

DRURY NETTLED AS U.F.O. MAN TALKS "HERESY"

Government Does Very Little
for Farmers, Says
Casselman

QUESTIONS HYDRO POLICY

Declaring Hon. D. Carmichael's proposed amendment to the Power Distribution Act to be worthless, so far as actual benefits to the farmers of eastern Ontario were concerned, W. H. Casselman, U.F.O. member for Dundas, in the Legislature yesterday urged the Government to act somewhat along the line of a suggestion by Hon. G. H. Ferguson, to bonus private power companies on their rural transmission line construction.

Not Worth "Snap of Fingers."

Mr. Casselman told the Premier and the House that, in his opinion, all that the Government had done on behalf of the farmers of the Province did not amount to "a snap of the fingers." By legislation that would give eastern Ontario farmers, and other farmers outside Hydro zones, the opportunity of securing cheap hydro power, the Government, he said, had a grand opportunity to accomplish something tangible.

The Premier and his follower discussed the thing with more or less vigor, and finally, when Hon. Mr. Ferguson interrupted to approve of the principle for which the Dundas member was pressing, Premier Drury advised Mr. Ferguson to "attend to his own flock." Mr. Ferguson replied that he always did, or tried to, and the Premier commented that he was always ready, nevertheless, to pet Government members who seemingly were at momentary odds with their party.

That statement brought Mr. Casselman to his feet with a denial that he was influenced in any way by Mr. Ferguson, or, for that matter, by anybody else. "I will say, however," he declared, "that the honorable member for Grenville is the hardest working member in the House."

Premier Drury asked what was the remedy for high-priced power conditions such as Mr. Casselman had cited in his argument, and Mr. Casselman replied: "More efficient management and construction."

Premier Drury—Yes; and we are trying to find out what is wrong with the construction and the cost.

Mr. Casselman—And you appointed a Royal Commission.

Premier Drury—But we did not appoint my honorable friend on that.

Mr. Ferguson—Do you mean you promised him appointment to the Hydro Commission and then did not appoint him. That is the fact, is it not?

The Premier stated that, in his opinion, the principle of bonusing private power companies with public funds would be a decidedly bad one to adopt. The Government, he said, had considered the matter of further means of aiding rural power distribution, but had adopted no definite policy.

Mr. Casselman thereupon interjected the opinion that the Government ought to have a policy by now.

after considering it for two sessions.

After considerable discussion of Mr. Carmichael's measure, it was permitted to stand over to see if means could not be devised for safeguarding public moneys should they be advanced to private companies with a view to aiding rural power distribution.

The measure was finally given committee approval at night, after further lengthy discussion, and further protest by Mr. Casselman over what he considered to be the failure of the Government to carry out its obligations to the rural people of the Province, to benefit them by Hydro distribution.

Charles Swayze, Labor member for Niagara Falls, came forward in the middle of the discussion with a suggestion that the 50 per cent. primary line bonus be given to associations to be formed by the farmers, which, he thought, would obviate the danger expressed by the Premier in voting public moneys to private concerns.

Mr. Casselman pleaded strongly for the farmers in outlying sections, contrasting the display of wealth in the cities and the swarms of motor cars, with the farmers with their horse-drawn vehicles, and those having motor cars, he said, laid up because of inability to pay for their upkeep.

Hon. D. Carmichael, however, gave the promise that next session a measure would be brought in which would give associations the bonus privileges, and he intimated that it would be made retroactive to cover the case of those inaugurating power distribution systems now.

Premier Drury, however, firmly opposed any extension of bonus to private interests, in spite of Mr. Casselman's declaration that he was "making a mountain out of a mole hill."

BILL FOR LIQUOR IS \$6,625,000

Since Dec. 1, 1919, 753,819
Gallons Have Been Bought
for Dispensaries

HYDRO GETS \$62,813,788

Since December 1, 1919, the Provincial Government has purchased 753,819 gallons of liquor, at a total cost of \$6,625,000, for the Government dispensaries. In giving this information in the Legislature yesterday, in answer to H. P. Hill's question, Attorney-General Raney said that there was \$360,000 worth of liquor on hand on December 1, 1919.

Among the other questions answered by Ministers, was one by Charles McCrea, Sudbury, asking how much had been advanced to the Hydro Commission since November 13, 1919, for development purposes. Hon. D. Carmichael gave the figure as \$62,813,788.75.

In reply to another of Mr. McCrea's questions, Hon. Beniah Bowman stated that Edward Backus had made no payments during the last fiscal year on account of ground rent and fire protection charges in respect to the English River and Lake of the Woods timber limits.

VOTED AGAINST COOPER BILL.

Two Liberals, J. C. Ramsden, Southwest Toronto, and J. W. Curry, Southeast Toronto, voted against the Cooper Bill when it was defeated in Committee of the Whole Legislature on Tuesday. The Cooper Bill is the measure which directed that the Ontario Railway Board be empowered to raise and lower fares on electric railways, regardless of franchises and agreements in effect.