE

Legislation Giving Municipalities the Right to Reduce Assessment of Improvements is Sure of a Majority

The Municipal Committee of the Legislature yesterday passed the act allowing local option in taxation. It gives the municipalities the right to wipe out assessments on improvements by a graded scale of reductions provided for in a by-law to be submitted to the ratepayers.

The bill was not adopted unanimously by the committee, and there will be a further fight when it reaches the House again. Both Hon. Geo. S. Henry and H. H. Dewart, Liberal Leader, were opposed. On a vote of the members of the committee, eighteen voted in its favor and nine against.

The bill, which has already been explained, gives to municipalities the opportunity to make a change,

by making provision for a petition to the Municipal Council by the ratepayers, and then the submission of a by-law. The by-law must state the percentage of assessment to be taken off. It cannot be less than 10 per cent, or over 25 per cent, at one time.

Those in favor of the bill argued that it would encourage people to improve property. The opponents said that it would prove a failure, as it had done in Western Canada. All the Conservatives in the committee, with Mr. Dewart, opposed the bill. All in favor were farmers, except C. F. Swayze (Labor) of Niagara Falls. Several Liberals and a few Conservatives support the bill, which, with the solid support of Farmers and Labor, is assured of a majority in the House.