

Cualladh Oibre Éireann in Cómhaire na Ceáir  
Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress

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# THIRTIETH ANNUAL REPORT

INCLUDING THE

Report of the Proceedings of the Special Congress held  
in Dublin on March 14th and 15th, 1924

THE

Report of the National Executive for 1923-1924

AND THE

Report of the Proceedings of the Thirtieth Annual Meeting  
held in Cork on August 4th to 7th, 1924.

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PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE  
32 LOWER ABBEY STREET, DUBLIN.

1925

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# Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

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National Executive, 1924-1925.

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ELECTED AUGUST, 1924.

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**Chairman :**

WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).

**Vice-Chairman :**

DENIS CULLEN (Irish Bakers', Confectioners' and Allied Workers' Union).

**Treasurer :**

ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).

**Secretary :**

THOMAS JOHNSON, T.D. (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks).

**Committee :**

RICHARD S. ANTHONY (Cork and District Workers' Council).

THOMAS CASSIDY (Typographical Association).

LUKE J. DUFFY (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks).

SENATOR THOMAS FARREN (Dublin Workers' Council).

SENATOR THOMAS FORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).

OWEN HYNES (Ancient Guild of Incorporated Brick and Stone Layers).

THOMAS IRWIN (Dublin Workers' Council).

LAURENCE KEEGAN (Amalgamated Engineering Union, Inchicore Branch).

THOMAS KENNEDY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).

M. J. McGOWAN (Postoffice Workers' Union).

THOMAS J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (Irish National Teachers' Organisation).

MISS E. O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union).

SENATOR JOHN T. O'FARRELL (Railway Clerks' Association).



# The Labour Party in the Oireachtas.

## DAIL EIREANN.

John Butler	...	...	...	Waterford
Patrick Clancy	...	...	...	Limerick
Hugh Colahan	...	...	...	Kildare
Richard Corish	...	...	...	Wexford
William Davin	...	...	...	Leix-Offaly
Edmond Doyle	...	...	...	Carlow-Kilkenny
James Everett	...	...	...	Wicklow
David Hall	...	...	...	Meath
Patrick Hogan	...	...	...	Clare
Thomas Johnson	...	...	...	Co. Dublin
Daniel Morrissey	...	...	...	Tipperary
Timothy Murphy	...	...	...	West Cork
Thomas Nagle	...	...	...	North Cork
Thomas O'Connell	...	...	...	Galway

## SEANAD EIREANN.

				Term of Office expires in
William Cummins	...	...	...	1925
Michael Duffy	...	...	...	1931
Thomas Farren	...	...	...	1931
Thomas Foran	...	...	...	1925
John T. O'Farrell	...	...	...	1925

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

SPECIAL CONGRESS

HELD IN THE

MANSION HOUSE, DUBLIN

ON

FRIDAY and SATURDAY, MARCH 14th and 15th, 1924.

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### *First Day—Friday, March 14th.*

MR. L. J. DUFFY, Chairman of the National Executive, took the Chair at 3.15 p.m., and reminded the delegates that the Congress had been summoned in accordance with the decision of the Annual Congress in August last, which had deferred several matters on its agenda for consideration by a Special Congress.

### APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS.

J. BROPHY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) and T. RYAN (I.T.G.W. Union, Waterford) were nominated as tellers, and, there being no other nominations, were declared elected.

### APPOINTMENT OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The following were nominated for election as Standing Orders Committee :—

- D. MORRISSEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).
- W. DAVIN (Railway Clerks' Association).
- M. MCCARTHY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union).
- J. CARR (Limerick Trades Council).
- D. CAMPBELL (Belfast Trades Council).
- T. WARD (National Union of Railwaymen, Belfast).
- P. BIRMINGHAM (Plumbers, Dublin).

There being only five seats to fill, a vote was taken by show of hands, with the result that CAMPBELL (58 votes), DAVIN (51 votes), MCCARTHY (32 votes), BIRMINGHAM (30 votes), and MORRISSEY (27 votes), were declared elected.



## ORDER OF BUSINESS.

THOMAS JOHNSON (Secretary) asked Congress to consider a suggestion from a sub-committee of the National Executive that the Resolutions on the Agenda should be taken first, and the amendments to the Constitution later. This course would give the Standing Orders Committee time to go through the proposals and amendments and make recommendations as to procedure. This course would save time.

The suggestion was put from the Chair and agreed to.

### CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT—DEATH OF THOMAS MacPARTLIN.

THE CHAIRMAN said that he had no intention of making any formal opening speech, but felt he ought to refer to the death, which had occurred since last Congress, of one of their oldest comrades, Tom MacPartlin. They knew the untiring work which MacPartlin had devoted to the Labour Movement in Dublin and in the rest of the country. He had been Chairman of their Congress in 1917, and had been one of those who helped to give their movement a broader outlook. He had left behind him a large family, whose loss was shared by all his old comrades. The Chairman asked the delegates, as a mark of their deep sympathy with the relatives and their respect for the memory of their dead comrade, to rise in their places for a moment.

The delegates rose and stood in silence for a few moments.

### THE FISCAL SYSTEM.

The following resolution, submitted by the NATIONAL EXECUTIVE, was moved by MR. L. J. DUFFY, the Chairman :—

That any change in the fiscal system involving import duties, subsidies or bounties, should be opposed which does not provide for transmitting the benefits derived from such duties, subsidies or bounties to the workers engaged in the industries, and at the same time protect the consuming public from robbery by profit-seeking combines, trusts or monopolies.

MR. DUFFY said—"The resolution which stands in the name of the National Executive urges that if there is any departure from the existing fiscal arrangements it shall be ensured to the workingclass that their position as wage-earners shall be improved; that any

advantages which Industry will derive from the departure shall be transmitted directly to those engaged in the Industry, and that the public who consume the protected commodity shall be safeguarded against exploitation by the Monopolists that orthodox protection produces." There, in a nutshell, is the position the resolution proposes we should assume. It is drafted, not with the intention that we should give our benediction to the demand for protective tariffs, but rather to demonstrate that as a class the workers view the demand with suspicion and claim that protection shall not be in the nature of a perpetual licence for incompetence or a new avenue for extracting a tribute from the wage-earners. We cannot ignore the outcry for a new fiscal policy. It has substantial backing amongst manufacturers on the one hand and amongst the ranks of honest enthusiasts on the other. We are familiar with the argument that our power to protect our native industries by means of a taxation levied off imports of a competitive kind is the acid test of the extent of our independence. Herein lies the danger. If, in order to demonstrate the measure of our national independence, we determine without serious examination to depart from a policy with which we are at least familiar the results during the next ten years may prove for thousands of workers that we have embarked on a costly experiment which we cannot so easily recall. We are not justified in making an experiment of this magnitude without having first assured ourselves that it contains the greater part of the merits we claim for it. This experiment is in its very essence one of those that cannot be unmade in a month or in a twelvemonth. Protective tariffs are imposed usually by the annual Finance Act, and even though at the end of twelve months we could delete them from the next Finance Act the Legislature would be slow to do it unless after an election, and even then, after machinery had been set up and really before it had become effective, any Government would be reluctant to scrap it. One may safely say that if we are to depart now from the existing fiscal policy, no matter how harmful or injudicious the departure may prove, we are not likely to escape from its consequences for a period of from five to ten years. It is, therefore, worth while to examine briefly the case for and against protective tariffs.

*The resolution before you must not in any sense be regarded as a gesture in favour of protective tariffs. It recognises that a demand on these lines is being canvassed in certain quarters and registers the opinion that in the event of its success the results (if any) to accrue must be transferred to the workers. But it must not be assumed for a moment that any beneficial results will accrue from the imposition of a tariff. The case for protection, as generally understood, rests on the assumption that it is an essential factor in the development of native industries and that, in fact, it is the prime and only factor. The logical deduction to be derived from this argument is this: that if a tariff is imposed on the imported article so as to bring*



its selling price up to the level at which this country can sell its own manufactured article, our industries will automatically spring into prominence and we will cease importing. Yet that case will not bear a moment's examination, and in the end we may find we can pay too high for this much-boasted protection.

### Protection of Life.

We hear much about the protection of our industries, but far too little about the protection of our human life. Previous to 1914 the Irish manufacturer enjoyed, at the expense of the Irish worker, a wide margin of protection against foreign competition. Still Irish industry did not show any evidence of expansion during all those years when the absence of Trade Union organisation, with the inevitable sweated wage that followed in its wake, gave it undoubted protection against its competitors. On the contrary, it languished and the old mills and factories of an earlier generation, dismantled by the roadside, confronted us everywhere. Even to-day wages in many cases are lower in this country than in other countries from which we import manufactured articles. Does not this difference in wages constitute an advantage equivalent to a protective tariff? On the other hand, we find industries paying good wages are not debarred by that fact from competing with their foreign rivals. Wages in the Printing Trades are relatively good in this country. In fact we are frequently reminded that they are prohibitive. Yet we can pick up cheaply-finished books in this country and in England bearing the name of a famous London publishing-house and the imprint of a Dublin printing-house, showing that this Dublin firm of printers is not only able to compete with the foreigner here at home, but is also able to invade the foreigners' own markets and beat them, and that it does not need sweated labour to do it. An Irish firm of steel constructors told the Fiscal Commission it was able to take orders in England in competition with English firms, and that it had actually done so. A firm like this needs no tariff to live.

One naturally hesitates in face of evidence like this—and these are not isolated instances—to enthusiastically back the Protectionist demand. It will be asked, of course: "How can we develop our own industries unless in their present backward state we protect them against unfair foreign competition?" The plea underlying that question seems plausible, but we must remember that *well over 80 per cent. of the Irish people are depending for a living on occupations that cannot receive any protection from a general tariff*, and in the event of a tariff being imposed it is not the foreigner but these people and the other twenty per cent. who will pay the amount of the impost. Some few years ago, when all England was passionately anti-German, the British Government imposed a duty of



26 per cent. on all goods imported from Germany. That was a sop to the British industrialist, and was an assurance to the British worker and the ex-soldier that the workmanship of the hated German would never again swamp the markets of England. Last week, however, the British Labour Government announced that in the interest of the British working-class consumer the duty of 26 per cent. on German goods, which was in reality paid by the British people, would be dropped, and in order to ease the fall a duty of five per cent. would be imposed instead.

### Dearer Bread.

Put a tariff on imported flour and what do you find? The Irish worker pays more for his bread, of course. Indeed, it has been calculated that it *would be cheaper to pay full wages to every flour milling worker in Ireland for absolute idleness than to add one farthing to the selling price of a two-pound loaf.* What is true in regard to flour is equally true in regard to boots, hardware and farm implements. Add a tariff duty to any article and you forthwith increase its selling price. In other words, unless you alter the social relations of the classes you lower the real wages of the worker in exact proportion to the tariff you impose on the things he needs and consumes. The joiner may favour a tariff on joinery coming into the country, but he cannot, at the same time that he obtains it for himself, deny it to the bootmaker nor to the worker in the flour mills. He may be able to keep up the standard of his money wage by hindering competition, but he will not, at the same time, prevent the depreciation of that money wage in terms of real wages if the other fellow is also able to hinder competition in his particular domain.

If native industries are a national asset, as of course they are, and if the people desire their development, ways and means for developing and extending their usefulness will suggest themselves to the people of the country without giving legal sanction to the formation of a dangerous monopoly for them. What we need most is not a tariff on foreign goods so much as a spirit of pride in our ability to do for ourselves what other people have done for themselves. It is rather a paradox that people who have for centuries learned to despise law and law makers should, in matters of this kind, stand still until they obtain the sanction of law for every simple act of self-preservation. Had we more confidence in ourselves and more pride in our own efforts, this question need never arise; but partly because of prejudice and partly because of incompetence the country is a happy hunting ground for every exploiter who cares to pay attention to the possibilities of enriching himself at our expense. Let me give a few examples.

## Why Irish Industries Languish.

Recently a certain public department invited a number of manufacturers to send in tenders for making certain garments from cloth they had in stock. A Dublin factory offered to do the work at the rate of 9/- per dozen articles; a foreign firm offered to do the work at the rate of 13/6 per dozen articles and got the contract. Another department invited quotations for the supply of 150 overalls. An Irish firm of manufacturers quoted as their price 6/6 each. The contract, however, was given to a retail firm who quoted 13/3 each for overalls made in Glasgow. But don't blame the public departments. They are in step with the spirit of the times. An Irish manufacturing firm recently sent its representative to a Dublin retail drapery house, where he offered to supply 100 dozens of a certain article at the rate of 45/- per dozen, but the firm in question could not give him an order, although next day they ordered 100 dozens of the same articles from a Glasgow manufacturer at 57/- a dozen. Had the order been given to the Irish firm work would be provided for ten Irish girls for a week and the public would get the article they wanted at 4/11. By giving it to the Glasgow firm work was provided for ten Scottish girls for a week and the public paid 6/9 for the article they wanted. While the public are willing to encourage and condone this prejudice on the part of distributors, not to mention their incompetence, the Irish industries will languish, the workers will remain unemployed, and *no tariff will correct the abuse.*

## Agriculture.

When we come to consider tariffs we must keep the position of agriculture firmly before our minds. Agriculture is and must for generations remain the chief source of our national wealth. How is it going to be affected by a Protectionist policy? Will a tariff on imported manufactured goods give the farmer a better price for his potatoes or cabbages, for his milk or for his fat cattle? If it does, under existing conditions, it will mean a tax will be imposed on our already over-priced food. If it does not, *it will ruin the farmer and the agricultural worker* by placing on him an impost he is unable to pass on to his customers. If the agriculturist must, because of an import duty, pay more for his farm implements and machinery, for his artificial manure and chemicals, for his clothing and his bread, and is unable to get a better return for the produce of his land, he will go to the wall definitely and irretrievably, and the farm labourer will go down with him. If he can pass on the burden and does so, the full weight of the tax will fall on the town worker.



## Causes of Unemployment.

Perhaps if we look into the matter more closely we may find upon examination that without tariffs, which are rather likely to hit the worker in the long run, there are other means of promoting industry in Ireland, and that they are more likely to be effective than a tariff can ever be. Indeed we may find that a tariff is, in the end, no remedy at all. Let us ask ourselves why our industries are in their present neglected state and why they are, in so many instances, outclassed by their foreign competitors. The present state of industry in Ireland is, in my judgment, attributable to three main causes:—

- (1) The industries are largely run on antiquated lines and lack expert and intelligent direction.
- (2) The purchasing public in the main do not realise any responsibility towards the home industry; the public in the main are the creatures so far as this is concerned of that selfishness begotten of Anglicisation and look upon the home article as bearing a stigma of inferiority and the imported article as carrying with it the hallmark of superiority.
- (3) The great bulk of Irish industries lack the capital necessary for their economic development.

Little argument is necessary to enforce the first proposition. It is quite apparent to everybody who has ever attempted to compare our factories and workshops with those of other countries that their methods, their machinery and their management are all antiquated. We spoke of flour milling. It is a common experience to find what is known as a 2½, a 5, or in the better-class mills a 12 sack plant. Nobody will suggest that a plant of such poor capacity could be worked economically in competition with a 50 sack plant, which is common enough in Liverpool and other cross-Channel flour mills. The majority of our woollen mills are only one stage removed from the days of the old hand-loom weavers. Factories and workshops are in the main unclean, badly heated, badly ventilated, and badly arranged for work. In such conditions it is futile to look for such an output, even granted the same machinery, as can be obtained in clean, well-arranged, well-ventilated, up-to-date factories.

## The Lure of Importations.

A moment's reflection will satisfy every honest mind. The second proposition which I have advanced is absolutely sound. The announcement in the daily paper that a business concern has imported something has an irresistible appeal to the popular imagination to patronise that business, whether it is a draper's shop, a bazaar, or a



music hall. "Our buyers have now returned from the London, Paris and Leipzig centres of fashion with new and up-to-date ranges of the season's modes" is set out in the newspaper announcement of an enterprising firm, and next day young and old rush headlong to get their share of the imported novelties. Our tastes are coloured by the pictorial design and sensational letterpress of the foreign newspapers which, with their insurance against railway and tramway accidents, have penetrated into almost every Irish household. What successful business firm would think of announcing to the public that their agents or buyers had returned from Dripsey with an assortment of Irish tweeds or from Galway with a full range of Corrib hosiery. Firms do not advertise on these lines because they understand public tastes.

The third proposition I have advanced raises a different problem. The majority of the Irish manufacturing firms are owned by family interests and their capital is not capable of great expansion. It is even questionable if they were floated afresh that they could get much new capital. The amount of money available in this country for investment is decidedly limited. The deposits in the Irish banks for 1923 amount to £201,656,000, which represents a contraction of £8,120,000 from the year before. It will be noticed this contraction corresponds very accurately with so much of the National Loan as was drawn from purely Irish sources. We are confidently assured that another loan running into anything up to £20,000,000 will be floated in the near future. If the Government continues to offer a rate of interest approximating to  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for money advanced on the security of the State, there is little prospect of those millions in the Irish banks going into industries unless we are to experience a new conception of social policy not now in sight. Do we desire foreign capital to come in here for the development of our industries? Money has no country and the English financier or American financier will invest his money as cheerfully in a promising Irish security as he would in India or Mexico—on terms. These terms would degrade the industrial and impoverish the agricultural workers. We ought, however, before we embark on an uncharted sea, take stock of the whole position, and take care that we are not forging an instrument of degradation for ourselves. A protective tariff may help to make the owners of finance capital more powerful and more wealthy, but it may incidentally depress the conditions of the vast majority of the people to even a lower state than they have yet touched. If, therefore, protection is to be applied let us have protection for the masses of the people, and not a licence for the owners of capital to enrich themselves at the expense of the community.

We can do much if we so desire to create an atmosphere in favour of Irish industries by organising on co-operative lines such industries as we have and pooling their machinery and capital value.

If a public opinion is formed on these lines we need not fear competition, but rather welcome it as a check on our own indolence and inefficiency."

MR. M. SOMERVILLE (National Executive and Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) formally seconded the resolution.

The following amendment, submitted by the IRISH UNION OF DISTRIBUTIVE WORKERS AND CLERKS, was moved by MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary):—

To delete all after "that" on the first line and substitute therefor:—

"Subject to provision being made (1) for transmitting the benefit which may be derived from a protective tariff to the workers engaged in the Industries affected, and (2) for preventing the growth of profit-seeking monopolies, Trusts, or Combines, within Saorstát Éireann, this Congress declares in favour of encouraging Home Industries by means of a protective tariff."

MR. JOHNSON said—"The form of this amendment was drawn up with a view to making the issue as clear as possible, while recognising that both the motion and the amendment place in the forefront the necessity for safeguarding the public against exploitation and the workers in any industry against being robbed in the course of their employment, and the robbery being assisted by the use of protective tariffs. I have not been able to prepare a statement, but I want to take a line which, in many respects, is directly opposite to that which the Chairman has put before you. I could not help but think when he was moving this resolution that I was listening to the Minister for Finance or the Minister for Agriculture. The speeches they have made are almost a replica, in sentiment at any rate, of the speech of the Chairman. It is well, I think, that we should begin by getting the right perspective of the existing fiscal arrangements which the Chairman speaks of, and concerning which he advises caution before we depart from them. It is well we should remember that the existing fiscal arrangements do provide for tariffs in some industries and have provided for protection in some industries. The importance of this motion at this date is that some of us may be called upon to say definitely "Yea" or "No," whether we should agree to proposals to extend existing protective duties, or whether we should oppose the continuance of existing tariffs and the imposition of any new tariffs. If the motion is carried, I, for one, will take it as an instruction that I must oppose the continuance of the differentiation between complete motor cars and motor chassis, the rate of duty being different for the complete car and the machinery part of it, thus protecting in effect the body-builders. There would have to be opposition to the present arrangements regarding the tobacco industry. Now, I contend that it is not desirable that we should oppose the existing fiscal arrangements so



far as these two industries are concerned. I am contending, on the contrary, that we should give our support to the further application of those practices or principles to other industries where a case can be made, that we should endeavour to assist the development of industries which can, with a reasonable amount of care on the part of those interested, be expected to survive in this country.

We have, I think, to bear very carefully in our minds the essential difference in the position of Ireland and of England in this matter, and I am surprised that the Chairman should bring forward the position of England and put it as an example to Ireland in view of the well-known and easily-understood difference in the economic conditions of the two countries. England depends on its manufactures and its export trade for its very life. The weaver in Manchester, the machinist in Birmingham or on the Clyde, is actually the ploughman who is feeding the people of England. The position of England, which is dependent actually upon its trade in exports of manufactured articles and coal for its food supply, is entirely different from that of a country like Ireland, which grows more than sufficient food for its population, and exports practically no manufactured goods. Some Beer, a little Cloth, and some Biscuits—and there you have the export trade of Ireland outside Agriculture.

I ask Congress to think of the matter not only as members of trade unions who are looking after their trade interests, important though they are. We must think of the country and of our conception of the country's future. The proposal of the Chairman is the proposal of the "Free Trader" generally. It is based on the assumption that there should be a free export and import of commodities, that those commodities which can be produced most efficiently and cheaply and bring the greatest measure of profit to the producers, should be produced and exchanged for other commodities which other countries can produce more cheaply, and that the result would be the maximum amount of consumable wealth enjoyable by the people. If men were automata, if men did not require to live and eat to live, there might be something to be said for the argument. There might be something to be said for it if we had arrived at the stage where the country was simply a family under a single control, so that the total import of commodities was freely enjoyed by all, and consequently the greater the total of imported goods that could be brought into the country, the greater the amount of consumable wealth for each person that would be available. But that is not the case. We are still in a state of competition, with the materials of life owned by a section, and the masses of the people dependent upon wage-earning. We have not got family unity, with equality of distribution of the commodities that are available within the country.



## The Country's Future.

What is our conception of the future of the country? My opinion is that, so far as this country is concerned, the Chairman's proposal, and all the arguments of those who are against any change in what was, until recently, a Free Trade system, leads to the development of pastoral life and grazing, to our relying only on the cattle, upon the productions of dairy farmers, and the exporting of that class of commodity which the country is most fitted for naturally, and which produces the greatest profit for the owner. Store Cattle, Grass-fed Beef—these will be encouraged and developed because they are the most profitable and easily produced, and the things for which Ireland is probably best fitted. What shall we do with these commodities? We shall export them in exchange for manufactured articles. But what will the men and women do? They will follow the manufactures. It follows, as a matter of course from this proposal of the Chairman's, that the people will go to the place where the manufactures can be produced more easily and cheaply, and cattle, which require little energy to prepare for the market in profitable form, will be retained. The result will be human depopulation, while the cattle population will be increased. I don't think that is desirable, and I don't think we should encourage it.

It may be said, and with some force, that it is not essential that the population should decline and cattle should increase, that you may have a development of agriculture alongside a development of industry. Theoretically yes. If the faults which the Chairman put before you—the unwillingness to support home industry, and so on—did not exist, then there would be more force in the argument. But I put it to you that the position of the Irish industrialists to-day is very much worse relatively than it was ten years ago, and the possibilities of the survival of our manufacturers and industrialists are much less than they were ten years ago. The war period brought a great acceleration in the improvement of productive power in British factories; there has been a great advance in the quantity and quality and adaptability of their machinery, and consequently a great increase in their capacity for cheap mass-production. There has been no such development concurrently in Ireland, and whatever handicap there was in Ireland before the war is greater to-day. Bearing that in mind, what is going to happen if our market for manufactured goods continues to be free? If agriculture improves and develops, if the price of cattle rises, the cattle-owner will be in a position to buy more Leeds-made clothing, or Birmingham small-parts, and other British-manufactured articles. You have now competitive industries in this country, trying to maintain the market they have, which cannot under present circumstances produce as easily and cheaply as elsewhere. The British

manufacturer comes into a perfectly free market with his advantage in selling capacity, in long industrial and commercial traditions, and even in the presentation of his wares. The result will be an intensified import of British-manufactured goods. Even if Irish manufacturers suddenly developed all the virtues, they would still be terribly handicapped.

Do we think it desirable that we should retain in this country, say, the woodworking, clothing, tobacco and bottle-making industries? Do we think it good enough that £9,000,000 worth of ready-made clothing and boots should come into the country yearly, while such machinery of our own as does exist is lying idle or nearly so, and the human ability to work this machinery is also lying idle?

### **Consumer and Producer.**

I am going to accept the proposition that protective tariffs may raise prices, though I believe that effect is magnified. I am prepared to face that. Even though that is so, it is better for the workers of the country that we should have industries moving and developing, so that we should be in a position to purchase that proportion of the products which the workers as a rule live upon. Do not mistake the position. We are not dealing with a single entity when we speak of consumer and producer. Clothing, for example, is consumed by all classes, not only by the workers. But the people who live upon fixed incomes, and upon rents and profits, are the people who get the greatest advantage from the cheapness of imports. If that cheapness of imports first of all deprives the worker of the opportunity to work and earn a good wage, and thereby prevents him from taking advantage of the opportunity to purchase cheaply, the advantage is with the receivers of rent, interest and profit, and against us.

I am going to make a couple of quotations. I am not saying, "Here are the Law and the Prophets, and we must not depart from them." But I do think it is worth placing before you what was in the mind of one whom we have all honoured as a man who thought deeply, no matter what else we might have believed. In 1910 James Connolly wrote an article in the "Harp," introducing a New Labour Policy for Ireland, and in the portion of that article which dealt with trade union organisation on industrial lines, he said:—

"One other question we propose to drop here as a seed in the minds of the toilers of Ireland, to germinate and fructify until the time comes to harvest it. It is this: We have often heard our fellow-workers in the ranks of organised Labour in Ireland complain about City Councils, Poor Law Guardians, Rural and Urban Councils, Catholic and Protestant Churches, Railroads, Dock and Harbour Boards, and other public bodies, as well as private capitalists, importing into Ireland articles which could be produced as well in Ireland, and the production of which on Irish soil would



keep at home many thousands who are now compelled to flee to the moral abyss of American or British cities. Now, suppose you had a national organisation of Irish workers—a Workers' Union of Ireland—controlling all the building and transport trades, as well as the others, and suppose the Executive of this Union were issuing an order to its members to refuse to handle transport, or work beside anyone engaged in handling or transporting such imported articles, and suppose the toilers of Ireland responded to such a call—as the farmers of Ireland had responded to similar calls in the Land League days—how long do you suppose such import would continue?

"Some Socialists will accuse us of being Chauvinistic. We are not. But we believe that the toilers of each country should control the industries of their country, and they cannot do so if these industries have their location for manufacturing purposes in another country. Therefore, after long and mature deliberation upon the matter in all respects, we affirm it as our belief that the Working-class of Ireland should prevent, by united action, the conquest of the Irish market by any capitalist or merchant whose factories or workshops are not manned by members of their organisation, by all foreign manufacturers, and all Irish employers of scab or blackleg labour."

That was written in 1909, and published in January, 1910, when the only possibility of controlling the imports or exports of commodities was through Trade Union interference. It was put forward as a possibility for the future if the working-class was sufficiently organised to be able to do so. It could only be done then by trade union action and strikes. Is it not equally desirable now, when it could be done without the necessity for strikes and holding up? If we can bring the same thing into effect by the use of the Legislature, ought we not to do it?

Here is a recent quotation. Again I am not quoting this because it is the law on the matter, but as an illustration of a point of view, and this time it comes from Russia. A controversy had been going on in that country between two sections for mastery. This is from Rykov, who has since been appointed as successor to Lenin. Rykov said—

"If Russia were to barter her raw materials for manufactured goods from abroad, she would become a Colony. Such a course would destroy her industry and weaken her proletariat, and along with it the Communist Party, as well as the Soviet power, which is based on the strength of the proletariat. The only way out of the present crisis, he said, was to import the means of production and not manufactured goods, to import raw materials and machinery which would enable Soviet Russia to develop her own industry, to have a prosperous working-class and a well-to-do peasantry."

You have then two views, from the West and the East of Europe, and they both pronounce in the same way. What is the end sought for in industry? It is not industry as industry, as an end of political or economic policy, but as a means to another end. It is to feed, clothe, house and educate, and provide with opportunities for cultural development as many people as possible within this country, and incidentally to provide as great a variety of experience within the



country as can be provided. That cannot be provided by relying on agriculture. To get variety of experience we must have a variety of means of livelihood, we must have a variety of industrial experience; and that involves the development of industries either independent of or accessory to agriculture. My opinion is that the chances of survival, not to speak of development, of these industries subsidiary to agriculture, or independent of it, are growing less and less unless we take steps to prevent it.

### **Industrialists and Traders.**

We may have, as we have, ideas that there are other methods to be taken to prevent this decay, this death of industries. But I am putting it to you, that before any new method is likely to be accepted in this country, the industries at present existing will die out unless we insist that they are kept alive. I join in the criticism that many of the industries, most of them perhaps, have been badly managed, disorganised and hardly fit for survival. Thinking not so much in terms of profit-making as in terms of the lives of men and women who depend on industry for a livelihood, even if industry is unfit to survive in the market, it might still be fit to survive as a means of keeping in being the Irish people.

The Chairman referred, quite rightly, to the inefficiency of manufacturers and, more than that, to the denationalising influence of the distributive trades, to the desire that exists to press upon customers, often at a disadvantage to the customers, imported commodities in preference to home-made goods. How are we going to counter that? You have tried for a long time attempts at voluntary protection, but you have not succeeded. I bluntly say that we have a duty, and that is to try to prevent the individual consumer following his natural bent. We all desire to get the most for the least when purchasing, but if that desire is going to mean killing industry and depriving people of a means of livelihood, I say that some barrier must be put against the natural desire for cheapness. The easiest method in present circumstances is to impose a tariff upon imports, upon imports of such goods as can be produced in this country with reasonable care and efficiency.

Then we will have a duty to see—and I make it a condition of support of tariffs—that the benefits are not going to be derived only by the manufacturers. It is a corollary of any policy of the kind, that the trade unions will be maintained in their position, and strengthened and more rigidly organised than before, so as to ensure that the benefits, which I am presuming will arise, will be shared by the workers in industries, and that the consumer will also be protected against exorbitant charges behind the barrier of tariffs. I assume that this is possible, given a well-organised working-class, in an alert community, able to exercise pressure in the legislature.

All that is necessary. Much of the working-class objection to tariffs in Free Trade countries is due to the fact that they are badly organised, and not able to protect themselves. In well-organised communities we find that the working-class movement favours the retention of tariffs. Not wholly so—there are variations. But ask the workers in Australia. They will say: "We are able to maintain our position because we are able to impose tariffs and see that the benefits are well distributed."

### **Tariffs and the Price of Bread.**

There is another aspect of the question of tariffs which I want to put before you, and again it is the problem in full. A tax on flour raises the price of bread? Suppose on examination we accept the principle that tariffs are desirable, and after examination it is put forward that, for the sake of ensuring the survival of the milling industry in Ireland, there should be a tariff on flour, and suppose it is proved that the saving of the industry would mean a rise in the cost of bread. A 10 per cent. tax on imported flour might possibly mean a rise of  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. in the 4lb. loaf. It would have some protective effect. It would mean an increase in the output of Irish mills, and I am assuming that the full burden is to be borne by the consumer to the extent that the flour consumed was an Irish product, from wheat milled in Ireland. There would be a very great increase in the wage-earning power of the workers in the industry, and a great increase in the provision of feeding-stuffs for agriculture. Actually there would be an increase in the total wealth produced in Ireland, but to the extent to which imported flour still came in and was taxed at 10 per cent.—to that extent you would be able to reduce your tariff upon foodstuffs that are not produced in Ireland—upon tea and sugar. Is there any great loss to the consumer in such a proposal? Sugar is as universal an article of food as bread, so that the cost to the consuming public need not be great.

I have quoted two or three times the position regarding manufactured clothing. It seems to me that there is more than a merely economic effect to be considered when we learn that a total of eight or nine million pounds worth of clothing and boots—£2,300,000 worth of boots alone—come into the Saorstat. (These are estimates, but they have been very carefully compiled. The Government has not found its way to provide statistics, so we have to get them for ourselves. They may not be quite correct, and I do not want to overstate the estimate, but eight or nine million is not very far astray.) Considering the position of this industry, which might employ numbers of men and of women here, it is a line I am convinced ought to be taken advantage of by the country; we ought to produce home-manufactured clothing, and not to rely entirely on imported clothing, cloth or designs.



We are told—the Chairman tells us, professors of economics tell us, and it is common knowledge—that to compete, mass production and a big market are required to produce efficiently and cheaply. Because we have not that large scale production in Ireland, and no home market sufficient to absorb the produce of large factories, we are going to be obliged to accept the position of being blotted out as industrialists, unless we can establish large-scale industries and mass production which will do more than supply the home market and can capture the foreign market. Do the delegates think that in the year 1924 there is a reasonable prospect of large-scale industries being established within a period of five years, during which five years the life or death of Irish industries will be decided? The chances of the survival of the present industries in free competition are small, but the chances of establishing new industries on a large scale are absolutely *nil*, in view of the fact, admitted by the Chairman, that there is a lack of capital behind Irish industries. That fact alone suffices for me to back up the case.

### **Safeguarding the Workers.**

I have been trying to make it clear that we ought to assist well-managed, well-conducted, honestly-conducted, industries to survive, but at the same time we ought to impose on these industries certain obligations. These obligations are to maintain trade union standards and provide reasonable accommodation and generally to conform to decent conditions. I have not been able to find any report of the success or non-success of the proposal which was put forward some years ago in Australia, but I think it, or some modification of it, would be practicable and would be quite satisfactory. Take, for instance, the Printing Industry, which is protected to some extent, because it is naturally supplying the home market. Suppose you impose an import tax of 10 per cent. on the value of foreign-printed matter imported, and at the same time impose an excise duty of 10 per cent. on the home-production of printed matter. Then you require certain conditions as to employment, and so on, to be satisfied, and on proof that these conditions have been complied with, the excise tax is remitted, and the advantage of the tariff to the industry is retained. The printing trade is, perhaps, not a good example, but it will serve as an illustration.

I have come to the conclusion, after a great deal of thought on this matter, that the national life requires that there should be a variety of occupations in this country for the people, that in the present state of development politically and industrially that variety cannot be found or provided without some assistance being given to industry, and that the easiest and most effective way at the present time for giving assistance and protection would be by a tariff. I am, therefore, moving the amendment.

The amendment was formally seconded by MR. J. W. KELLY (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks).

MR. J. CARR (Limerick Trades' Council) said the general opinion of the Labour Movement in Limerick was that Industry in Ireland ought to be protected by tariffs. The worker of Limerick found to-day that he had neither work nor wages under the so-called Free Trade, and any change would be a change for the better. Really they never had Free Trade in Ireland. They would find a ton of raw material coming into the country and costing more than a ton of manufactured articles. There should be a tax on the finished article coming into the country rather than on the raw material. The difference in freights on raw materials and manufactured articles amounted to a tax, and if freights could be altered in favour of the raw materials that would help the country even without a tariff. He believed that trade had been depressed intentionally with the object of cutting down the standard of life and reducing the people's wages.

MR. J. BERMINGHAM (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) said that the part of the resolution which had specially caught his eye was the phrase, "subsidies or bounties to the workers in the industry." That was an admirable phrase to use in framing the resolution. But the framing of a resolution was one thing, and carrying it into effect another thing. One part of the resolution declared for protective duties, and the other part nullified it. Neither the mover of the motion nor the mover of the resolution had his mind made up, and they could not expect Congress to make up its mind. This was a deeper, greater and more intricate question than should be decided upon by a handful of delegates, and not by a full Congress. They were told of the blessings of protection, but if they took France and Germany, where to-day were the mark and the franc? The people there were suffering turmoil and starvation; they were worse off there than here. He was not opposed to any system which would be for the country's good, but the question could not be decided on either the resolution or the amendment. This matter must be thought out even outside the Congress. It was going to affect every man and every woman, trade unionist or not; it went beyond the Trade Union Movement. It was a very easy matter to try to persuade a Capitalistic Government, and to say that the benefit should be handed over to the workers, but they could not prevent them taking a shilling off the Old Age Pensions. He thought that neither the amendment nor the resolution met the question at all, and that Congress should refer the matter back to their constituents to take full account and consider whether they would support the policy or not.

MR. J. SHEEHAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Limerick) thought that this question of protective tariffs had been fully debated amongst the unemployed and their wives for at least



twelve months, and everybody knew that at the present time in the country there was nothing to prevent unemployment but protective tariffs. It was a big thing to allow £140,000 to leave the country every month while their own tanneries were closed down. He believed that workers were not content to have ready-made clothing sent into the country while the Irish workers walked the streets, but wanted raw materials brought in.

MR. J. RENNIE (Operative House and Ship Painters' Society, Newry) asked if he would be in order in seconding Mr. Bermingham's proposal to defer the matter.

The CHAIRMAN said he understood Mr. Bermingham was merely making a suggestion, and in any case he could not accept a further amendment at that stage.

MR. J. TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Union, Dublin) unhesitatingly supported Mr. Johnson's statements. But what he did not like about the amendment was the reservations, and what he did not like about Mr. Johnson's speech was that he did not give sufficient information as to how he proposed to get the reservations carried into effect. He would heartily support the amendment provided he could see how it could be carried into effect, and he hoped for further discussion on that. As between Free Trade and Protection they as workers had no guarantee that they would receive any of the benefits accruing from Free Trade, and some had the idea that Protection would mean that at least they would have a little more of the benefits than they got at present. It appeared to him that if that £9,000,000 spent on ready-made clothing and boots was spent in this country, a good many other trades would reap the advantages of the £9,000,000. Mr. Bermingham's suggestion that Protection was the reason for the present position of the franc and the mark carried no weight. They knew that the present position of the mark had nothing to do with either Free Trade or Protection. The American dollar could be quoted in opposition.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) hoped Congress would not pass the amendment. The result would be to nail the Protectionist banner to their mast. He congratulated those who had made up their minds on this question, but the danger was that they might change their minds just as quickly. In their desire to do a patriotic duty there was just a chance they might go too fast and achieve quite the opposite object. There was talk of dumping. In fact, there was a lot of confusion between "dumping" and "competition." "Dumping" meant putting goods on the market at less than the cost of production. There was another form of competition caused by depreciated currencies. The Safeguarding of Industries Act would serve to protect any country from dumping of that kind. It would enable the Minister for Industry and Commerce to prevent dumping of goods made outside at less than the cost of production and a cost at which they could

not be put on the market in this country. Every manufacturer ousted by competition said it was due to dumping, but there should be no confusion between the terms "dumping" and "competition."

It was very little use quoting other countries unless there was a material analogy in all respects. Different countries could be cited on both sides. They should not pledge themselves generally to one policy or the other, but should be very careful to consider all the facts. In evidence given before the Fiscal Enquiry Committee, they found paper manufacturers demanding the imposition of an import tax on foreign paper to save the industry while the Printers and Allied Trades protested against such a duty because it would go a long way towards ruining their trades in this country. The flour-millers wanted a protective tariff on flour, but the bakers and biscuit manufacturers protested that it would cause a dearer loaf and dearer biscuits. Irish barley growers demanded a tariff on imported barley, but distillers and brewers opposed, as it would cause dearer beer and spirits. The furniture manufacturers wanted a duty of 33½ per cent. on imported furniture and an export duty on timber, while the timber producers wanted an import duty on timber. From that it was quite obvious that they could not have protection for one industry without helping to destroy another. It was the same with sheep-skins and leather. Witnesses at the Fiscal Enquiry Committee admitted that a duty on imported boots would make boots dearer for many years. If the whole of the Irish boot-manufacturing firms were working at full capacity they could only manufacture one pair of boots for every fifteen required. It would take considerable time to meet the home demand even by working at express rate. Overtime would increase the cost of production, and they would have to pay overtime rates. The result would be they would have to pay higher for boots and shoes.

They would have to pay more all the time. The farmer, too, would have to pay more for all that he bought. They were told that prices would go down after a while, but although it was easy to put prices up they knew it was a different thing to get them down. What some manufacturers wanted was really protection for inefficiency. They used to have a very definite protection before the war in the form of low wages and still their industries were not flourishing.

It was necessary to get at the real cause of the decay of Irish industries. They had no right to protect inefficiency, and these industries could not claim protection on the ground that they were infant industries. On that point the Report of the Fiscal Enquiry Committee was clear. It said :—

"In some cases, at least, the precise point can be indicated from which their debility began. In the tanning and boot-making industries, the failure at a critical period to equip themselves with the most modern appliances marks the arrest of their growth. In the tobacco



industry, the failure to foresee the importance which the consumption of cigarettes would have upon the development of their trade left the Irish manufacturers behind in the race for securing the Irish market. When cigarettes from their competitors were being brought into every Irish town they had not set up the plant necessary for their manufacture in any quantity. The taste for other than Irish cigarettes was formed, and Irish manufacturers awoke too late to the double task of securing the home market and altering the home taste. Again, in the clay pipe making industry the witnesses stated that the clay for the manufacture is imported from the South of England, and the existing supplies of native clay have ceased to be worked; even the imported clay is brought by a roundabout and needlessly expensive route. It is plain that such industries can more fairly be described as debilitated than as infantile, and, whatever may be the value of the arguments in favour of their protection, they cannot be based upon the considerations that apply in the case of industries whose life is beginning, and whose history is yet to come."

They had to consider the effect of Protection on agriculture. In pre-truce days a boycott had been imposed on imported machinery. The Irish manufacturers agreed that they would not take advantage of the boycott by putting up prices, but actually the prices of agricultural machinery went up by 75 per cent. The result was that the boycott had to be removed. What had they to offer the agricultural community, who were the majority of the people? They would have to pay more for everything. It was argued that the farmers would be repaid by the general prosperity of the country. But that would not apply to exports. The farmers would still have to compete against foreign competition in this country. The result would be a demand for a tariff on imported food-stuffs. Then up would go the cost of living, and everybody would be worse off than before.

What advantage had they to offer the transport and distributive trades from Protection? The amendment admitted the effect of tariffs in raising prices, for it spoke of "the benefit which may be derived from a protective tariff." But if prices rose, purchasing power would be diverted from the consumption of other commodities.

Mr. Johnson had quoted James Connolly. Connolly had also advocated sympathetic strikes, but that had been tried in 1913 and since, and Connolly himself and the Labour Movement realised that such strikes could be used only with reserve. Sinn Fein had promised many things—for example railway nationalisation—which they now repudiated. The successor of Lenin had been quoted. But Bolshevik policy had not been sufficiently successful to warrant them in taking his line. It would be a mistake to try by panic legislation, which would inevitably influence all their future, to meet a position which was abnormal, and from which every country was suffering. The condition of civil war in the country had prevented them from settling down to normal affairs, the condition of the country did not

make for industrial development. Ireland had been exposed to fierce competition at a critical period, and capital had not been invested in industry because of the situation of the country. The road to success and keeping people in Ireland to live under happier conditions could be devised, but the remedy was not to be found in nailing the Protectionist banner to their mast. He asked Congress not to pass the resolution. He had studied the arguments for and against, and still could not be quite sure whether absolute Free Trade or Protection would be good for Ireland. They could not have their minds sufficiently made up yet to be able to take definite steps, and he asked them to exercise restraint. The resolution had been framed so as to provoke discussion, and it included safeguards, but they did not know yet how those safeguards could be enforced. The amendment tried to rush them into taking a definite step which would bind and cramp their policy for years to come. He thought it would be a mistake for them to adopt either one policy or the other yet, and appealed to them to reject both the amendment and the resolution, as neither really met the case.

MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin) said he came into the room with his mind made up as a Free Trader, and heard nothing to alter his view. All the delegate from Limerick had to justify protection was that it would be good for Limerick. He held that Congress was not justified in assuming that what was good for Limerick would be good for all Ireland and the workers of Ireland. The amendment declared in favour of Protection, if the tariffs imposed were going to be used for the benefit of the workers. In that city, and it was the primary constituency in the country, a candidate stood for election and his only policy was Protection, but he did not get enough votes to save his £100 deposit. That candidate was a Protectionist only as far as his own industry would be protected. Probably he would not be in favour of a tariff on boots, etc., outside his own industry, and that opinion prevailed amongst all Protectionists at the moment. It was fairly safe in many cases to judge a policy by the people who were expounding it. Personally he would not like the Labour Movement to be asked to keep company with Protectionists. He knew the Protectionists of the city and what were known as "Industrial Developers," and he knew that in all their lives they never developed anything but their banking accounts. Then they talk to the workers about their alleged sympathies with Irish industries. It was only bluff. What the speaker was always interested in was seeing that men engaged in any occupation should get a living wage, but these people did not worry about that, as was proved in 1913-14. Now the same people were Protectionists. The position was that the Labour Movement and the National Executive were divided on the question. He, therefore, would appeal to Congress not to commit itself, but to defer the matter, as suggested by Mr. Bermingham. The matter



could wait, and he thought Congress would be badly advised to vote for either the amendment or the resolution.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) supported the amendment. She thought it was a mistake to say that this was a new thing. It had been debated by the unemployed and their wives recently, and generally by the workers of Ireland for twenty years. Connolly wrote of it in 1910, and Arthur Griffith ten years before that. She had been listening to discussion of it all her life, and had heard nothing to change her views. The chief reason of the utter worthlessness of the evidence given to the Fiscal Enquiry Committee was that each set of people who came before it wanted protection of its own particular interest. But what she wanted was to get some method of control of industry, so that the workers should have a full and good wage all the year round. That might be secured by a protective tariff, or a subsidy, or some form of control. A good deal would depend on control of export of agricultural produce. Their point of view should be that, rather than one of protection for particular interests. It was argued that the matter was complicated and difficult, and ought therefore to be deferred. But that would not do. They were not dealing in a panicky way with a new situation. Unemployment was not abnormal, but normal; so were low wages, emigration and poor food. She believed that all who thought really patriotically were in favour of Protection. They should not be afraid to tackle it merely because of the difficulties. She herself could not see how the reservations were to be applied, but believed they had sufficient intelligence and driving force to invent a way. The political weakness of Labour would not matter; the Trade Unions could do as Connolly suggested. There was no difference between "dumping" and what Mr. O'Farrell called "honest competition." Goods produced under sweated conditions and child labour were being imported. Their own factories were being closed down before their eyes—the North Kerry Manufacturing Co. and Milroy's confectionery works and Governey's factory were all closed down. If the workers lost their wages they could pay nothing, but if they had wages they would be able to pay any increased costs.

MR. CORMAC BREATHNACH (Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Dublin) said he could not discern any fundamental difference between the resolution and the amendment; the conditions were the same in both. The issue could not be disposed of in five or six lines of a resolution. A distinction ought to be made between food-stuffs, and perhaps wearing apparel, and machinery. They did not produce machinery. Would Mr. Johnson be prepared to put a tariff on that? On the other hand, they did produce certain food-stuffs, and some of these—for example, bacon—they exported, while at the same time they had tons of American bacon coming in. He would put a stop to that. He would be a Free Trader as regards

tea and sugar; but—on the grounds of health alone, regardless of anything else—he would be a Protectionist as regards wheat and flour. He could not possibly vote for a resolution which made one clean sweep of these commodities, and would have to oppose the amendment and the resolution as well.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) opposed both the resolution and the amendment. Both spoke of safeguards for the workers, but could Mr. Johnson give a single instance where the introduction of a tariff was accompanied by measures in the interest of the workers?

The discussion had been markedly different from those of several years ago, when Protectionists had claimed that they would be able both to raise revenue and "keep the foreigner out," though clearly they could not do both. They could not tax the foreigner; they could only tax his goods, and the consumer would have to pay the whole cost of the goods, including the taxes. Consequently they had to ask themselves whether the promised increase of employment in home manufactures would be compensation for the extra cost to the consumer. Would the taking in of extra workers absorb all the unemployed? The Protection agitation was a boss's agitation. Incidentally Protection *might* benefit the worker, but *assuredly* it would raise prices. It was idle to think of getting safeguards for the workers when not half of those whom Congress represented voted Labour. They were asked to give artificial support to industries, but the Report of the Fiscal Enquiry was most destructive of the claims of industries to be deserving of support. They had to remember that they produced some goods which they must export—they could not drink all the stout made in Dublin—and in consequence they must import goods in payment. America had often been quoted to show the advantages of Protection, but three or four years ago the United States had from two to five million workers unemployed. They got out of that difficulty by paying better wages—

MR. JOHNSON—"Hear, hear. That is our case."

MR. CAMPBELL—"That is *my* case." Let them increase wages by 50 per cent., and if it was proved next year that there had been no improvement in industry, then they would be prepared to consider Protection.

MR. J. MCCOOKE (Railway Clerks' Association, Belfast) said one fact was unchallengeable, that in no country and at no time had Protection benefited the workers. The progress of Germany before the war had not been brought about by Protection, but by the scientific organisation of industries. The same was true of Denmark. They had heard about the £9,000,000 worth of boots and clothing imported into this country, but there was a credit item opposite that, for Ireland was one of the largest suppliers of the wants of Great Britain. It had been claimed that Protection would



help Limerick, but it would certainly not help them in Belfast. Congress should not support either the resolution or the amendment, for both of them could be construed as declaring in favour of Protection. The qualifications savoured too much of "Don't nail his ears to the pump." It would be dangerous in any way to give the employers or the public to understand that with certain qualifications they would support a policy which had been disastrous in every country where it was tried.

MR. THOMAS FORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) could not favour either the resolution or the amendment. He believed they should not commit themselves to Protection until they controlled at least 51 per cent. of the Legislature. If they committed themselves to Protection, the administration of it was going to be in the hands of a Government which had shown that it had no consideration for the interests of the workers. Protection then must be a curse instead of a blessing. When the workers realised the importance of putting men of their own class into the Legislature, then, and not till then, they ought to have Protection. No one in the country wanted to see the decay of the existing industries, and the clearing out of the young people of the country to other countries, but they wanted the people here under conditions favourable to the development of the men and women, as well as the development of industries. Protection itself had not been a failure in any country; it was the people who administered it who had failed. He thought they ought to defer consideration of the matter.

MR. E. O'CARROLL (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) said he wished to give notice of a further amendment. He was absolutely opposed to the amendment and to the resolution because neither declared in favour of Free Trade. Labour stood for the survival of the fittest, and Free Trade meant the survival of the fittest. They could not protect one industry and not protect another. Even a tariff did not necessarily keep out foreign goods. The Board of Trade returns showed that the import of goods affected by the Safeguarding of Industries Act actually increased after that Act had been applied. What form of protection would Miss Moloney impose? Was it a flat rate for all? What was to be the rate, how was it to be imposed, and how was it going to operate? He was willing to change his mind if he could be convinced that Protection was going to give employment to the unemployed, get decent wages and secure a better social standard. America had been quoted, but at a normal time and under normal conditions America was not better off than Ireland or England so far as unemployment was concerned. He would like to give notice of a further amendment declaring that Free Trade was the policy of Irish Labour.

It being six o'clock Congress adjourned.

## REPORT FROM STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

### Attendance at Congress.

During the day the Standing Orders Committee reported that the credentials of delegates had been examined and found in order. The total number of delegates present was 90, representing 29 Unions and 7 Trades' Councils, with an aggregate membership of 263,034.

(The reports of the Standing Orders Committee on other matters relating to procedure are not printed, but are indicated by the form of the report).

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### *Second Day—Saturday, March 15th.*

*In accordance with the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee adopted on the previous day, the discussion of Fiscal Policy was suspended, and Congress proceeded to consider the other items on the Agenda. But, for convenience, the report of the resumed discussion on Fiscal Policy is printed here.*

MR. W. DAVIN, T.D. (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) said he could not share the fears of those who were opposed to Protection. The existing system had been framed to suit the needs, not of the Irish people, but of the British, who had used this country to feed themselves. They had been told of the importance of their exports, but their most dangerous export was the best part of their population. A postponement of a decision on the issue would result in the absolute wiping out of their few remaining industries. As a result of the Truce and the lifting of the Boycott, travellers from Belfast and England had rushed into this country. (*Protests and laughter, in which Mr. Davin joined, and explained that for their present purpose, Belfast was as foreign as England, for, to his regret, the Fiscal Policy of the Six Counties was outside their influence*). Their demand for freedom, if it meant anything, was a demand for freedom to control their own fiscal policy, and having got that they should use it to the fullest advantage at the present critical period. He thought the arguments about France and Germany were, frankly, very wide of the mark! Germany had so built up her industries by Protection that she was able to find employment for all her people. The failure of the Labour Party in the Dáil to prevent the reduction in the Old Age Pensions was due to the failure of the members of Trade Unions to appreciate to the full their political powers. It was only through the Parliament they could give effect to their views on this question. He thought they ought to use the Parliament to protect their industries. Even a limited form of Protection would give them power to bargain



with England. They ought to experiment with a few industries, and if it was found that Protection helped them to get on their feet they could extend it more widely. He believed that one industry—furniture-making—had made a good case for Protection. They imported £2,000,000 worth of furniture every year. Protection in that case would not affect the cost of living so far as the necessities of life were concerned, and it would give time and encouragement for capital to be invested, to get new machinery installed, and to develop the industry. Only in such cases, and only by way of experiment, was he in favour of Protection. If he thought it would injure the main body of the workers, he would take a different view. He supported the amendment.

MR. J. MCGARRY (Trades' Council, Bray) thought the question should be referred back for further consideration and brought up again at the Annual Congress in August. They had been debating Protection *versus* Free Trade, but both the motion and the amendment seemed to favour Protection conditionally. How were they to make sure that those conditions would be enforced? The body he represented had not discussed the matter, and he thought they would all gain if further consideration were deferred for a few months.

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical Workers' Union, Dublin) stressed the fact that in Ireland, as in all countries under the capitalist system, industry was organised by individuals for their own profit. Should they hold themselves responsible for the success or non-success of capitalist industries which they did not control at all? If Protection were applied and led to surplus production, where could that be disposed of, the world market being already supplied? These big economic questions were not to be solved by such little measures. If they had control of industry, then they would be able to protect their own industries, still leaving room for imports, but at present they had nothing worth protecting. They should concentrate on thorough organisation, on getting into power through the Governmental machinery, co-operative societies, and so on, and not let themselves be used to bolster up the demands of people who did not care a hang about them, and who did not consult them about the running of their industries. Neither the resolution nor the amendment offered any hope to the workers as such.

MISS O'CONNOR (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) thought that the opposition to Protection was largely selfish. Her Union wanted Protection to give employment. Probably if people were patriotic enough to support their own industries, tariffs would be unnecessary, but they had to take facts as they were, and they knew that factories were closing down for lack of support. She hoped that mass production would never prevail in Ireland.

MR. J. COLLINS (Furnishing Trades' Association, Dublin) said that the furniture trade was being wiped out, not by fair competi-

tion, but by imports of non-Union goods from England. Their industries were small and few, and they could not carry on because of importations from across the Channel. Recently the employers in his trade had called for a reduction of wages: the Government had rejected a claim for Protection, and the employers therefore said that wages must come down. The result was that there was one firm with only two men working in it, all the rest having been sacked. The duty on spirits which had come into operation had led to the manufacture of spirit in Dublin, but the price was 5/- per gallon, as compared with 2/- in England. The difference in the cost of varnish as a result of the duty was so much that a suite of furniture could be imported ready-polished from England at from 25/- to £3 less than it could be made in Dublin. What they wanted was a tax, not on the raw material, but on the manufactured article. The position was so bad that one firm which, during the European War, had been able to do considerable trade in the English market, could not now hold its own even in the Irish market. The Union had accepted reductions of wages to try to keep firms going, but they could not now get work owing to the imports.

MR. H. T. WHITLEY (Typographical Association, Belfast) felt that the last three speakers had very successfully argued against Protection, while Mr. Johnson's speech was the same as Mr. Duffy's given backwards. The resolution and the amendment differed only by a transposition of words. His own view was that Protection was not going to give them what they wanted—a living wage and a stabilisation of that wage. If they were confined to two or three factories for their furniture supplies, would they be able to get the furniture they wanted? He suggested as a remedy for the importation of non-Union-made furniture the starting of a Co-operative Society to enable them to buy Union-made furniture. Cheap ready-made clothing was only necessary because of low wages, but the effect of a tariff on clothing would be to ask those who had nothing to pay more. So with cigarettes: it was the man who smoked who had to pay the tax. Taxing goods was no use to the workers. If they could get good wages settled and stabilised, all the other things would come right. He thought it would be wise to defer the question until August. Once a tariff was applied they could not tell how far it would go, and he was not convinced that the Free State Government would legislate in the interests of the workers. Referring to Mr. Davin's reference to Belfast, he said that the politicians were trying to trade on divisions among the workers of Ireland, but there was no division in the Trade Unions and there was not going to be.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin), moved that the question be put, but the Chairman declined to accept the motion at that stage.



MR. T. MURPHY (Brushmakers' Society, Dublin) said that in his trade the shops were filled with imported goods that could be made in Dublin. The position was the same in Belfast. In Dublin there were 150 trained girls who had been unable to get work for 18 months. The loaf at 5d. was no use if they had not a penny to buy it, whereas if they had Protection they might be able to afford 7d. for it. It was only those who owned industries who benefited by Free Trade. In his industry there were 300 people clamouring for help. They had stabilised wages, but even if they worked for nothing they could not compete against the goods dumped from low-exchange countries. One firm had sacked all the girls in its employment and turned the work-room into a store-room for imported goods: in another case where there had been 160 girls working there were only six. He was afraid tariffs were being opposed by well-fed young men in good jobs who had never felt the pinch. If tariffs meant only that a few classes of goods would be made at home, that would mean more employment and greater prosperity: a little business would lead to more business, and so to a general development even of transport services. They ought to submit to a moderate sacrifice now in order to lay the foundations of economic regeneration later. Germany had built itself up by tariffs between 1871 and 1914. It was absurd to say that America was worse off than they were: why then should their people emigrate there, as his own six children had done? Brush-making, box-making, jam-making and other industries were all going, and they could not defer a decision until August, when people would be starving meantime.

SENATOR CUMMINS (I.N.T.O., Co. Kildare) said some of the speakers seemed to regard the possibility of industrial revival as quite hopeless. Certainly it would be quite hopeless if the strongest weapon secured to them by the Treaty, the control of their own fiscal policy, were not to be used because they thought they could never become industrially competent. The Irish industrial tradition had been killed, not by inefficiency or lethargy of manufacturers or incompetence of workers, but by deliberately hostile legislation. Nobody could be content with the present position. Were they simply to watch and wait for something to turn up? Or were they to agree to Protection limited in point of time and degree? The Labour Party should urge the adoption of Protection. If it failed to achieve their purpose they would have to be content, but he believed that if used in a practical way it would not fail. The Congress should give their members in the Oireachtas a mandate in favour of Protection.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (I.T.G.W.U.) moved that the question be now put.

MR. T. JOHNSON (Secretary) opposed the motion. He said that the Congress had been called almost solely to discuss the matter,

and those who would have to take decisions on the matter in the Oireachtas must know where the organisation stood.

On a division, the motion that the question be now put was defeated by 38 votes to 23.

MR. J. HICKEY (I.T.G.W.U., Cork) said that they were in Trade Unions to protect their wages, but they could not get wages if they could not get work. They were being deprived of work because foreign goods made of sweated labour were being dumped into their country. He had seen goods in Newcastle West made by girl labour in Germany, but with the merchant's name printed on the box in Irish. The question was being discussed every day by unemployed everywhere. He supported the demand for Protection.

MR. P. O'REILLY (I.T.G.W.U., Limerick) feared that the discussion had not removed their divisions. Protection might help some, but it might injure others—for example, dockers on cross-Channel boats. They ought to give ample opportunity for discussion of the matter throughout the country.

MISS BENNETT (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said that the discussion was ignoring an important point—how were the workers to be protected against exploitation if the manufacturers got Protection? Protection would mean a transfer of unemployment from one trade to another. In the United States, what had improved employment recently was not Protection, but the cessation of reductions in wages by the employers. Congress should not decide without more consideration of the matter, particularly as regards safeguards for the workers. Industry could be controlled and developed without tariffs, and they would not be justified in accepting Protection unless they were sure of securing safeguards.

MR. W. CARPENTER (Irish Garment Workers' Union, Dublin) found it impossible to distinguish between the resolution and the amendment. His Union had a high percentage of unemployment, but he thought it was a wrong approach to deal with it as a question between Free Trade and Tariffs. The figures quoted by Mr. Johnson about the clothing imports were not the whole facts. Irish mills exported cloth to Leeds, and these exports came back as imports of ready-made clothing. The situation was largely due to the people's apathy in buying cheap ready-made goods. A suit could be made in Leeds—cut, made and trimmed and delivered in Dublin—for 10s. 6d., but the workers in Leeds earned better wages than those in Dublin. But the employers in the trade in this country who were clamouring for Protection had refused even to try to manufacture that class of goods, although the workers were willing. If workers would study economic geography, they would be able to understand the flow of trade, and to realise that Protection would be of very little use to the workers in this country. He was



astonished to find Mr. Johnson quoting Connolly in support of Protection. He understood Connolly to have been advocating efficient industrial unions, which would be strong enough to enable the workers to control industry and trade as they pleased. There was really only one industry in Ireland, and that was agriculture; if they wanted to legislate for industry, that was the industry they should concentrate on. If it flourished, the country flourished. Ireland could not compete with the big wheat farms of Canada and the United States of America, but it could become a flourishing dairy farming country if it were given wise State aid in organising proper marketing facilities. The voting on the resolution and the amendment could not be decisive, for a vote for either was a vote for tariffs. If he had to vote at all, he would prefer the resolution, but the proper course would be to defer the matter till August, and in the meantime the delegates could study economic geography and similar subjects so as to prepare themselves for taking a decision.

MR. F. ROBBINS (Workers' Council, Dublin) supported the resolution. He regretted that little attention had been paid in the discussion to the control of the big financial trusts over industry and trade. He supported Protection, not because it might appear to benefit Irish industrialists, but because it would give employment to Irish workers. The recent duties on imported manufactured tobacco were an example of that. As for imported goods being sweated goods, that was the fault of the Trade Unions themselves. Protection might raise prices in some cases, but it would also increase earning and spending power, as had happened during the War. He questioned if it would mean less employment at the docks; raw materials would be imported instead of manufactured goods. The bottle trade at Ringsend was practically extinguished, but could be revived by a tariff. The same means would enable them to meet tactics like those of the Lever Soap Trust, who controlled Irish factories, were concentrating all their manufacturing at Port Sunlight, and maintaining their trade here by giving specially favourable terms to shopkeepers. The delegates must give their representatives authority to take a definite line.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that 27 delegates—over a quarter of the whole number—had spoken, and it was agreed that the discussion should be brought to a close.

MR. JOHNSON (Secretary), replying as the mover of the amendment, dissented absolutely from Mr. O'Carroll's dictum that the Labour Movement stood for the survival of the fittest. If they thought of the survival of the fittest as merely survival in a struggle for existence, then beyond question industries in this country, no matter how efficient they might be as compared with one another, were not as efficient as the industries of other countries, and would consequently not survive and the country would inevitably

decline. What he wanted was to ensure that industries, though they were less fit, should survive in order that they might become fit; if they were not allowed to survive they could never become fit.

It was said that the consumer paid for Protection. That was true, but as Trade Unionists they were not looking at the matter from the point of view of the consumer, and could they do so until there were no consumers who were not also producers? Let them analyse the Cost of Living Figures, and they would find that the expenditure of the worker on clothing and other taxable articles was not more than 25 per cent. of his total expenditure, excluding food, but the expenditure of the wealthy on these things was very much more than 25 per cent. Tariffs would make the class that did not work pay in much higher proportion than the working-class. They had to face the facts of the present situation. They prided themselves on having been able to keep wages high—higher even than in England and in Northern Ireland. Could they continue to resist the downward tendency unless they recognised the employers' handicaps, if they refused to help the employers by tariffs? Mr. Foran suggested that they should wait until Labour had a majority in the Legislature. But when they got their majority, what would they do then? They could not merely criticise, even as a matter of propaganda. They must put forward positive, constructive proposals. Protection was not the be-all and end-all of Labour policy in the fiscal field. They had other, bigger and better proposals. But there was no chance of these things being accepted in the next couple of years. If meanwhile they allowed their industries to die out, they would have to try to revive them under a bigger handicap than ever. Of course, they all wanted cheap food, clothing, houses, and so on, but they were not going to allow their opponents to say that that cheapness must come from low wages. Their policy should be to insist on high wages to be spent in Ireland on goods produced in Ireland. To insist upon spending in the cheapest market was not going to help industry in their own country or to give them the variety of industries they needed. The accusations of inefficient business methods and bad organisation on the part of employers were true. But were they going to run the risk of getting better organisation by the employers with lower wages for the workers. He wanted better organisation plus high wages. He believed that was a good policy to put even to the farmers. The demand for Irish farm produce in this country could be doubled by keeping wages high, and increase the volume of industrial employment. He wanted Congress to declare itself definitely on the matter. It was more or less assumed that Irish Labour followed British Labour in this matter, and that because workers were Free Traders there they must be so here. He wanted them, on the contrary, to declare that if they could ensure certain safeguards, then they would favour tariffs—not, of course, a flat



rate of duty, but with liberty to discriminate. Some of them would shortly have to decide on definite proposals to impose tariffs. If Congress left them free, he personally would be content, but that would mean that the Labour Party would be speaking with different voices, and not for the Movement as a whole. If they were given instructions everybody would know where they were.

He had been asked what were to be the safeguards, and he admitted that he had no panacea to offer. The greatest safeguard would be provided by the Trade Unions themselves. But if industry were not maintained, the Trade Unions could not remain in existence. The fact that industries were being protected by the State would give the State a right to impose obligations. It would be entitled, for example, to have access to the books of manufacturers. Certainly he would strongly insist that State assistance should involve some means of State control. The Trade Unions and the Labour Party, representing both producers and consumers, would have to use industrial and legislative pressure to prevent exploitation of workers as a result of tariffs.

It had been urged that tariffs would damage the distributive and transport industries. But the reduction of imports of manufactured goods would be counterbalanced by an increase in the handling of raw materials. In any case, the present dominance of the distributive trades was lop-sided and unhealthy, particularly in view of the new methods of distribution.

If the productive manufacturing industry of the country was to be allowed to decline because it was "not fit to survive," then the country would be thrown back solely on agriculture. He agreed that it was vital to encourage their agriculture. But the agriculturists told them that tillage did not pay because the markets abroad were declining and there was no market at home. Reliance on agriculture would, therefore, mean reliance on grazing and pastoral farming. The whole country would become one great grass farm. They were heading straight for that. Was that what they wanted? If it was, they would have to say good-bye to Labour.

The CHAIRMAN, MR. L. J. DUFFY (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks), closing the discussion as mover of the resolution, said there was a clear distinction between the resolution and the amendment. The amendment frankly invited Protection. The resolution did not ask for Protection, but, recognising that that claim was being made by other parties, declared that if they were to have tariffs, any benefit to be derived from them must be secured to the workers and not to the capitalists. The number of people engaged in industries susceptible of Protection was not more than 20 per cent. of the population. They were asked to impose tariffs for the benefit of that 20 per cent at the expense of the remaining 80 per cent. That was to ask them to pay more for their bread, boots, clothes, and so on, in order that inefficient, lackadaisical captains

of industry might survive. The inefficiency of Irish industrialists had been admitted by Mr. Johnson, who had pointed out in the Dáil that the low wages of Irish workers before the war had constituted a kind of Protection, and yet had not enabled Irish manufacturers to compete with the imported goods. Tariffs would mean an increase in prices. The bakers had admitted that even if they paid no wages at all they could not produce bread as cheaply as in London. So with clothing, with the present type of factory and machinery and management, they could not make ready-to-wear clothing as cheaply and well as in England, even if the workers got no wages at all. The best thing that could happen to Irish industrialists was to get a severe jolt that would wake them up and make them realise that they could no longer depend on waving the green flag. The arguments used in the discussion showed that each industry wanted Protection for itself but not for others. Furniture-makers wanted furniture taxed, but no tax on varnishes and paints. Paper-makers wanted imported paper taxed, while printers said if they did not have Free Trade in paper, they would lose employment. The same applied to boots and leather. Even those who were protected would suffer, for the rise in price would mean a diminished demand. The question delegates had to decide was whether they were in favour of Protection to-day, with industries controlled by capitalists and not by the workers, and knowing that any Government, of whatever party, that was in sight in the future would not worry about the interests of wage-earners. The traditional working-class attitude was that tariffs would mean an additional impost on the workers. The delegates had heard the case discussed well and at length; it was now for them to decide.

### Voting on Fiscal Policy.

On a division, there voted :—

For the amendment	...	...	...	39
Against the amendment	...	...	...	30

The amendment was declared carried, and on it being put as a substantive resolution, there voted :—For, 36; against, 33, and it was accordingly adopted.



*Second Day—Saturday, March 15th.*

The Chair was taken by MR. L. J. DUFFY at 10.5 a.m.

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.**

THE CHAIRMAN formally moved, on behalf of the National Executive, the following alteration of the Constitution:—

**Finance.**

To alter Clause 7 so as to read:—

(a) Trade Unions or Branches of Trade Unions shall pay to the Central Fund of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress Threepence per member on the full certified membership in Ireland on the first day of January in each year.

(b) Trades Councils shall pay Three Pounds (£3) for the first 5,000 members, or part thereof, and a further One Pound (£1) for every additional 1,000 members, or part thereof.

(c) The minimum annual contribution from affiliated Societies shall be Three Pounds (£3).

(d) Individual subscribing members shall pay at the rate of Sixpence per member per month, of which sum Threepence shall be paid to the Central Fund, and Threepence retained by the Local Trades' Council or local Labour Party for organisation and labour representation purposes, subject, where necessary, to a payment out of the local moiety of one half-penny for the expenses of collection.

(e) A woman member who has paid a total of Three Shillings within the year shall be deemed to be a fully-paid subscribing member.

(f) The National Executive shall be authorised to make special appeals for funds for political and other purposes, from time to time, as may be desirable.

(g) Any Society whose affiliation has been accepted shall be considered to be permanently affiliated and liable for affiliation fees, unless such Society has given six months' notice of withdrawal, or has been excluded by the special decision of Congress

MR. M. SOMERVILLE (National Executive and Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers) formally seconded.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary)—“I think it would be well to enlarge a little on the intention of the Executive in proposing the Resolution last year. It was considered that the income of the Congress at the rate of 2d. per member is not sufficient if we are to enlarge the activities, as was intended and as is desirable. We have found that the income at 2d. per member just about meets the ordinary expenses of the Congress year, but as there is an increasing demand for greater activity (which involves more expense) industrially and politically, that activity cannot be carried through without an increased affiliation fee. We propose to raise the contributions from 2d. to 3d. per member in the case of Unions, and, in the case of Councils, to alter the fee from a flat rate of £1 per 5,000 members to £3 for the first 5,000, and a further £1 for every additional 1,000 or part thereof. This would mean that every Trades Council or Workers' Council which at present pays £1 would have to pay at least £3. There is a further amendment, not embodied in last year's proposal, which it has been considered desirable to put before Congress. This amendment does not aim, as does the previous one, at altering the affiliation fee, but it does aim at altering the individual subscribing members' contribution to the Labour Party as a political body. The proposal is to raise it from 3d. to 6d. per month. That provision of the Constitution has not to any extent been operating, but it is hoped that the organisation on the political side in the country will proceed rapidly. We hold that that contribution is not enough, and should be 6d., half of which would be retained locally and half sent to the Central Fund for organisation purposes. The other provisions are not altered. There have been three amendments from Trade Unions and Workers' Councils respecting the proposed alterations. These were the only amendments sent in in time for the Agenda. There was a proposition put forward in connection with paragraph (d), that the individual subscriber's contribution should be raised to 4d. That is not on the Agenda, because it was not received in time, and it cannot be discussed without the special permission of the Congress. The main proposal before Congress, then, is that the affiliation fee should be raised from 2d. to 3d. per member for Unions, and raised from £1 per 5,000 in the case of Trades' Councils to £3 for the first 5,000, and a further £1 for every additional 1,000.”

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL (National Executive and Irish National Teachers' Organisation) suggested that the resolution be taken clause by clause.

This procedure was agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN—Clause (a)—“This Clause, if accepted as it stands, will raise the affiliation fees of the Unions, as distinct from the Councils, by 50 per cent. The present affiliation fee is at the rate of 2d. per member. The proposal before you is to increase



the affiliation fee because of reasons given by the Secretary. (*No dissent was expressed*). If you agree I am satisfied. Do you understand what you are agreeing to? You should take time to discuss it."

MR. T. JOHNSON (Secretary)—"I think the Congress should hesitate. They are not agreed, and a resolution of this kind will have to be taken in a different manner. It is provided by the Constitution that a resolution affecting finance may have to be decided by card vote, in which every Union will vote according to its membership. Rather than that this should be carried informally in this way by a mere cry of 'Agreed,' I would call for a card vote."

MR. T. CASSIDY (Typographical Association, Derry) said that the question had been before the last Congress and had been deferred to the Special Congress. He took it that the delegates had considered the matter and put it before their unions. The delegates of his Union had done so, and been instructed to use their own discretion. He believed the increase was necessary to carry on their increased activities.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) warned the Congress that an increased affiliation fee might not mean an increased income. He thought the majority of the Unions would not agree to pay the increased fee, and they might have Unions paying on a reduced membership which the Congress could not check. He thought that the matter should be deferred until the Unions had definitely considered the proposal. There were other ways of raising money for political purposes and so on, which should be considered. He therefore moved that the whole matter be deferred until the next Annual Congress.

MISS BENNETT (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) thought there would be more support among her members if they could be certain that the increased funds would go to develop the industrial activities of the Congress—for example, by the adoption of the resolution on the Agenda in the name of her Union. At present they thought stress was being laid on the political rather than the industrial side.

MR. J. BIRMINGHAM (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) supported Mr. Campbell's proposal. He had not sufficient authority to support the proposed increase, though he was not opposed to it. If the increase was made with the good-will of the affiliated Unions it would do more lasting good. The matter should be deferred to allow of full discussion by the Unions.

MR. J. TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Union, Dublin) said that his members had voted on the proposed increase and decided against it.

MR. W. DAVIN, T.D. (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) said that his Association, like the Typographical Association, had given its delegates a free hand, and they had decided to support the increase. The machinery of the Labour Party in the country was

not adequate if the movement was to be a live movement on both the industrial and political sides. They had to face the facts. They passed resolutions in Congress and their Unions demanding nationalization and so forth, and then their members went out and voted for other political parties. If they were to carry their principles into effect, they would have to develop both the industrial and political sides. There were other ways of raising money, and he thought an appeal for a Million Shilling Fund would meet with support from very many electors who were not Trade Unionists. That was the only alternative to the present proposal. They were entitled to assume that delegates had brought the proposal of the last Congress before their Unions. If they were not prepared to find the money, then they could only expect a proportionately reduced return. If the political side was to be developed, they ought to have an Organizer attached to the Head Office and touring the country. That would cost money, but if they could get ten or twenty thousand members they would add considerably to their revenue.

MR. J. MCGARRY (Workers' Council, Bray) supported the proposed increase. The matter had been before the Council repeatedly and he had been given free discretion. They had all felt the want of organization at the last elections, and if for no other reason they should support the increase.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said that as a member of the National Executive he was very well aware that the Party was not able to finance the necessary activities, and that new sources of revenue must be obtained if the work was to be carried on. But as a delegate of his own Union, he was not in a position to vote for the proposal, as he had no instructions to do so, and the increase meant a considerable aggregate amount for his Union. If a vote was taken on the proposal, he would be obliged to vote against it, and he thought the matter should be held over till the Annual Congress.

MR. A. STEWART (National Executive and Trades' Council, Belfast) thought that after the statements by several delegates they would have to refer the matter back. They had to remember that besides the affiliation fee there were heavy local liabilities. In Belfast they had a Trades' Council affiliation fee of 3d. a member, and a further 3d. fee to the separate Labour Party, while members of local political groups were also paying 6d. a month. They could not expect to capture Parliament with farthings. The fight would be a big one, and therefore the contribution would have to be big. There might be a 5 or 10 per cent. reduction in the membership on which affiliation fees would be paid, but there were always people who objected to paying money.

The CHAIRMAN said that no useful purpose would be served by proceeding with the discussion. There was the same old objection of lack of time to consider the proposal, though it had been before



them for eight months. His own Union had decided to support the increase. He was astonished that any Union should declare itself ready to support the increase only if the extra funds were used in a particular way. The present funds plus the increase would not supply the money necessary for the effective working of an Industrial Committee even if they had it. At present the activities of the Congress were being smothered for lack of funds to pay for staff, printing, records and so on. They were thinking of the industrial side no less than the political: one was no less important than the other. If shopkeepers and "industrial developers" thought it important to try to capture the political machine, it was important for Labour to try to prevent them from doing so. He suggested that the matter should be allowed to stand over, and if the National Executive thought fit they would put it on the Agenda again at the next Annual Congress. That would apply to Clause (a) only.

MR. J. TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Union, Dublin) hoped that consideration would be given to Deputy Davin's suggestion of a Shilling Fund.

The CHAIRMAN—"The National Executive will take into account all suggestions."

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (National Teachers' Organization, Dublin) said that if Clause (a) was to be referred back, the whole resolution might be so referred.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that there was no need to refer back Clauses (d) and (e).

Congress unanimously agreed to refer the whole resolution except Clauses (d) and (e) to the National Executive and the next Annual Congress.

The CHAIRMAN, opening the discussion on Clause (d), pointed out that the proposal affected only individual subscribing members, whose subscription it was proposed to raise from 3d. to 6d. a month. There was no formal obligation on a member of an affiliated Union to become a subscribing member of the Labour Party.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (National Executive and Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) thought the Congress would be well advised to approve the alteration. The threepence was originally fixed in 1917, and was quite insufficient now.

Clause (d) was unanimously agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN, in putting Clause (e), said the clause was one way of putting men and women on an equality. The effect was that a woman who had paid 3/- within the year should be deemed to be a fully-paid subscribing member.

Clause (e) was unanimously agreed to.

After some discussion as to the order in which the other items on the Agenda should be taken, it was agreed that resolutions 3, 5 and 6 should be taken consecutively.

### National Executive.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary), on behalf of the National Executive, moved :—

To alter Clause 8 (first paragraph) to read :—

“There shall be a National Executive, consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and Thirteen other members elected by the National Congress at its regular Annual Meeting, in accordance with the Standing Orders, and this National Executive shall, subject to the control and direction of the National Congress, be the administrative authority and be responsible for the conduct of the general work of the organisation.”

MR. JOHNSON explained that the idea of the National Executive when submitting the proposal to the last Annual Congress was that the work of the Executive might be sub-divided somewhat in the way suggested by the Women Workers in Resolution 6. The present membership of 14, including officers, might not be large enough to allow that to be done. The proposal was to bring the total membership to 17, which would allow of sub-division.

The CHAIRMAN formally seconded the proposal.

MISS BENNETT (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said that if the proposal was intended as an alternative to her own Union's motion, she would oppose it, because she felt that they needed a group, however small, elected from important industries, and primarily concerned with the Trade Union side of the work. They did not complain of the time given to the political side of the work, but they did want to take steps to secure attention to the industrial side. The two wings ought to be equally strong, and that was not possible unless they had a committee primarily interested in the industrial side. There were already three Joint Industrial Councils in existence, and she had heard of a Workers' Council which had set up an Anti-Profiteering Committee. The proportion of people who did not vote at the last elections showed that the people were “fed up” with politics. If they had an Industrial Committee, it would give the workers of the rank and file something to do, and they would find the political side strengthened as a result. The present proposal would not meet the need, as it would not strengthen either side.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) confessed that he was unable to understand the attitude of the Women



Workers. They could not have a Committee "working in conjunction with the Executive." If the Committee was to have authority from the Congress, it would have to be part of the National Executive. But apparently Miss Bennett wanted a body not responsible to the Executive, but reporting only to the Congress once a year. Such a body might be useful in an emergency, but not permanently. Why should not the body desired be part and parcel of the Executive? The increase of the numbers would allow of that.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (National Executive) pointed out an inconsistency between the Women Workers' attitude on this matter and their opposition to the strengthening of their financial position. What exactly did they want? Did they want an Industrial Committee not responsible to the Executive or even to Congress? If Congress was to be the authority, it could have only one Executive responsible to it.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive and Workers' Council, Dublin) said that the main object of the Executive's proposal was that the National Executive should be enlarged in order that it could be divided so as to be able to work more efficiently. The proposal of the Women Workers was to divorce the political from the industrial side. Their present Constitution was based throughout on the principle advocated by Connolly that political and industrial organization should go hand in hand. Miss Bennett wanted organization on the English model. The fact was that the industrial side was NOT being neglected. Moreover, it was notorious that the people who were most opposed to political activity were always wanting the Labour Party to remedy a bad industrial situation by political methods. He hoped the Executive's proposal would be accepted.

MR. T. IRVINE (Union of Post Office Workers, Belfast) pointed out that though the Congress had decided to refer back a proposal to increase affiliation fees, they were now discussing a proposal to enlarge the Executive, which would inevitably cost more money. The matter had, therefore, better be referred to the Annual Congress.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) said that the proposal would not necessarily mean increased expenditure.

MISS MOLONEY (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) explained that there was no desire to divorce the two sides of the Movement. They believed that the Executive proposal was not so good as their own. They wanted the same thing, but thought their own method better.

MR. T. JOHNSON (Secretary) agreed that there was something in the objection by Mr. Irvine that an Executive of 17 would cost more than one of 14, but even if the proposal were passed by that Congress it would not come into operation until after the next Congress, and by that time he hoped the recommendations of the Executive as to finance would have been adopted. He understood the proposal of the Women Workers to mean, not the setting up of an

entirely separate body, but the creation of a body whose members were not members of the National Executive, but who would collaborate with the Executive in an advisory capacity on subjects which demand consideration from a social or political as well as an industrial standpoint. The new Committee would therefore be an addition to the National Executive without responsibility, and acting only in an advisory capacity. It was not correct to say that the National Executive was engaged almost wholly on political activities. If there were any criticism to make, it would be that the Unions so rarely asked for any industrial information unless they were prompted to do so by the Executive. Even during the last few months a very considerable amount of research work had been done for a Union in connection with a big industrial question: not one per cent. of the Unions in the country would ever realize or appreciate the work that had been done, but it was done nevertheless. He pointed out that at least 90 per cent. of the resolutions submitted by Unions to the last Congress dealt with social and political affairs: not one was strictly industrial. The Committee, if it were set up, would have to try to do work which the Trade Unions ought to be doing for themselves, organizing work, which could not be done by a voluntary unpaid Executive. Even if it were attempted, the Unions would not allow it: their attitude always was—"Don't intervene until we ask you to"—and they usually asked for intervention only when the damage was done. He agreed that there was a great deal of industrial work that ought to be done, in the way of supervision, collection and distribution of information, etc. But what the Women Workers were trying to do was to make a sharp distinction between social questions and political questions. That simply could not be done. If it was intended to abandon political action, that should be made clear. The proposal of the National Executive would allow the work to be done that was the ostensible purpose of the Women Workers' resolution, while it would retain responsibility and a single control.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the matter had been debated sufficiently. While they necessarily had coupled the two resolutions together in the discussion, they should remember that they were about to vote only on the National Executive's proposal. That proposal was tabled by the Executive at last Congress to meet the demand for a separate *sub*-Committee, while avoiding a divorce between the bodies dealing with political and industrial questions. The Women Workers declared that they wanted a committee representing the chief industrial activities of the country. Well, the chief industrial activities were represented at the Congress, and presumably they could elect representatives to the National Executive. The special committee proposed by the Women Workers might supplant the National Executive, and they might even have the same persons being elected to both Committees.



In reply to MISS BENNETT (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) the CHAIRMAN stated that the resolution proposed by that Union would not fall with the passage of the National Executive's proposal, but could be separately moved, discussed and voted.

The resolution was then put to the Congress, and on a show of hands was declared carried.

### **Representation on National Executive.**

The CHAIRMAN formally moved, on behalf of the National Executive :—

To alter Standing Order No. 12, paragraph 3, to read :—

The maximum number of delegates from any one organization that may be elected to membership of the National Executive, otherwise than as Officers, shall be :—

For an organization with a membership not over 10,000—ONE.

For an organization with a membership over 10,000, but not over 20,000—Two.

For an organization with a membership over 20,000, but not over 50,000—THREE.

For an organization with a membership of over 50,000—FOUR.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (National Executive) seconded the motion.

MR. J. CARR (Workers' Council, Limerick) moved the following amendment :—

That any Union be only entitled to one member on the National Executive (outside of Officers).

Mr. Carr said the intention of the amendment was to secure the representation of a greater variety of interests on the Executive. If the motion were carried, any Union that became entitled to three or four members of the Executive would naturally try to get them elected. Neither the English nor the Scottish Congress allowed any one Union to have two or more members on the Executive. The whole question of representation on the Executive should be reconsidered. There were two main principles of representation—geographical and industrial or vocational. The Movement was more or less committed to the vocational principle, and ought therefore to apply it to the National Executive. Under the scheme of the motion, only one Union would at present be entitled to as many as four members, but with the development in the way of amalgamation that might be expected—single Unions for the building trades

and for the distributive trades, for example—they might have the whole of the Executive being elected by three Unions, which would almost be giving the other Unions notice to quit the Congress. He was not sure whether Unions directly represented at Congress would be entitled to further indirect representation through Workers' Councils, but if so the strong Unions might still further increase their representation, and eventually the arrangement might lead to having a single organization in control.

MR. J. RENNIE (N.A. Society of Operative House and Ship Painters, Newry) seconded the amendment, as the best means of strengthening the influence of the Congress throughout the country. It was most discouraging to come to the Annual Congresses and find that certain persons who were in a strong position in certain Unions were able practically to dictate to Congress and express opinions which went out as the opinions of the whole movement. For the benefit of the smaller sections, and also of the Trade Unions generally, he thought that the Executive should be representative of the greatest possible area of thought.

MR. C. J. KENNY (Clerical Workers' Union, Dublin) supported the motion, which had found general favour in his Union. The amendment superficially appeared to ensure representation of the smaller Unions, but as the mover of it had pointed out, it would still be possible for the larger Unions to get representation through the Trades' Councils. The motion was simple and clear, and its adoption would not prevent a number of small Unions from getting representation by combining together.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) was opposed to both motion and amendment. The amendment would be even more unsatisfactory than the present position. The motion appeared to be designed to favour a particular Union. There was a good deal to be said for that on the basis of "per capita" representation. In fact, a Union of great strength could determine not only who should be its own representatives, but also who the others should be. Again, it would be possible for a single Union to be represented by the four Officers and by four other members of the Executive, making a total of eight out of seventeen. That would not be inconsistent with its numerical strength, but at the time the Constitution was drafted it was thought advisable not to give such full-scale representation. The particular organization concerned agreed at the time, and its agreement was accepted by Congress as a gracious gesture. It was difficult to find a logical ground for refusing representation on the basis of membership, but he nevertheless would regret it if the proposal were adopted. He would have to vote against both motion and amendment.

MR. T. JOHNSON (Secretary) thought the proposal in the amendment very unwise. The larger Unions—not the largest—would be restricted to one member apart from the Officers. That was being



unjust to the larger Unions in order to favour the smaller ones. The motion did not give an absolute right to representation. The members of the Executive would still have to be elected by the whole Congress, and it would be quite possible for representatives of the smaller Unions to be elected if they were deemed to be the best fitted for the position.

The CHAIRMAN, referring to Mr. Campbell's suggestion that it would have been better if the proposal had come from the Union principally concerned instead of from the Executive, recalled that the Congress of 1922 had instructed the Executive to make proposals for the reconstitution of the Executive. The Executive had considered the matter from every angle at two meetings, and had been unable to devise any scheme which would meet directly the objections made by Congress to the existing arrangement, but they believed that the scheme now proposed would in its working out be as satisfactory as could be expected. The amendment was even going a step back from the existing position.

MR. M. SOMERVILLE (National Executive and Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) said that there was a suggestion that the proposed system would enable the Transport Union to secure practically the whole representation on the Executive. Yet two years ago that Union had tried to get two of its members elected on the Executive and had failed to do so, the system of voting being the same then as now. The Transport Union did not have a majority at the Congress. If a Union with 500 members was recognised as entitled to have one member on the Executive, if elected, surely a Union with 100,000 members was entitled to something more.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Transport and General Workers' Union) said it was important to remember the actual facts. His Union had fully one-half the membership, and contributed more than one-half of the funds of the Congress. But it had not half the voting strength at Congress, and Congress could, if it liked, decide not to elect a single member of the Union either as an Officer or as a member of the Executive. The position in England and Scotland was different, because there no Union had half the membership. Would those opposed to the proposal agree to election by Proportional Representation? If that were adopted, his Union would be able to secure a bigger representation than that now proposed. Frankly, he agreed with the suggestion that there ought to be only one Union, electing only one Executive and carrying out a single industrial policy, but they had not reached that stage yet.

MR. T. IRWIN (Plasterers' Society, Dublin) thought there might be a good many in favour of the One Big Union as an ideal, but there were some who seemed to think that the O. B. U. must be the Transport Union, and he was not in favour of getting an O. B. U.

on those lines. If the Constitution was to be changed, they might consider other methods of giving representation. If they gave representation on an industrial basis, every Union would be sure of its fair share of representation. After all, it was a matter of indifference how the men were elected so long as they got the best men. His experience of Congresses was that, no matter what the method of election might be, and no matter how good a man might be, if Congress did not want him he would not be elected, whatever the strength of his Union. He would not vote for either the motion or the amendment.

MISS BENNETT (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) suggested that the motion should be referred back to the Executive for further consideration. She agreed very largely with the views expressed by Mr. Irwin, but while she agreed that the larger Unions were entitled to a larger representation, she pointed out that there were only two Unions affiliated to Congress with a membership over 10,000.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) remarked that even a Union with only 100 members could still have one member on the Executive.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out further that in theory a Union with only 29 members—and there had been such a Union affiliated—could be represented by the four Officers and one member of the Executive in addition.

The amendment was then put to the vote and was declared lost.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary), resuming the discussion on the motion, reminded the delegates that they had already agreed to enlarging the Executive to 17 members. The position as regards the Officers was to remain unchanged, but as regards the other members of the National Executive, the proposal was that a Union, if it had over 50,000 members, might have four members on the National Executive out of thirteen, instead of two out of ten as at present. They had been pressing Unions to affiliate on their full membership, and asking them to pay more in fees. If the motion were defeated, they would be doing an injustice to the larger Unions. There was not the slightest ground for suspecting the larger Unions of having used or intending to use their power unjustly. But on the other hand, if Congress did not do justice to them, they might be tempted to use their powers selfishly. The proposition before them had been carefully thought out. Any method based on either local or industrial representation would give the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union a larger number of National Executive members.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (National Executive) said that Congress must at least give fair consideration to the position of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union. They would be in a serious position if it were ever treated so as to drive it to secede, for it contributed



more than half their funds, and played an important part in industrial organisation in the country. They had to approach the matter in a broad-minded way. If the change did stimulate amalgamation in the building trades and in other groups, as had been suggested, it would be very useful.

MR. H. T. WHITLEY (Typographical Association, Belfast) could see no reason for the large and the small Unions to be at logger-heads. If they could get the whole thirteen members of the National Executive of sufficient ability and intelligence all from the largest Union, or all from the smallest Union, they ought to be elected. The lowest limit of 10,000 members in the suggested scale covered a large number of Unions with members of considerable talent. He would prefer to allow appointment by open vote without any restriction. The National Executive had not explained why the change was necessary. He remembered the same difficulty twenty years ago. Whenever he voted himself, he always tried to decide on the capacity of the man, regardless of his Union, though he did not deny that canvassing for votes took place there as elsewhere. He suggested that the matter should be deferred; they might then get a complete change of spirit, and get rid of the notion of antagonism between the large and the small Unions.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out the difficulties of attempting to base representation on industries, for the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union cut across all industries. There was the same difficulty in regard to a geographical basis of representation. Which-ever basis were adopted, the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union would be in a position to dominate the Executive if it wished. Certainly the point of view expressed by Mr. Whitley was the ideal. If any Union could suggest a plan fair and acceptable to all, the National Executive would raise no objection. What they had tried to do was to secure a National Executive whose members would be spread over a wide area and a large number of occupations, and who would be prepared to do the work required of them. The Unions outside the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union were, under the scheme before them, guaranteed at least nine seats, and as many more as they could induce Congress to elect, while the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union had a claim to a fair voice which could not be ignored.

The motion was put and declared carried, without a division.

## INDUSTRIAL COMMITTEE.

MISS BENNETT (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) moved the following resolution :—

That in view of the probable extension of industrial activities in Ireland, the Executive be instructed to arrange without delay for the election of a Committee representative of the chief industrial activities in Ireland, which will deal with all industrial matters, and collaborate in an advisory capacity with the Executive on subjects which demand consideration from a social or political as well as an industrial standpoint.

MISS BENNETT said her Union felt flattered by the bombardment which this resolution had suffered in the earlier discussion on the enlargement of the National Executive, but disavowed any inspiration of serpentine cleverness. They had not intended to make any revolutionary alteration, but merely made the modest suggestion that there should be a specially qualified body dealing with industrial matters, and that when the National Executive was dealing with industrial as well as political and social matters, it should be able to collaborate with that body. The National Executive proposal of two sub-committees seemed to her to do in fact what was charged against their proposal, to separate the two sides of the Movement.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) hoped that the setting up of an Industrial Committee would give them an expert body able to advise the Unions on matters of organization and industrial affairs generally.

A motion that the question be now put having been agreed to, a division on the resolution was taken, and there voted :—For the resolution, 18; against, 39. The resolution was declared lost.

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At this stage the discussion on Fiscal Policy was resumed. The report is printed earlier. See pp. 12 to 43.

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## AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION.

The following resolution appeared on the Agenda in the name of the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union :—

**Membership.**—To alter Clause 3 of the Constitution so as to read :—

The Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress shall consist of its affiliated organisations—i.e., Trade Unions, Branches of Trade Unions, Trades' Councils, Local Labour Parties, **Independent Labour and Workers' Parties**, Co-operative Societies and other working-



**class organizations**, together with those men and women who are individual subscribing members of a recognised local Labour Party group, and who accept the Constitution and Policy of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

The amendment proposed consisted in the insertion of the words in **heavy type**, and entailed consequential alterations as follows:—

Clause 4 (b) (Basis of Representation), after "Trade Unions," to insert "or other affiliated organizations";

Clause 7 (a) (Affiliation Fees), after "Trade Unions," to insert "or other affiliated organizations."

On the motion of SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin), it was agreed to defer consideration of the proposal to the next Annual Congress.

### VICTIMIZATION OF GROCERS' ASSISTANTS.

On the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, Congress gave permission for the discussion of the following resolution:—

That this Special Congress condemns the action of certain Licensed Traders in Dublin who have refused to reinstate members of their staff who were arrested, interned and released without charge or trial; that this action on the part of these employers adds insult to injury and makes harder the lot of the victimized worker; and that this Special Congress calls on all members of the affiliated Unions to give all the support in their power to the Irish National Union of Vintners, Grocers and Allied Trades' Assistants in defending what we believe are the just claims of all workers by refusing to patronise the houses of employers responsible for such victimization.

MR. P. HUGHES (Irish National Union Grocers', etc., Assistants, Dublin), moving the resolution, said that he hoped the passage of the resolution would have some effect on employers who had victimized their ex-internee employees. His Union had taken action in one such case, and withdrawn the staff. He, as Secretary of the Union, had then been arrested and charged under the Public Safety Act, but the prosecution under that Act had been dropped. A picket put on the next day by the Union was arrested, and it had been held by the magistrate, Mr. Lupton, that there was no trade dispute, and he had accordingly convicted the pickets, but had agreed to state a case. The higher Court had upheld the magistrate's decision on the case stated. If that decision were to stand, it would mean that a Trade Union could not picket. He believed his Union had a perfect right to picket the employers who were victimizing their members. This matter affected 150 to 200 members, whom the employers, though they had no complaint against them, would not reinstate.

MR. CORMAC BREATHNACH (Irish National Teachers' Organiza-

tion) seconded the resolution, saying that this was a case where the Congress must support the Union.

MR. E. O'CARROLL (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) suggested that the mere passing of the resolution would be of little use, and that the Union should find means to expose these employers throughout the city, so that workers would refuse to go into their establishments.

MR. M. SOMERVILLE (National Executive and Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) also said that the names of the employers should be circulated, so that members could be asked to withhold custom. But he understood that there were some members of the Union still working in the shops affected.

MR. P. HUGHES (Irish National Union Grocers', etc., Assistants, Dublin) said that they could not legally publish a "Black List." It was a fact that the Union had not yet decided to withdraw all their members from working in the shops affected.

MR. J. HICKEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork) thought they had not had sufficient information about the case, particularly if members of the Union were working in these shops.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Union would have been well advised to consult with the Dublin Workers' Council on the matter.

MR. — FITZPATRICK (Irish National Union Grocers', etc., Assistants, Dublin) explained that there had been nearly 200 of these workers who had been victimized as a result of a concerted and organized attack by the employers. The Union had been able to get the majority of these members reinstated, but they had been faced with an organized move to prevent reinstatement, which resulted in the present situation.

The resolution was carried without dissent.

## SUPPRESSION OF ELECTED LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Congress having given permission on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, the Irish Municipal Employees' Union submitted the following resolution:—

That this Special Congress directs the National Executive to take all the necessary steps to secure proper action by Organized Labour to combat the Government's action and contemplated changes in the Constitution and powers of Corporations and Public Bodies, by removing the elected representatives and substituting paid Commissioners; and in view of the present sinister action by the Government with the Dublin Corporation in calling an alleged inquiry into the working of the Corporation, we call upon Congress to take immediate action to consider the situation; and further, that we respectfully suggest that in the event of the Government remaining adamant in



its present retrograde action in striking against popular representation, we call upon the National Executive to obtain the considered opinions of all Unions affiliated to the Congress on the withdrawal of all members of the Irish Labour Party from the Dáil and Seanad to take such further action as may be advisable to give full effect to this protest.

MR. T. LAWLOR (Irish Municipal Employees' Union, Dublin), moving the resolution, admitted that its terms were drastic, but submitted that the actions of the Government could be countered only by strong measures. The Government's determined policy seemed to be to abolish popular representation on local authorities. It was doubtless inspired by fear of the Labour representation on the local boards, and of the possibility of increased representation after the next elections, together with a desire to find well-paid jobs for some of its supporters. Labour representation on public boards was even more important than representation in the Dáil and Seanad, and the Government's actions were a blow directed against such representation.

MR. R. TYNAN (Irish Municipal Employees' Union, Dublin) seconded the resolution.

MR. WM. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said that they should certainly protest against the suppression of elected local authorities, but he thought the recommendation to withdraw from the Dáil and Seanad was merely silly, unless it came from the political party which had adopted the policy of abstention. The really effective action would be to secure the election of more Labour representatives to all these bodies, and he could not congratulate the Municipal Employees' Union—or, indeed, any other—on their activity in this respect.

MR. A. STEWART (National Executive, and Trades' Council, Belfast) suggested that the latter part of the resolution should be dropped.

MR. LAWLOR said that there was no political motive behind the resolution. They felt that strong action was necessary to meet the Government's action. It was not a Union grievance, but a matter affecting Labour generally.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) declared that any attempt to supplant local representative bodies by administration from a central office was retrogressive and bad for the public life of the country. The right policy was to work for a better development of public control over administration. To that extent the resolution should be emphatically passed. But the remainder of the resolution was opposed to the accepted policy of the Movement. The workers of the country were really getting what they had asked for at the General Election last August, and they were only now beginning to realise it and protest. But the bye-election about to take place in County Dublin would give the employees of the municipal

authorities in the county and other workers an opportunity to emphasise the will of the working-class in this matter. The return of the Labour candidate would be a very effective protest.

MR. LAWLOR said that if Congress made an emphatic protest, that would be sufficient, at any rate for the present, and agreed to withdraw the latter part of the resolution. He felt that it was unfair to single out his Union for criticism in respect of elections; its members were not the only Trade Unionists who had shown themselves apathetic at election times.

The resolution, amended to read as follows:—

That this Special Congress directs the National Executive to take all the necessary steps to secure proper action by organized Labour to combat the Government's action and contemplated changes in the Constitution and powers of Corporation and Public Bodies by removing the elected representatives and substituting paid Commissioners

was passed unanimously.

The Special Congress concluded at 3.15 p.m.



# SPECIAL CONGRESS

March 14th and 15th, 1924.

## List of Unions and Councils represented, Delegation Fees paid, and Names of Delegates.

No. of Delegates.	Fees paid.	Name of Union. Names and Addresses of Delegates.
1	£ s. d. 0 5 0	ASSURANCE WORKERS, NATIONAL UNION OF LIFE: Joseph Doyle, 37 Ring Street, Inchicore, Dublin.
4	1 0 0	BAKERS', CONFECTIONERS', AND ALLIED WORKERS' AMALGAMATED UNION (IRISH): T. McConnell, Artisans' Hall, Lr. Garfield Street, Belfast. F. Moran, 37 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin. D. Cullen, 37 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin. P. Shanahan, 31 Washington Street, Cork (absent).
1	0 5 0	BUILDING TRADE WORKERS, AMALGAMATED UNION OF: R. Beggs, 3 Tennyson Street, Belfast.
1	0 5 0	BRICK AND STONE LAYERS (ANCIENT GUILD OF): Owen Hynes, 39 Cuffe Street, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	BRUSHMAKERS (NATIONAL SOCIETY OF), DUBLIN BRANCH: Wm. Murphy, 17 Russell Street, N.C. Road, Dublin
2	0 10 0	CLERICAL & ALLIED WORKERS' UNION (IRISH): J. J. O'Neill, 14 Nth. Gt. George's Street, Dublin. C. J. Kenny, I.C.W. Union, 1 College St., Dublin.
7	1 15 0	IRISH UNION OF DISTRIBUTIVE WORKERS AND CLERKS: L. J. Duffy, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin. W. O'Beirne, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin. Thomas Johnson, 32 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin. Harry Batt, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin. J. W. Kelly, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin. J. McGreale, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin. Miss Cahalan, Cavendish House, Parnell Square, Dublin (absent).

No. of Delegates.	Fees paid.	Name of Union. Names and Addresses of Delegates.
	£. s. d.	
5	1 5 0	ENGINEERING INDUSTRIAL TRADE UNION (IRISH): Joseph Toomey, 6 Gardiner's Row, Dublin. P. O'Hagan, " " James Hill, " " M. Doyle, " " J. Collins, " "
1	0 5 0	FIRE BRIGADE MEN'S UNION: J. Smart, Tara Street Fire Brigade Station, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	FURNISHING TRADES ASSOCIATION (NATIONAL AMALGAMATED): J. Collins, 11 Leo Avenue, Dublin.
2	0 10 0	GROCERS' & VINTNERS' ASSISTANTS (IRISH NATIONAL UNION OF): P. Hughes, 20 Parnell Square, Dublin. — Fitzpatrick, 20 Parnell Square, Dublin.
—	0 10 0	LOCOMOTIVE ENGINEERS' AND FIREMEN'S TRADE UNION (BELFAST AND DUBLIN).
2	0 10 0	MENTAL HOSPITAL WORKERS' UNION (IRISH): John Kelly, Portrane Cottages, Donabate, Co. Dublin. M. J. O'Connor, 21 Lower St. Brigid's Road, Drumcondra.
4	1 0 0	MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES' TRADE UNION: Robert Tynan, 24 Winetaven Street, Dublin. Thomas Lawlor do. do. do. Robert Farrell do. do. do. James Delaney do. do. do.
2	0 10 0	PAINTERS AND DECORATORS, NATIONAL AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF OPERATIVE HOUSE AND SHIP: J. Rennie, Mill House, Ayallouge, Cloughoge P.O., Newry. P. J. Martin, 71 Foley Street Buildings, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	PLASTERERS' TRADE SOCIETY (DUBLIN OPERATIVE): T. Irwin, 32 East Essex Street, Dublin.
2	0 10 0	PLUMBERS AND DOMESTIC ENGINEERS: Peter Bermingham, 76 Lombard Street West, S.C.R., Dublin. Patrick Connor, 8 Aughrim Villas, Aughrim St., Dublin.



No. of Delegates.	Fees paid.	Name of Union. Names and Addresses of Delegates.
1	£ s. d. 0 5 0	POST OFFICE WORKERS, UNION OF: T. Irvine, 13 Cadogan Street, Belfast.
2	0 10 0	POST OFFICE WORKERS' UNION (IRISH): M. J. McGowan, 46 Magdalen Street, Drogheda. W. Norton, 4 Cavendish Row, Dublin.
4	1 0 0	RAILWAY CLERKS' ASSOCIATION: W. Davin, T.D., 1 Crofton Tce., Dunlaoghaire. J. McCooke, 27 Eden Crescent, Belfast. E. O'Carroll, 5 Abbey Terrace, Howth, Co. Dublin. John T. O'Farrell, 48 Henry Street, Dublin.
3	0 15 0	NATIONAL UNION OF RAILWAYMEN: J. Bermingham, 33 Parnell Square, Dublin. T. Ward, 54 Eliza Place, Belfast. T. Daly, 22 Parnell Place, Cork.
1	0 5 0	SLATERS' AND TILERS' AMALGAMATED SOCIETY: John Sheppard, 77 Eccles Street, Dublin.
2	0 10 0	GARMENT MAKERS' INDUSTRIAL UNION (IRISH): Walter Carpenter, 44 York Street, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	TAILORS' AND GARMENT WORKERS' TRADE UNION: J. Loughnan, 2 Convent Place, Crosses Green, Cork.
3	0 15 0	TEACHERS' ORGANISATION (IRISH NATIONAL): C. Breathnach, Marlboro' House, Glasnevin, Dublin. P. J. Quinn, 10 Ring Street, Inchicore. T. J. O'Connell, T.D., 9 Gardiner's Place, Dublin.
3	0 15 0	TYPOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION (MAN- CHESTER): T. Cassidy, 41 Chapel Road, Waterside, Derry. H. T. Whitley, 12 Frederick Street, Belfast. C. G. Carey (absent).
3	0 15 0	TYPOGRAPHICAL (DUBLIN) PROVIDENT SOCIETY: W. McEwan, 35 Lower Gardiner Street, Dublin. Sean P. Campbell do. do. W. J. Whelan do. do.

No. of Delegates.	Fees paid.	Name of Organization. Names and Addresses of Delegates.
	£ s. d.	
1	0 5 0	WOODWORKERS (AMALGAMATED SOCIETY OF): M. Somerville, 1 "F" Road, Fairbrothers' Fields, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	Do. DUBLIN No. 6 BRANCH: P. Brophy, 32 Lower Ormond Quay, Dublin.
1	0 5 0	Do. DUBLIN No. 10 BRANCH: Thomas Dunne, 10 Richmond Row, Portobello, Dublin.
27	6 15 0	IRISH TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS' UNION: Thomas Foran, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin. William O'Brien, do. do. do. Michael Duffy, Readesland, Dunshaughlin. Thomas Ryan, 1 Lady Lane, Waterford. Daniel Clancy, 91 O'Connell Street, Limerick. John Sheehan, Old Church Street, Limerick. M. Cunningham, Streamstown, Roscrea. J. Hickey, I.T.G.W.U., Connolly Hall, Cork. John Sullivan, do. do. do. do. M. Connor, Liberty Hall, Peter Street, Drogheda. P. O'Toole, 29 Eden Quay, Dublin. Thomas Nagle, T.D., 1 Oxford Road, Ranelagh. M. McGabhann, Halla Na Saoirse, Droichead Nua. Daniel Morrissey, T.D., 1 Oxford Road, Ranelagh. John Swan, Glen Road, Delgany. Thomas Hayes, Barrack Lane, Limerick. P. O'Reilly, P. Brophy, M. Usher, M. McCarthy } 35 Parnell Square, Dublin. P. Kane, M. McGrath. M. Hill, P. Stafford, P. Gaffney, } absent. D. Hall, T.D., P. O'Donohue,
15	1 5 0	WOMEN WORKERS' UNION: Miss E. O'Connor, 152 Leinster Road, Rathmines. Miss Bennett, "Gayfield," Killiney. Miss Moloney, 9 Belgrave Square, Rathmines. Miss Shanahan, 7 Eustace Street, Dublin. Miss Price, 29 South Anne Street, Dublin.



No. of Delegates.	Fees paid.	Name of Council. Names and Addresses of Delegates.
	£ s. d.	
2	0 10 0	BELFAST TRADES' COUNCIL: Alex. Stewart, 2 Convention Street, Belfast. D. R. Campbell, 11 Kimberley Street, Belfast.
1	0 5 0	BRAY & DUNLAOGHAIRE TRADES' COUNCIL: Mr. J. McGarry, I.N.T.O., c/o Trades Hall, Main Street, Bray.
1	0 5 0	DROGHEDA WORKERS' COUNCIL: Patrick Byrne, 6 Marsh Road, Drogheda.
3	0 15 0	DUBLIN WORKERS' COUNCIL: Frank Robbins, Liberty Hall, Dublin. George Spain, Liberty Hall, Dublin. Thomas Farren, 37 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin.
1	0 5 0	KILDARE WORKERS' COUNCIL: Senator W. Cummins, Central Hotel, Droichead Nua.
2	0 10 0	LIMERICK TRADES' COUNCIL: Jas. McQuain, Mechanics' Institute, Limerick. James Carr, do. do. do.
1	0 5 0	WATERFORD WORKERS' COUNCIL: L. Dunne, 35 Manor Street, Waterford.

# REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

FIVE YEAR

YEAR 1923-24

## I. SPECIAL CONGRESS

1. The Annual Congress last August decided to send special matters appearing on its Agenda for consideration to a Special Congress. The Special Congress was held in New York City on March 14th and 15th, 1924. A full report of the Special Congress will appear in the next issue of the *Journal*.

# REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

## Membership

FOR

The proposal to amend Article 3 of the Constitution, submitted by the *High Council*, was adopted by the Special Congress, was again adopted by the Annual Congress, and was adopted by the National Executive.

1923-1924

## Finances

The proposal to amend Article 7 of the Constitution, dealing with additional fees, submitted by the National Executive, was adopted by the Special Congress with the exception of the portion dealing with the subscriptions of individual members. These paragraphs were not brought forward for consideration, but it was felt desirable in view of the fact that the membership of individual members of the *Labour Party* was increasing, that a decision on the matter should be taken by the Special Congress. The Congress amended the National Executive's proposal so that the fee of contribution for individual members was reduced to one-half of the fee of contribution for members of the National Executive and the other half was to be paid by the National Executive. The Constitution has been amended accordingly.



# THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

1923-1924

## REPORT OF

THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

FOR THE YEAR 1923-1924

THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

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# REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

FOR THE  
YEAR 1923-24.

## I.—SPECIAL CONGRESS.

1. The Annual Congress last August decided to remit a number of matters appearing on its Agenda for consideration by a Special Congress. The National Executive accordingly summoned a Special Congress which was held in the Mansion House, Dublin, on March 14th and 15th, 1924. A full report of this Special Congress will be circulated with the Annual Report for this year in due course, but the following brief note summarises the decisions taken :—

### Membership.

The proposal to amend Clause 3 of the Constitution, submitted by the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union to the 1923 Congress, was again deferred to the present Annual Congress.

### Finance.

The proposal to amend Clause 7 of the Constitution, dealing with affiliation fees, submitted by the National Executive, was again deferred to the present Congress with the exception of the paragraphs dealing with the subscriptions of individual subscribing members. These paragraphs were not brought forward at last year's Congress, but it was felt desirable, in view of the fact that the organisation of individual members of the Labour Party was proceeding, that a decision on the matter should be taken by the Special Congress. The Congress accepted the National Executive's proposal to make the rate of contribution for individual subscribing members 6d. per month per member, of which one half is to be remitted to the National Executive and the other half retained by the local organisation. Women members are not required to pay more than half the full rate. The Constitution has been amended accordingly.



## **National Executive.**

The proposal by the National Executive to increase the membership of the Executive from 14 to 17 by the addition of three members, other than officers, was approved by the Special Congress. The Constitution has been amended accordingly.

## **Audit.**

The proposals by the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union and the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks to amend the Standing Orders relating to the Audit of accounts, were deferred to the present Congress.

## **Election of National Executive.**

The proposal submitted by the National Executive to amend the Standing Orders so as to permit large Unions to have an increased number of members on the National Executive was accepted by the Special Congress, the amendment by the Limerick Trades and Labour Council limiting Unions to not more than one member, excluding officers, being defeated. Standing Orders were amended accordingly.

## **Industrial Committee.**

The resolution moved by the Irish Women Workers' Union instructing the National Executive to "arrange without delay for the election of a Committee representative of the chief industrial activities in Ireland, which will deal with all industrial matters and collaborate in an advisory capacity with the Executive on the subjects which demand consideration from a social or political as well as an industrial standpoint," was defeated.

## **Fiscal System.**

A discussion on the resolution and amendment on the Fiscal System, submitted to last Congress by the National Executive and the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, which occupied the greater part of the time of the Special Congress, concluded by the adoption by 36 votes to 33 of the amendment as substantive resolution in the following terms:—

"Subject to provision being made—

- (1) for transmitting the benefit which may be derived from protective tariffs to the workers engaged in the industry affected, and
- (2) for preventing the growth of profit-seeking monopolies, trusts or combines within Saorstát Éireann.

this Congress declares in favour of encouraging home industries by means of protective tariffs."

2. Matters deferred from the Special Congress appear on the Agenda of the present Congress.

## II.—AFFILIATION, &c.

3. In August, 1923, the National Executive rejected an application for affiliation from the Irish National Union of Wood-workers on the ground that the trade was adequately catered for by the existing organisation and in accord with the general policy of discouraging the formation of sectional unions.

4. In May, 1924, the National Executive rejected an application for affiliation from the National Association of Free State Workers, an organisation formed in Cobh, Co. Cork.

5. The National Executive last year reported to the Standing Orders Committee of the Annual Congress that they were not satisfied as to the accuracy of the Membership Return by the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, which had affiliated on the basis of membership of 5,000 instead of 8,000 as previously. The matter has since been the subject of correspondence with both the Head Office and the Irish Office of the Union, but no satisfactory explanation has yet been received.

## III.—RELATIONS BETWEEN AFFILIATED ORGANISATIONS.

### Inter-Union Dispute in Waterford.

6. A complaint made by the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks as to the action of the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union in Waterford, was reported by the National Executive to a Sub-Committee for investigation. The Sub-Committee reported as follows :—

The undersigned Sub-Committee appointed to enquire into the Inter-Union dispute between the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks and the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, had the representatives of both parties to the dispute before them on the 17th April and the 9th May, when the whole matter of the dispute was fully gone into.

From the original correspondence and the statements made on behalf of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks and the evidence adduced in support thereof, it emerged that the charges against the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union fell under three heads :—

(a) Poaching of members.

(b) Acceptance of members of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks into membership of the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union at a time when a serious wage dispute was in progress between the employers and the former Union.



- (c) Acceptance by the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union on behalf of the poached members of less favourable terms of settlement than the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, could have obtained.

In respect of the first charge (a), it appears that the trouble arose through an internal dispute in the Waterford Branch of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, with the merits of which the Committee is not directly concerned. In the course of this dispute, a circular (dated the 12th November, 1923) was issued to a number of the Waterford members of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, who are alleged by that Union to have since been poached by the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, containing the following statement:—

"They (the members) have no right to claim membership any longer. All collections taken up by the three collectors . . . have been returned to them. Therefore, everybody from whom they collected subscriptions is now lapsed from the Union."

The Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union allege that from the receipt of the above-mentioned circular it was definitely understood that the members concerned ceased to be members of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks.

The Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union further states that although approached by the dissenting members with a view to joining that Union, the latter repeatedly refused to accept them until negotiations which had been proceeding between the members and their old Union had finally failed to result in any agreement being arrived at. The dissenting members were eventually accepted into membership of the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union on the 15th February, 1924.

We have given very careful consideration to the statement made by both parties, and we have come to the conclusion that it was not unreasonable for the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union to assume that the members in question had definitely ceased to have any official connection with the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, and that therefore they were justified in accepting them as members. The charge of poaching has not, in our opinion, been definitely established.

With reference to the second charge (b), it is clear beyond all doubt that the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union were aware of the fact that the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks were about to be involved in a serious industrial dispute involving, amongst others, the dissenting members, and that lock-out notices were about to be issued almost simultaneously with the acceptance of these members into the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union.

In view of these circumstances, we consider the action of the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, in accepting into membership these members at such a crucial period, as deserving of censure.

Moreover, the evidence went to show that that Union made no representations to the Headquarters of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks before accepting the members.

Respecting the third charge (c), the question as to whether the terms upon which the Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union advised their recently-enrolled members to go back to work were less favourable than could be obtained by the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, must remain largely a matter of conjecture, and there was not sufficient evidence before us to enable us to arrive at a definite decision on this point.

We are unanimously of opinion, however, that there is no doubt whatever that the fact that the members were at this critical stage divided into two Unions each more or less hostile to the other, had the effect of weakening the whole position and made a favourable settlement much more difficult than if the members were represented by one Union.

It is well to state that we postponed the issue of this report for several weeks to give both Unions an opportunity of considering the suggestions made to them by us, of consulting with a view to arriving at some working agreement which would render a recurrence of the unfortunate incident which was the subject of our enquiry, unlikely. We regret that no progress seems to have been made in this direction, but we would once more earnestly suggest to both Unions the desirability of seeking a settlement along these lines.

Signed :

JOHN T. O'FARRELL (Chairman).

THOMAS J. O'CONNELL.

DENIS CULLEN.

#### IV.—INDUSTRIAL SITUATION AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

7. At the end of September, 1923, the industrial situation was the subject of prolonged consideration by the National Executive, and it was agreed that encouragement should be given to a suggestion which had been made for a general conference of employers and employees, with a view to a full discussion on the economic and social position of the country and the effect of the movement, then beginning to be felt, for general reductions in wages. It will be remembered that the Government programme, announced at the opening of the present Dail, declared that "high prices, high profits and high wages can no longer be sustained by a country whose economic life has agriculture as its base and foundation." The experience of the Labour Movement over very many years gave ground for scepticism as to the practical outcome of such Governmental declarations, and events have proved that this scepticism was justified, for while, up to the present, no action whatever has been taken in regard to high prices and high profits, the Government have given direct encouragement to drastic reductions in wages. Realising that



there would inevitably be a movement to reduce wages and in the hope of securing a more general realisation of the influence of wages on the prosperity of the whole community, members of the National Executive and of the Labour Party in the Oireachtas had conversations with the President and other Ministers early this year, but there was no useful outcome. Since then the National Executive and the Labour Party in the Oireachtas have been engaged continually in reinforcing the opposition of the Trade Unions to wage reductions, and particularly to the powers of the Government, in relation to schemes for the relief of unemployment, and of local authorities being utilised for the purpose of bringing down wages.

8. At the end of last year the Government, which it will be remembered had some six months earlier rejected with contumely the proposals of its own Reconstruction and Development Commission for a comprehensive scheme of Road development, announced that it was placing a substantial sum of money at the disposal of local authorities for expenditure on road works for the purpose of relieving unemployment, particularly of men demobilised from the Army. A deputation from the National Executive and the Labour Party in the Oireachtas interviewed the President and other Ministers in November. We were assured that, while it was not possible to comply with our demand to pay the standard rate for the road-workers to the inexperienced men engaged on these schemes, it was not the intention to treat the schemes as providing merely another form of relief from "doles," and that, while the wages to be fixed for each district would be something below the standard rate for road-workers, they would be something above the usual rate for casual agricultural workers. This assurance has since been wholly ignored. The Minister for Local Government has insisted on the fixing of abnormally low rates of wages on road work. Sometimes this has been effected in the face of the strenuous opposition of the local authorities concerned, but in some cases both members of the Republican Party and supporters of the Government on Local authorities combined to take advantage of the Government's invitation to reduce wages. There is now clear evidence that the Minister for Local Government, who has the support of the Executive Council and the majority of the Dail, having succeeded in fixing very low rates of wages for workers employed on road schemes, is utilising those low wages as an argument for the reduction of the standard rate of wages paid to workers in the permanent employment of local authorities.

9. Every possible opportunity has been availed of by the Labour Party in the Dail to expose, criticise and oppose the policy of the Government in this respect. Full debates on formal motions, motions on the adjournment of the House, questions and speeches on the estimates have all been availed of to the fullest possible extent, but the Labour Party in the Dail is, of course, rendered almost powerless by the failure of the workers at the last general election to return their own representatives in effective numbers.

10. The question of unemployment and its consequent ill results has been raised again and again during the course of the session by the Labour Party. On the motion of resolution of thanks for the Governor-General's address, unemployment was dealt with by Deputies Johnson, Nagle, and Cornish.

Deputy Corish took advantage of the motion for the adjournment of December 6th, 1923, to raise the question of unemployment and the application and administration of the Unemployment Act of 1923.

On December 14th, Deputy Morrissey moved:—

"That the Dail condemns the Government for the failure to deal seriously with the problem of unemployment and its refusal to provide means for ameliorating the distress arising from the failure of the Unemployment Insurance Fund; and in particular disapproves of any attempt to use the promised scheme of State Aid for Road Improvement and the existence of a large number of unemployed demobilised soldiers as a means of forcing down the rate of wages paid for the ordinary work of Road Maintenance."

This motion was seconded by Deputy Murphy and spoken to by Deputies Hall, Corish, and Johnson. It was defeated by 44 votes to 13. In Deputy Corish's motion of the 5th March, 1924, censuring the policy of the Ministry of Local Government, the failure of the Government to deal with unemployment was again referred to. When the estimates for the relief of unemployment and distress came before the Dail, on July 2nd, Deputy Hogan criticised them for their inadequacy. In this he was supported by Deputies O'Connell and Morrissey, and eventually Deputy Corish moved that the estimates be referred back for reconsideration with a view to increasing them. Deputy Colohan seconded the motion, and Deputy Johnson spoke in support of it. It was defeated by 46 votes to 14, Deputy Cosgrave, an Independent Deputy, being the only Deputy outside the Labour Party who voted for it.

### **Unemployment Insurance.**

11. The widespread and long-continued unemployment, of course, resulted in the practical breakdown of the Unemployment Insurance System. When the Unemployment Insurance Act of 1923 was being discussed in the Dail last May, the Government's spokesman admitted that its finance was based on the assumption of a general revival of industry by October of last year. The warning then given by the Labour Party that there was no ground for anticipating any such general revival, and that in the absence of it the finance of the whole scheme would break down, has since been more than justified. The matter has been the subject of repeated representations to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce and to the Government in the Dail, but until June of this year no action was taken by the Government. The position has, therefore, been that since October, 1923,



Unemployment Insurance has been administered under the full rigour of the Act of 1920, although in Great Britain and the Six Counties the cruel absurdity of this course has been recognised by the Governments there. As a result of the Government's policy a very large number of workers—how large it is impossible to estimate, but it must run into many thousands—after having suffered acutely from unemployment over a period of many months, or even years, have been left without even the meagre relief afforded by Unemployment Benefit.

12. A very large number of individual cases of refusal of unemployment benefit are reported to the Head Office, and action is taken thereon with the Ministry of Industry and Commerce. In some cases it is possible to secure rectification of errors, but in very many cases the claimant is disqualified under the terms of the Act of 1920, usually under Section 8 (4), and the Minister was powerless to grant benefit in the absence of the necessary amending legislation.

13. The whole question of Unemployment Insurance and its administration has been under consideration by the National Executive in conjunction with the Dublin Workers' Council and other affiliated Organisations with a view to a complete examination of the defects of the present system.

### **New Unemployment Insurance Act.**

14. After continual pressure by the Labour Party, Deputy McGilligan, the Minister for Industry and Commerce, introduced a new Unemployment Insurance Bill on June 5th, which aimed at (1) reviving contributions which have been exhausted so as to make them again available for qualification for benefit; (2) at making special arrangements for demobilised Army men who had been previously employed in insurable occupations, and (3) at temporarily suspending certain disqualifications for benefits due to insured contributors not having been able to obtain the necessary number of contributions.

The maximum periods of benefit allowed under the Act are:—

From the 30th June, 1924, to the 29th October, 1924,

10 weeks (out of 17).

From the 30th October, 1924, to the 25th March, 1925,

16 weeks (out of 20).

From the 26th March, 1925, to the 14th October, 1925,

15 weeks (out of 29).

From the 15th October, 1925, to the 14th October, 1926,

26 weeks (out of 52), and so on.

The period during which the benefit can be actually drawn is still calculated in accordance with the 1920 rule of one week's benefit for every six contributions. Any benefit drawn in the last year will not lessen the contributor's claim to future benefit provided that there are some contributions still to credit, and all contributions paid since 1920 are treated as unexhausted and give claim to benefit at the full rate. Demobilised soldiers are given the right to four weeks'

benefit for every insurance year during which they have served in the Army. Any further benefit will depend on the number of contributions which they had to their credit before they joined the Army.

15. The principal Labour Party amendments aimed at :—

- (1). Giving soldiers full credit for two-thirds of their period of service with the Army.
- (2). Decreasing the gap between the exhaustion of maximum benefit in any one benefit year and the re-entry into benefit with the commencement of the next benefit year.
- (3). Bringing into benefit demobilised soldiers (who are disqualified by not having any stamps to their credit previous to their joining the National Army) by giving the Minister discretionary powers to pay the usual special contributions in such cases.
- (4). Entitling workers to benefit who are unemployed through a trade dispute to which they are not parties.
- (5). Preventing the disqualification of persons through refusal to accept work in a district where the wage is lower or the conditions less favourable than those generally observed in that district.

Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 4 were defeated, and the Minister, while not accepting No. 5, gave assurance that the Act would be so administered as to ensure that the intention of the amendment was fulfilled.

## **V.—HEALTH INSURANCE.**

16. In order to provide a means for consultation and joint action by Trade Union Approved Societies, the National Executive took the initiative in summoning conferences of representatives of such Societies. The first Conference was held on 22nd February, 1920, at which Draft Rules were provisionally adopted. The first General Meeting of the Association was held on the 17th April, 1924, and the provisional Rules confirmed. The Association has affiliated to it nine Societies, with an aggregate membership of 34,330. The establishment of the Association was welcomed by the Insurance Commissioners, who invited it to nominate two members of their Advisory Committee. Messrs. L. J. Duffy and T. Waldron were accordingly nominated.

### **The Irish Trade Union Congress Health Insurance Society.**

17. This Society, established last year, is making satisfactory progress. In April, 1924, the Approved Society established by the Irish Post Office Workers' Union agreed to transfer its engagements, and this transfer of 1935 members, together with a number of individual accessions, has brought the total membership up to 10,045. The



First Annual Conference of the Society was held on 19th May, 1924, when the following Officers and Committee were elected :—

\*Chairman—M. Somerville.

\*Secretary—Thomas Johnson.

\*Treasurer—Thomas Farren.

Manager—T. Waldron.

Trustees—Messrs. P. J. Martin, H. McDermott, T. Dunne.

Committee—Messrs. J. Wickham, L. Keegan, J. Sheppard, J. H. Bennett, P. Gavan, and F. Parkes.

\*These are members of the National Executive.

## VI.—WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION.

18. The Free State has continued temporarily the British legislation which increased the compensation payable to injured workmen and their dependents under the Workmen's Compensation Act, but has not amended the principal Act. The British Parliament, followed by the Northern Parliament, passed last year an Act which amended and very considerably improved the principal Act, so that there is now a marked difference in the legislation on this subject in the two parts of Ireland and between the Free State and Great Britain. We have urged upon the Government the necessity of introducing permanent legislation and of making much needed improvements in the existing scales and system of compensation. So far no action has been taken, partly because the whole question of Workmen's Compensation will be considered by the Seventh Session of the International Labour Conference at Geneva in 1925, and much valuable information as to the systems adopted in other countries will then be available. The British system, which we have carried over in Ireland, is not absolutely certain in its operation, nor is it very economical; in some of the Provinces of Canada, for instance, 98 per cent. of the money paid by employers for compensation purposes actually reaches the injured workman or his dependents, while in Great Britain the proportion received is very much smaller.

19. The position in respect of compensation of workers resident in the present Free State area but injured in Great Britain or the Six Counties, or vice versa, may cause considerable legal difficulties and expense. This issue was raised in the Courts early this year in the case of a seaman resident in Arklow, who claimed compensation from a British employer in respect of an accident abroad. In this case, the decision was satisfactory, and it was held that the Irish Court had jurisdiction. But this kind of difficulty may arise frequently, and we therefore urged the Ministry of Industry and Commerce to seek to arrange an International Convention to facilitate procedure in such cases. No action has yet been taken, but the International Labour Conference at Geneva this year gave a first reading to a Draft Convention and Recommendation which will

come up for final adoption next year, and which will, if ratified by the British and Free State Governments, fully safeguard the rights of workers injured while employed outside their own country.

## VII.—LABOUR DAY.

20. Last year's Congress passed the following resolution :—

“That it be an instruction to the National Executive to organise for the celebration of May 1st, 1924, and succeeding years as a National Labour Day.”

Accordingly the National Executive circularised affiliated organisations at the beginning of March, drawing attention to the resolution, and requesting their view as to the steps to be taken. At the beginning of April the Secretary reported that of the replies received to the circular, only one favoured the declaration of a general holiday; all the other replies were opposed to a stoppage of work, in view of the widespread unemployment, but several suggested holding demonstrations on the first Sunday in May. It was decided that Unions and Councils should be informed that, in view of this consensus of opinion, the National Executive could not advise a general holiday, but that meetings, demonstrations, &c., should be held either on May 1st or on the first Sunday in May, as decided by the local organisation. So far as the National Executive are aware, only a few Labour Day meetings were in fact held.

21. While the National Executive feel that the decision to celebrate May 1st as Labour Day should be adhered to, it must be pointed out that a successful celebration depends upon active preparations by local organisations made well in advance. This year's experience confirms that of recent years, namely, that in times of industrial depression and unemployment, it is little use trying to arrange for a May Day stoppage of work, but it should be remembered that a general holiday is only one form of celebration. Labour Day should be a festival, and the celebration should, therefore, take the form of concerts, sports, open-air galas, processions and similar functions, and need not be limited to either a stoppage of work or mass meetings. Where local circumstances render it impossible to celebrate Labour Day fully on May 1st, the first Sunday in May might be utilised for part of the celebration, but in such cases an effort should be made to hold a meeting or demonstration of some kind on May 1st as well. It is hoped that next year and in succeeding years the local organisations will make proper preparations for Labour Day well in advance of May.



## VIII.—COMMISSIONS AND COMMITTEES OF INQUIRY, &c.

### Governmental.

#### The Commission on Prices.

22. This Commission presented its Report in July, 1923; but, as was anticipated in the Report of the National Executive for last year, its recommendations were very limited in scope, and have had no practical effect.

#### The Commission on Agriculture.

23. This Commission issued its final Report in June, 1924. Earlier Reports dealing with the grading and marketing of eggs and the establishment of a national brand for butter and the control of the butter trade, have been made the basis of legislation introduced by the Minister for Lands and Agriculture. The Final Minority Report, signed by the two Labour members of the Commission, Deputy Johnson and Senator Duffy, may serve as the basis of a comprehensive Labour agricultural policy, and deserves to be studied carefully, in conjunction with the Report of the Majority, by the whole Movement.

#### The Commission on Canals and Inland Waterways.

24. This Commission, on which Deputy Davin was the Labour representative, presented its Report in July, 1923. It recommended the nationalisation of canals (but not of transport by canal), the establishment of a Board of Control over Canals and Canal traffic, and the immediate development of certain sections of our inland navigation system. No action has been taken on its recommendations.

#### The Commission on Reconstruction and Development.

25. This Commission ceased to meet after its recommendations in regard to Roads had been denounced by President Cosgrave, in circumstances which were reported to last year's Congress, and the Commission was formally wound up in January of this year.

#### Commission on Industrial Assurance.

26. This Commission, of which Mr. Seumas Byrne, of the National Union of Life Assurance Workers, is a member, was set up by the Government at the beginning of this year. The National Executive submitted to the Committee a memorandum advocating the establishment of a State monopoly of Life Assurance, or at any rate of a State Life Insurance Office. The Committee has not yet published its Report.

## National Executive Inquiries.

### Advisory Commission on Education.

27. Acting on the instructions contained in the resolution of last year's Congress, the National Executive early this year set up the following Committee to advise the National Executive on the formulating of a National system of education adapted to the needs and circumstances of the children of the workers :—

Cormac Breathnach, Dip. Ed. (N.U.I.), ex-president of the I.N.T.O.; Miss Heagan, Central Model Schools; T. J. Burke, B.A., Secretary A.S.T.I.; F. MacNamara, Secretary I.A. and T.I.O.A.; J. McGuigan, B. Comm., Dublin City Technical Institute; T. J. O'Connell, T.D., General Secretary I.N.T.O.; Thomas Johnson, T.D., and Senators T. Farren and J. T. O'Farrell.

At the first meeting of this Committee, Deputy Johnson was appointed Chairman, and Deputy O'Connell Vice-Chairman. M. P. Linehan, of the Labour Party Office Staff, acted as Secretary.

28. In the terms of reference the Committee were asked to discuss and report to the National Executive :—

- (1) The aim of a national system of education.
- (2) How the aim may best be realised.

Suggestions were asked for on :—

- (a) The organisation of the Ministry of Education, and the co-ordination of its different departments.
- (b) The financing of educational services.
- (c) Types of schools—their distribution.
- (d) School buildings, their heating, lighting and sanitation.
- (e) The management, staffing and inspection of schools.
- (f) The training, remuneration and status of teachers.
- (g) The medical care, feeding and attendance of pupils.
- (h) Schools programme—vocational training.
- (i) Secondary education—continuation classes in agriculture, commerce and technology.
- (j) Adult education—the Universities.

29. The Committee has held frequent meetings, but the terms of reference being so varied and covering such a wide field, the preparation of anything like a full report will require a great deal of time.

30. In the discussions that have taken place up to the present, the points raised have been approached from the viewpoint of the pupil, the citizen, the teacher and the State. Tentative findings have been drawn up with regard to private enterprise in education, nursery schools, infant schools, primary or elementary schools and obligatory attendance. The Committee stands adjourned at present owing to the summer holidays, but arrangements have been made to resume its deliberations in the early autumn.



### **Shop and Factory Inspection.**

31. A consultation on Shop and Factory Inspection with the Irish Women Workers' Union and the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks—the two unions which proposed resolutions on this subject at last year's Congress—took place in April. It was agreed that the existing legislation and its administration called for review, but it has not been possible up to the present to take further action in the way of enquiry and consultation which was contemplated. The matter is one which deserves consideration by the incoming National Executive.

### **Irish Railways Wages Board.**

32. It will be convenient here to refer to the fact that Messrs. L. J. Duffy, our Chairman, and D. R. Campbell, Secretary Belfast Trades Council, were nominated by the National Executive to serve as representatives of Labour on the Irish Railways Wages Board. This body is the final court of appeal in the conciliation machinery established by agreement between the Railway Trade Unions and the Railway Companies. It met in May to hear claims and counter-claims by the Unions and Companies, but owing to the obduracy of the Railway Companies' representative on the Board was unable to give an award. A strike by the Railway Clerks' Association which would have resulted at the beginning of June was averted by an agreement that the dispute should be decided by the arbitration of Mr. Justice Wylie, the Chairman of the Board. The Railway Clerks' Association was, on the whole, satisfied with the arbitrator's award.

## **IX.—INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.**

### **International Federation of Trade Unions, Amsterdam.**

33. In March an invitation was received from the International Federation of Trade Unions to send a fraternal delegate to its Congress at Vienna in June. The invitation was declined on the ground of the cost entailed, and because it would be impossible to obtain a prior approval of Congress. In May an invitation was received inviting the sending of delegates to an International Congress on Workers' Education organised by the International Federation of Trade Unions, to be held at Oxford on August 15th-17th, and to this the National Executive replied that they hoped to be able to send a representative.

## **Assistance to German Trade Unions.**

34. The financial collapse of Germany had disastrous effects on the Trade Unions, wiping out their reserves and reducing their income to a vanishing point. The National Executive subscribed £50 to the Relief Fund opened by the International Federation of Trade Unions, and £20, £10, and £5 respectively were given by the Irish Women Workers' Union, the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, and the Dublin Typographical Association in response to a circular issued by the National Executive, bringing the total Irish contribution to £85.

## **International Labour Office.**

35. The Secretary was nominated by the National Executive as Workers' Representative in the Irish Delegation to the Fifth Session of the International Labour Conference of the League of Nations, at Geneva, in October, 1923. Mr. Johnson was accompanied by Senator MacPartlin as adviser. It is with profound regret that we have to record that Tom MacPartlin died on the night of his arrival in Geneva, so that a gloom was cast over Ireland's entry into its first official International Conference. His family suffered a grievous bereavement, and the Irish Labour Movement lost the services and comradeship of a wise and trusted leader. The home-coming of the remains was made the occasion of a public funeral of a unique character, which testified to the respect and affection which Mr. MacPartlin inspired, not only among the Trade Union officials and the members of the Oireachtas who had worked with him in public affairs, but also among the thousands of Trade Unionists who marched in the funeral processions, lined the streets and attended the Funeral Mass in the Pro-Cathedral.

36. The Sixth Session of the International Labour Conference was held in Geneva from June 16th to July 5th. Senator T. Foran was nominated by the National Executive as Workers' representative, with R. J. P. Mortished as adviser.

37. During the year the Saorstát, after approval by the Oireachtas, ratified two conventions adopted by previous International Labour Conferences. The conventions guaranteed to workers in agriculture the same rights in respect to freedom of association and to compensation in case of accidents as obtain in the case of urban workers. The ratification of these Conventions had, therefore, no immediate effect but was nevertheless of considerable value as signifying a formal commitment of the Saorstát to the application of the principle of international action in social legislation, which is the governing idea of the International Labour Organisation of the League of Nations.



## **"British Commonwealth of Nations" Labour Conference.**

38. In January last an invitation was received from the Joint International Department of the British Labour Party and Trade Union Congress to participate in a "British Commonwealth Labour Conference" to be held in August of this year. After consideration, the National Executive decided that the invitation should be accepted, and that the question of the relations of the various States of the "British Commonwealth" with one another and with other States should be brought up for discussion. The British organisations' arrangements for the Conference were well in hand, but it was found that, owing to elections and the political situation in several of the British Dominions, it would be impracticable for the Conference to meet in August, and the Conference has accordingly been postponed to a date still to be fixed.

## **Labour Premier of Queensland.**

39. Mr. E. G. Theodore, Labour Premier of Queensland, accompanied by Mrs. Theodore, visited Dublin at Easter, and were entertained to lunch by the National Executive. Mr. Theodore, who expressed great pleasure at having had the opportunity of meeting representatives of Irish Labour, emphasised the value of interchanges of views and experiences between the Labour Parties of the Dominions and of Ireland, and gave much useful information as to the legislation and activities of the Labour Governments of Queensland.

## **Scottish Trade Union Congress.**

40. The fraternal delegates to the Scottish Trade Union Congress appointed by Congress last August have presented the following report :—

Comrades,

We have to report that we had the privilege and honour of attending, as fraternal delegates, the Twenty-ninth Annual Congress of the Scottish Trade Union Movement, which was held at Ayr, on the 16th, 17th, 18th, and 19th April, 1923.

We were received very cordially, and had an opportunity of addressing the Congress on the third day of the proceedings. We endeavoured to give to the delegates present an idea of the position of the Movement at home, industrially and politically. Every member present showed a keen interest in the Irish Movement, and many of them expressed themselves sympathetically, conveyed messages of encouragement, and renewed their assurances of goodwill.

The Congress was presided over by Mr. T. Wilson, who delivered

a very inspiring address. He dealt with the struggles of the past year in Scotland, and pointed out that, although that year was a strenuous one industrially, the membership of the Unions in Scotland had increased by about 75,000. This again showed that, although the Trade Union Movement may have its bad days, the workers are always forced back again to the ranks.

The subjects discussed were practically similar to those at our own Congress, except that the Scottish one is a purely Trade Union Congress. One interesting point was that one whole day was spent discussing the question of better Union organisation—about thirty delegates entering into the discussion. Their arguments ranged over the question of the One Big Union, Amalgamation, Federation, Industrial Unionism, and so on. There was no general agreement as to the form of organisation to be set up as the most effective weapon to wage the workers' war, but all agreed that some form of closer organisation was necessary.

The Social side of the Movement was well catered for. All delegates visited Burns' Monument, Burns' Cottage, and then had tea in Burns' Tea Gardens. An impromptu concert was started in the Gardens, and we heard many good voices singing Labour and Socialist songs. Altogether it was very enjoyable.

We were presented with beautiful Souvenirs of the Congress, in the shape of a copy each (our own choice) of Robert Burns' Poems.

Yours fraternally,

T. Nagle.

D. R. Campbell.

## **X.—POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LABOUR PARTY.**

### **A.—ELECTIONS.**

41. The third Dail was dissolved on the 9th August, 1923, and August 27th was fixed for the date of the General Election. The Labour Party immediately proceeded to press forward with the selection of candidates for the different constituencies. Local conferences were held of delegates from Trade Unions in accordance with our Constitution. The National Executive was represented at each of them. Labour entered the field in twenty-six constituencies out of a total of thirty. The following table gives the names of these constituencies, the number of seats, and the names of the Labour Candidates.



CONSTITUENCY.	NUMBER OF SEATS.	LABOUR CANDIDATES.
Cavan .. ..	4	P. Sheridan (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Carlow-Kilkenny ..	5	*E. Doyle (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Clare .. ..	5	*P. Hogan (I.T. & G.W. U.). P. J. MacNamara (Ennis U. Labourers)
Cork (North) ..	3	*T. Nagle (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Cork (West) ..	5	*T. Murphy (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Cork (Borough) ..	5	R. Day (I.T. & G.W. U.). W. Kennealy (I.T. & G.W. U.). R. S. Anthony (Typographical).
Donegal .. ..	8	D. Houston (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Dublin County ..	8	*T. Johnson (I.U. of D.W. & C.). B. Kavanagh (N.U.R.).
Dublin City North ..	8	E. O'Carroll (R.C.A.).
Dublin City South ..	7	William O'Brien (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Galway .. ..	9	*T. J. O'Connell (I.N.T.O.). J. J. McNally (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Kildare .. ..	3	*H. Colohan (I.T. & G.W. U.). M. MacGabhann (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Kerry .. ..	7	Patrick Casey (Bakers). Cormac Breathnach (I.N.T.O.).
Limerick .. ..	7	*P. Clancy (Limerick Carpenters). M. J. Murphy (I.T. & G.W. U.). Seumas O'Brien (I.T. & G.W. U.). M. Keyes (N.U.R.).
Leitrim-Sligo ..	7	John Lynch (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Longford - Westmeath	5	T. J. Redmond (I.T. & G.W. U.). H. Wilson (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Leix-Offaly .. ..	5	Denis Cullen (Bakers). *William Davin (R.C.A.).
Louth .. ..	3	Cathal O'Shannon (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Meath .. ..	3	*D. Hall (I.T. & G.W. U.). C. Matthews (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Monaghan .. ..	3	James Coburn (Bricklayers).
Mayo North .. ..	4	Archie Heron (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Roscommon .. ..	4	W. Kelleher (N.U.R.).
Tipperary .. ..	7	*D. Morrissey (I.T. & G.W. U.). P. O'Doherty (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Waterford .. ..	4	J. Baird (I.T. & G.W. U.). *J. Butler (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Wexford .. ..	5	*R. Corish (I.T. & G.W. U.). D. O'Callaghan (R.C.A.). J. Shannon (I.T. & G.W. U.).
Wicklow .. ..	3	*J. Everett (I.T. & G.W. U.). C. Gaule (I.T. & G.W. U.).

\* ELECTED.

Of the 44 candidates nominated, 14 were elected.

42. The following programme was published and distributed throughout the different constituencies.

### **The Labour Party Programme.**

#### **The Right of the People.**

In the words of Patrick Pearse, we hold that "The right of the people of Ireland to the ownership of Ireland and to the unfettered control of Irish destinies is indefeasible; that the Nation's Sovereignty extends not only to all the men and women of the Nation but to all its material possessions; the Nation's soil and all its resources; all the wealth and all the wealth-producing processes within the Nation."

#### **National Unity.**

The workers of all Ireland, North and South, suffering from the same evils, arising from the same causes, can hope for relief only from the same principles of economic and political democracy.

#### **Anti-Militarism.**

The Army must be the servant, not the master, of the people.

#### **Regular Work and a Living Wage.**

Every man and woman willing to work must be guaranteed work and a living wage.

The recommendations of the Reconstruction Commission on the strengthening, re-making, and repair of the main and local roads, must be given effect to immediately, so as to give employment to ten thousand men on the main roads and thirty thousand men on local roads this year.

#### **Reduction of Taxation of the Poor.**

The Tax on Tea, now tenpence per pound, and the Tax on Sugar, now nearly threepence per pound, must be abolished; and the tax on Tobacco, now about sixpence per ounce, must be greatly reduced before any reduction takes place in the taxation of the rich.

#### **Agricultural Development.**

Encouragement of tillage; reduction of Railway Charges on Agricultural Produce; assistance to co-operative efforts amongst Land Workers; development of Home Markets for Irish Farm Produce.



## Industrial Development.

Irish Industries must be encouraged and assisted by aid of national credit and cheap loans; home markets to be developed by a policy of regular employment, and high wages to be spent in buying Irish-made goods; protection of fair employers from the competition of goods produced by low-paid labour—whether home-made or imported.

## Housing of the Workers.

The Housing of the workers must be undertaken by a National Housing Authority. This body to be set up immediately, and to be given full powers to prohibit luxury building until sufficient houses have been built for the workers. It shall have power to take over and enter upon the production of building materials as required, and to arrange for the building of houses wherever needed according to a regular annual programme. The cost of Housing to be borne out of National funds, and the rents to be charged not to exceed the cost of upkeep and depreciation.

## Nationalisation of the Railways and Canals.

The Railways and Canals must be Nationalised and administered by a Board on which the workers in these services shall be fully represented. The Railways and Canals to be used for the purpose of serving the Irish people, not in the interests of foreign traders.

## Care of the Children.

It is the first duty of the Government *to make provision for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the children*; to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food, clothing or shelter—(Democratic Programme of the First Dail).

## Election Propaganda.

43. In addition to the above the Central Office of the Labour Party prepared a series of leaflets, bundles of which were supplied free to the different election committees. The following is a list of the different leaflets :—

- No. 1.—“ Carry on the True National Tradition.”  
(Quotations from Tone, Davis, and Mitchel).
- No. 2.—Ditto (     ”     ”     Lalor and Davitt).
- No. 3.—Ditto (     ”     ”     Pearse and Connolly)
- No. 4.—“ Workers of Ireland, study this! ”
- No. 5.—“ How to get houses.”
- No. 6.—“ If you want your child to get a fair start in life.”
- No. 7.—“ Christians consider!”
- No. 8.—“ A Record to be proud of.”

- No. 9—"Work for the Unemployed."  
 No. 10—"Farmers! Consider."  
 No. 11—"The Labour Party Programme."  
 No. 12—"The Betrayal of the Unemployed."  
 No. 13—"How to reduce the cost of living."  
 No. 14—"Labour's Standard Bearers."

Notes for speakers on Education, Unemployment, Housing, the Land, the Constitution and the Oath, and Militarism, were prepared and supplied to the different candidates, their agents and directors. Amongst the other literature prepared and distributed from the Central Office during the campaign were:—A Pamphlet on Electoral Law, Notes for Labour Party Candidates and their Agents, Copies of Legal Forms for use during an Election Campaign, the Postmaster-General's Regulations *re* Free Postage, and instruction to Election Agents and Directors on their duties on a polling day. The campaign was a stirring and strenuous one, the members of the National Executive and the Staff of the Labour Party taking an active part in it.

### Election Results.

44. The following table gives, in a summarised form, the results of the Election:—

PARTY.	Number of Candidates elected.	Number of First Preference Votes received.	Percentage of Total Poll.
Labour ... ..	14	119,116	11.4
Cumann na nGaedheal	60	406,083	38.6
Republican ... ..	44	284,341	27.0
Farmers ... ..	15	135,354	12.9
'Independent Labour'	2	12,920	1.0
Larkinite ... ..	—	4,503	.4
Other Candidates ...	15	91,630	8.7
Total	150	1,053,947	100

45. The results were most disappointing from a Labour point of view. The comparative smallness of the Labour vote was due in part to the want of suitable political machinery and lack of funds.



But it was also due very largely to the fact that Irish working-class electors have not yet fully realised the need for independent working-class representation and still allow themselves to be misled. The Government supporters chose to fight the election on the Treaty issue, thus playing into the hands of the "Republicans," and many electors were foolish enough to allow the unreal opposition between "Free State" and "Republic" to divert their attention from the urgent problems that affected the working-class. The result was to strengthen the "Republican" vote and to allow the Government to secure re-election without being committed to any definite programme, and consequently free to exercise the powers of the State against the workers' interests. The lesson to be learned from the results of the Election is that if Labour ever hopes to achieve a majority in the National Parliament, it must set about building up a political organisation which will provide opportunities for that propaganda amongst, and that education of, the workers which the results of this Election undoubtedly prove they need.

Nevertheless, when it is remembered that this was, after all, only the second General Election contested by the Labour Party, it is encouraging to find that there were nearly 120,000 electors prepared to give their No. 1 votes to Labour. We can hardly expect to win the powers of the State for the workers much more rapidly than has been the case in other countries which have not been delayed by national problems. What we have to do, after a beginning which is comparatively good, is to bend all our strength to the task of making up lost time.

### **The County Dublin Bye-Election.**

46. The death of the late Deputy Derham, in the closing days of 1923, created a vacancy in the constituency of County Dublin. At a Conference representative of all Trade Unions operating in the constituency, on January 27th, 1924, it was decided that Labour should enter the contest, and Mr. A. Heron, I.T.G.W.U., was chosen to be its standard-bearer in the contest. This decision was come to notwithstanding the fact that most of the delegates present believed that the possibilities of Labour's winning the seat were remote. They felt, however, that the opportunities for propaganda which the campaign would provide should be taken advantage of. The Polling Day was fixed for the 19th March, so that the campaign, which was under the direction of A. J. Cassidy, was a long one. Its progress was eagerly watched by the workers all over the country, many resolutions from Trade Union Branches and Workers' Councils wishing success to the Labour Candidate being received by his election committee. The result, although not so good as was expected, still gave ground for congratulation, as the joint first preference vote of the two Labour Candidates at the general election was increased by 1,566, and the Labour percentage of the total poll was increased from 8 per cent. to 15 per cent.

## **Limerick Constituency Bye-Election.**

47. A Constituency Conference, at which the National Executive was represented, was held in Limerick on April 13th, to consider the advisability of contesting the bye-election caused by the resignation of Dr. Hayes from the Dail. After consideration of all the circumstances, including the financial situation, the Conference decided that it would not be advisable to put forward a candidate.

## **The Local Council Elections.**

48. The Local Council Elections, which had been postponed to a date not later than 1st January, 1924, were again postponed to a date not later than 30th September, 1924, by a Bill which became law on the 10th January, 1924. An Order of the Minister for Local Government published in "Iris Oifigiuil," fixed the date for holding local elections as follows:—

(a) Corporation, borough council, urban district councils and town commissioners—July 15th, 1924.

(b) County and rural district Councils—July 15th, 1924.

(c) Boards of guardians for urban districts—August 27th, 1924.

On the 14th March, the Secretary, on behalf of the National Executive, circularised all affiliated Trade Unions and Trades and Workers' Councils suggesting that machinery be put into operation at once for contesting these elections. A further circular was promised, which would contain additional advice, but as it soon became evident that there was no intention of holding the elections on the dates mentioned, the necessity for such a further circular has not up to the present arisen. A Bill was introduced in the Dail in June to further postpone these elections until a date not later than the 31st March, 1925. The Labour Party opposed this Bill by speech and vote.

## **Registration of Voters.**

49. In November of last year a circular letter was issued to all affiliated organisations giving full information as to those entitled to be registered as voters; instructing how those whose names are omitted from the list could get them put on; and pointing out the important dates. A further circular on the same matter was issued in January. As much ground was lost at the last election owing to the non-registration of working-class voters, the importance to the Labour movement of seeing that all workers are registered who are entitled to be so cannot be over-estimated.

## **B.—REPORT OF THE LABOUR PARTY IN THE OIREACHTAS.**

50. The first meeting of the fourth Dail took place on September 19th, 1923. The first business of the Dail was the election of the President and the members of the Executive Council. The Chairman



of the Labour Party took advantage of this debate, and again of the debate on the Governor-General's address, to demand a declaration of policy by the President in the matters of the release of the prisoners, unemployment and unemployment benefit, reduction of wages, and the general economic position of the Free State.

51. The following is a resumé of the most important of the other Bills and Acts introduced during the present session.

### **The Courts of Justice Act.**

The first measure introduced in the Dail was "A Bill for the establishment of Courts of Justice pursuant to the Constitution of Saorstát Éireann, and for purposes relating to the better administration of justice."

The most important of the amendments put down by the Labour Party included one enabling District Justices to act as Conciliators, another setting up Children's Courts in Cork, Limerick and Waterford, in addition to the one in Dublin, and a third ensuring the attendance of at least one other woman in a Court where a case of assault on women is being tried *in camera*.

### **Ministers and Secretaries Act.**

52. This Act aimed at setting up the Ministers and Departments of the State in Saorstát Éireann pursuant to the Constitution, and for enabling the appointment of Parliamentary Secretaries, and for purposes incidental thereto.

Among the Labour Party amendments to the Bill were proposals aiming at keeping the administration of Old Age Pensions within the Ministry of Public Health, the setting up of a Ministry of Transport, the removal of the Council of Defence from the privileged position given it by the Act, but giving the Minister for Defence the power to set up such a Council, the transference of electoral functions from the Ministry of Local Government to the Ministry for Justice. All these amendments were rejected.

### **Transport and Communications Bill.**

53. This Bill introduced by the Labour Party was the first non-government measure introduced in the Dail. It aimed at providing for the acquisition by the State of Railways in Saorstát Éireann, and for the management of such railways and the postal services, and for the co-ordination of road, motor, aerial, and other transport and communication services, and for purposes connected therewith. It comprised fifty sections and two schedules. It attracted considerable attention, and representatives of all parties in the Dail joined in congratulating the Labour Party for their contribution to the solution of this vital problem. The Bill was the fulfilment of the promise

referred to in last year's report that, if the Labour Party decided to introduce such a Bill, the Railway Clerks' Association would be pleased to give expert assistance in its preparation. This offer was gladly availed of. The thanks of the Congress are due to the Railway Clerks' Association for their generous activities in connection with the serious effort at legislation on a question which had been the subject of many resolutions of past Congresses. The Bill was defeated on the Second Reading. The following Deputies only, in addition to the Labour Deputies, voted for it:—Dr. Myles Keogh, Mr. A. Byrne, and Mr. Sean Lyons.

### **Public Safety (Powers of Arrest and Detention) Act, 1924.**

54. This Act was passed as an urgent measure to enable the Government to continue to hold the remaining prisoners in custody and to prolong the powers of arrest on suspicion and detention without charge or trial which were given by the Public Safety Act of 1923. It was strenuously opposed by the Labour Party, as was the previous measure, but the Government, of course, was sure of its majority, and practically all our amendments were defeated. Two useful amendments, however, were secured by the Party, though both were weakened by the Government before it would accept them. The first aimed at speeding up the procedure in regard to the Appeal Councils which enquire into the case against prisoners. The second provided for a member of the Police force being present when Military forces enter a private house to effect an arrest.

### **Housing (Building Facilities) Act, 1924.**

55. This is a weak, timid measure which will have but little effect in relieving the acute shortage of houses all over the country. Not more than about 3,000 houses can be built under the scheme of the Act, and the total expenditure by the State is limited to £300,000. This money will be spent in giving grants ranging from £50 to £100, to persons who build houses of an approved type within the next year and of £26 and £67 for reconstructed houses. The houses will be small, and restrictions are imposed to prevent them being sold or let at excessive prices; but the lowest rent fixed is  $7/4\frac{1}{2}$  a week for a three-roomed cottage in a rural district. The maximum rent for houses is  $13/10$  weekly and  $5/6$  for flats. While criticising the inadequacy of the Bill, the Labour Party took the line that they would not do anything to justify the charge of holding up building.

### **Railways Bill.**

56. This Act creates a Railway monopoly by amalgamating practically all the lines situated wholly in the twenty-six counties. The Amalgamated Company is guaranteed a standard revenue equal to at



least the average of the years 1911-12-13, which were the three best years known in Irish railway history. There is no representation of the State, the railway-using public or the railway workers on the Directorate of the Amalgamated Company. The only safeguards of public interest are a power to call for information and, within narrowly restricted limits, to require facilities to be given by the Company, which is vested in the Minister for Industry and Commerce, and the creation of a Railway Tribunal with power to fix rates, subject to the guarantee of the Company's standard revenue. The baronial lines are to be absorbed in the new monopoly, but the baronies and the State are to pay a subsidy in respect to them for ten years amounting in all to nearly half a million sterling.

This Bill does not render nationalisation unnecessary, for it does not meet the needs of either the State or the public, but will defer it and make it more expensive.

The Labour Party voted against the second reading of the Bill. It tabled fifty amendments to it. The most important of these were :—

- (1) The setting up of two Railway Tribunals instead of one, viz., a Railway Amalgamation Tribunal and a Railway Rates Tribunal.
- (2) The making permanent of the Railway Tribunal.
- (3) The giving of the Tribunal power to see that the capitalisation of the Amalgamated Company is arranged on sound lines.
- (4) The giving of the Tribunal power to effect a greater reduction of rates if it be satisfied that the excess of the revenue over the standard is not due mainly or in great part to the enterprise and good management of the Company.
- (5) The provision for the Amalgamated Company being required on the demand of the Minister for Industry and Commerce to permit electric power transmission lines to be carried along by the railway tracks with a view to promoting the extension of the use of electric power and facilitating its distribution.

The following are the more important of the successful Labour amendments which are of direct material benefit to the railway workers in the Saorstát :—

- (1) In the Bill as introduced, the basis of the compensation to which a redundant officer or servant shall be entitled was laid down as the average amount of his remuneration and emoluments for the three years preceding 3rd April, 1924. As the result of a Labour Party amendment, the basis of computation has been altered to the annual value of the remuneration and emoluments of which the officer or

servant was in receipt on the date of the happening of the event giving rise to the claim for compensation. As large numbers of railway workers may not be adversely affected by the Act for several years, the importance of this improvement will be obvious.

(2) In the Bill as introduced, there was no provision whatever for compensation to redundant officers or servants having less than five years' service on the date from which they became redundant. In the Senate, however, the Labour Party succeeded in having accepted an amendment providing that any officer or servant with less than five years' service, who is made redundant, shall be entitled to a gratuity calculated at the rate of one-sixth of his remuneration and emoluments for each completed year of his service.

(3) In the case of the Staff of the Irish Railway Clearing House, the period after the passing of the Act within which compensation for redundancy might be claimed was restricted to three years in the Bill as originally introduced. The Labour Party moved the abolition of the time limit, and the placing of the men concerned on the same basis as the Staffs of the Railway Companies, and eventually succeeded in carrying an amendment extending the time limit from three to five years.

(4) Another Labour amendment was carried which provides that the new Amalgamated Company shall, within one year after the 1st January, 1925, prepare for discussion with the Railway Trade Unions a scheme for providing a Pension Fund for such of the employees of the Amalgamated Company as are not at present adequately provided for in regard to superannuation and who can be catered for by such a fund.

### **Town Tenants' Bill.**

57. This Bill, which was the second private measure introduced in the Dail, was moved by Deputy Redmond and aimed at improving the position of tenants of certain houses, shops, and other buildings in Saorstát Éireann. It aimed, amongst other things, at giving town tenants fixity of tenure of a kind, at enabling them to sell their interest in a tenancy, and provided for the setting up of a Fair Rents Tribunal. The Labour Party recognising that it moved, no matter how faultily, in the direction of protecting the interests of town tenants, voted for its second reading; but objected strongly to certain provisions which were believed to be detrimental. The Bill was defeated on the second reading.



## Local Government Bill.

58. This Bill aims at reorganising the different authorities under the control of the Minister for Local Government and Public Health, at eliminating Rural District Councils, and at co-ordinating and centralising the various health services. In the second reading debate, the Chairman of the Labour Party moved that consideration of the Bill be deferred for four months on the ground that sufficient consideration had not been given as to the advantages or otherwise of the changes which the Bill sought to bring about. Though the Labour Party's amendment was rejected and the second reading of the Bill passed, further consideration of the Bill was adjourned to the next Session.

## The Finance Bill.

59. This year's "Budget," which the Finance Bill translates into law, marks a distinct departure inasmuch as it introduces, by way of experiment, the principle of tariffs, with the definite purpose of protecting Irish industries.

The taxation on tea was reduced, and a protective duty was imposed on the following:—Boots and shoes and shaped parts thereof, chocolates and sugar confectionery, soaps, candles, bottles, and motor bodies, whether for commercial vehicles or not. The line taken by the Labour Party on the Bill has been that no reduction of the taxation of the rich should be made until there has been a substantial reduction of the taxation of the poor, and that the reduction in the taxation on tea will not in effect compensate the mass of the people for the increase in the price of other commodities, and that for this purpose the tax on sugar should have been reduced. While approving of the experiment in the stimulation of industries in Ireland by protective tariffs, the Party has criticised some features of the experiment, and helped to secure a modification of the very heavy tax on Canned Fruits originally proposed. The Party also supported, unsuccessfully, a proposal to exempt women's and children's boots and shoes from taxation on the ground that they are not at present manufactured in this country, and that men's boots gave a sufficient field of experiment to begin with, and also that the cost of children's boots, especially, was a heavy burden on working-class budgets.

## Old Age Pensions and the Old Age Pensions Act.

60. During the debate on the resolution of thanks to the Governor-General for his address, the Minister for Finance made a statement on the Financial Position of the Saorstát. In the course of his statement the Minister stressed the necessity for economy, expressed it as his intention to cut down expenditure of the State, and stated that as a first step in this direction it was his intention to introduce

a Bill to reduce the pensions of the Aged and the Blind by 10 per cent. Following this statement, the Chairman of the Labour Group, Deputy Johnson, moved the following amendment to the resolution of thanks :—

“That while approving of that decision (i.e. to economise) the Dail cannot agree to methods of retrenchment which would be detrimental to education, or which would cause suffering to the aged poor.”

Deputy T. Murphy seconded this amendment, and Deputies Morrissey, Nagle, Hogan (Clare) and O'Connell spoke in support of it.

61. The promised Act, which was introduced on the 12th of the following February, revised the existing scale of pensions for the Aged Poor and reduced the pensions by 10 per cent. in the case of those in receipt of the full pension. The percentage reduction of the pension in the case of those not in receipt of the full pension ranged from 20 per cent. to 75 per cent. The percentage reduction in the total income of the pensioners ranged from 6 per cent. to 21 per cent. In addition to the alteration in the rates of pension and the limit of private means, a new method of calculating the value of the private means owned by a claimant is provided by the Bill. The effect of this is that whereas it has been possible for a person who owns property valued at anything up to £711 to get a pension (of 1/- per week in the extreme case), in future no person who owns property valued at more than £417 10s. 0d. will be able to get a pension at all.

The Labour Party voted against this Bill at its every reading, and were supported in their opposition to it by several of the Farmers and independent Deputies.

The principal amendments put forward by the Labour Party were directed towards :—

- (1). Postponing the “cuts.”
- (2). Preventing pensioners of 75 years from suffering the “cuts.”
- (3). Preventing blind pensioners from suffering the “cuts” or alternatively minimising the effects of the “cuts” in such cases.
- (4). Removing or improving the new method of calculating private means and “perquisites.”
- (5). Improving the new scales of pensions by maintaining the maximum pension at 10/- weekly and the maximum total income (pension and private means) at 18/- weekly, which would save about £130,000 a year, or alternatively maintaining the maximum pension at 10/- and the maximum total income at 16/- weekly, which would save about £220,000 a year.



The Labour Party secured the following amendments to the Bill :

- (a) The revised and less favourable method of calculating private means does not apply to pensioners under Section 1 of the Blind Persons Act, 1920.
- (b) The exclusion from private means of sickness benefit is extended to benefit received for six months in a year (instead of three) and disablement benefit is also included.

### Committees of An Dail and An Seanad.

62. The following Labour Deputies were appointed to serve on the Committees of An Dail and An Seanad :—

Selection ... ..	Deputies Thomas Johnson and William Davin
Procedure and Privileges ...	Deputy T. Johnson
Private Bill Standing Orders ...	Deputy Nagle and Senator J. T. O'Farrell
Internal Accommodation ...	Deputy Morrissey
Interpretation Bill (Special) ...	Deputies T. Johnson and P. Hogan
Wireless Broadcasting ...	Deputy T. Johnson
Public Accounts ... ..	Deputies T. Johnson and D. Morrissey
Accommodation for an t-Oireachtas	Deputy T. Nagle and Senator J. T. O'Farrell
Dairy Produce Bill (Special) ...	Deputies P. Hogan and T. Johnson
Local Administration in Dublin City and County (Departmental)	Senator J. T. O'Farrell and Deputy R. Corish

### Questions.

63. Since last September up to July 5th, the Dail has met 101 times. During that period the members of the Labour Party asked 730 questions. Of these, 78 referred to Unemployment, Unemployment Benefit and Unemployment Relief; 76 dealt with the payment of Military debts; 91 were in connection with raids, arrests, detention and release of political prisoners; 35 were in reference to claims for allowances to Dependents of members of the National Army; 100 dealt with claims for compensation for personal injuries or commandeered property; 20 referred to Old Age Pensions; 20 to superannuation and pensions of Government employees. Other matters about which questions were asked were—the acquisition and division of land, railways, education, employment of civilian workers by the Army, conditions of labour on Government contracts, local Government administration, industrial insurance, housing, postal facilities, return of seized guns, development of industry, &c. The files of the Central Office of the Labour Party bear evidence of the

efficiency with which this part of the Labour Deputies' work has been carried out. Hundreds of letters of thanks have been received from persons whose grievances have been remedied as a result of one or other of the members of the Party taking up their cases with the Ministries responsible.

### Resolutions, Motions on Adjournment, &c.

64. The matters raised by the Labour Deputies by way of resolutions or on motions for adjournment included :—

- (1) Condition of Fishermen on Western Sea-Board.
- (2) Londonderry and Lough Swilly Railway Strike.
- (3) The burial of a hunger-striker.
- (4) The turning-down by the Postmaster-General of the recommendations of the Postal Commission.
- (5) The distress caused by floods in the Suir Basin.
- (6) The prohibition of meetings by the Minister for Home Affairs.
- (7) The interference of soldiers in the Curragh Strike.
- (8) The policy of the Ministry for Local Government.
- (9) The Army Crisis.
- (10) The policy of the Ministry for External Affairs.
- (11) The curtailment of rural postal services.
- (12) The publication of the Inspector's report on the conduct of civic affairs by the Dublin Corporation.

The Labour Group also spoke in favour of the following resolutions and motions :—

- (1) Deputy White's motion on illegal trawling off Tirconnail Coast.
- (2) Deputy Baxter's motion *re* the release of the Hunger-Strikers.
- (3) Deputy Cooper's motion on Customs delays at Dun Laoghaire.
- (4) Deputy Milroy's motion on the Fiscal Policy of An Saorstát.



- (5) Deputy Figgis' motion on putting into effect the recommendations of the Canals and Inland Waterways Commission of July, 1923.
- (6) Deputy Sears' motion on Distress in the West of Ireland.
- (7) Deputy Lyons' motion on the treatment of ex-service men.
- (8) Deputy Baxter's second motion *re* the release of the prisoners.
- (9) Deputy Milroy's motion on the Boundary Commission.
- (10) Deputy McGrath's motion for the release of the prisoners.

### The Estimates.

65. During such of the Debates on the Estimates as took place previous to the 5th July, the following matters were raised by Labour Deputies :—

- (1) The Letterkenny Asylum Dispute.
- (2) Superannuation of Employees of **Local Authorities**.
- (3) Rates of wages paid on reconstruction works.
- (4) Contracts given outside Saorstát Éireann.
- (5) The suppression of the Dublin Corporation.
- (6) Threats of Local Government auditors to surcharge Councillors if wages of Council employees were not reduced.
- (7) Unemployment.
- (8) Provision for meals for school children.
- (9) Medical treatment for school children.
- (10) Care of the blind.
- (11) Treatment of Tuberculosis.
- (12) Provision of Houses for Agricultural Labourers.
- (13) Insertion of Fair Wages' Clause in Government contracts.
- (14) The building of National Schools and the provision of teachers' residences.
- (15) The rebuilding of the Sorting Office for Dublin G.P.O.

- (16) The cost of maintenance of the Governor-General's household.
- (17) Improvement of Customs arrangements at Dun Laoghaire Pier.
- (18) Letting of ground for Athletic Pavilion in Phoenix Park.
- (19) Compensation for commandeered premises.
- (20) Shannon Navigation Works.
- (21) Co-ordination of Educational Services.
- (22) Modification of Rules of Ministry of Education.
- (23) Compulsory School Attendance.
- (24) Private enterprise in education.
- (25) Co-ordination of educational and public health services.
- (26) Inspection of Schools.
- (27) The training of teachers.
- (28) Amalgamation of schools.
- (29) Security of Tenure for National Teachers.
- (30) Heating and cleaning of schools.
- (31) The teaching of rural science.
- (32) The provision of facilities for the teaching of cookery.
- (33) Superannuation of National Teachers.
- (34) Advisory Council on Education.
- (35) Tenure and superannuation of Secondary Teachers.
- (36) Retirements from the D.M.P.
- (37) Commandeering of premises by the Civic Guard.
- (38) Compensation for Personal Injuries.
- (39) Distress in the West of Ireland.
- (40) Child Welfare Schemes.



## J.—POLITICAL ORGANISATION.

66. Immediately after the General Election in August last, steps were taken to prepare a scheme of machinery for pushing forward the organisation of individual subscribing members of the Labour Party. This preparation was completed at the end of November, and copies of the scheme were then circulated to all affiliated bodies, with suggestions that they should give their fullest co-operation in making the organisation of the political wing of the movement a success.

67. The machinery, which the scheme advised should be set up, consisted of Labour Political Clubs in each parish or chapel district, Divisional Labour Parties in each county electoral division and joint constituency Labour Parties in each parliamentary constituency. The contributions of the members are those laid down in the Constitution as amended by the Special Congress of March 14th and 15th, namely 6d. per month in the case of men and 3d. per month in the case of women. A memorandum was also issued outlining the duties of the Clubs, the Divisional Labour Parties, and the Constituency Labour Parties. These duties included education, propaganda, and the organisation of meetings, the registration of voters, the contesting of elections, and the organisation of election campaigns, and the catering for the social and recreative needs of the workers.

68. During the first six months of the present year, Conferences and Meetings were held in many different parts of the country with a view to organising these clubs and labour parties. Members of the National Executive and of the Office Staff of the Labour Party attended meetings for this purpose at Swords, Donabate, Portrane, Skerries, Balbriggan, Lucan, Crumlin, Blanchardstown, Rathmines, Pembroke, Dun Laoghaire, Dalkey, Droichead Nua, Portlaoighise, Newcastle West (Co. Limerick), Rathkeale, Dundalk, Drogheda, Dunshaughlin, Mullingar, Navan, Nenagh, Bri Cualann, and Cork City. Thirty Clubs, in addition to the Dublin City Labour Party, have been organised as a result of these visits.

69. The Central Office has issued to the Clubs several circulars and leaflets. These dealt with such matters as the work of the Clubs, registration of voters, local authority elections, and the need for the workers having a Party of their own. Further leaflets and circulars are in the course of preparation. Several Clubs in the Metropolitan area have had the advantage of lectures from representative Labour men during the closing months of last winter. The lecturers included Deputy Thomas Johnson, Senator J. T. O'Farrell, Mr. R. J. P. Mortished, Mr. T. J. McKenna, Mr. Andrew E. Malone, and Mr. M. P. Linehan; the subjects dealt with being—The ultimate aim of the Labour Movement, Housing, the evils of Protection, Profiteering and Co-operation, problems of Local Government, the

Constitution of the Free State, and the development of the social side of the Labour Movement. During the summer months it was found inadvisable to continue these lectures, but many of the Clubs set about devising other means of interesting their members. A notable example in this direction has been set by the Rathmines Club. A series of Sunday rambles and excursions has been arranged by it, and the success which has attended these rambles up to the present augurs well for the future development of the Club. It is recognised that it will not be possible to provide rural clubs with the same facilities in the way of lectures that the metropolitan clubs enjoy, but it is the intention to procure *verbatim* reports of lectures delivered during the coming winter and to issue them in pamphlet form to the rural clubs.

70. The opportunities for political activity and education which these clubs provide cannot be over-estimated, and we would earnestly exhort the delegates to this Congress to set about organising them in their own districts at once. The possibility of an early Local Authority Election will furnish immediate work for them, and the machinery they will provide will be found to be of incalculable advantage in the successful contesting of these elections. Delegates who decide to form Clubs in their own particular areas will receive all the assistance they need from the members of the National Executive, the Labour Group in the Oireachtas, and the Officials of the Central Office of the Labour Party.

### **XI.—MEMBERSHIP OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE.**

71. Miss Cahalan, Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, who was elected a member of the National Executive at last year's Congress, resigned her seat by letter dated 31st October, 1923, alleging as a reason the "inaction of the National Executive in respect of the hunger-strike of prisoners." Her resignation was accepted by the National Executive at the next full meeting, and Mr. James Casey, of Limerick, was co-opted in her place.

72. Mr. T. Kennedy, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, who was elected Vice-Chairman by last year's Congress, found himself unable to attend the meetings of the National Executive by reason of illness and pressure of Union work, and resigned his seat.

### **XII.—SITUATION IN THE SIX COUNTIES.**

73. In February, the Chairman and Secretary visited Belfast for the purpose of ascertaining the opinions prevailing in the Labour Movement there on such questions as the attitude of the Northern Government towards the Labour Party and Trade Unionism; the Boundary Question; the founding of a Northern Ireland Labour Party distinct from the Irish Labour Party.



They found diversity of opinion on all these matters, but there was general agreement that the trend of legislation in the Free State reducing the value of the ameliorative social legislation of the British régime, and the opposite trend under the Labour Government in Britain (which is being applied in Northern Ireland) would be a powerful influence against national unification.

### XIII.—TRADE UNION POLICY.

74. Since the slump in wage rates in Great Britain in 1921, it has been the policy of the National Executive and of the Trade Unions to maintain, so far as circumstances permitted, the wage rates secured during the boom period of previous years. The inevitable reaction that followed the collapse of the European Market so far shook the Trade Unions in Britain that (after a few major struggles had demonstrated that the advantages of the position lay with the employers) their power of resistance was no longer sufficient to prevent wages being forced down to a point that, in many cases, was below the pre-war level. Conscious that, considered in terms of pre-war values, the condition of the Irish worker of ten years ago was very much worse than that of either the British, Belgian, French or Danish worker, grade for grade, we have contended that he must continue to retain for himself a higher standard of life than that which prevailed here before the European War. We have urged that if productive enterprises were directed purposely towards this end, the resources of the country are sufficient to provide such higher standard of living. Circumstances, the chief of which was the new consciousness created by the intensive Trade Union activity of the last eight years, favoured our endeavours in spite of other very serious obstacles. Notwithstanding that it has been found necessary, in a somewhat general way, to submit to reductions in wage rates, the Unions are to be congratulated on the fact that over the greater part of Ireland, if we except agricultural employment and a few severely depressed industries mainly confined to Belfast, wage rates have not suffered anything like the reductions that our comrades in Great Britain were obliged to concede. Now that there is evidence that the downward tendency in Britain has been arrested, and that the Unions are attempting to recover the position they held a few years ago, we may reasonably anticipate that the main argument by which Irish employers justified every attack launched against their workers will disappear.

75. Notwithstanding the fact that our tactics have enabled the Irish worker to retain, in spite of serious agricultural and industrial depression, internal warfare and unprecedented unemployment, a standard of life that, viewed from any angle, is an appreciable improvement on his pre-war standard and is, in fact, superior to the

present standard of his comrades in neighbouring countries, complaints are loud that the National Executive and the Trade Union Executives have not been aggressively militant enough; that they have not continued to press for further advances; that they have not struck against every decrease in wage rates, no matter how small. In our opinion the Trade Union Executives in this country are more closely in touch with the organisation and the movement they represent than the Trade Union Executives of almost every other country, and we believe they have lost no opportunity in taking any action that, having regard to the circumstances and the material at hand, would bring betterment to the people they were entitled to guide. Whenever they refrained from taking the more spectacular action now so vehemently urged, we have good reason to think they were guided by a very sincere desire to preserve the integrity of the movement and conserve that power that would, in more promising circumstances, bring better results.

76. So far as the National Executive is concerned, it is not its function to direct the Trade Unions as to what rates of pay they should accept or reject; but it is charged against us that we ought to have "given a lead" to the Unions and urged them to fight rather than confer.

Because we have generally approved of the policy pursued by the Unions in this matter and in justification of the policy they have adopted, we point to the fact that the fall in wages, taken all round, has not been as great as the fall in retail prices; that, reckoned in terms of food and other necessities, the workers' weekly wage, even after such reductions as have occurred, is more valuable to-day than in the boom years when advances were easily obtained but when prices rose even more rapidly.

77. It is not so much the drop in wage rates, as the difficulty, for so many thousands of workers, to find regular employment that is to-day pressing so severely on the masses of trade unionists. Indeed, until we see a definite plan to place the thousands of unemployed wage-earners in productive employment, we are disposed to think that no improvement in wage rates, even were such an improvement now in sight, would appreciably alleviate the present hardship that is pressing on the working people.

78. This consideration brings us to a study of the present economic situation of the country. In order that we may intelligently determine a future policy for our movement, we should take into account the more outstanding economic factors with which we are confronted. A few of these are:—

- (1) That people who pay wages will not, beyond certain limits, continue to do so unless they can make profit.



- (2) That when industry ceases operations, unemployment ensues, and the power of the worker to resist reductions is thereby reduced.
- (3) That agriculture is the staple industry of the country; it is on the volume of the surplus agricultural wealth annually produced that the nation subsists; that agriculture, and consequently the land workers generally whether peasant proprietors or agricultural labourers, are passing through a serious state of depression partially owing to the serious annual burden placed on the Irish peasantry by the various Land Acts, which imposed a tribute upon the agricultural community of many millions of money it is no longer able to bear.
- (4) That for the past two years agriculture has been unprofitable, considered as a commercial undertaking.
- (5) That the burden of State expenditure, much of it wasteful, having risen from about thirteen million pounds for all Ireland in 1913 to something very near seventy million pounds for all Ireland in 1923, is out of all proportion to the totality of the annually produced national wealth.
- (6) That the number of non-productive workers, that is to say those engaged in transport, distribution, and clerical occupations, is excessive and constitutes a serious burden on the annually produced wealth of the country.
- (7) That the absence of certain essential commodities for industrial production such as coal, iron, copper, etc., in easily accessible deposits, constitutes a serious handicap to the country's industrial development.

79. We draw attention to these facts because we think they should be present to our minds when we come to consider the position of the Irish worker and to formulate a policy that in our judgment will alter the circumstances of the wealth producers' life. For one thing, we feel that the condition of the workers in the mass would not, at this moment, be improved, but on the contrary would be materially worsened, by an industrial policy on the part of the movement that did not take these factors into account. To change very substantially the system which makes these factors a handicap rather than to ignore them, would seem the immediate purpose of the movement.

80. The underlying cause of the economic subjection of the workers, which is the root of our antagonism towards the prevailing social order, lies in the fact that the wage-earners, speaking generally, are without means of livelihood except when they are given employ-

ment for which they are paid wages. As things are, it rests with the employer to say whether he is willing to offer employment at the wages demanded; and there are limits, varying as circumstances vary, beyond which it is less profitable, or more profitable, to the employer, to keep going than to close down.

81. Knowledge of these facts, ever present to our minds in the present conditions in this country, impose upon the Trade Union Movement a grave responsibility. Whenever the issue is knit or about being brought to a crisis, the resistance likely to be offered by the employer; the staying power of the worker; and, not less important, the probable effect of a prolonged struggle on the morale of the workers in the mass and the effectiveness of their organisation in the day-to-day negotiations which follow every settlement whether the result is a victory, a defeat, or a compromise, all spring to the mind; and the wisdom or otherwise of the ultimate decision will be tested by the manner in which every essential factor has been weighed and assigned its proper worth.

82. Having these circumstances in mind, and knowing that as matters stood in the country the tide was flowing against the workers, so that even a little extra pressure, in many cases, would bring the industry or service concerned to a standstill, we have, when approached for advice, expressed the opinion that unless the circumstances were in the main different from those usually present, the Trade Unions would be justified during the past year in not forcing the pace. This has been denounced as "traitorous," as "playing the employers' game," as "selling the pass," and "as letting the workers down!" To have advised an opposite course of action in certain cases would have been quite easy, very popular, and apparently heroic; but, looking back on the events of the last twelvemonth, we are more convinced than ever that had the National Executive advised and the Trade Unions pursued a policy that entirely disregarded the considerations we have enumerated, the conditions of the Irish workers to-day would be very much less favourable than we find them. There are circumstances in which the Unions, if they are to continue to be useful and effective weapons in the hands of the workers, must fight to the last ounce of their resources, and there are circumstances in which it would be folly to reject negotiations. Sometimes we are liable to forget that the ever-fighting Union fights itself out of existence.

83. Let us see what is the alternative policy our critics and traducers—not always the same people we readily admit—would have us pursue. It is claimed on their behalf that we should always, in all circumstances, keep pressing forward, never negotiating, never compromising; and that the pressure of a united working class, which on this issue has been taken for granted, for continually advancing wages, irrespective of every other consideration, will bring the capi-



talist system tumbling to the ground. Then, they assert, a new social structure can be erected having none of the defects of that which they have succeeded in destroying!

84. It is our view that the adoption of such a policy in Ireland, during a period of commercial stagnation and agricultural depression, and with the resources available, is suicidal and would make impotent the organisations which after years of effort have been made powerful. It may be true that continual pressure on any and every pretext, no matter what the circumstances, may result in putting a stop to the wheels of industry and cause the collapse of the present social structure, but at what cost? Who would bear it? Has the new and better system been so far developed as to be ready to supplant the old? Has the education and training of the workers fitted them for the task of running the country under the promised new conditions? Is it thought that the organised town workers—a minority of a minority—can establish a new social system, able to satisfy the needs of the country, without the consent and against the opposition of two-thirds of the population, and those the food producers? Or is it suggested that the agricultural community are eagerly awaiting the signal to rush to the aid of the town workers in an effort to establish this new social order? If it is not so suggested or implied by the traducers of the National Executive, their taunts are simply evidence of either their madness or of their dishonesty. No honest observer will answer these questions truthfully and still taunt the Trade Union Movement in this country with having acted “traitorously” towards the working class upon which they are founded.

85. Perhaps the advocacy of this policy is not inspired by madness; perhaps it is part of a plan not to improve conditions for Irish workers or to give them the mastery in their own land, but to use them for the personal advancement, the satisfaction of the personal ambitions of individuals who judge the temperament of the working class in this country under present conditions as being more readily capable of being exploited towards this end than that available elsewhere; or it may be the object in view is simply to destroy in the minds of the workers their confidence in the organisations they have created by the sacrifices they have so willingly made over a period of many years of struggle and suffering. That would throw them inevitably into the hands of those who are prepared to use them for their own ulterior purposes. Or is it part of a plan to turn the present misery of the Irish working class to account in an effort to influence conditions elsewhere? Perhaps if the movement for the conquest of power by the revolutionary process outside Ireland can be accelerated by urging the Irish workers to disregard their own present and future well-being in a blind struggle against forces they have not measured, its architects are prepared to promote their plans by this

means regardless of the consequences to the workers of Ireland or the effects on their daily lives, their livelihood or their homes.

86. We invite the Unions and the working class generally to review the position in the light of history, economic facts and working-class development, and to shape their immediate policy with due regard to their own opportunities and the country's advantages. If they desire that an industrial conflict at this juncture should provide the occasion for civil war and that even before the civil war begins the state of the country and the conditions of the people at large will be such that men will be driven by destitution to acclaim war as a possible relief from such misery, they need only disregard the facts we have urged to satisfy that desire. For the advocacy of our traducers is the advocacy of a policy that will transform the first big industrial conflict into a conflict of arms that, so far as the workers are concerned, can have only one termination—defeat, misery, and destitution. All the bright promises that are held out to the workers if they will only abandon themselves to these guides, are heralded by the very people who ignored the possibilities of success for such an enterprise when the economic facts were more favourable than they are to-day. We repeat; the upliftment of the Irish workers is not their objective. The Irish workers are promised the realisation of their dreams if they allow themselves to be shepherded by herdsmen whose services were denied them at a time when many factors, no longer present, co-operated to make such an undertaking less likely to fail. The promises cannot be fulfilled in existing circumstances, and their authors have an entirely different purpose in view.

87. Again we say, Labour policy in Ireland at this juncture should be to consolidate the position won during the war period; to use the political power of the workers to promote employment, and lessen poverty; to prevent either administrative or legislative retrogression; and to demand measures, both administrative and legislative, of such a character as will bring about a true revolutionary change—not the revolution of a bravado, but a genuine change in the social and economic outlook—a reconstruction of the social order in which all who labour, urban and rural, artisan and farmer, will participate and by which all will benefit.

For the National Executive,

L. J. DUFFY, *Chairman*.

THOS. JOHNSON, *Secretary*.

July 25th, 1924.



# INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

For the Year ended 30th June, 1924.

INCOME.		EXPENDITURE.	
	£ s. d.		£ s. d.
BALANCE FROM LAST YEAR'S ACCOUNTS :—		CONGRESS EXPENSES :—	
Cash at Banks on Deposit ...	1,483 16 3	Reporting 1923 Congress ...	20 0 0
Cash at Banks, Current A/cs... ..	472 0 0	Fees: Standing Orders Committee, Tellers, Stewards, Auditors, etc. ...	46 15 0
	1,955 16 3	Special Congress, March, 1924	13 15 0
AFFILIATION FEES RECEIVED ... ..	1,508 19 8		80 10 0
DELEGATION FEES :—		OFFICE EXPENSES :—	
Account 1923 Congress ... ..	219 0 0	Rent ... ..	143 0 0
Account 1924 Congress ... ..	19 0 0	Lighting, Heating and Cleaning	43 15 9
Account Special Congress ... ..	27 0 0	Hire of Typewriter ... ..	1 0 0
	265 0 0	Books and Newspapers ... ..	14 6 4
SALES OF REPORTS AND PAMPHLETS ...	28 16 8	Furniture and Repairs ... ..	50 7 2
DONATIONS TO ELECTION FUNDS ... ..	372 15 0	Rotary Duplicator and Supplies	65 13 7
CONTRIBUTIONS FOR GERMAN TRADE UNION FUND :—		Telephones, Telegrams, Postage and Insurance ... ..	108 3 7
Per Irish Women Workers' Union ... ..	20 0 0		426 6 5
Per Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks ... ..	10 0 0	SALARIES :—	
Per Dublin Typographical Prov. Society ... ..	5 0 0	Secretary ... ..	129 5 9
	35 0 0	Office Staff ... ..	1,177 19 4
IRISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS HEALTH INSURANCE SOCIETY :—		Extra Clerical Work ... ..	17 5 0
(Repayment of Loan, 1923) ... ..	254 10 0		1,324 10 1
LABOUR CLUB SUBSCRIPTIONS ... ..	17 1 3	SUNDRY EXPENSES :—	
Repayment of Cash Advanced (R. Corish) ... ..	5 0 0	International Labour Office Publications ... ..	8 0 0
		Labour Research Department: Affiliation ... ..	10 0 0
		Overseas Visitors ... ..	7 14 8
		Late Senator MacPartlin's Funeral ... ..	47 1 6
Cheque Issued (1922), uncashed ... ..	7 0 0	Scottish T.U. Congress Delegation ... ..	17 1 0
TRANSFER FROM MUNITIONS STRIKE FUND BALANCE ... ..	37 12 4	Meath Labour Union: Affiliation Fee Refunded ... ..	1 0 0
BANK INTEREST ... ..	37 17 7		90 17 2
		GERMAN TRADE UNION FUND :—	
		National Executive Donation ... ..	50 0 0
		Union Contributions ... ..	35 0 0
			85 0 0
		NATIONAL EXECUTIVE EXPENSES :—	
		Fees for Meetings, etc. ... ..	78 17 0
		Conferences and Organising Meetings ... ..	110 3 2
			189 0 2
		PRINTING, STATIONERY & ADVERTISING	586 12 6
		Co. DUBLIN ELECTIONS EXPENSES ... ..	382 7 6
		Cheque Books, Bank Telegrams, etc. ... ..	2 16 7
			3,168 0 5
		ELECTION DEPOSITS :—	
		Loans Outstanding ... ..	350 0 0
		CASH AT BANK: On Deposit ... ..	1,071 8 4
		Less Debit Balance, Current Account ... ..	131 11 2
			939 17 2
		CASH ON HANDS ... ..	67 11 2
	£4,525 8 9		£4,525 8 9

We have examined and checked the books and vouchers of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, and also the Bank Accounts, Deposit Receipts and Cash on Hands, for the year ending 30th June, 1924, and certify that the above is a correct statement of same.

29th July, 1924.

E. O'CARROLL,  
FRANK ROBBINS, } Auditors.

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

THE THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEETING

REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE

**IRISH LABOUR PARTY AND TRADE UNION CONGRESS**

HELD IN THE

Crawford Municipal Technical Institute, Cork

ON

AUGUST 4th, 5th 6th, and 7th, 1924.



# **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE, 1923-24.**

## **Meetings, Attendances and Expenses Executive Meetings**

Name.	Full N.E. Meetings.	Resident Committee Meetings.	Total allowance as per scale.		
	Present at	Present at	£	s.	d.
CULLEN, DENIS	2	19	2	15	6
CAHALAN, C. (Miss) (resigned)	—	5	0	12	6
DUFFY, LUKE J.	5	28	4	7	6
FARREN, THOMAS	3	24	3	7	6
FORAN, THOMAS	2	22	2	17	6
HILL, MICHAEL	2	—	6	18	0
JOHNSON, THOMAS	5	31	—		
KENNEDY, THOMAS (resigned)	—	—	—		
LARKIN, LUKE J.	4	—	7	5	6
O'BRIEN, WILLIAM	5	32	4	17	6
O'CONNELL, THOMAS	5	23	3	15	0
O'FARRELL, JOHN T.	4	24	3	12	6
SOMERVILLE, MICHAEL	4	22	5	7	6
STEWART, ALEX.	4	—	13	8	0
CASEY, JAMES (co-opted)	1	—	4	6	6
Total ...			£63	11	0

# **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE, 1923-24.**

## **(Sundry Meetings and Expenses).**

Name.	Meetings in			Amount.		
				£	s.	d.
CASEY, JAMES	...	Limerick District	...	5	7	0
DUFFY, LUKE J.	...	Drogheda, Kilkenny, Arklow, Belfast	...	5	5	2
FARREN, THOMAS	...	Cork and Galway	...	9	9	3
JOHNSON, THOMAS	...	Dundalk, Ballinasloe, Bel- fast, Mullingar and Cork	...	9	2	2
LARKIN, LUKE J.	...	Wexford	...	1	10	6
SOMERVILLE, MICHAEL	...	Waterford	...	4	15	5

£35 9 7

# REPORT

OF

## Special Congress on Election Policy,

*Dublin, 21st February, 1922.*

A Special Meeting of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress was held in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, on 21st February, 1922, to consider what action should be taken in connection with the forthcoming elections in Ireland.

Mr. Cathal O'Shannon, Acting Chairman, presided.

Credentials were issued to 245 delegates.

The Chairman said he wished to explain the reason why the chairman elected at the last Congress did not occupy the chair that day. Some two months ago Mr. Thomas MacPartlin, on account of ill-health, felt compelled to resign his position as chairman of the National Executive. That decision was much regretted by the N. E. As a result Mr. MacPartlin was not attending the meetings of the N. E. and was not in the chair that day. The first item on the Agenda was the election of Tellers, in case there should be any divisions taken during the progress of the Congress, and he asked for nominations. The following four delegates were appointed as Tellers:—J. McKeon (N.U.R.), W. Bunbury (A.W.U.), Miss Sheahan (D.W.U.), and M. Craig (I.T.W.U.).

As the result of a vote the following five were elected as a Standing Orders Committee:—M. Somerville, T. Kennedy, W. Davin, D. Houston, and Patrick Leo.

### CHAIRMAN'S ADDRESS.

The Chairman said that the Special Congress of the Irish Labour Party and Trades Union Congress had been called together to consider the question of the forthcoming general election. They believed, and the probability was that unless



## REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS

OF

## THE THIRTIETH ANNUAL MEETING

HELD IN THE

Crawford Municipal Technical Institute, Cork.

*First Day—Monday, August 4th, 1924.*

The meeting was opened by MR. LUKE J. DUFFY, Chairman of the National Executive, who occupied the Chair during the four-days' sittings.

The LORD MAYOR OF CORK (Councillor Sean French), the CITY HIGH SHERIFF (Councillor Sir J. H. Scott), and COUNCILLOR WM. ELLIS attended the Congress on the opening day, as representatives of the Cork Corporation, to extend to the delegates a civic welcome.

The LORD MAYOR said he was very pleased that it was his privilege, in his official capacity, to extend to the delegates a cordial welcome to Cork. He had always found that both Labour and the Labour representatives were as alive to the industrial, economic and general prosperity of their city as any other section of the community. The delegates would have an opportunity of seeing Cork and some of the beauties of the city and its surroundings, and when they went away he trusted that they would sometimes look back on their visit to Cork with a certain amount of pleasure, and that that visit would be a reminder to those who represented democracies outside Cork that there was such a place as Cork (laughter, and hear, hear). In the past Cork had floated very proudly, but for some years past it had been overweighted, and it started sinking. At the moment, however, he was glad to say that the sinking process had been delayed, it was now in the state of suspension, and some of them hoped that Cork was casting off the overweight and was beginning to rise again (applause). In a short time, with their assistance, he hoped Cork would again rise to the surface and float as proudly in the future as it did in the past. Business was very bad at the moment, it had never been so bad, and he was sure the delegates would give that problem their very best consideration. At

the moment Cork wanted a tremendous amount of co-operation (hear, hear). Labour in the past had readily given that co-operation and he asked them to do the same at that Congress. He might claim to have some little connection with the Labour movement in Cork, and at a time when it was not the tremendous power that it was that day, and he had always been pleased with the growth of Labour, and any assistance that he could give towards that end would always be at their service (applause). The welcome he gave them from the citizens was from the bottom of their hearts, and from no one particular section but from all the citizens (applause). He should say a special word to those delegates from the North of Ireland. He could assure them that they were bound to them by heart and hand, and that no power on earth could cast those links asunder (applause).

MR. R. S. ANTHONY, President of the Cork Workers' Council, as Chairman of the local Reception Committee, also extended a hearty welcome to the delegates, and mentioned that it was the fifth occasion on which the Irish Labour Party and Trades Union Congress had assembled in Cork. The majority of the delegates were aware that during the Black and Tan regime their City Hall was "accidentally" burned (laughter). They had, however, secured the present fine premises for the holding of the Congress (applause). They were glad to know that the delegates were satisfied with the arrangements made by the local Reception Committee (applause). They would not neglect the social side of the programme, and they invited the delegates to a trip around the harbour on the following day and a reception on Wednesday evening. They hoped to do their best, and he hoped they would please every delegate by their efforts for the success of the Congress (applause).

The PRESIDENT returned thanks for the cordial welcome extended to the delegates. The bulk of the delegates had many pleasant experiences of Cork in the past, and they realised to the fullest extent that everything that was said by the Lord Mayor and Mr. Anthony was meant in its entirety (applause).

### APPOINTMENT OF TELLERS.

The following delegates were nominated, and on a show of hands received the number of votes shown:—

T. Harrington (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork)—102.

Peter Osborne (Irish Transport and General Workers Union, Dublin)—57.

James Hunt (Irish Union Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo)—10.

T. McConnell (Irish Bakers', Confectioners' and Allied Workers' Amalgamated Union, Belfast)—76.



Seumas Byrne (National Amalgamated Union of Life Assurance Workers, Dublin)—56.

J. Healy (Amalgamated Transport Workers' Union, Waterford)—8.

Messrs. Lennon, Clonmel; Mulvaney, Deans Grange, Co. Dublin; and T. Barry, Cork, who were also nominated, withdrew their names.

Messrs. Harrington, McConnell and Osborne were accordingly declared elected.

### APPOINTMENT OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

The following delegates were nominated as members of the Standing Orders Committee:—

D. R. Campbell (Trades Council, Belfast).

E. Lynch (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cobh).

J. Weldon (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Cork).

F. Robbins (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin).

T. Irwin (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin).

P. Horgan (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Limerick).

Messrs. Irwin and Horgan having withdrawn, the remaining five nominees were declared elected.

### PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS.

The PRESIDENT then delivered his address to Congress, as follows:—

COMRADES,

It is to all of us a source of great pleasure that this, the fifth Congress to meet in Cork during the last thirty years, is in every sense as fully representative of the Irish Labour Movement as any of its predecessors. With the single exception of the 1920 Congress it is in fact far more representative of the working-class movement than any other assembly that ever came together in this historic city. And having regard to the perilous times we are passing through, and more particularly the very trying years since last Congress held in Cork, it might well have been otherwise. The presence in Munster's capital of so many delegates from every part of Ireland is, however, a striking testimony to the virility of the Labour Movement, and an assurance that when the testing time comes that movement will be the pivot around which the future fight of the dispossessed masses—North and South—for mastery in their own land will eventually revolve. When I was privileged a year ago to address a

few observations to Congress I attempted to review the history of recent events in this country as I saw them, and to insist that the ultimate end of all our conflicts, of all our aims, and of all our strivings, must of necessity depend for its attainment on the recognition of the fact that the reconquest of our liberties would be incomplete and worthless without

### **The Reconquest of all the Natural Resources**

in which the country's wealth resides. For my part I cannot pretend to modify that view in any particular. I am satisfied it correctly expresses the conscious or subconscious purpose of the toiling masses of this island. As Connolly so aptly expresses it—"The underlying idea is that the Labour movement of Ireland must set itself the reconquest of Ireland as its final aim. That that reconquest involves taking possession of the entire country, all its powers of wealth production, and all its natural resources, and organising these on a co-operative basis for the good of all." Besides this definition of our task every other definition seems mean and cowardly. By adopting as our central objective this aim and this purpose with a full knowledge of all it implies, we will have a movement that will be proof against every device of opportunism, that will be honoured and revered wherever brave men and noble women take their stand for freedom. A Labour Movement that aims at anything less will degenerate into the dimensions of a petty contest for existence. But it was difficult to believe that the Movement we had known for its determination, its unity of purpose, and its high idealism would within the space of a year be torn asunder by sectional feuds, the purpose of which few can fathom. It is perhaps not so extraordinary as at first glance it appears that in the present economic position of the country and the resultant demoralisation of the toiling, struggling masses, men would show impatience, become restless and desperate. Gradually their hard-won advantages were slipping away; they had come to the end of their material resources; unemployment and want had taken possession of their lives and had shortened their vision. Grasping at any pretext that would afford an outlet for their wrath, these men permitted themselves to become the playthings of every adventure that had any of the attributes of novelty.

Unfortunately, sections of the working-class were unable to distinguish between their own weakness and the alleged culpability of those they selected as their spokesmen. If they suffered a reverse they found momentary satisfaction in fixing blame for the catastrophe on some popular figure of their own creation; if they scored a triumphant success they claimed for themselves whatever credit it brought. It may not be entirely unprofitable to reflect for a moment on some of the more notorious consequences of this somewhat paradoxical reasoning. When men and women are in revolt against the



authority of their own institutions, they not only weaken their effective strength in the moment of crisis, they also frequently compel those in authority to rush precipitately to a course that more balanced judgment would renounce. In this state of disintegration we find organisations at one moment being plunged into a conflict where every element that promises success is absent, and at another hesitating and halting where a swift and determined stroke is the essence of success. To this weakness that arises from the absence of loyalty, confidence and solidarity, we owe most of our defeats in war as in peace. Fights are entered upon where an intelligent survey of the position would recommend compromise, just as fights are shirked where prudence most demands resistance. If we are to retain democracy in our Trade Unions, the best and most courageous men and women in the Movement must be elected to positions where they will advise and guide, and, in order that they may devote their whole mind and intelligence to the work allotted to them, they must be ever assured of the

### Confidence, Co-operation and Loyalty

of those who select them, and endow them with responsibility. But let it be always remembered that courage does not consist alone in the willingness to have recourse to "drastic action" every time a few people demand it. It is often much more courageous to state very definitely that "drastic action" is not the only or the best remedy at hand if, after mature consideration, that view seems most in keeping with the facts. "Every vice may call itself by the name of some virtue or other," and the meanest cringing often masquerades as robust courage.

If a strike, once undertaken, cannot be abandoned with honour before the final collapse of the forces upon which it depends for its success, the critics, who, by their ceaseless taunts, provoked it, are merciless in their denunciation of those who sanctioned it; if it succeeds they are jubilant because they have urged it; if because of their tactics it becomes necessary to avoid a conflict rather than risk a defeat that may mean sacrificing hundreds of honest workers and their families, they denounce the "treachery" of those whose sense of duty dictated a course of action their conscience reprobated. To satisfy that kind of criticism we must never fail to fight, whatever the material at our disposal may be, and we must always win outright within a week whether we have fighting material or not.

The most perplexing thing about this attitude of mind is clamour for Democracy, the rule of the rank and file, the unflinching homage paid to the control of the Unions by the individuals that constitute them on the part of the people who, by their very action, gesture and argument, demand the establishment in the Unions of an individual dictatorship. How their professions pass for revelation in

the teeth of activities that belie them categorically passes all comprehension. A dictatorship in the Labour and Trade Union Movement, if it is intelligent, may possess many virtues that will commend themselves to the great bulk of the people, but it cannot confer the advantage that democracy confers of fitting the people, collectively and individually, to control their own affairs. If the working-class of this country are so utterly devoid of all sense of self-reliance that they voluntarily abandon their movement to become the personal appendage of any group of people, no matter how well intentioned, they are forging new chains for their own enslavement. We should be setting a good example at this Congress, and laying the foundations for the future greatness of our Movement if, with general unanimity, we were to resolve whatever differences, and remove whatever misunderstandings there are within the Movement, and place it in the position of buoyant optimism and spiritual grandeur that gladdened many hearts in every quarter of the globe when we were last meeting in Cork.

We begin to realise, when we throw our minds back over the four years since our previous meeting in Cork, how serious are the reverses suffered by the working-class in that brief space of time. Four years ago to-day the then Lord Mayor of Cork (Terence MacSwiney) stood with us on this platform—the last public platform on which he ever stood. Speaking on our platform in this city a few days before the eventful afternoon that saw him snatched away to his martyrdom, Terence MacSwiney said:—

“He recognised that in recent developments in Ireland a distinct bond of unity had been created amongst all Irishmen who were labouring for the welfare of an Irish Republic, and the Labour Party generally . . . . . had assisted in bringing about that bond of unity.”

At no time in Ireland was the need for a bond of unity amongst all the forces of progress so necessary as it is to-day. Many thought the unity of 1920 was too dearly bought by the Labour Movement. The Movement effaced itself in the interest of national unity. Had both parties to the bond yielded something, had the definite aim of the working-class secured more explicit expression, and had the alliance been more regularly arranged, much of the unfortunate happenings of recent years would have been avoided. Sinn Fein sought, secured and acknowledged the ready co-operation of the

### **Labour Movement during the Anglo-Irish War.**

But the Labour Movement entered into the compact as a vassal rather than as a co-partner. Let us not blame Sinn Fein for that position. Congress is responsible entirely for the position that grew up around the struggle with England. The working-class as a whole were in the struggle, and were part of the force that sustained it;



the great majority of the delegates were fully conscious of this and gave the alliance—informal, no doubt—their benediction; some went very much farther and submerged their own identity in the Nationalistic movement, but Congress never formally, officially or specifically, took any cognisance of that arrangement. By its silence it acquiesced in the part that was being played, and tolerated the visible association of the official Labour Movement with Sinn Fein, although, in fairness, let it be said, some delegates felt the situation embarrassing from time to time. After the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed, with the consequent break up of the forward National Movement, the relationship of the Labour Movement and its former associates underwent a change. Early in 1922 it was decided the Labour Movement should assert its independence and push forward its own programme without regard to the position of either of the new parties that arose out of the ruins of Sinn Fein. Having been the vassal of the political party so long, this decision naturally astonished many well-meaning people who had entirely overlooked the possibility of the Labour Movement having any views of its own on questions of history, philosophy, or social science. Some of those who taunted the Labour Movement with subserviency to one side or the other did believe they could so interpret its activity and tactics. Many of those who gave very audible expression to those taunts knew quite well they were telling untruths.

The Labour Movement cannot efface itself to accommodate any party; whether it is a big movement or a small one it must keep on the straight path that leads towards the realisation of its hopes and of its aims. But the Labour Movement is to-day as it was four years ago, essentially a Republican and anti-Imperialist movement. "Only the Irish working-class remain as the incorruptible inheritors of the fight for freedom in Ireland," wrote Connolly. We accept his view, and we must, therefore, ensure that the movement of "the Irish Working-class" accurately reflects the tradition out of which it arose. In short, this Movement stands to-day precisely where it stood on that day four years ago when Terence MacSwiney recognised and commemorated "the bond of unity that had been created amongst all Irishmen for the welfare of an Irish Republic." A change of tactics there has been, but a change of purpose there is not. The reaction occasioned in the Labour Movement by the upheaval that followed the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty makes a continuation with any other party of the relationship then subsisting inconceivable and impossible. Co-operation between all the forces that stand for freedom in the full sense of the term there can be, but concealment of a distinctive identity there will not be if we are prudent. Despite the bitterness aroused in certain quarters by the knowledge that the working-class movement cannot be stampeded

by every interest that commands a transient success, the forces of progress aiming at a goal which is not our goal, but is tolerably near it, in theory at any rate, realise the soundness of our position and the possibilities that will accrue by co-ordinating a driving power that may be irresistible. It may be well at this stage to direct attention to the need of modifying our position in the event of certain eventualities that seem imminent. If England by implication acknowledges that the Anglo-Irish Treaty is no longer inviolable and persists in enacting qualifying legislation, because she is unable or unwilling to secure the obedience of Sir James Craig, we may be pardoned for pressing that point to its logical conclusion. The situation that has arisen may be rich in possibilities affording an opportunity for an appeasement of national passions at home, and Congress, perhaps, may find an opportunity of determining that, so far as this Movement is concerned, a common bond of comradeship between the workers North and South will triumph over all barriers. Nothing but hate, ill-will, antagonism and strife can emerge from the present deplorable conditions, with ever increasing estrangement and a lowering of the social status of the working-class. The sooner all working-class interests join in a common endeavour to end this conspiracy to keep them asunder, the better the interests of peace will be served.

None of us can be indifferent to the sufferings and hardships endured by the working-class in every part of the country during the last three years. The wealth-owning class are more firmly established in Dublin and Belfast than they ever were, but the wealth-producing class are gradually sinking lower and lower in the social scale. With what force and burning sarcasm we can say of the revolution that was terminated in January, 1922, what Wolfe Tone said of the revolution of 1782: "I assert that all we got by what we are pleased to dignify with the name of Revolution was simply the means of doing good according to law, without recurring to the great rule of nature, which is above all positive Statutes. . . . I leave to the admirers of that era to vent flowing declamations on its theoretical advantages and its visionary glories; it is a fine subject . . . while at one stroke it doubled the value of every borough-monger (private property) in the Kingdom, it left three-fourths of our countrymen slaves as it found them."

We need only refer to the plight of the unemployed to gather some impression of how worthless to the common people is all this "visionary glory" that cost so much in human life and human suffering.

The number of unemployed people in this country to-day, if we include those who do not and never did register at the Unemployment Exchanges, cannot be less than 80,000. Another winter of poverty, cold and hunger is approaching for



them. That is, a fourth winter of suffering will shortly overtake them. Men and women have died this year of hunger and exposure. If they can't exist in their present plight in the warm rays of summer, how are they to get through the winter? Sir James Craig stated in Belfast a year ago that he would personally solve the unemployment problem in the North, but he is as far from that solution now as he was twelve months ago. In Dublin the Government propose solving the problem by placing a few dozen men at work here and there at a rate of wages that has set a standard for every employer in the country—a standard that is being readily taken as a headline by which to reduce wages. As was inevitable, the condition of the country as a whole is sinking lower and lower. This is all the more alarming in view of the immense wealth that is locked up and kept out of service. The Banks are paying a higher dividend than they ever paid before. Every £100 worth of stock held in the Bank of Ireland has increased £91 in value since 1921; while the wages of agricultural labourers, teachers, post office employees, skilled artisans, road workers, public employees, are being lowered to a level that is no longer able to repel starvation, and while the paltry allowance conceded to the old, infirm and destitute fathers and mothers of the working-class is being reduced in the sacred name of economy, the wealthy class who live on the accumulated wealth produced by those who are now unemployed or underpaid are every day adding to their present wealth. For this the Governments have no remedy. They will not bring the railways and canals under public control because they would antagonise the set that live on wealth produced by others. They will abolish the Dublin Corporation because its politics are offensive to the minds of Ministers, but they refuse to interfere with the "sacred privilege" of public authorities like the Committee of Management of Letterkenny Mental Hospital. The "fair wage" clause in public contracts in the gift of local authorities is almost a dead letter, and because the money cannot be spared, factory inspection is now but a tragic farce. Profiteers and usurers have a free hand to extract their tribute from the poor and the needy. Every agency in the land that speaks the voice of

### **Capital is free to rob**

the living and the dead while the Government looks on in silent approval.

A Government conscious of its responsibilities and determined to discharge them would tap every source at its command to provide work for those who need it and obtain the money necessary to finance big national schemes of reconstruction towards that end. A legal six-hour day, perhaps a five-day week, the raising of the school-

leaving age to 16 years, and the granting of State pensions at 65 (as often demanded by Congress) would at once take a large number of workers off the labour market and provide room for those who are without work for years. Several big schemes of national reconstruction are in need of attention. For instance, the building of houses, schools to replace or extend those already existing, laying out of parks in districts where there is an overcrowding of children who have no safe place for recreation, the removal of dangerous slum dwellings, the rebuilding of bridges that are now a public danger, the re-making and re-metalling of main roads as recommended by the Reconstruction Committee, the sinking of wells and pumps in districts where it is an admitted fact that fever recurs annually owing to a defective water supply, to name but a few of those schemes that at once occur to the mind as being long overdue, and would in the end prove quite remunerative. Where is the money to come from, the Government will at once inquire. There is enough money in the Irish banks to do this work ten times over. There is enough money the property of Irish citizens lying in British Government securities to pay for this work five times over. Enough money can be provided by Ireland in a month to carry out not alone all the undertakings mentioned, but in addition to provide a National Electricity Scheme, to buy out the railways and canals, and to erect the many public buildings Dublin, Cork and other centres need so badly. It is the willingness not the ability to do this work that is lacking. Any dispute about national status that fails to take the

### **Condition of the People as Wealth-producers**

into account will never bring its solution nearer. The mass of the people are struggling not only for political freedom, but for economic freedom as well. The measure of a country's freedom will be always determined by the measure of freedom enjoyed by the humblest of its citizens. "In the evolution of civilisation," says Connolly, "the progress of the fight for national liberty of any subject nation must perforce keep pace with the progress of the struggle for liberty of the most subject class in that nation." There, in a nutshell, is stated the essence of national and economic freedom; there is the test of national status. Yet, we find a Dublin evening paper a few weeks ago telling its badly-informed readers that for the present "emigration year" we are now entitled, because we have secured a separate quota of our own, to transport 20,886 active, healthy, virile men and women to the United States, and that this fact is evidence of our sovereign status. In 1848 we did not go so far as to boast that because a million of our race were despatched in coffin ships from our shores we enjoyed sovereign independence. We have, however, progressed since then, and the economic laws that forced the best



muscle and sinew of our working-class to the emigrant ships seventy-five years ago, and because of the fact were execrated throughout the entire world, are now heralded as evidence of our national sovereignty. If this country will ever become great and powerful, the economic freedom of its peasants and workers must be the basis of that greatness and power.

## VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT.

A vote of thanks to the President was moved by T. McCONNELL (Irish Bakers', Confectioners', and Allied Workers' Amalgamated Union, Belfast), seconded by J. HICKEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork), and carried by acclamation.

## REPORT OF THE NATIONAL EXECUTIVE FOR THE YEAR 1923-4.

### Motion for Adoption.

The Chairman formally moved the adoption of the report of the National Executive for the year 1923-4, which Congress then proceeded to consider Section by Section.

### Section I.—Special Congress.

No discussion took place on this section.

### Section II.—Affiliations, &c.

MR. G. F. GILLESPIE (Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said he did not think that the National Executive realised the position of his Union as regards affiliation. That Union had a number of affiliations to deal with, not only in Ireland, but across the water: it was affiliated to the Irish, English and Scottish Congresses, and the National Labour Party and various local Labour Parties, and also the Transport Workers' Federation and various Trade Federations, and these cost annually £7,000. He hoped no one would think they were stingy or mean towards the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, but that was their position. They reviewed the whole position each year, and endeavoured fairly and honestly to allocate and affiliate a fair number under each heading. They had lately reviewed the Irish position and affiliated an additional one thousand members that year, and next year they hoped to again increase their affiliation to the Irish Congress.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said he was afraid the delegate was under a misapprehension. They did not know what was the position in regard to the other organisations that the Union was affiliated with, but the Irish Congress worked on its Constitution, which stated that the fee must be twopence per member. The only question was what was the membership of the Union on the 1st of January. The question arose a year ago. The membership was shown in the affiliation form, and that membership was questioned before the Standing Orders Committee last year. Some correspondence followed, and there was a difference in statement as between the Head Office of the Union and the Irish officials. An attempt was made to straighten that out this year and last year. The issue was not a question of treating Congress and the National



Executive fairly, but what was the membership on the 1st January, 1923, and 1st January, 1924. If they could get that information the issue could be immediately settled.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Treasurer) said a couple of months before this question arose at a meeting of the National Executive he had been present at a Court in Dublin and heard the chief official of that Union swear that there was between 11,000 and 12,000 of a membership. For the past two years, however, the membership affiliation of the body had been less than half that number.

### **Section III.—Relations between Affiliated Organisations.**

MR. C. J. KENNY (Clerical Workers' Union, Dublin), dealing with Paragraph 6, said there were certain matters in the Report dealing with the inter-Union dispute in Waterford that needed further explanation. That dispute was between the Distributive Workers' Union and the Clerical Workers' Union. In July, 1923, certain workers in Waterford applied for membership to the Clerical Workers' Union, but the application was refused on the ground that the proper organisation for such workers would be the Distributive Workers' Union, and also on the ground that there was some dispute between these workers themselves and the Distributive Workers' Union that should be fixed up between those workers and that particular body. The advice of his Union on that aspect of the situation was not taken. These workers insisted on becoming members of the Clerical Workers' Union, and in due course they were accepted. The report, however, would seem to indicate that the Clerical Workers' Union made special efforts to get the workers into their Union. That was not so. In accepting those members the Clerical Workers' Union did a service to Trade Unionism in Waterford and throughout the country generally. His Union had no dispute with the Distributive Workers' Union, and would work in harmony with that Union. The Clerical Workers' Union did not deserve the criticism suggested in the report, as the Union only did its best in a very awkward situation, and if it had not done so the position would have been worse. They did not press those members to remain with them or ask them to leave the Distributive Workers' Union, but their position was that if those members paid their fees and abided by the rules they could not get rid of them. They had no dispute with the Distributive Workers' Union, and did not desire any dispute.

### **Section IV.—Unemployment Insurance—Paragraphs 11, 12, and 13.**

MR. RICHARD MAHER (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said that when men went to the Exchanges they were kept out of payment for two or three weeks, notwithstanding

the fact that they had been constant contributors to the Fund. Complaints had reached him from a number of quarters on that point, and he would like to have steps taken to remedy such complaints. He also found that some people who were drawing Insurance Benefit were doing their best to do without work. They wanted such a state of affairs remedied.

MISS E. O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said her Union had several complaints from their members having applied for the Unemployment Dole, and of officials, "off their own bat," having practically told them that they were not entitled to it. Congress should see that officials did not take it on themselves to do such a thing. They ought to be made go through the usual routine. Some of their members had suffered great hardship on that account.

MR. THOMAS O'GORMAN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Limerick) said the criticism of the officials was not quite fair. It was often the case that when people went to the Exchanges they went to the wrong place for information. If people who were refused went back to the Secretaries of their Unions, and put the facts of their cases before their Secretaries, they would be able to find out the reasons in writing from the local manager. He had found the officials rather courteous, and it was not fair generally to blame them.

MR. J. KELLY (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) said he looked at the question of unemployment insurance from the point of view of making an effort to do away with such a demoralising dole altogether. He suggested that the Government should utilise that yearly dole as capital or a loan towards the carrying out of work.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said Mr. O'Gorman had stated accurately what ought to be the position with regard to complaints. At the Head Office they received many complaints about the treatment of individuals at local Labour Exchanges, and it was the practice to refer such individuals to their Unions, and in nine cases out of ten, perhaps in ninety-five case out of a hundred, the Unions take the matter up with the local Exchanges, and if they got no satisfaction there they went to headquarters, and the matter was either rectified or the position of affairs was made quite clear. Whenever they in the Head Office had taken an appeal from the Union about Unemployment Insurance to the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, they found that that department paid attention to the complaint, and also pointed out their own limitations, because they were limited by the Act. It was very foolish to talk about Unemployment Insurance as a dole: one delegate had described it as a demoralising dole. They were all apt to fall into that phraseology. They were making a great mistake. It was an insurance. When they contributed to such an insurance, either by taxation



or weekly contributions, it was something they were justly entitled to, and they did not receive it as a charitable dole. It was rather tempting to suggest means by which such money could be better utilised. But what would happen to the unemployed if that money were devoted to the creation or development of industries? If the Unemployment Insurance money were used up in new works, nothing would be left for those that would yet be unemployed, even though new works were established, and their last state would be worse than their first. They should not use their Insurance Fund for starting new work if thereby they would deplete their Insurance Fund. They should have such money as a reserve for unemployment, because no matter how prosperous the time might be, they would have unemployment, and if the money was not available to meet the distress that would follow, they would have a complaint about the failure of the Government to do its duty in that respect. He did not think that was the way to meet unemployment.

MR. J. COLLINS (National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades' Association, Dublin) said he had had dealings with the Labour Exchanges, and he found no trouble in getting the members of his Union paid. Some people, however, went to those Exchanges and made statements that were not correct and they were turned down, and then those people had abuse for everyone employed in the Exchange. He had a case some time ago of some Southern workers who went into the Six Counties with unemployment cards, and the Northern Government refused to pay those men on the Free State stamps. That position of affairs should be remedied. If the Northern Government did not pay those men on their cards, the Southern Government should send their money to them.

MR. H. T. WHITLEY (Typographical Association, Belfast) said the latter statement of the previous speaker was not altogether correct. It was not correct to say that parties from the Free State did not get Unemployment Insurance money in the North. Such Insurance was being paid, and more especially to those who served in the Free State Army. A hitch did occur between the two Governments on the payment of such Insurance in the North and in the South. In the North when a man had drawn the benefit on the number of stamps on his card he continued on, even though he was not in benefit, but in the Free State when a man exhausted his benefit he was done. That was the position. The present state of affairs could only be remedied by the two Governments showing reciprocity in the matter. The Labour Party should try and bring such reciprocity about.

MR. JAMES HICKEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork) said he knew of the case of a man who was employed in Cork, but his case was transferred from the Cork Labour Exchange to the Belfast Labour Exchange. He resided in Belfast from July to December and he had not received his benefit. A lot of

correspondence had passed between his Union and the Free State and Northern Government in connection with that case, and a question was asked in the Dáil, but nothing came out of it. That man never drew unemployment benefit during the eight months that he was unemployed, though he had paid regularly into the fund.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said the case to which Mr. Hickey referred came under his notice some time ago, and he took steps to remedy the complaint that was made. He raised the question on a number of occasions, but unfortunately without effect. The Free State Government was paying Unemployment Insurance Benefit to persons who had been working in Britain or the Six Counties, although the money paid for stamps on their cards went into the British or Six-Counties Exchequer. There was no refund from those other Governments. But the Six County Government refused to recognise Free State stamps, or to give credit for contributions paid to the Free State Government. The Free State Government had failed to get a reciprocal agreement with the Six Counties Government, so in the cases mentioned the fault lay with the Six Counties Government.

MR. JAMES BELL (Irish Engineering Industrial Union, Dublin) complained of the congestion prevailing at the Dublin Labour Exchange on the days on which the money was distributed, and asked if anything could be done to relieve it. The money should be administered and distributed properly. He suggested that the National Executive should take steps to have two Exchanges provided in Dublin, one for the North side and the other for the South side of the city. Such a step might relieve the congestion.

MR. JOSEPH TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Industrial Union, Dublin) supported the remarks of Mr. Bell, and said that it was absolutely essential that such congestion should be relieved. There was one other matter about which he desired to complain. It was often the case that men and women had to go before a Court of Referees. If their claims were turned down they had to appeal to the Umpire. It was stated to him that the Chairman of the Court and the Umpire were one and the same person. If that were so, what was the use in taking an appeal before an Umpire? The Executive should make some inquiries into the matter.

The CHAIRMAN—"I was at a Court of Referees not long ago, and it certainly was not the Umpire who presided."

MR. J. BROPHY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) supported the previous speakers' remarks about the Dublin Exchange. It was a disgrace for any man to have to go there at present, and many refused to do so on account of the conditions prevailing. There should be a separate Exchange for the ordinary men and the Army men. Men were forced to go there as if they were beggars for what was nothing but a dole: he would not go there himself



if he were out of work for a month. There was room for improvement in the Exchange.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive and Dublin Workers' Council) said there was no use blaming everyone for what they might be able to do themselves. There was no reason why any unemployed member should be compelled to go to the Labour Exchange to sign or get his benefit. There was a provision in the Act of 1920 under which the Unions could make arrangements for the men to sign up at the Hall or Office of such Unions and be paid there. Several Unions did that. Every Union should do it, as it would prevent all the rushing and squabbling that was now complained about. He therefore advised all the Unions to take advantage of that provision of the Act.

MISS H. MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said that some years ago they heard that they could sign up and be paid in their own Unions, but that was only the rule where the Unions themselves paid benefit. Her Union did not do that, and she was sure the same applied to other Unions.

The CHAIRMAN—"There must be at least five shillings benefit from your own organisation to do it."

MR. T. RYAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Waterford) said he knew of Insurance Companies which made some arrangement by which dismissed employees were able to get benefit without going to the Exchange.

MR. W. MURPHY (National Society of Brushmakers, Dublin) pointed out that the Head Office of the Union must be in the Twenty-six Counties for it to be able to work under the special arrangement referred to.

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said if the position in the Free State was as indicated in paragraph 2, he was of opinion that it was a very bad inducement to the workers of the North to become linked up with the Free State. If they got rid of partition in the Northern Ireland area, the position would not be so bad. In the North they had a more humanitarian way of dealing with their workers. Though distress was prevalent there the people who made application for unemployment benefit got it, and they had continuous benefit. The same thing should apply in the South. At present there seemed to be something harsh in the system.

MR. JOHN FARREN (National Union of Sheet Metal Workers, etc., Dublin) said the Act might be all right, but the carrying out of its provisions was another matter. The Court of Referees, so far as he knew, was a farce. The Chairman of that body was always opposed to the workers, and he was always bound to rule against the workers. That was his experience. He knew of a case of a dressmaker whom he thought was entitled to benefit, but the Chairman of the Court said that as long as domestic service was

available he would not pay her. He considered that was wrong, and until the system was altered there was no use in Labour representatives going to such tribunals.

### **New Unemployment Insurance Act—Paragraphs 14 and 15.**

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said there was a provision inserted in the new Act to the effect that not only shall the worker be obliged to come before the Court of Referees, but that the Employer also, if requested, or any other person shall be obliged to come before the Court.

MR. JOSEPH TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Industrial Union, Dublin) asked if it would be possible to give effect to Amendment No. 5 moved by the Labour Party. Something more should be mentioned in the report about it.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive) said that amendment was put down to the Unemployment Insurance Bill as the result of complaints received by the Dublin Workers' Council from various trades in the building industry that their members had been deprived of benefit because of their refusal to accept employment in other districts at a lower rate of wages than was paid in their own district. After a discussion at the Council they had a conference with the Executive of the Labour Party. An amendment moved to the Bill in the Dáil was not accepted, and it was then moved in the Senate. It was however pointed out that the practice complained of was against the spirit in which the Act had been administered for a number of years. That was a fact as far as Dublin was concerned, but they gave specific cases of men being disqualified for the reason he had stated, and the Minister in charge of the Bill then gave an undertaking that that would not occur in the future, and that if it did occur again and complaints were made to him, he would have the matter dealt with in a proper manner. In view of that assurance, and in order to facilitate the passing of the Act, which means such a great deal to a tremendous number of workers, the amendment was withdrawn. That, however, was only done on the definite understanding that he had mentioned.

MR. JAMES LARKIN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Newcastle West) referred to the hardship to members who had to travel long distances to Courts of Referees, and who were not allowed their expenses if their claims were disallowed. He knew members who had to travel 32 miles to such Courts.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said on all those matters representations had been made quite frequently and pressure kept up as much as possible to have such representations acceded to, and they had received assurances that everything possible was being done to ensure the clear and easy working of the Act. The question of applicant's expenses had been brought before the Ministry several



times, and their best reply was that they were doing their best to ease the situation in that respect, but he did not know with what success. The Central Office would be glad to receive particulars of definite, well-authenticated complains from every Union, and they would do their best to have such complaints rectified.

### **Section V.—Health Insurance—Paragraph 16.**

MR. THOMAS RYAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Waterford) said he noticed that the new group of Societies was to have certain representation on the Commission. When they got the findings of that Commission they should consider and deal with the defects of the Act. They should not lose sight of the member who had been insured for a number of years, but who ceased to be a member after being unemployed for a certain period, though he had paid his contributions for a long time.

The CHAIRMAN said the Trade Union Approved Societies had formed an Association, and that Association had secured two places on the Advisory Committee. The Inquiry was different. It was an Inquiry by an Inter-Departmental Committee into the Insurance Act generally and medical services. The Association had appointed three members to give evidence, and they had handed in a summary of evidence that covered the point raised.

MR. W. MURPHY (National Society of Brushmakers, Dublin) asked if anything had been tabled to deal with the case of a man who had come under the National Health Insurance Scheme since its initiation in 1911 up to the present time, and who paid up all the contributions demanded of him, but who was cut off completely when he reached seventy years, though he paid his contributions for the ten or twenty years without receiving any benefit.

The CHAIRMAN detailed the circumstances under which the Committee of Inquiry was set up, and said a protest was made that no Labour representatives were on it. They wanted such representation, because they claimed that Health Insurance was only part of the big scheme of Social Insurance. If the system was recast or amended, all their social insurance should be brought under one heading. They had drawn attention to the point of cutting off people and the defects in the Act and all such other matters. All those services should be incorporated in one big scheme of State Insurance.

MR. PATRICK DORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said another point should not be lost sight of, that a member becoming unemployed in July, 1923, and remaining unemployed until June, 1924, who did not pay up a certain amount of arrears by the 1st October, became disfranchised from receiving any benefit for the year 1925. That was a serious defect, and required attention.

MR. T. JONES (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Bandon) said they could take the case of a man who was insured from the inception of this Act and contributed continuously during that time, and who received an injury and who made a claim under the Workmen's Compensation Act and received 35/- per week under that Act. He claimed that it was up to that man's Society to keep his card in benefit. Some contemptible things had been done around the country in that connection. What was the next position about such a man? He returned to work, but after a few months he became incapacitated through illness, and made application for benefit under the National Health Insurance Act, but some of the gentlemen going round the country under the Act pointed out that because that worker did not return his certificates weekly when incapacitated under the Workmen's Compensation Act he was debarred from benefit. Some confusion arose in his town over such a case. A solicitor was instructed and was feed to fight the man's case and to lodge an appeal, but that appeal would have to be against the Society, as if a feud existed between the insured workers and the Society. Something should be done in such a case.

MR. THOMAS O'GORMAN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Limerick) complained that the responsible department had not dealt with cases of non-compliance under the National Health and Unemployment Insurance Acts urgently reported to them. He reported some cases and got no reply from the Department. Members had lost unemployment and sickness benefit at a time when they wanted it owing to such dilatoriness on the part of the department. Employers stopped their contributions, but did not stamp the cards, and those men got nothing. The National Executive should do something in the matter.

The CHAIRMAN said in the case raised by Mr. Doran the Society was bound in law to keep the person insured. The Society must prolong the insurance in such a case. In reply to Mr. Jones, he wished to point out that a person who was ill and could show to the satisfaction of the Commissioners that he failed to stamp his card because of that illness, was a fully-insured person. Any man who was away from work owing to illness did not fall into arrear. If an insured person had a difference with his Society, that person should make a claim on the Society for what he was entitled to, and if the Society failed to come to an agreement with him, he had a right to ask the Society to refer the matter to arbitration under the rule dealing with disputes. If the insured person was not satisfied with the arbitration, he could bring his case before the Commissioners.



## Section VI.—The Irish Trade Union Congress Health Insurance Society—Paragraph 17.

MR. W. NORTON (Post Office Workers' Union, Dublin) asked the number of Clerks employed at the Head Office, the capacity in which they were employed, and the wages they received each week.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said the manager was Mr. Waldron, and the staff consisted of five men, three of whom were temporary, and three girls. The two permanent men were paid £4 per week, and the three girls £1 15s. 0d., £1 5s. 0d., and 15/- per week, respectively.

MR. NORTON—"What is the age of the lowest-paid girl?"

MR. JOHNSON—"She is 15 or 16 years of age, and has recently come from school."

MR. NORTON considered that she should be paid a higher wage.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive) said he did not agree that the wages paid were sufficient, but the delegates should be aware there was only a small amount allowed for administration expenses, and the whole of that amount was being paid in wages and the upkeep of the office. If the amount was larger, there would be much larger wages paid.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) explained the position of the Society and its relation to Congress, and pointed out that neither the Executive nor Congress could govern the Society or its policy; that could only be done by the members of the Approved Society.

## Section VII.—Commissions and Committees of Enquiry, etc.

### Governmental.

MR. W. NORTON (Postal Workers' Union, Dublin) said they had a regular litany of Commissions set up by the Government to enquire into various matters. A considerable amount of evidence and an amount of time was wasted by the Labour Deputies and everyone else, because afterwards they were told in effect by the Government that they did not know what they were talking about, and that their proposals were ridiculous, and would not be put into operation. That was nothing but a policy of marking time on the part of the Government, and a desire to "send the fool farther." The Labour representatives should consider the question of refusing to have anything more to do with those Commissions until the Government changed their policy with regard to them.

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said Congress and the National Executive should give very serious consideration to the question of Labour representation on Government Commissions, but he did not agree that when the report of a Commission was turned down, even by

the Party that set up such a Commission, the Labour representatives should withdraw. A good many people had got it into their heads that a good way to do things was to have a strike at every moment, and for their members to come out of the Dáil and off this Commission and that Inquiry, and leave all those matters to other people. That would not get them anywhere. Anyone who had studied the reports of the various Commissions would find, in spite of the turning down of the findings by the Government, that the Labour representatives had done excellent work. When Labour came into power they would have all the information in such reports at their disposal. That would give them something to go on. If some of the people who were so keen on criticising the action of Labour Deputies would just sit down for an hour once a week and study the matters contained in the reports of those Commissions, they would be doing more work for Labour than by suggesting such withdrawals or things of that kind.

SENATOR MICHAEL DUFFY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dunshaughlin) said the Labour recommendations had not been considered by the Government. The majority of the legislation passed by the Government had been of a consequential character, and there had not been much constructive legislation up to the present.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (National Executive) said while he could sympathise with Mr. Norton's protest, he considered it would be unwise to spring from one extreme to the other. They should consider the matters on their merits. They were right in being critical of the Government in setting up Commissions without making an effort to see that something should be accomplished. They only consented to accept representation on the Development Commission on getting an undertaking that large sums of money would be available in the event of that Commission reporting that certain work should be done. The time of the Chairman and Mr. O'Connell was not wasted on the Postal Commission, though that Commission did not give the workers all they desired.

MR. ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) agreed with Mr. O'Shannon. Labour would not be in power until the workers voted for their own representatives and returned them in sufficient numbers to govern the country. In the Minority Report on Agriculture they had the nucleus of what was Labour's agricultural policy for the country. All those reports were valuable, and excellent work had been done by their representatives on the Commissions.



## National Executive Enquiries.

### Advisory Commission on Education—Paragraphs 27 to 30.

MR. T. JONES (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Bandon) said he would like to know if under that heading of education anything could be done for the fathers and mothers of workers' children on the cost of books. Poor people had to pay for Irish books, Latin books, and all kinds of school books in order to get their children an education. They had to pay anything up to ten shillings a week for books, and they could not do it. It was fallacious to suggest that they had free education. Congress should take steps to have free books provided for necessitous children, and to have the charges for books reduced in other cases.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Cork Workers' Council) said he was aware that the Teachers' Organisation had dealt extensively with the whole position of National Education, but they should be enlightened as to what other members of the public thought about the present system of education in the country. He believed that the educational programme was overloaded with Irish. He held that they should do everything possible to encourage their native language, but the programme was certainly overloaded in that respect. He did not speak officially on that as the representative of the Cork Workers' Council, but he knew what was operating in the minds of the people of Cork City. The present state of affairs was rank injustice to the children of the working classes. He said unhesitatingly that while he was prepared to make any sacrifice to retain the National language, and do what he could to preserve it, at the same time he thought they were placing a millstone around the necks of the children of this generation, unfitting them for work in the future. Many things had been said about the educational programme. Many schemes were placed before the teachers, who had been penalised in the matter, and they had a difficult problem before them to make out that scheme. They had, however, their own native Government, and that Government should reflect what was in the minds of the people on that and other matters. Was it fair to expect children to spend three-fourths of their time in the study of Irish? Many children were compelled to leave school at an early age, and they were unfitted for any occupation, and yet they wasted all that time in the manner he had described. Irish should not be studied to the neglect of every other subject, and the overburdening of the educational programme with Irish would not be to the advantage of the people of the country.

MR. D. A. MEEHAN (Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Leix) said he had a great deal of sympathy with the delegate who had just spoken, but much of what he said was due to misapprehen-

sion. People who were saying that the children of the country were not being educated must be living underground. Statistics showed that sixty per cent. of the children left school before they passed the third standard, and there could and would be no education in the country until the people arose to a realisation of the fact that children attending school in the present come-day go-day fashion could not be educated. To put that want of education down to Irish was not fair. It was wrong for Mr. Anthony to suggest that the teachers were being victimised. It was not so; they would not stand it if they were. It was complained that the children had now too long a holiday. It was a peculiar thing that in the Secondary schools they had a longer holiday, and he never heard anyone complaining about it. The University students' examinations were over in June, and they did not return until November, and there was no complaint about that from any philanthropist. At the time the National Programme was drafted he was one who stood out and said they should go very easily on Irish. His experience had since been that to a very large extent there might be a rather big programme. The teachers had submitted their scheme of work, and it was a fair scheme.

MR. T. FRISBY (Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Kilkenny) said it was his experience that the rushing tactics adopted by those responsible for education in the country were resulting in a deplorable loss from the educational point of view, and were killing the language.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) asked were they to infer that Irish as a spoken language could never be restored, after all the talk for the last twenty years.

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (National Executive, and Irish National Teachers' Organisation) said as regards the teaching of Irish in the schools, he would like that they would understand the position. During the struggle for Irish freedom the restoration of the language was put in the forefront of the Sinn Féin Party's programme. Now that Party was proceeding to carry out its programme. So far as anything had occurred up to the present, that Party were right in thinking that they still had the people behind them in restoring the language. If they believed that they were justified in going on with their policy. But the teachers had, through their organisation, repeatedly complained that the people of Ireland generally had never expressed any opinion one way or the other on educational matters. They left it, as it were, to others to carry out educational policy, and very seldom had they expressed any opinions themselves on those matters. At election meetings candidates were heckled on various matters, but he never yet heard a heckler ask any of the candidates what his educational policy was. That showed that the people did not take sufficient interest in



educational matters. The teaching of Irish in the schools was a matter of the greatest importance to the people of the country, and the people would very soon have to decide definitely whether it was their wish that the Irish language was to be restored as the spoken language of the country, or whether the attempt being made in the direction of reviving it was to be abandoned. That decision would have to be come to, and he was therefore glad that the matter had been raised so that the delegates could express their views on it. If it was the wish of the people that the Irish language was to be restored, the next question to be determined was what were to be the methods by which the language should be restored. These were secondary considerations, the main consideration being as to whether they were to continue the efforts to restore the Irish language as the spoken language of the country. That was, undoubtedly, the aim of the present Government and the Department of Education, but whether they were proceeding to carry it out in the right direction was another matter. The people of Ireland would have to give their decision on the matter.

MR. ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said it was only cant and humbug to think or say that they were building up a Gaelic State by concentrating on the pillar boxes, painting them green, and on the Irish language alone in the schools, excluding the vital question of the slums. He appealed to Congress to take a broad view, and while insisting on the teaching of Irish in the schools, not to forget other subjects that were just as important. It was about time that the Labour Movement or the Trades Congress formulated an educational policy, which they might immediately put into practice, not alone for the children but for the adult workers as well. If they did that they would have the means of taking their children out of the slavery that existed in the country.

MR. A. WELDON (Irish Technical Instructors' Association, Cork) said he would like to point out that ample opportunities for adult instruction were provided in the technical instruction classes at the various centres throughout the country, and recommended that the Technical Instruction Committees should be approached with the object of getting classes in social science subjects established generally throughout the country.

### **Shop and Factory Inspection—Paragraph 31.**

MR. T. O'GORMAN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Limerick) said that there was reason to believe that shops with a small number of hands were working considerable overtime, and that the standard wages laid down by the Wages Board were not paid in such shops. The Inspectors were few, and it was impossible to get them to pay regular visits of inspection to these shops.

The employees themselves were to a great extent to blame if their hours were extended and they had to work under the recognised wages. They should put the facts before their Unions for attention.

MISS E. O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said she was not satisfied that the Executive did anything towards factory inspection last year. It was a serious matter, and should be closely gone into. There was a great deal of abuse taking place in the factories.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said he would like to know if the Women Workers had given the Executive any instances of such cases that they could deal with. The matter raised by Mr. O'Gorman had been pressed on the Government several times within the last six or seven months. No later than last week that matter was dealt with publicly.

MISS O'CONNOR said they had complaints, but they did not want to be troubling the Labour Party with them. Their object was to get them attended to through Inspectors.

THE CHAIRMAN—"The Executive had no such cases brought before it."

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said any complaints he ever received on any matter always got consideration when he forwarded them.

### POSITION OF SECRETARY.

At this stage it was decided to discuss a recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee in the following terms:—

The Standing Orders Committee have had interviews with representatives of the National Executive of Congress, who informed us that from time to time they have had borne in on them the difficulties of the Secretary attending in full to his duties as Deputy in the Dáil and also to the work of Congress. We recommend the National Executive to instruct the incoming National Executive to make such arrangements as may seem meet to relieve the Secretary of as much of his work as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN said that the position at the moment was that Mr. Johnson had been carrying on the duties of Secretary to Congress and Chairman of the Labour Party in the Dáil for the past two years. All of them who were in close contact with Mr. Johnson knew that it was unfair to Mr. Johnson or any other man to have to try to discharge the duties of those two offices to his own or anybody else's satisfaction. Mr. Johnson desired to make his position fully plain to Congress. It was the desire of the National Executive to retain the services of Mr. Johnson to Congress as far as such services could be retained. They could see if they could relieve Mr. Johnson of any of the duties and have them done



through the office, Mr. Johnson's authority to remain supreme, and he to be finally responsible to Congress for the work.

Mr. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said when he found himself again nominated as Secretary he was very reluctant to allow that nomination to go forward, because he felt he would not be able to do the work of Congress as he thought it should be done. The work had increased, and was growing rapidly, especially by reason of the fact that they had representation in the Dáil and a Party there, and he felt it would not be possible for him to do in the office the work he had hitherto done there. He therefore determined not to allow his name to go forward for the Secretaryship of Congress, but no other nomination came in, and he was persuaded not to refuse the nomination. He consented to such a course on condition that he would be allowed make his position clear before the ballot papers were issued with his name on them. It was decided that Labour should run candidates for the Dáil, and he was one of them; he was also one of the elected Labour Deputies, and he was afterwards elected Chairman of the Labour Party in the Dáil. That choice was again made for the second year. Some people thought that the duties in the Dáil should be taken more lightly than he took them, but he felt that there was an obligation on him to devote a great deal of time to such duties, and also to the work of the Party in the Dáil. That, with the work of Congress, had imposed more responsibility on him than he felt he was able to undertake. He believed the work in the office had gone on satisfactorily, but he put that position of affairs before them for their consideration.

Congress then adjourned until the following morning.

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## *SECOND DAY—Tuesday, 5th August, 1924.*

MR. L. J. DUFFY occupied the Chair.

### **POSITION OF SECRETARY—Discussion resumed.**

MR. T. IRVINE (Postoffice Workers' Union, Belfast) said it would only be fair to provide assistance for Mr. Johnson, as they could not expect one man to do two men's work. It would also be necessary to increase the affiliation fees, as the work could not be done on the affiliation fees of last year. He believed the officials in the office were working at full pitch, and the incoming Executive

should inform the Unions that they would have to be paid adequately for such work.

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (National Executive and I.N.T.O.) said as one who had been closely associated with Mr. Johnson in his work in the Dáil, he was in a position to know and to appreciate fully the valuable work Mr. Johnson did there. That work, both in volume and importance, was not known to the members of the Labour Movement to the extent that it should be. Mr. Irvine remarked that one man could not do two men's work. Mr. Johnson was doing six men's work there. That was the position. Mr. Johnson was doing work in the Dáil which on the Government's side was being done by six or seven Ministers. The Minister came in with a Bill and he dealt with it, and discussed various points and amendments, and then he finished, and another Minister took up another Bill and finished with it, and so on; but Mr. Johnson was there to deal with every Bill that came up, and he had not behind him the big staff of helpers that the Ministers had. He (Mr. O'Connell) thought it was recognised by every Party in the Dáil that Mr. Johnson was the outstanding man in the Dáil as a Parliamentarian. Such an opinion was not confined to their own country, because whenever visitors from foreign countries like America came to the Dáil, the man they first asked for was Mr. Johnson, the Labour leader; they seemed to have heard more about Mr. Johnson than about any other man in the Dáil. By the character of the work Mr. Johnson was doing in the Dáil, he had lifted up the whole Labour Movement throughout the country. In nature, volume, and value, that work was beyond all praise. In addition, he had to do a great deal of preparation work in connection with Bills, and to attend to the work of the office. The National Executive had repeatedly discussed among themselves the position of Mr. Johnson, and they felt that if they were to continue to have Mr. Johnson with them, they should do all they could to lift as much of the weight off him as they could. The suggestion of the Executive was that it would not be a good thing for the Labour Movement if Mr. Johnson's own wishes were acceded to, that he should leave off his duties as Secretary, and attend to the work in the Dáil. They felt that that could not be done. They wanted his guiding hand as Secretary, but the office work could be performed by someone else, and Mr. Johnson would still remain Secretary, and have, in the last instance, the responsibility, and he could also attend to his duties in the Dáil. He could hardly say to them what it would mean if Mr. Johnson were to cease work, or that anything should happen to prevent him continuing his Parliamentary duties.

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said an opinion which was held to a considerable extent by the delegates and in the Labour Movement as a whole



on that question should be given expression to at Congress. It was that they all recognised the work Mr. Johnson was doing in the political and Parliamentary sphere. Some of them were rather inclined to think that he gave too much attention to that side of the work. Some of them believed that the industrial side of the Movement was of more importance than its Parliamentary side. However, they recognised that the Parliamentary side was important, too, and anyone who had seen Mr. Johnson at work knew that he did that important work very well, and gave most of his days and nights to it. Some of them believed that it was not right that Mr. Johnson should give so much attention to it, and he (Mr. O'Shannon) was of opinion, and they might as well express themselves frankly, that while Mr. Johnson was doing that work excellently, he had at the same time lost touch a lot with the driving force of the Movement—that was the industrial side. He hoped the Executive would give Congress an assurance that in any new arrangements to be made it would take care that the industrial side should be properly catered for. He would also like Congress to tell the Labour T.D.'s that it was not right that so much of the work in the Dáil should fall on Mr. Johnson. He was doing not only the work of six men, but also the work of most of the dozen Labour T.D.'s in the Dáil. Mr. Johnson was the Party in a sense. That was not fair or right, and Congress did not want so much work in the Dáil put on one man's shoulders. The Labour Deputies in the Dáil should help Mr. Johnson to carry the burden by doing some of the work that he was now doing by himself.

MR. T. IRWIN (Plasterers' Society, Dublin) said Mr. O'Shannon stressed the importance of the industrial side of the movement as compared with the political side, but at the Special Congress when it was decided that Labour should enter the Dáil, Mr. O'Shannon took up no such attitude. He would like to know how much help Mr. O'Shannon had given to Mr. Johnson when he was himself a member of the Dáil. It was not fair of O'Shannon to criticise the whole position from that aspect. He (Mr. Irwin) was opposed to the Labour Party being in the Dáil at all, but Congress decided that they should be there. He was opposed to any man being overworked, and if Mr. Johnson found the work too heavy for him, Congress should assist him in every possible way.

MR. O'SHANNON.—“On a point of order, I desire to say, in reply to Mr. Irwin, that I did stress the industrial side of the Movement at the Special Congress.”

MISS MOLONEY (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said her Union instructed her to make a suggestion about securing an assistant who would look after the industrial side of the Movement. They all recognised Mr. Johnson's work in the “Southern Irish Parliament,” and they only regretted he was not in a more worthy Parliament.

MR. LUKE J. LARKIN (Irish Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) said he supported the suggestion of the Executive, but at the same time he was struck by the expressions with regard to the industrial side of the Movement. They should, however, look at the matter from the point of view of the welfare of the organisation, and not from the individual standpoint. If they were not careful they would soon regret the loss of the services of one of the ablest Labour leaders the country had found in their time. The work imposed on Mr. Johnson in his dual capacity was enormous, and they should recognise his ability and value to the Movement. Let them mark their high appreciation of his services. As regards the industrial side of the Movement, if the delegates wanted that attended to, they would have to see that the Unions and their members showed the necessary allegiance and confidence in those who were put in charge of the Movement.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Cork Workers' Council, Cork) said he was aware that Mr. Johnson, in addition to having to perform a considerable amount of ordinary work, also got more work to do from every other constituency than he had from his own constituency in Dublin. On behalf of the workers of Cork he desired to pay a tribute to Mr. Johnson for the care and attention he gave to their interests. Even people who had no connection with the Labour Movement often asked him to communicate with him on matters requiring attention, and his ability and value were recognised through the whole country, and far beyond it. They were proud of Mr. Johnson as a leader, and they should assist him in every way.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (National Executive and Railway Clerks' Association) said it was all very well to say that more attention should be paid to the industrial side of the Movement, but none of the speakers told them what could be done. They wanted some information as to what the National Executive or the Deputies in the Dáil were not doing that should be done. He had hoped their own shortcomings would have been pointed out. Was it expected that Mr. Johnson would also go and do the work of the Trade Union officials around the country? They found that criticism generally came from the ill-managed Unions. The Secretary was asked to get over the bungling of Unions that lived in a state of chronic chaos, and that every day came to the National Executive, as a last refuge, for succour for them. All industrial action must be done by the Trade Unions. When Unions were efficiently managed and controlled and their members were interested in their Movement, they could have proper industrial action.

MISS O'CONNOR (Women Workers' Union, Dublin) supported the idea that Mr. Johnson should receive help, and said Senator O'Farrell had taken the wrong line by being angry over the criticism of the Labour Party. They all appreciated Mr. Johnson's services, and especially his work in the Dáil, but they thought his



Parliamentary work was as much as any one man could do without doing his secretarial work. They also believed in the necessity for closer attention to the work of the industrial side of the Movement.

MR. J. KELLY (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) said he agreed with all that had been said about Mr. Johnson, and it was not fair that he should be doing the work of six men. It was a bad example to outside employers. He suggested that either of the two important positions filled by Mr. Johnson should be given to another man.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) said the work of either of the positions occupied by Mr. Johnson was sufficient for one man. As regards the industrial side of the Movement, it was never regarded as being any prime part of the Secretary's duty to look after that industrial work. There was a necessity for organisation work outside in the country.

MR. F. PURCELL (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said Mr. Johnson had done his best for the Movement, and he would ask Congress to relieve him of some of his duties.

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, Dublin) said Mr. Johnson had the heaviest portion of the work in the Dáil, and it was time that Congress expected more work from the other members of the Party. The ordinary member of that Party was not doing his bit. Those members should become more efficient in the discharge of their duties in the Dáil.

MR. H. T. WHITLEY (Typographical Association, Belfast) said in the North they would be sorry if Mr. Johnson's name were taken away from the communications of the Trades Union Congress. He was sorry to hear that Mr. Johnson had too much to do. They should tell Mr. Johnson which of the two positions it would be better for him to hold in the general interest of the Movement.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said that he appreciated very much the many kind things which had been said in regard to himself and his work, but he was more conscious than they appeared to be of the defects of that work. He realised the strength of what had been said by one or two speakers about the need of what might be called keeping in close touch with the industrial Movement. He thought he knew what the desire was. It was the feeling that that criticism was abroad, the sub-conscious feeling that there was such a current of thought amongst the delegates, that made him say what he said on the previous day, that he was not prepared to go forward as Secretary while doing the work in the Dáil, unless the delegates desired that he should do so in the circumstances, and being aware of those circumstances. He did not think that the Executive had failed to take due consideration of the industrial side of the Movement. The Executive had made a suggestion about giving more authority in that regard, but Congress had not given it. Most of their resolutions at past Congresses and all their discussions and

representations made from time to time dealt with activities made by political action. They dealt with pressure to be put on the Government. Unless they gave new authority to the Executive, there was not much use in talking about the industrial Movement in the way some delegates talked about it. They could not dissociate the two sides of the Movement. There was a need for a definite link, and the political side of the Movement could only do the work effectively when well fed from the industrial side. They were waiting for that food in the head office. In the Dáil and elsewhere they were doing their part as effectively and as well as it could be done with the material that was given to them. But the Movement was not in the country to a sufficient extent to make the Parliamentary machine effective. When that work was done as effectively as it could be done in the country, and an effective Movement existed, then there would be less criticism or undercurrent about the National Executive, or of the Parliamentary Party. They were all fitted to do such work if they had the energy to do it. He again thanked them very much for their expressions, which he appreciated to the fullest, and if they desired that he should continue in the office of Secretary in the circumstances outlined by the Standing Orders Committee, he would do so. He was prepared to do his best for another year, and he hoped that their Movement would then be more effective, and that a better record would be placed before them at the next Congress.

## **NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT**—Discussion resumed.

### **Irish Railway Wages Board**—Paragraph 32.

MR. J. MCCOOKE (Railway Clerks' Association, Belfast) said a note of optimism ran through the paragraph that was not justified. It was stated that his Association were not, on the whole, dissatisfied with the arbitrators' award, but he considered that was a misinterpretation of the position. The demand of only one section was proceeded with, and amongst the other sections dissatisfaction did exist. That was the position, and before the next Congress came around much more would be heard on the matter.

MR. T. WARD (National Union Railwaymen, Belfast) said the Railway Companies were starting out for another reduction, but for what reason he did not know. It was not the award in the case mentioned that gave satisfaction, but the averting of a strike by the Board sitting under Mr. Justice Wylie deciding to arbitrate on the matter. Under the award the Junior Clerks received a substantial increase.



## IX.—INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

### International Federation of Trade Unions, Amsterdam—Paragraph 33.

MR. W. NORTON (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Dublin) said the reference to the invitation being refused on the grounds of the cost entailed was difficult to understand, especially when they examined the position in the statement of account. The matter should be explained.

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) agreed and said the National Executive should also explain in what manner it desired the approval of Congress. He understood there was an effort being made to bring the whole Trade Union Movement of the world closer together, and to secure greater solidarity in the world movement. That was a good sign. There was a reference in page 41 of the report with which he did not agree. That justification might be removed if they took part in the Movement. The Executive seemed to have got the impression that certain activities of people in Ireland outside the Congress were stimulated by people outside this country for the purpose, not of doing any good to the workers of this country, but of doing something outside the country. He did not agree with that. They should be in a position to know whether that was so and to put the position of affairs in Ireland before their fellow-workers outside Ireland if they had International affiliation. As regards the International Congress on Workers' Education to be held at Oxford, could the Executive tell them whether they would be represented there or not, and whether their delegates would get any particular instructions or merely hold a watching brief. The want of education was largely responsible for the weakness of their Movement, and they should have an expression of opinion on such an important matter.

MR. PATRICK BARRY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork) said it seemed strange that it was impossible to get the prior approval of Congress in connection with the Vienna Congress, and that the invitation to the Oxford Congress should not need any such prior approval. He believed if a delegate were sent to Vienna that Congress would approve of such action. The reasons set out in the Report for not having representation at Vienna were not sufficient.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said there was no use in blinding themselves to the facts of the situation. Within the past four or five years there had been, in Europe more particularly, rivalry between two Internationals—one known as the Red International with headquarters at Moscow, and what was known to the Reds

as the Yellow International, or in other words the International Federation of Trade Unions with headquarters at Amsterdam. The rivalry between those two ideals had split the Trade Union Movement in Europe from top to bottom. The policy of the National Executive for years had been to avoid the entrance into this country of that quarrel, to avoid giving the opportunity for parties in Ireland within the Trade Union Movement to range themselves for Red or Yellow, Moscow or Amsterdam, and he believed the National Executive was justified in saying that in these circumstances it would not have been well advised to send fraternal delegates to Amsterdam without the previous sanction of Congress, unless it had also taken the initiative and sent fraternal delegates to Moscow. He suggested that the National Executive and Congress had done wisely in not entering into that controversy. The question of cost was also a factor in the matter. The cost of affiliation alone would approach £200 a year, and that was a considerable item to have to take into consideration, especially when they looked at their own shortcomings. He submitted that those two facts were sufficient reasons for not sending a delegate to that International Convention, but more particularly because Congress had not previously been asked and had not decided of its own volition to send delegates to either the Moscow or the Amsterdam International. As regards the Conference at Oxford, the Executive had appointed him to attend that Conference, not to represent the workers' educational institutions in Ireland, but as representing Congress in its interests in such education. It would be with the object of finding out what could be done in that connection that he would attend.

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) asked would not it be prudent in the interest of the Labour Movement as a whole that delegates should be appointed to go to both of these places, Amsterdam and Moscow.

MR. J. KELLY (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) said he was glad that a delegate was going to the Oxford Conference. It was most important that they must have some means of educating their people in Ireland, especially adults.

The CHAIRMAN said the question should not have been discussed from the point of view of affiliation, as that did not arise. When they met in 1920 in Congress a similar paragraph in the report was challenged, and a very strong number of votes were recorded against any association with Amsterdam. As a matter of fact, there were three Internationals, and if the suggestion made were carried out, they would have to affiliate with the three of them; but he did not think that those three Internationals themselves would agree that they should affiliate with all of them.



### Assistance to German Trade Unions—Paragraph 34.

The CHAIRMAN said that the purpose for which the money they forwarded was being used was to keep the Workers' Trade Union Movement in Germany in existence. That Movement was cracking to pieces owing to lack of funds at the time.

### International Labour Office—Paragraph 35.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said that as that was the first Annual Congress that had met since the death of Senator MacPartlin they ought to mark the sense of the great loss the Movement had sustained by the death of such an esteemed friend and worker. Senator MacPartlin had always been an active worker in the Movement, and it was with a great shock that they learned of his death. He died in harness. Senator MacPartlin occupied a unique position in the Movement. He was a great worker, and though there was no man who could hit harder, he never in any of his actions left a sting behind. He was a sound leader, guide and counsellor to the Movement, and never spared himself in the furtherance of the Movement. He moved that their deepest sympathy on his demise be placed on record.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL seconded the motion, which was passed in silence.

MR. J. MCCOOKE (Railway Clerks' Association, Belfast) asked whether the Washington Convention with regard to the eight-hour day would be acted up to by the Government.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said they were pressing on the Government as a matter of obligation, that they must ratify the Conventions that had been adopted by the International Labour Conference. Some Governments had ratified them, but others had not done so. The British Government was introducing legislation to ratify the eight-hour day, and it was likely to meet with opposition, but the British Government delegation gave a definite promise that that Convention would be ratified.

MR. LUKE J. LARKIN (Irish Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) said that while the subject of a forty-eight hour week was under discussion, some points should be raised in connection with it. While it might be desirable for the workers of the country to have the forty-eight hour week ratified and applied to this country, the delegates should warn the Labour members in the Dáil that when the matter came up they should be careful, and see before they committed themselves to anything of that kind that they tested the feelings of the workers of Ireland on the question. The question of a forty-eight hour week as against an eight-hour day was one

that the railwaymen of Ireland were making a strenuous fight against.

MR. T. WARD (National Union of Railwaymen, Belfast) said the forty-eight hour week was altogether different to the eight-hour day so far as the railwaymen were concerned. The railwaymen held that they must have a guaranteed day, and he hoped an eight-hour day would be safeguarded for them in the Dáil.

MISS H. MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) drew attention to the hours worked by an affiliated body, the Nurses, who were employed and paid out of public money, and had to work twelve hours per day for seven days of the week.

MR. J. KELLY (National Union of Railwaymen, Dublin) pointed out that a forty-eight hour week for railwaymen might include Sunday work. That was the position they desired to put before Congress.

The CHAIRMAN said the legal enactment of a forty-eight hour week did not do away with the eight-hour day, and it was not going to make the railwaymen or building trade or anyone else work on Sundays. It did not imply that the eight-hour day was surrendered.

### **"British Commonwealth of Nations" Labour Conference—**

#### **Paragraph 38.**

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said Congress should have more information under that heading, especially regarding the Agenda of the Conference, and what subjects would be discussed at it. Attempts were being made in England to draw what they called the Empire together, and the present British Labour Government were doing something in that direction. He asked if the Executive were enthusiastic or otherwise about the title of the Conference. Personally he did not like it. The so-called Commonwealth was not a Commonwealth at all.

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) asked how could the Executive reconcile their attitude in sending delegates to the Conference in question, and not to a Congress in another country.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said the Agenda of the Conference was not a finished production. Certain proposals were circulated, including the question of hours of work, wages, emigration, the future relations between Labour parties, and the question of native labour, and a proposition of their own that the relations between the States forming this Association and other States within or without the Association should be included in that Agenda. The title was not their title, but the title



of the Conveners of the Conference, and whatever one might say of it or think of it, it was a nicer word and had a nicer meaning than the word "Empire." One justification for attending the Conference was that they lived close to England, and whatever was done in the Labour Movement in England legislatively, whether they liked it or not, was likely to have more effect on Irish labour than on labour in France, Germany or elsewhere. That was a sufficient reason. There were also good reasons that were perhaps more political than industrial. He believed that the Conference would be very valuable from a political point of view, as well as from the industrial and social standpoints, especially in view of the setting up of Labour Governments in many of the countries to be represented at such a Conference.

## X.—POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF THE LABOUR PARTY.

### Section A.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (National Executive and Railway Clerks' Association) said, on the question of elections, the record of Labour was not one to dwell on with any degree of pride. To return fourteen Deputies out of forty-four candidates to a house of 153 representatives was a very sorry commentary on the political consciousness of Labour. They must admit, however weak or strong they might be industrially, that as a separate political entity they were still in their infancy. It was not so long ago that they were boasting to the world, and asking the world to look upon their Movement as one of the most forward movements in the whole world, but the result of the elections, especially in places where Labour predominated, had caused them very serious disillusionment. In Dublin City and Cork City, where they did not return any of their candidates, Labour had reason to be ashamed of itself. It was lamentable to find in many constituencies men and women who called themselves forward Labour people nominating anti-Labour candidates and touring the country in support of such candidates. They did not sympathise with such people; they pitied them. The whole result of the elections went to show that the Irish Labour electors, or the majority of them, were still deeply saturated with the time-honoured "pot-house" type of politics. There was no use seeking any other explanation. What had any of the other parties to offer to the country? Nothing except that they were bitterly opposed to each other, and that they made determined efforts for each other's extinction, physically and politically. While so engaged they laid waste the country, and when they were finished they told Labour that the country had become exceedingly poor, and that the working-class were to foot the bill by paying higher taxation and accepting a lower standard of living. Up to the time that the elec-

tions came along thousands of workers had suffered untold miseries and barbarities and horrors, and ruin was brought on the country by the two wings of what was the Sinn Fein Party. Yet with that lesson, and all those facts before their eyes, the electors returned 127 of those two parties and fourteen Labour representatives, or one-ninth of the total. They were certainly a very emotional people, prone to the dramatic and the romantic. He however felt that at the elections it would have been realised that they had had enough of the drama for centuries, and that electors would do their duty to their country. He hoped that those who voted for the non-Labour candidates had got good value for their money. He knew that when they wanted anything done, it was to the Labour Deputies they came to get it done. It was notorious that some of the Deputies who had been elected by Labour votes never lost an opportunity since their election to Dáil of voting in direct opposition to Bills that tended towards the improvement of the working-class conditions. They must not, however, be discouraged. No great cause was won without a lot of uphill work and set-backs. Let them profit by what they had learned for their work in the future, and if they were solid and united and determined in that work, so surely would they return a sufficient number of Labour Deputies to grasp the reins of office. When that day came, Labour would prove it had a higher sense of citizenship and true civic patriotism than any of the Governments that had gone before it. Theirs was a Movement that must survive leaders and parties. It was the cause of the aged poor and children of tender years, of the masses of the people, and it was the cause that stood for equal facilities and opportunities for everyone to use his and her gifts to enable them to be useful and happy citizens. The Labour policy properly administered was love of universal justice. Let them avoid the present ebullition. It would pass, because any movement founded on personal animosity and lies and vilification and such things could only have a short existence. Such a movement as that could not survive. Between now and the general election they must firmly establish the true Labour spirit, and with the greater determination and experience they had gained, they would steer a path that would bring them to the goal to which Labour aspired.

MR. D. MORRISSEY, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Worker' Union, Nenagh) said it was with some diffidence he entered into the discussion, as he was one of the delinquent Deputies who had already come under the lash of criticism. It struck him that such critics only came to light at a Conference or Congress once a year, and they then made their one effort in that way to advance the Labour Movement. The Deputies were as conscious of their shortcomings as any of the delegates, but the delegates should not try and get out of their own faults by putting them on the Deputies.



It was the fault of the delegates themselves that they had not a more virile Party in the Dáil. He was aware that all the Deputies did their best in the Dáil, and they worked in conjunction with Mr. Johnson in such a way that, though their numbers were small, they had done as much work as any other party. If there was any shame, it was on the people who criticised them, but who gave very little assistance at the elections to secure the return of Labour candidates. If their critics were in power they would not be able to do more than the present Deputies had done.

MISS H. MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said she protested against the third paragraph in the Labour Party's programme under the heading of "anti-militarism." An Army should not be either the master or the servant of the people. She was sorry Senator O'Farrell adopted the tone he did. The reason so few Labour candidates were returned was because 75 per cent. of the people preferred to stick by their word and the ideal of a Workers' Republic. The reference to pot-house politics should be refuted. She did what she did in the election because she believed she was right. Labour would do better when it became conscious of what an ideal was and also an Oath.

MR. D. A. MEEHAN (I.N.T.O., Leix) said that by their excellent attendance in the Dáil the Labour Deputies had set an example to all other parties as to how they should do their duty. Mr. Johnson and his Party had done everything possible in the unfortunate circumstances in which they were situated. At the elections, Labour did not do its duty. If Labour had done so, it was not only fourteen Deputies they would have in the Dáil to look after their interests. They would have a Party not only influencing the legislation of the country, but guiding such legislation. They should build up their organisation and create a better spirit in their Movement, and by their strength would have no difficulty in succeeding at the next election. Considering the adverse circumstances in which their Party entered the Dáil, he considered that the Party had done great work.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said if they intended to have a movement that would be a powerful factor in the life of the nation, they would have to do a good deal of more serious work before they could get more candidates returned. They must know what support they had outside. He held that man for man their fourteen Deputies had given a good account of themselves in the Dáil. Mr. Johnson was undoubtedly a superman. In the future they would require a good deal of finance to carry on the work of the political side of the Movement, especially for propaganda and educational work. In the County Dublin Bye-Election, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation gave a handsome subscription of £100. Such help would always be appreciated.

MR. M. J. MacGOWAN (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Drogheda) said that while they all agreed that the result of the elections showed a lack of class consciousness as far as the worker was concerned, they should not find fault with the position, but try and remove the fault. That condition of affairs did not entirely rest with the ordinary rank and file of the Movement. They should come nearer home, and they would ultimately find that people more intimately connected with the Movement were responsible. During the Postal Strike the mentality of the workers throughout the country was brought home very forcibly to them. The Postal Workers were the first body to be attacked by the Government in their policy of cutting wages. A report was spread that it was because of their sympathy with a certain political section in the country that they went on strike. To any sane man, that was ridiculous, but that doctrine was accepted, and they had people in the Labour Movement who listened to the cry of "scabs." A policy should be formulated by which certain people would be made get in or outside the Movement, because they could not succeed while such people were allowed to "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds."

MR. JOHN F. GILL (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Edenderry) said it should be realised that at the elections the workers not alone voted against their own nominees, but they split their vote, one section supporting one political party. In his district they put up two Labour candidates, and they should easily have returned them if the workers supported them, but only one of the candidates just managed to scrape in. One of the Deputies returned was an employer, and he publicly thanked the workers, but those workers, if they had any grievance since, had to run to a Deputy who was not returned by them, but by another body in the constituency. The employer whom their votes returned was now forcing a fifteen per cent. reduction on them. They should find means of dealing with workers scabbing at the polls.

MR. SEAMUS BYRNE (Assurance Workers' Union, Dublin) suggested that Committees should be formed in every area to carry on the political and election work. If they had less talk and a first-class machine, great work could be done for the Movement.

MR. McGLYNN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Ennis) said something practical should be done for any future election. If they worked in a proper manner in every area they would not alone win the majority of the seats, but they would secure the Government of the country.

MR. ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said the line taken by Miss Moloney required some serious consideration. Those of the Delegates who knew her record would credit her with frank sincerity. They should, however, consider the issue raised in expressing such views. He took it that the



Labour Party on the political field had made up its mind what its objective was, and that to attain that they were prepared to fight any other party, Republican, Cumann na nGaedheal, or anything else. Miss Moloney spoke as if a particular party that she was connected with had a monopoly of principle. He hoped they would get some credit for their own principles. Their first principle should be loyalty to their own Movement. He believed there would be no freedom in the country either under the present form of government or the form of government that many of Miss Moloney's comrades desired, until the working classes were in control of the machinery of the Government. A Republic was not anything wonderful to strive after, if they were going to stop at that. America was a Republic and Britain was a monarchy. It would be no use to have a Republic if the workers were to be slaves: it would be better to have a monarchy where they would have more freedom and work and better wages. He was a Workers' Republican, but they should not confuse their principles.

MISS MOLONEY—"Do I take it that in the Labour Party there is no room for a person holding Republican principles?"

MR. HERON—"I consider I have as good a claim to the term Republican as Miss Moloney or anyone else. She is entitled to hold her opinion, but I claim the same right."

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said the constitution of the Labour Party had in its objects "to abolish all powers and privileges, social and political, of institutions or persons, based upon property or ancestry, and not granted or confirmed by the freely expressed will of the Irish people." He defined that as being Republican.

Congress adjourned until the following morning.

*THIRD DAY—Wednesday, 6th August, 1924.*

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT.

### X.—Political Activities of the Labour Party.

#### Section A—Discussion resumed.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said although Mr. Kenny of the Clerical Workers' Union insinuated that most of the Labour members in the Dáil were too ignorant to be members of any organisation, and were also incompetent, he had made no wise suggestions for the advancement of their Movement. When they had an Election in County Dublin a few months ago, Mr. Kenny, though he lived in Dublin City, never

came forward to help the candidature of the Labour candidate. It did not follow that because the Labour Deputies did not seize every opportunity to make speeches they were not working as hard as any other members in the House. They all did their best, and they could do no more. Mr. Johnson generally covered fully every point in dealing with Bills and amendments to them, and left the other Deputies with very little to say.

MR. KENNY explained that what he said was that the Labour Deputies should become experts in their work in the Dáil.

ALDERMAN R. CORISH, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Wexford) said he was perfectly satisfied that he was serving the best interests of his constituents, and he had been present in the Dáil on every occasion that he thought it necessary to be there. He was connected with many public bodies in Wexford, in which Labour was interested, and he had to attend to those bodies in addition to the Dáil. He was rather surprised there was not more criticism of the Labour Party in the Dáil because of the things one heard said in various quarters before Congress assembled.

MR. H. COLOHAN, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Kildare) said the people who criticised the Labour Deputies forgot that they were bound by Standing Orders, and it was only at certain times that they could turn the searchlight on actions of the Government. The criticism ought to be constructive, and those who indulged in it should go back and see that the workers of the country realised that it was their duty to send Labour Deputies in far greater numbers to the Dáil.

MR. E. MANSFIELD (I.N.T.O., Tipperary) said that the average attendance of Labour Deputies in the Dáil was very satisfactory, being 71 per cent. It would be foolish for Labour to expect to have fourteen Johnsons in the Dáil. He believed their Deputies were doing good work, and they deserved credit for their services. As Chairman of a local Old Age Pensions Committee, he desired to complain of the inaction of the officials in the working of the Old Age Pensions Act. In his district they had made repeated complaints, but got no satisfaction. In connection with the administration of the Blind Persons Pensions, they asked several times for an expert from the Department to be sent down, but without result. He also referred to the position of the Free State regarding finance. A Land Act had been passed, and it involved from twenty-five to thirty millions of money. There was nothing in the Treaty with regard to giving a British guarantee to the landlords, and yet they had got it. The position was very serious in that the landlords of the country had got a guarantee from Britain, and Britain had a lien on their country by reason of the fact that she got a mortgage on the finances of the Free State, and that demand must be met before a single cent could be spent on Irish services. Perhaps it was one



of the understandings or agreements that cropped up to make the Treaty what it was not. The position was serious, because England had got a further financial grip on Ireland, which meant a political grip on the control of the affairs of their country. Mr. Johnson was the only member in the Dáil who raised that question, and perhaps a little more light might be thrown on it.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said he was very glad Mr. Mansfield raised those two questions. The Old Age Pensions Act had been a subject of almost daily criticism by Labour Deputies in the Dáil. They opposed as strenuously as any Party could the Pensions Bill as it was going through the Dáil, and they also attempted to fight the County Dublin Bye-Election on that issue. They thought that from all parts of the country there would be a distinct feeling against the successful attempt of the Government to cut pensions by 20 per cent. It was not 10 per cent., but in effect 20 per cent., and in many cases 100 per cent. He was sorry to say that in the country, even amongst Labour people, there did not seem to be much concern over that matter. They all, however, knew of the evil and great injustice that had been perpetrated by such action on the part of the Government. In their opposition to it in the Dáil, however, they got very little support. It was not merely the workers in the towns but the sons and daughters of the small farmers who would be made to suffer. With regard to the Land Purchase Bonds Guarantee, he drew attention to a promise which had been made by the British Government, and it was admitted by President Cosgrave first, and Mr. Hogan afterwards, that an arrangement had been arrived at whereby the Land Bonds to be issued by the Free State Government under the recent Land Acts were to be guaranteed by the British Government, principal and interest. President Cosgrave also said that was done in fulfilment of a promise that was made in or about the time of the Treaty negotiations. It was not a promise made to the public. It was a promise apparently made to the representatives of the landlord interest. The contention was made that the old Land Purchase Bonds were guaranteed, they were issued by the British Government and guaranteed by them, and that the fulfilment of the new scheme should carry a similar guarantee. He answered that the landlords who did not sell had an opportunity to sell at the time, and they thought it was to their advantage not to sell. They ought to be made pay for the consequences. A Bill was about to be introduced into the British Parliament authorising the Treasury to guarantee the Irish Land Purchase Bonds, and it was definitely promised that a complementary Bill would be introduced in the Dáil. He (Mr. Johnson) had made it clear that he would oppose that Bill for all he was worth. He believed it meant a formal handing over of financial authority in this country to the British Government, and that it was practically an invitation to the British Government to keep a watchful eye over financial methods in Ireland.

That was very nearly traitorous to Ireland. It was asking the British Government to undo everything that had been done by the political arrangement that had lately taken place. He hoped that through the country there would be some definite and clear expression of antipathy towards any such proceeding. It would be a disloyal act to Ireland to do such a thing. He hoped that the Labour Party's action in the Dáil on the matter would have the support of the country. If they had not that support they could say with assurance that the country was not greatly concerned about independence.

The CHAIRMAN said the report they were discussing was the report of the Labour Party to the Executive, and it dealt with important questions of policy and principles, and unless they had an expression of opinion they must assume that the action of the Labour Party in the Dáil met with their approval.

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said the Town Tenants' Bill was not so much a bill for the advantage of the working-class tenants generally as a measure for the benefit of a certain class. It was nothing but an attempt at window-dressing, because it did not attempt to meet the tenants' difficulties. The Housing Bill was also of little advantage to them, as it would not go very far towards meeting the housing shortage. The houses to be built under it would be small. The lowest rent for a three-roomed house in a rural district would be seven shillings and fourpence, and yet attempts were being made at the moment to drive wages down to twenty-five and twenty shillings. That would make the rent one-fourth of a man's weekly earnings.

MR. W. P. GREENE (Railway Clerks' Association, Dublin) said two Railway Bills were before the Dáil during the last two months. He regretted the Bill introduced by the Labour Party had been turned down. He hoped that measure had not altogether been shelved, and when a suitable opportunity arose that it would be resurrected and improved on. In connection with the Bill amalgamating the railways in the Twenty-Six Counties his organisation was anxious about the redundancy question. He was afraid their new Amalgamated Company would drive a coach and four through the safeguards in the Bill. With reference to wireless broadcasting, he thought that would give them an opportunity of developing the Irish Language, about which they heard so many complaints. The Home Government took a fee of one guinea for wireless broadcasting, receiving licenses, and did nothing with it. He would suggest that such money should be put aside for a broadcasting station, for the study of the Irish language, and Irish history.

MR. J. KELLY (N.U.R., Dublin) said silence on their part on the Railways Bill might create the impression that Labour and its Con-



gress approved of that measure. He claimed that nothing short of nationalisation would meet the situation.

MR. W. NORTON (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Dublin) said he hoped any criticism of his on the work of the Party in the Dáil would be helpful. It was a pleasure to him to see the Party in the Dáil, but he would like its work to be more efficient and effective. It was evident that Mr. Johnson and one or two other members of it were the Labour Party, and those members were carrying on their backs the remainder of that Party. The Party was not active or virile enough. Only four or five members spoke on Deputy Morrissey's motion of condemnation of the Government on a question of vital importance to Labour and the country. They should all have taken part. Quite recently he himself gave the Party certain matters to raise on the Post Office estimates, and he gave a résumé of what was required to be done, but one of their Deputies told the Dáil and the public that there was not so much dissatisfaction in the Post Office as a few years ago. He could tell them there was, and also that their wages had gone down by twenty-eight shillings per week. The Labour members should become efficient and propagate the Labour programme. The attendance of the Party was good, but the whole Party should take responsibility for the work in the Dáil.

MR. T. JONES (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Bandon) said it was amazing to hear what the Labour Party were doing in the Dáil, when they remembered how many people did nothing at the elections to help to return the Labour candidates. Who sent J. J. Walsh and others like him into the Dáil?

The CHAIRMAN—"Mr. Norton did as much as any man for the return of Labour candidates."

MR. D. MORRISSEY, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Nenagh) said his colleagues and himself in the Party did not object to any criticism of their actions in the Dáil. The Congress had a right to criticise them, but that criticism should be like that of Mr. Norton's, along helpful lines. He hoped all Unions would forward to them any suggestions they had to make, and they would attend to them.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said the Labour Party's action on the Town Tenants' Bill was set out quite clearly in the report. They thought the main purpose of the Bill deserved their support, but that the measure was so full of defects of a kind that would be disastrous to the tenants of the working-class houses in the towns that if the measure passed a second reading they should try and remedy such defects, or else oppose the Bill on the third reading. That was their procedure on the measure. On the question of the Housing Bill, they were not yet persuaded that their prophecies in regard to it were falsified. They did not think the Bill would

do much for housing, but they recognised that every new house built and occupied was relieving the congestion to some extent. It was unfortunate that most of the houses were being built in rural areas and for owners rather than tenants, but those people would have to leave another house vacant, and that relieved the pressure to some extent. They could not go far on those lines, however, to solve the housing problem. He hoped the efforts being made in England would be helpful to them, and that they would deal with the matter on bold lines. As regards the Railways Bill, the Labour Party did everything to improve that measure. He thought the effect of the Bill would be to strengthen the hold of the Railway Shareholders, and to give them an added vested interest preparatory to the time when nationalisation would be demanded by the agricultural and other classes in the country. The Railway Stock Holders would then be better than ever prepared to extract their full tribute from the community. The measure would, no doubt, result in some good to the commercial community, but no good would come of it for the community as a whole. He was glad Mr. Norton gave his views on postal matters, and he hoped they would all derive benefit from them. He would ask the members of that service to bear in mind that, whatever might be the defects of the present Post Office administration, it would probably be worse if the Treasury had direct control without any check. He did not want to say all he might about the Postmaster-General, but he thought the present administration would do better if the Treasury would allow him. He was in severe conflict with the Treasury. That was quite clear to anyone who followed the proceedings in the Dáil. Postal administration was defective from many points of view. They had frequently done their best to state the case of the Post Office employees, and they would continue their efforts. On the whole, the criticisms of the work of the Party were light, and it had taken a lot to drag them from the delegates.

## ELECTION OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL, Chairman of Standing Orders Committee, announced the election of the National Executive. They were in the unique position, owing to the withdrawal of Senator O'Farrell for Chairmanship, the retirement of Mr. Luke J. Larkin from nomination for the Executive Council, and the disqualification of the nomination of Mr. McKeown as not being a delegate, of having to announce unanimous elections as follows:—

### Officers:

*Chairman*—WILLIAM O'BRIEN, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.



*Vice-Chairman*—DENIS CULLEN, Irish Bakers', Confectioners', and Allied Workers' Amalgamated Union.

*Treasurer*—ARCHIE HERON, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

*Secretary*—THOMAS JOHNSON, T.D., Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks.

### **Committee:**

RICHARD S. ANTHONY, Cork and District Workers' Council.

THOMAS CASSIDY, Typographical Association.

LUKE J. DUFFY, Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks.

SENATOR THOMAS FARREN, Dublin Workers' Council.

OWEN HYNES, Ancient Guild of Incorporated Brick and Stone Layers.

THOMAS IRWIN, Dublin Workers' Council.

LAURENCE KEEGAN, Amalgamated Engineering Union (Inchicore Branch).

THOMAS KENNEDY, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

MR. J. MacGOWAN, Irish Postoffice Workers' Union.

THOMAS J. O'CONNELL, T.D., Irish National Teachers' Organisation.

MISS E. O'CONNOR, Irish Women Workers' Union.

SENATOR JOHN T. O'FARRELL, Railway Clerks' Association.

SENATOR THOMAS FORAN, Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

### **REPORT OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**

Standing Orders Committee recommended that permission be given to the Bri Cualann and Dun Laoghaire Trades Council to withdraw their resolution\* on the non-affiliation of Trade Unions; that the first amendment thereto, standing in the name of the Cobh Workers' Council, be taken as the resolution, and moved by Mr. Lynch, Bri Cualann and Dun Laoghaire Trades Council, and seconded by Mr. Sean O'Connor, I.T.G.W.U., Cobh, and that the amendment in the name of the Irish Engineering Industrial Union be taken as an amendment to the substituted resolution.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) moved the rejection of this recommendation.

\* For the text of the resolution and the amendments, see page 180.

MISS E. O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded.

On a vote being taken, there voted for rejection 18, and against 99. The recommendation of Standing Orders Committee was thereupon accepted.

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT.

### X.—Political Activities.

#### Section C: Political Organisation.—Paragraphs 66 to 70.

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, Dublin) said that the Central Club did not appear to function. He suggested that it should be amalgamated with some other Club or the Dublin Labour Party.

MR. ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said that as Secretary of the local Labour Party in Dublin, there might have been some neglect for the past few weeks, but that was due to circumstances which he thought the majority of the delegates appreciated. A great deal of work in connection with his Union had come his way, and he could not give the necessary time to the work of the Party. The amalgamation of the Dublin Labour Club and the Party had been discussed, and he thought steps would be taken in that direction. The Club failed to function because it could not find suitable premises. He was afraid political organisation in their movement had not got the attention it needed. They should have a definite political organisation in the country. They should establish more Clubs throughout the country, and he hoped the delegates would help in that direction in their districts.

MR. W. NORTON (Postal Workers' Union, Dublin) said when the Rathmines Labour Club found it impossible to get members to attend lectures, they inaugurated a series of Sunday rambles which proved very successful. The existence of such a band of workers would have a good effect in the future.

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said they heard a lot of talk about the apathy of the workers in connection with their own movement, and suggested that care should be taken in the appointment of persons to hold positions that they should be the most representative, and should have a thorough knowledge of their work. They should be careful of the men selected to lead them.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) urged every delegate to make up his mind to do something practical in his district for the political wing of the movement. They should start that work when they returned home after the Congress, and get their Unions to establish Clubs in every district, and have suitable books and literature provided for the members in the Clubs.



MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) said the question of individual subscribing members to the Labour Party had presented some difficulty to the local Labour Party in Cork. They thought they could introduce into that Party men and women who were not connected with Unions or the Trade Union Movement, but who were friendly to them and would give them good support. The success of the Labour Movement abroad had been mainly due to the introduction into it of the best brains and intellect in the country. He did not suggest that they had not in the Trade Unions sufficient brains and intellect and men of broad outlook, but he did suggest that they could go farther afield and get into their ranks young men and women whose ideas and cultural attainments would be a great advantage to them. It was time that such people outside their movement should know that their ranks were open to them, provided they were sympathetic with Labour's aims and objects. They should, however, insist that if a Trade Union catered for any such individual, he or she would not be received into the Movement unless they were members of that Union. He believed they had not sufficient propaganda in their Movement. They should have a Literature Sub-Committee for such work, and concentrate on the education of the masses of the people.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (National Executive and Railway Clerks' Association) said Mr. Anthony had raised a very important matter, the admission into the Movement of people who were in direct sympathy with Labour ideas, but who could not be members of Trades Unions. There was a number of such people throughout the country. It was very essential that those admitted into direct participation in the political and social activities of Labour should have the approval of the local Labour Party, and it was therefore always open to the local Labour Party or Club to say whether any of those presented should be accepted into membership. He was afraid there had been an unreasoning fear through the country to accept anyone who was not a Trade Unionist. All other parties received all sections of the community into their fold. Labour was the one Party that had so far denied that right to the general body of the electors, but the constitution as now framed took away that embargo. They could provide socially and intellectually for the members and their families in the Clubs, and by bringing in those who sympathised with Labour and accepted its policy, they would go a long way towards making their movement a successful power in the country.

MR. T. O'GORMAN (Irish Distributive Workers and Clerks, Limerick) said that at the last Election the candidates of the Free State and Republican Parties got the support of the working classes, and they must devise some means by which those votes would go to the Labour Party representatives on the next occasion. Extensive propaganda must be carried on.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said the need for a well-organised political party in their Movement would be just as great, whether they had representatives in the Dáil or not, or on public bodies. The object of the Clubs was to spread the light and create a passion for social justice and democratic freedom. They must have that through and through their Movement in the country.

## **XII.—Situation in the Six Counties—paragraph 73.**

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said it would be well if they had something more from the Executive about the situation in the Six Counties. There was a great diversity of opinion in the Six Counties on a question that affected all of them, and that would in the near future affect their whole movement and their country in general. It was quite correct to state that certain things that were happening in the Free State were not, to say the least, encouraging to those in the North, who don't desire to come under the one form of Government in the country. The present opportunity should be used by the delegates, particularly the delegates from the North, to manifest once again their opinion that, whatever political differences there might be in Ireland, the organised Labour Movement and the Trade Union Movement as a whole did not desire the separation of any section of workers from the main body. Their Movement never agreed to the separation of any section of their people. It was an excellent step on the part of the Executive to send a delegation to the North, and it should be repeated, not merely when a big issue came on, but regularly. There had been a development in the North which he as a Northerner would have preferred not to see. He was not altogether satisfied that they were correct in tactics there when they set up a Labour Party for the Six Counties, independent of the Labour Party throughout the rest of Ireland. It might have been correct to look after the immediate interests of the workers there, but it would have been better to consider the general interests of the workers of the whole of Ireland. He suggested that the position of the workers in the Six Counties, and the political situation of Labour in the North should be taken into consideration by the Northern Delegates present, by their colleagues in Belfast, and by the National Executive. If something like that were done, they, as a united working-class movement, might be able to influence the decision that would very shortly be taken, and that might mean a very serious situation for the workers, both in the North and South of this country. They wanted a united front of the working classes throughout the whole of Ireland. The only way they could get that was by keeping up regular communications, not merely written communications, but by fraternising, and the exchange of views and getting a thorough grip of the situation there. For the sake of the



whole Movement, both North and South, they should exercise all their influence, whether political or industrial, at the command of the Labour Party in Ireland, and let them have, not alone a united industrial front, but a united political front as well.

MR. T. WARD (N.U.R., Belfast) said that while all those in the Trade Union Movement in the North were not of the same political way of thinking, they were absolutely united in refusing to recognise any Boundary industrially. He was sure that Congress would recognise no Boundary either. He hoped that the efforts now being made by the Labour Party in England, Scotland and Wales and in the British Parliament, would settle the question, which had been allowed to go on too long, and which was trying the spirit of the Irish people North and South. He was confident that those who had taken it in hand would see it through, and he hoped there was going to be no division between the workers of the country, and that they would all, North and South, stand together for the common good of their country and themselves.

MR. R. CORCORAN (National Amalgamated Society of Operative House and Ship Painters and Decorators, Belfast) said he remembered the visit of Mr. Johnson and Mr. Duffy to Belfast in February, and he was one of the persons privileged to meet them. He was sorry they could not avail of his invitation on that occasion to hear the views of the unemployed workers of Belfast. They took their views from the Belfast Trades Council, but they received more the views of the individual members of that body than the people they represented. People were clamouring that day for the settlement of the Boundary question, and they were entirely wrong in doing so. What was likely to be the result of the settlement of the Boundary question in accordance with the proceedings in the British Parliament? It would mean the establishment of a deliberate and permanent boundary, and that would be a false step. He was expressing the views of the unemployed workers of Belfast. They were not desirous of a Boundary, and he hoped the Southern workers were not desirous of a Boundary. Such a thing would be contrary to the views of the entire Labour Movement throughout the country. Mr. O'Shannon said it was a wrong and retrograde step on the part of the workers of the North to set up a Labour Party. Perhaps Mr. O'Shannon did not know the psychology of the people of the North. That name was only a nominal one, and it was forced on them, but it was a step in the right direction. Hitherto they were only the Belfast Labour Party, and in the future they hoped to be the All-Ireland Labour Party. The workers in the North did not want a Boundary to separate them from their comrades in the South.

MR. H. T. WHITLEY (Typographical Association, Belfast) said he was at the Conference that led up to the change of the name

of the Belfast Labour Party, and he did all in his power to prevent the change of that name to that of the Labour Party of the North of Ireland. To his mind it was a wrong step, as it agreed with the political element that was then working to cause a permanent separation between the workers of the South and the North. As regards the position of the deputation to the North, he would like to know from whom they got the consensus of opinion. He was not aware that the President and the Secretary had been in the North making inquiries into the matter. He took it they formed their views after having confined their attention to statements from the Trades Council. They did not go far afield or they might have got more diversity of opinion. From the Trades Council they could only get a partial opinion, as they did not represent all the workers. They confined themselves to Belfast, but Belfast did not represent the Six Counties. The Labour Party of Northern Ireland was a very active body at the present time. They had a programme mapped out, and were trying to work it by enthusiasm and organisation. When the time came they would be able to fight in many places that were unthought of at the previous election. They had appointed a permanent organiser. A question was asked as to the attitude of the Northern Government towards the workers and the Labour Party there, but there was only one attitude towards a Labour Party by any Government, other than a Labour Government, and that was one of hostility. At the present moment he should say that the Northern Government, as compared with the Southern Government, had been very fair to them. They had improved unemployment benefit and other Acts, and whenever they approached the Government they were always well treated, and any protest they made was given consideration. They had, however, no Labour Members in the Northern Parliament, but they hoped to win some seats at the next Election. He agreed that if the Boundary question was to be settled by legislation, they were going to have a permanent cut as between the North and South of Ireland. He had never yet agreed to a policy of division in the country. The Labour Party had always been up against such a thing, and too much had been made of it. They should leave the Boundary question alone and forget all about it.

MR. J. KENNEDY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Belfast) said the question of a permanent Boundary should not concern Congress. What they should be concerned about was having a very vigorous Labour Party for the whole of Ireland. He favoured the establishment of Provincial Labour Parties that would be linked up with the Central Party in Dublin. He did not know why the Labour Party in the North and South should be two distinct units. They should be joined together. If they did that, all Boundaries between the North and the South would become unnecessary.



The CHAIRMAN said there was no such thing as a Southern Labour Party. That Congress was the Congress of the All-Ireland Labour Party and Trade Union Congress. It had always functioned as such, and it was competent for the Labour Groups in the North of Ireland, just as in Cork, Waterford, Dublin, Limerick, and elsewhere all over the country to affiliate to Congress. When Mr. Johnson and himself went to Belfast in February, they did so after having a conversation with Mr. Alex. Stewart, Chairman of the Belfast Labour Party, who was then a member of the National Executive. They decided to go, unofficially, so as to keep in touch with the Belfast Trades Council and others, but mainly with the Council, as that was the affiliated organisation. After having met the Council and others identified with Trade Unionism in Belfast and in Northern Ireland, they came to the conclusion that there was diversity of opinion amongst themselves. They knew what Mr. Kennedy said was true. Every member who was then active and was still active in the political Labour Movement in Belfast was opposed to the idea of a separate Labour organisation for the Six Counties, but a number of them seemed to be afraid that if there was a direct line taken it might alienate some of their supporters, and they were at a stage when they did not want to lose such support. He thought they ought to aim at having one Movement, and if they were able to remove a little misunderstanding and some little suspicion, there should be no difficulty in attaining that object. If the speakers expressed the views of the working classes in the North, they had solved the problem of Northern Ireland as far as the Labour Movement was concerned.

MR. J. MCCOOKE (Railway Clerks' Association, Belfast) said the unity of Ireland as a desirable thing was common to all Ireland. Their problem was how best was that unity to be promoted. After the confusion of the past few years, as the Northern Minister for Labour had said, Ireland did not need another violent surgical operation, but a rest cure. The people of the North were not violently opposed to union with the South under certain conditions. Retrogression in legislation on the part of the Free State Government was adversely affecting the chances of Union. He asked would they say to the teachers—"If you are going to come in, you will have a reduction of pay"—and would they say the same to the Old Age Pensioners, and treat the unemployed in regard to benefit in the same way? Or perhaps they would be induced to come in so as to contribute their share to the emigration quota, and more easily get out of the country? The situation would ultimately be solved by the workers, who should concentrate on improving their organisation in both areas of the country.

MR. ARCHIE HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said the views of the situation given by the Northern

Delegates were substantially correct. He believed a great deal of bunkum was being talked about the Boundary question, and so far as the Boundary Commission was concerned, he did not see that any good would come out of it. The best thing it could do would be to alter or revise the Boundary, and make it more permanent, and the worst it could do was to revive the horrors of the past few years. The real solution was in the hands of the Labour Movement. The question could only be settled by an extension of the activities of that Movement. The workers of the North and South were in the Congress, and were united, and that was the solution. At present they were being hoodwinked by politicians. Let them have a strong and united movement North and South, and by that means they would ultimately secure the solution of the problem.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) agreed that there was a lot of bunkum talked by politicians about the Boundary. He believed that the only party that would solve that or any other question in Ulster was a Labour Party. They still had a united Labour Movement in the whole of Ireland, but the defining of the Boundary would not tend towards a unified Ireland. The representatives of the Six Counties believed there was only room for one united Labour Movement in the country, and for one united Government in the country, and by such means all their problems would be solved.

MR. E. MANSFIELD (I.N.T.O., Tipperary) said despite the Boundary that had been carved out by politicians, the Labour Movement had not been partitioned. Its boundary was still the same—the shores of Ireland. The boundary difficulty existed, and they must recognise that they would not satisfy national sentiment by strangling the nation. If the proposed legislation were put into operation, the position would become worse, and they would probably have divided some counties that were now whole. They might have a strip of Donegal drawn into North Fermanagh in order to make the position economic. As social beings, they should make their gospel of love override the double ditch of hatred set up between two people who should be united. It was really an educational question, and he believed all the trouble arose by the mis-handling of the educational problems of the country.

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said he was always opposed to any Boundary, not only in Ireland, but in the whole world. He held that it was an economic question, a matter of bread and butter. There was a prevailing opinion in the North that their industrial conditions were much better than in the South, and that ought to be corrected. Their only hope for the future was that they should all join the Socialist Movement of the world.



MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said it was very shallow to say, as Mr. McGrath had done, that they did not believe in national boundaries. They should know that they would have boundaries as long as humanity diverged according to climate or geographical area and historical associations. He would suggest for the very careful consideration of the delegates that the approach to the solution of this problem in Ireland should be by way of a united Governmental or other Authority on lines of industry and occupation rather than on lines of territory. They could not avoid the fact that there were distinct lines of cleavage territorially. They existed, and though they had by every contrivance endeavoured to prevent the political or administrative areas being sharply defined, facts remained as they were and stared them in the face. But when they took any particular industry or cultural association, they found there was a unity of purpose, and he believed they ought to encourage in every way possible the notion that for the administration of transport, railways, etc., the authority that would govern that should be an all-Ireland Authority. Similarly, for agricultural affairs, the authority that should govern and administer those affairs should be an all-Ireland Authority. They should think in terms of industry and occupation rather than mere geographical territory. He believed if the country could be made accustomed to think of government in those terms, and leave only the administration of certain social matters such as police and the like services to be divided geographically, they would probably find that North and South would find a very easy means of approaching a final settlement of that difficult problem. It was a difficult problem, and there was no use in belittling it. The majority of the people in Belfast, as distinct from Ulster, were thinking in terms of British politics. He did not suppose he would be far astray when he said that a considerable section of the Northern Labour Party was thinking more of representation in the British House of Commons than in the Belfast Parliament. The statement of Mr. Whitley repeated by several speakers, that they did not desire that the Boundary should be fixed, was very commendable, and would have general agreement there; but the fact remained that for legislative and administrative purposes to-day there was a Boundary, and the immediate issue that seemed to be affecting the people was whether that Boundary should be where it was now or somewhere else. It was not whether there should be a boundary or not, but where that boundary line should be. He was of opinion that the setting up and functioning of the Boundary Commission would not do any good for anybody, but it was part of a definite understanding that had been entered into, and it had been thought by the great majority of the people in the Twenty-Six Counties, he believed, and a considerable minority of the people in the Six Counties, that that agreement should have been definitely enforced. It had not been enforced, and as far as one could gather it was not

likely to be enforced or fulfilled for a considerable time. What was going to happen? The signs were that they were going to have, in the words of Joseph Chamberlain, "a raging, tearing propaganda" through England in regard to that Irish question again, and that they were going to have the echoes of that propaganda in Ireland. He (Mr. Johnson) believed that would be a calamity for the Labour Movement both in England and Ireland. He believed that when it was over, nothing then would have been settled, and they would be in the difficulty of having to go through the same trouble again in this country.

Having all that in view, he believed it should be their decision that the agreement that was entered into to set up a Boundary Commission should be annulled, and all the other agreements that were entered into at the same time. All the articles of that agreement, at least most of them, had been fulfilled, but that particular one dealing with the Boundary question had not been fulfilled, and was going to cause a great political controversy in England. It had not been fulfilled for over twelve months, and they must take that non-fulfilment as a definite refusal on the part of the British Government to carry out the definite contract that existed under the Treaty. The present Boundary would, no doubt, still exist, but they would be no worse off so far as the Boundary was concerned. Then the reviewing of the social movement, North and South, would lead to the finding of a way of using their combined power and wisdom to bring the various political, social and economic activities into alignment. The Boundary would not then be a clean cut between North and South, but would merely be administrative, and the various national economic and social operations could become united and national. He believed they were bound to take notice of the present situation. He believed they ought, as a Labour Movement, say, "We are not willing to go any further on this road." The Government of the Free State had done its part in fulfilment of that contract and Treaty. But all evidence pointed to the fact that the British Government would not fulfil its obligations, and they should tell that Government, "As you refuse to fulfil your obligations, we will take steps of our own to make a constitution for Ireland. If we are not able in that Constitution to bring in the citizens of the Six Northern Counties, well, we may have to wait and persuade them by good legislation and good administration in the Twenty-six Counties to induce them to come in."

It was quite evident from everything that had been said at Congress that, as far as the organised Labour Movement was concerned, they desired that there should be a single national movement with such local modifications as would meet local conditions. He was glad to hear Mr. Kennedy, and he hoped that the view he expressed would become general. The view of the outgoing Executive was that ways and means



should be found to set up in the Six Northern Counties some kind of administrative Committee to do the work that the National Executive would naturally do, in association with and on behalf of that body. By such means there could be frequent intercourse politically, socially and economically, between the two areas, and he believed from that Congress there would be developments in that direction. As regards the reforming of the Belfast local Labour Party into a Northern Ireland Labour Party, he desired to say that the Executive were not informed on the matter. They had not taken offence at that. They took the view that it was a sign of Labour revival in the North, particularly in Belfast, and that it would not be wise, discreet or judicious to take any action to damp down such enthusiasm in the Labour Movement. They held the view that they must maintain the all-Ireland Labour Organisation economically, industrially and politically, and if it were impossible for the existing Northern Ireland Labour Party to find means of having association and conformity with the Irish Labour Party then, whenever the time seemed ripe, the Irish Labour Party would have to proceed with its own work of organisation in the North as well as the South. They had no means of attempting organisation in the North until they had a volume of success in the South, but when that opportunity arrived they would proceed. He hoped that would be done by friendly association, and with the utmost cordiality with the existing Northern Ireland Labour Party. After the speeches of Mr. Kennedy and others they need not have any fear of any opposition in that direction, but could hope that they would have an active organisation in existence there.

## SCOTTISH TRADE UNION CONGRESS.

### Address by Fraternal Delegate.

MR. JOHN MCKAY, of the Amalgamated Society of Woodcutting Machinists, Glasgow, Fraternal Delegate from the Scottish Trade Union Congress, expressed the hearty fraternal greetings of the Scottish Movement. After referring to the temporary decline in Trade Union strength after the Armistice, now being retrieved, he pointed out that in Scotland they found that employers were just the same as they were before and during the war, as was shown by their conduct in the building trade dispute, of which he gave details. He had been glad to hear the references made by delegates to the Housing Bill of the British Minister of Health, Mr. Wheatley. It was the introduction of that Labour housing programme about which the building trade employers were concerned in the present dispute, not any small increase in wages. As regards the settlement of trade disputes generally, he had no great faith in Courts of Inquiry or other bodies of which "independent" or "unbiased"

persons were members; if employers and Trade Unions in an industry could not agree on a settlement, nobody else could do it for them. He had noted also the references to the recent British Workmen's Compensation Act, and hoped they would take care not to have the same Act imposed on them, for under it a workman earning £2 a week was entitled only to 22s. 6d. weekly compensation, whereas under the Acts of 1906, 1917, and 1919 he would have got 35/-.

The discussion as to the political and industrial functions of Congress had had a special interest for him, because though in Scotland they had a Trade Union Congress and a Labour Party as separate bodies, he had himself advocated a fusion of the two as long ago as 1904. He had been a delegate to Scottish Congresses for fifteen years, but found that though they had separate bodies, they could not help discussing the same problems at both. If the Trade Union Movement did not deal with politics, politics would deal with it.

In spite of strange stamps and postcards, Mr. McKay said he could not regard Ireland as a foreign country. He had heard that Ireland was divided into two, yet he found that in the election of Tellers and of the Standing Orders Committee the Congress had chosen delegates from Belfast, Dublin and Cork, and that there was no possibility of any division of the industrial movement into North and South. If the workers North and South in Ireland could not be divided, neither could the workers in Ireland be divided from their comrades in Scotland, England, France, Germany or Russia. It was a fine thing that they had the Teachers represented at this Congress. It was the teaching of the late John McLean in Glasgow that had enabled them to win 10 seats for Labour out of 15 in Glasgow at the last election. As Mr. Baldwin had said, if Trade Unions would only spend money on educating the workers, they would be controlling legislation everywhere. An educated working-class would be able to solve problems that Ministers of State and captains of industry could not deal with. It was a big task to clean up the capitalist system in the world, but their aim was to bring happiness to the people, and he was sure they would always remain comrades in that work.

The CHAIRMAN thanked Mr. McKay for his fraternal greetings and speech, and also acknowledged the kindness that had always been shown to Irish delegates when they visited the Scottish Trade Union Congress.

The Congress adjourned until 9.30 o'clock on the following morning.



*Fourth Day—Thursday, 7th August.*

## NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT.

### XIII.—Trade Union Policy.—paragraph 74 to 87.

SENATOR J. T. O'FARRELL (National Executive and Railway Clerks' Association) said that part of the Report was in many respects the most important from an industrial point of view, and regretted that it came rather late in the proceedings. One circumstance in connection with their industrial movement deserved attention, and also the issuing of a warning from the Congress. There had crept into one of the Unions affiliated with Congress certain dissensions which were really only symbolical of dissensions which had crept into other Unions, but which differed from them in the fact that the present dissensions affected one of the largest bodies in the Movement. Any dissension in such a Union was bound to have a reverberating effect on the whole Movement. It should also be remembered that while schism and dissension in other Unions had been confined to those Unions themselves, those concerned in the present dissension had set out to destroy the Labour Movement, and to set up in its place some sort of nebulous institution, whose only object was to create widespread chaos and exploit the families of the workers, as well as the workers themselves, for purposes outside their shores. But the workers of Ireland were not prepared to be "butchered to make a Roman holiday." It would be well to appeal to all Trade Unionists inside as well as outside that particular organization not to be drawn into such dissension by the personal vilification and turmoil that was being created with the object of leading them into seductive bye-paths that would mean the destruction of their Movement and themselves. The policy of those concerned in the present effort was to hold up certain officials and executives as traitors to their Movement and class. That policy of playing to the gallery and trying to seduce the members of Trade Unions from support of their officials and unions was a terribly dangerous policy for the Movement. Some of the people who were following the banner of the mutineers were men who had been members of one union and went into another union, and then left their new loves and joined the schism. They had to realise that there was a movement on foot which had not for its object the upliftment of the workers or the improvement of their social conditions, but was only designed to gratify the over-weening ambition of a number of disgruntled politicians and demagogues. Such a policy would inevitably lead to social chaos and ruin. They were not going to countenance the adoption of a policy set up by Russian

Jews and calculated to suit half-civilised Asiatics and brought into their country by trappers of the rat-catching species. The Irish workers could not and would not, because of the nature of their civilisation, subscribe to such a policy, which had for its object the invasion of the sanctity of the home, and the uprooting of a civilisation founded upon centuries of development. That policy had failed in every land in which it was tried, and it had come to Ireland in its very worst form. It was being tried on the dog in Ireland to see how it would work, but in Ireland they had long and painful experience of dissension, and they realised that it would be madness to tear down the work they had built up by patient and united toil.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) congratulated the Executive on that part of their Report under discussion, and said it properly indicated what their future policy should be. He believed the suggestions and policy outlined should be made broadcast. It was one of the sanest documents that had ever emanated from Trades Union headquarters. He believed that it would act as a stimulus towards a forward movement.

MISS H. MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said she was disappointed at the last paragraph in the report. She would like to see something in that report approaching Trade Union policy in the usually accepted terms rather than the terms in the report, which were entirely political. She advocated the desirability of literature, and said she hoped the Executive would take the necessary steps in that direction. She believed there was a passionate desire amongst the workers for more education. Though Senator O'Farrell had referred to and condemned what he alleged to be the effects of a Red Revolution, they in Ireland did not really know what its effects were. Whether those effects were good or bad they did not know. All they did know was that it was presented in a very attractive form, and under it the workers were promised a millenium, and not always by unworthy people. If all its advocates were unworthy characters, it would not matter, but their ideas were voiced by people who were listened to with respect, as well as by others. That was the situation they must face as part of their educational programme. Their greatest danger would be to allow themselves to sink into the conviction that they themselves were right and all the others wrong. They did not want Irish Labour to adopt a "stick in the mud" policy, while the free lances outside urged the workers to forge ahead. If they had a good sound active policy it would do a great deal to wipe out dissension and make their Labour Party the spear-head of Trade Unionism and progress.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) said such a policy as outlined by Miss Moloney must be undertaken quickly if they were to save the Movement from destruction. During the last five or six years the Movement went



through a severe strain, and notwithstanding all the political dissension and turmoil and unemployment, the Movement had emerged pretty strong. But within the past few months the massed forces of the employing classes, inspired by the Government, had started their final attack on the Labour Movement in order to smash it. They had now reached the turning point in the affairs of Irish Trades Unionism. A lot might be said for and against the parties to the dispute that had been mentioned, but the Union primarily concerned in that dispute was largely responsible for allowing it to develop to the extent it had developed. He believed that Union and its officers could have dealt more effectively with that situation during its early stages. Perhaps they were too tolerant. He thought that if they had taken the matter more seriously and dealt with it with a firm hand, they would not have the disruption and trouble that existed at the present day. If they allowed things to drift as they were drifting in Dublin, they would soon have no Movement. They must not blind themselves to the seriousness of the situation. The Executive must be given a full backing by Congress to act on behalf of the whole Movement, and to go ahead with a strong open policy, and the organised workers would back them up to save the Irish Labour Movement from destruction. Those people who held high places in the Movement in the past, and were now out to cause trouble, had not the welfare of the Movement at heart, and the workers should be made to realise the seriousness of that position. They must come out into the open, and with the workers behind them they must take a strong line of action. Their Movement must not stand for any more such nonsense as the exploitation of the workers and their organisation.

MR. SEAMUS BYRNE (Life Assurance Workers' Union, Dublin) said as one who saw in Dublin all the disadvantages of such turmoil, caused by internal strife, he would like to put forward a suggestion that might change the whole situation. In their debates at Congress they came across lines of demarcation. One Union, because it had control of more members than other unions, said it had a right to do this and that. They now saw that rule applied by individuals. If it had been a guiding line for some people in the past, they could not blame others who now desired a similar thing. They should have a more tolerant idea and take cool and calm responsibility, because it was only by such means they would get anywhere. They should show such a spirit, and all those men would return to them when they were shown that the Movement as a whole was for everyone's benefit. They should have a tolerant idea of one another's position.

MR. D. MORRISSEY, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Nenagh) said it was the greatest mistake for some of the speakers to think that the matter under discussion was an internal

dispute in one union. If they examined what had happened in the Movement during the past twelve months, they would see that the Union in question was merely being attacked for the purpose of smashing the whole Trade Union Movement in the country. That was the actual position. They should go to the root of the evil and take off their gloves and fight it. If they did that, and dealt with it in the right way, they would have no more dissension in the country.

MISS O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said it was absolutely necessary, knowing the position as she did in Dublin, that steps should be taken to end the trouble. A committee should get together and settle it. There were five or six hundred skilled workmen in Dublin walking around the streets absolutely starving owing to that dispute. Those men were not getting any unemployment dole or Trade Union money, as it was not a Trade Union dispute, and how long was that to go on? Surely some means should be devised to end the dispute, otherwise their Movement would go. Those skilled workmen were not going to walk around the streets hungry very much longer.

MR. C. O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said the truth of the matter was that to a great extent the present trouble was just like the national trouble. They could not at the end of a revolution, and particularly a revolution the main object of which was lost by the people leading the forces, have the same quietude as they had before it. They in the Labour Movement were getting the back-wash of the wave that struck the political movement a few years ago. He did not think Congress ought to take the view that the Trades Union Movement was being used by outside revolutionaries. They should take no notice of that, because those people pretending to be "left wingers" and "Reds" were no more so than the members of the Congress. There were more "left wingers" and "Reds" in the Congress than there were outside of it.

MR. P. DORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said as one of the rank and file of the organisation referred to he desired to say that everything had been done within the Union to settle the dispute. The rank and file of the organisation would not allow its democratic principles to be trampled under the feet of any dictator. They would not allow truth and justice to be trampled on. That was their position.

MR. J. F. GILL (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Edenderry) said agriculture was the main industry in the country, and he quite agreed with the statement in the report that for the past two years agriculture had been an unprofitable undertaking. The vast majority of the workers of the country were engaged in that industry, and he thought they should adopt a definite policy



in connection with it. They had evidence on the state of agriculture and the relations between farmers and agricultural workers during the past two years. They knew what happened in Waterford and Athy and other places. The Transport Workers' Union, representing the agricultural Workers, met the farmers on several occasions, and were met with the cry that it was impossible for the farmers to carry on unless they had a reduction of wages: otherwise they must go into the Bankruptcy Court. While that was true in the majority of cases, owing to the depressed state of the industry, he wished to point out that none of the farmers had offered to allow the workers try their hand at the business. The workers, however, were asked to accept a wage of twenty-five or thirty shillings per week. There were thousands of broad acres lying idle where those men lived, and yet the majority of them had to buy their own milk. The farmers would not allow them as much land as would sow enough potatoes to keep them for a week. The Executive and Labour Party should frame a policy on agriculture before they could have progress in agriculture. Let them do that and have the agricultural workers behind them, and those workers would not be the last in helping them out of the revolutionary change in the country.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said he thought they ought to get away from the notion that the matter in dispute in the Transport Workers' Union was a matter merely for that Union, or that it was confined to that Union. In his view it was very much deeper than personal antipathies or quarrels. No doubt, that loomed largest, and if such antipathies were absent the issue would not appear to be so great. But there was a very much deeper question that the Trade Union Movement had the right to face and to take into account in deciding on its policy. Miss Moloney had suggested that the Executive should be a spear-head of progress. It seemed to him that everything depended on what they were doing with the spear. The fault he found was that it was demanded of the Labour Movement that they should lunge with that spear anywhere and everywhere, and give their opponents an opportunity of getting home with their counter-weapon. Those who spoke in terms of revolutionary Trade Unionism were apt to take their cue from very eminent and wise and able writers and economic thinkers in other countries who had based their teachings on conditions that do not apply in this country. The essential lesson of their teaching was that they must face the facts, and the National Executive were the real followers of that teaching. He was not, and he thought the Executive was not, in favour of revolution for the sake of revolution. People talked as if that were the only thing to be sought, and that once they got a revolution everyone would be satisfied. He hoped Congress and the Movement in the country would never take that view. If revolution was necessary, it was a means to an end, that end being the uplifting of the common people. Trade Unionism

was also a means to that end. The issue was whether Trade Unionism was to be used for uplifting the common people, or making a revolution for the sake of a revolution—and a revolution not here in Ireland, but a world revolution. It might be necessary for Ireland to play a part suited to its conditions in a world revolutionary movement, meaning by that a reconquest by those who labour from those who lend. But that was not the issue now. They had to face the facts, remembering, as was so often said, that "Labour Power is a commodity," and that, as with all other commodities, when there is an over-supply the price cannot rise. It would be the utmost folly for them to take any step that would adversely affect the workers at a time of slump and depression, when people would be glad in many instances to cease industrial operations. He agreed with Mr. O'Shannon that it was untrue to say that the trouble was being fomented by revolutionary elements outside Ireland for the purpose of disrupting the Labour Movement. That had not been said. But he did believe it was true that people inside Ireland and outside of it would be prepared to help on revolutionary activities within this country in the hope that these activities would have a repercussion on other places, and the possible disastrous effects of such a revolution on the Irish people would be of small account to them provided it assisted in the revolutionary movement in other countries. He, at any rate, was not prepared, for the sake of a possible world revolution, to run the risk of sentencing many thousands of men and women and children to several years of much worse poverty and starvation than they were suffering to-day.

Two of the speakers had referred to agriculture. Agriculture was their only industry producing for export, apart from relatively very small exports of liquor and biscuits. Three-quarters of the community were engaged in agriculture, and the bulk of them did not employ wage-labour. Of those who were engaged in wage-labour, one-half was employed in distributive and other trades not directly productive. Only a small part of the remaining half were engaged in exporting industries. They wanted a revolution, but they had to consider the facts and decide what kind of revolution. They wanted to mobilise the national forces for wealth production, but there was no scheme worked out, no organisation constructed. If they forced the existing machinery of production to come to a stop, who would suffer? Agriculturists would suffer, but at least they would not starve. But what would happen to the town worker? They had to remember that a revolution could be retrogressive as well as progressive. They had chosen deliberately to sever their political and legislative connection with England. That meant that they had abandoned the possibility of tapping the wealth of England. He thought it was a good choice. They could make for themselves a happier country. But they would have to face the facts and not indulge in destructive activities. Their resources were sufficient,



if wisely and equitably used, to maintain their whole population in comfort and good health, but that end could not be reached by destroying the sources of production.

MR. R. G. CORCORAN (National Amalgamated Society of House and Ship Painters, Belfast), as a Socialist, contended that they must abolish entirely the present system of Society. They were told that they were governed by the law of supply and demand, but the extraordinary thing was that both when the supply was less than the demand, and when the markets were overstocked, the people began to starve. There was still enough in mother earth and in the power of production to have sufficient to keep them.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said that their aim should be to revolutionise the present system. People were employed now merely for the purpose of making a profit. A system should be devised whereby the resources of the country would be controlled by the organised workers of the country. There was a danger of a revolution that might bring them back to the days of slavery. They should, therefore, be careful, especially when the wage-earners were not in the majority in the country, that anything that was done would ultimately result in benefiting the country rather than destroying some of their opponents, lest such destruction should mean the destruction of both of them.

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said in order to clear up the matter it would be well if they saw the trouble to which reference had been made in its proper light. There was a tendency in many directions to have a rap at what was called the O.B.U. It was a very hurriedly mobilised army and had many defects. It was, however, more than merely one Union. It was a movement in itself, and it had accomplished and would accomplish great things. Divisions had occurred that were re-acting on that Union and other Unions and the Movement in general. The damage that was being done could not have been done were not the soil in the condition that it was. The vitality and moral of the Movement and the people were low in consequence of what they had passed through. That was even shown by the result of the elections. But they need not despair. If any workers had been led astray by vilification and abuse, they would have to be given their head, but by sufferings and education they would learn their mistake and would come back to the true fold again.

The CHAIRMAN then moved, and Mr. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer) seconded, the adoption of the report of the National Executive as a whole. The motion was unanimously adopted.

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS.

MR. F. ROBBINS (Workers' Council, Dublin) moved the adoption of the statement of accounts. He stressed the way the bank reserve of Congress had fallen. It was falling lower and lower. In 1922 it was over £2,250, next year it fell to £1,951, and for the present year it had gone down to £1,000 odd. The delegates were constantly suggesting that things must be carried out in a different manner, and that policy of Congress had got to change, and they suggested there should be a great educational programme introduced, but in view of that balance sheet they could see what a serious problem they were up against.

MR. P. DORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded the motion, which was unanimously adopted.

## PRESENTATION TO SCOTTISH FRATERNAL DELEGATE.

The CHAIRMAN presented to MR. McKAY, the fraternal delegate from the Scottish Congress, three books—"Labour in Ireland," by James Connolly; "Essays and Poems" of Patrick Pearse; and "Principles of Freedom," by Terence McSwiney. He said these three volumes had contributed more to the present outlook of the working-class Movement than anything that had ever been written in the country before.

MR. JOHN McKAY (Scottish fraternal delegate) thanked Congress for the gift, and said it was just what he would like—something in connection with Jim Connolly and the freedom of Ireland and the working classes.

## RESOLUTIONS.

### Non-Affiliation of Trade Unions.

In accordance with the recommendation of Standing Orders Committee, the following resolution—

That this Congress calls upon all Trade Unions in Ireland to affiliate to the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, and that the National Executive be instructed to communicate this resolution to the Head Offices of Unions not at present affiliated.

Moved by Bri Cualann, Dun Laoghaire and District United Trades and Labour Council,

was withdrawn, and the following amendment, in the name of the Cobh Workers' Council, was moved as a substantive resolution:—

That this Congress views with alarm the growing tendency of opportunists, etc., to form local associations purporting to be trade



unions, and considers that such associations are unnecessary and superfluous. Consequently, the National Executive are instructed to refuse all applications of such organisations for affiliation to the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress. Furthermore, the National Executive are instructed to devise ways and means of getting into touch with the members of these "flapper" trade unions, and advise them in their own interests, and in the interests of the organised workers of Ireland, to get into a Trade Union affiliated to the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

MR. P. MULVANY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Deansgrange, Dublin) formally moved the substantive resolution on behalf of James Lynch, of the Bri Cualann and Dun Laoghaire Trades' Council, who was unable to be present.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) formally seconded the motion.

MR. SEAN O'CONNOR (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cobh) supporting the motion, said that ex-soldiers in Cobh had undercut Trade Union wages and conditions, and eventually had formed an Association, which had sought affiliation to Congress, but had been rejected by the National Executive. In the interests of the Movement such Associations should be rejected.

MR. P. O'HAGAN (Irish Engineering Industrial Union, Dublin) moved as an addendum the following clause, which appeared on the Agenda as an amendment to the motion withdrawn:—

But no Union be allowed to become, or remain, affiliated, which lends itself to the policy by which the rates of wages and conditions of employment in any industry in Ireland are regulated by agreements made between that Union and employers in a similar industry in other countries.

He said that within the past few weeks certain organisations having members in the Dublin Dockyard had been parties to accepting, behind the backs of other Trade Unions, a considerable reduction in wages, commonly called the Clyde rates and conditions. The organisations responsible for such reductions had never been affiliated to Congress, and he thought they should not be allowed to affiliate.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded the addendum, and said the important question of whether workers who were not concerned with rates across the water should be involved in such a reduction was raised. Such a thing would have a lowering effect.

SENATOR O'FARRELL (National Executive and Railway Clerks' Association) said he would oppose the addendum, and objected to the form of the resolution. The addendum would interfere with the autonomy of unions, and such a policy was not in accordance with the Constitution. It was moved on behalf of a Union that might itself be described as one of the "flapper" unions condemned in

the resolution, which had split Trade Union organisation among engineers. As for the resolution, they did not view with alarm, though they might view with regret, the setting up of such bodies.

MR. W. NORTON (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Dublin) moved, and MR. J. KELLY (N.U.R., Dublin) seconded, that Congress should proceed to the next business.

The CHAIRMAN having over-ruled a protest by MR. J. TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Union, Dublin), the motion to proceed to the next business was put and carried by 50 votes to 48. The delegates of the Irish Engineering Union thereupon withdrew from the Congress chamber.

## AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION.

(Deferred from Special Congress held in March, 1924).

### Membership.

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, Dublin) moved :—

To alter Clause 3 so as to read :—

(1) The Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress shall consist of its affiliated organisations, *i.e.*, Trade Unions, Branches of Trade Unions, Trades' Councils, Local Labour Parties, INDEPENDENT LABOUR AND WORKERS' PARTIES, CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES AND OTHER WORKING-CLASS ORGANISATIONS, together with those men and women who are individual subscribing members of a recognised local labour Party group, and who accept the Constitution and policy of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

*(The amendment is shown in capitals).*

He felt that the basis of affiliation was not wide enough. The Co-operative movement might be of great assistance to their own. So also might bodies such as the Independent Labour Party, the Northern Ireland Labour Party, Socialist and Communist Parties (if there were any such), and the Workers' Educational Association, which could affiliate without losing their autonomy if the amendment were accepted. The Movement should be wide enough to include all shades of opinion from left to right. He did not anticipate a sudden rush of such affiliations, but thought it should be possible for them to affiliate in the future.

MR. JAMES HICKEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork) seconded. He thought Congress had no reason to fear the affiliation of the bodies proposed to be brought in.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive and Workers' Council, Dublin) asked Congress not to accept the amendment, as there was



provision in the Constitution for the affiliation of local groups of individual subscribing members. Everyone with the proper Labour outlook should be in a local Labour group.

MR. C. J. KENNY pointed out that the local Labour groups were not the same as the bodies referred to in the amendment.

The amendment was defeated by 88 votes against 2.

### Finance.

#### Affiliation Fees of Unions.

MR. WM. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, moved that Clause 7 (a) be amended to read:—

(a) Trade Unions or Branches of Trade Unions shall pay to the Central Fund of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress THREEPENCE per member on the full certified membership in Ireland on the first day of January in each year.

*(The alteration was from "twopence" to "threepence.")*

He said that the effect of the alteration would be to raise the annual income of the organisation from between £1,500 and £1,600 to about £2,000. They had been living beyond their income for the past two years, and that could not continue. The matter had been before the Annual Congress in August, 1923, and before the Special Congress in March, 1924, and consequently did not need much discussion. They could not carry on without an increased income.

MR. S. BYRNE (National Union of Life Assurance Workers, Dublin), seconding the amendment, pointed out that, apart from election expenses, the income was £500 below the expenditure for the past year. They all wanted a better machine, and they could not get it without paying for it.

MR. J. COUGHLAN (United Operative Plumbers, Cork) intimated that he had been instructed by the Executive to vote against the proposed increase, but that he was not personally opposed to it, and doubted if members of his Union in this country generally would object to it.

The motion was agreed to.

#### Affiliation Fees of Councils.

MR. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, intimated that the National Executive withdrew their motion to amend Clause 7 (b) so as to read:—

(b) Trades Councils shall pay Three Pounds (£3) for the first 5,000 members or part thereof, and a further One Pound (£1) for every additional 1,000 members or part thereof—

in favour of the amendment proposed by the Dublin Workers' Council, which would make the Clause read :—

(b) Trades Councils shall pay Three Pounds (£3) for the first 5,000 members or part thereof, and a further One Pound Five Shillings (£1 5s.) for every additional 5,000 members or part thereof.

*(The original affiliation fee was at a flat rate of £1 per 5,000 members).*

He accordingly moved the Dublin Workers' Council amendment.

SENATOR T. FARREN (National Executive and Workers' Council, Dublin) seconded the substituted motion.

MR. D. R. CAMPBELL (Trades' Council, Belfast) withdrew an amendment by his Council to substitute ten shillings (10s.) as the additional fee for every additional 1,000 members or part thereof.

An amendment from the Limerick Trades' Council proposing to make no change in the affiliation fee was not moved.

The substituted motion was agreed to.

### **Minimum Affiliation Fee.**

MR. O'BRIEN (Treasurer and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, moved that Clause 7 (c) be amended to read :—

(c) The minimum annual contribution from affiliated societies shall be Three Pounds (£3).

*(The original minimum was One Pound).*

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded. The motion was agreed to.

## **AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS.**

### **Audit of Accounts.**

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical Workers' Union, Dublin) moved to amend Standing Order No. 4, paragraph 2, to read :—

A Balance Sheet and Financial Statement shall be prepared, audited BY A PUBLIC AUDITOR OR ACCOUNTANT, and sent to the affiliated Societies at least seven days before the opening of the Annual Congress.

*(The amendment consisted of the insertion of the words in capitals).*



He said he was thinking of the future good of the organisation, and believed audit by a professional accountant would be more satisfactory than an amateur audit.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) seconded.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that an amendment by the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks differed from Mr. Kenny's motion only by describing the auditors as "a Chartered Accountant or a firm of Chartered Accountants or a Public Auditor," and suggested that the proposal might be amended so as to read "public auditor or qualified accountant."

The proposal of the Chairman was agreed to, and the paragraph accordingly altered to read :—

A Balance Sheet and Financial Statement shall be prepared, audited by a public auditor or qualified accountant, and sent to the affiliated societies at least seven days before the opening of the Annual Congress.

A consequential amendment to Standing Orders No. 15 so as to make it read—

"A public auditor or qualified accountant for the succeeding year shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting," instead of "two auditors,"

was agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that as there could not have been any nominations of auditors under the amended Standing Order for the present Congress, the amended Order could not come into operation until the following year.

## Education.

## RESOLUTIONS.

In accordance with the recommendation of Standing Orders Committee a resolution of the Limerick Trades Council and an addendum of the Irish Nurses' and Midwives' Union were combined in a single resolution as follows :—

That we urge upon the Government and the Ministry the necessity for providing for the children of the nation a system of education co-ordinated through the various stages of Elementary, Secondary, Technical and University Instruction, whereby the humblest child, provided he naturally possesses the necessary talent, may be enabled to climb from the lowest rung of the educational ladder without hindrance by lack of means or otherwise. We are strongly of opinion that the first step in the making of such a system should be the introduction of a thorough comprehensive measure of compulsory education, which we hereby demand. We also urge that the Medical Treatment of School Children Act, 1919, be enforced without delay as we consider it is vital to the health of the Irish people that the schools be medically inspected and school nurses appointed.

MR. T. FRISBY (Irish National Teachers' Organisation, Kilkenny), moving the composite resolution in the absence of a delegate from the Limerick Trades Council, said that the National Teachers had been pressing that matter of co-ordinated education for nearly a quarter of a century. When they got a National Parliament they thought education would be one of the first problems to be tackled, but it had received very little attention. The Irish people took very little interest in education, and until they did so Parliament would remain indifferent about it. They wanted a ladder for the gifted child to rise by, but they also wanted a raising of the general level. The first step that should be taken is to see that the children went to school. They were not doing so at present. 56 per cent. of the children attending school did not go beyond the First and Second Standard, and 84 per cent. never went beyond the Fourth Standard. A compulsory Act should be put into operation to secure the attendance of the children at school. Yet observers found that the Irish child who stayed at school till he was sixteen compared very favourably with children of other countries of the same age. The reason for non-attendance was the exploitation of child labour, especially in agriculture, and this was also a cause of unemployment.

MISS GLOSTER (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded, and said steps should be taken to engage qualified nurses and medical officers to attend to the general health of the children attending school. Much of the teachers' time was wasted because of the ill-health of the children. Diseases such as measles and scarlet fever not only meant a loss of school-time, but often led to serious incapacity later—rheumatism, for example—while adenoids could be guaranteed to make any child seem stupid.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) moved as an amendment:—

While this Congress is convinced that in the interest of the Nation every child should remain at school until having attained the age of 16 years, and should be afforded all the opportunities a Co-ordinated Educational System can bestow, it refuses to endorse the claim for compulsory school attendance until the State recognises that its first duty to the people is to ensure that every child is adequately clothed and sufficiently fed to enable it to reap the advantages of a progressive Educational Programme.

While he sympathised with the Teachers' point of view about compulsory attendance at school, he thought that if they adopted the attitude outlined in the amendment, great help would be given to the Teachers. They could not have hungry and unclothed children in school all day, and until proper provision was made in that respect for the workers' children, they should not advocate compulsory attendance at school. The education to be imparted to the children should also be in accordance with the wishes of the people.



MR. JAMES HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo) seconded the amendment, and said half-starved children could not properly assimilate the education imparted to them.

MR. THOMAS RYAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Waterford) said he would like, as a man who had children at school, to support the motion. He believed the parents should be able to provide clothes and food for their children going to school. He doubted whether it was good for the children to be at home for three months while the teachers were learning Irish. When his little girl returned to school after the holidays she was presented with a list of books and told to bring the money for them on the following morning. He gave her the necessary few shillings, but when she brought home the books he found they were printed and published in London. If that was the way they were going to build up the Irish State he would not support it.

MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society and National Executive, Dublin) thought that children should be kept at school until they were sixteen years of age. It was true that many parents could feed neither themselves nor their children, but meals should be given in the school. They should consider their whole policy in regard to education.

MR. J. KELLY (N.U.R., Dublin) said he was opposed to compulsion in any shape or form, especially when they were supposed to have got their liberty.

MR. S. BYRNE (National Union of Life Assurance Workers, Dublin) said too many children were kept at home from school, and in the majority of cases it was not because they were not properly housed, clothed, or fed, but because they were wanted to run messages. No child would go to school unless it were compelled. Parents would have to realise their responsibilities. He was doubtful, for that reason, whether it was wise even to demand free school books.

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (National Executive and Irish National Teachers' Organisation) said if they were to live in an ordered community they must have compulsion of some sort. The teachers saw the evils from which the children suffered because of their irregular attendance at school. The object of the proposer of the resolution was a fair and worthy one, and so was that of the mover of the amendment, that the children should be properly clothed and fed. But it was not the children of the poor people who were the greatest defaulters by non-attendance at school. He could assure the mover of the amendment that the best way to secure that the children would be properly fed and clothed would be to pass the motion.

MR. E. MANSFIELD (I.N.T.O., Co. Tipperary) contrasted school attendance in Ireland and in England and Scotland. In this country,

out of 100 children on the rolls, the average attendance was 65, but there were another 30 children of school-going age who were not even on the rolls, so that the average attendance was actually only 50 per cent. The corresponding proportion in England and Scotland was 90 per cent. The average duration of school life in Great Britain was 10 years, equivalent to 9 years actual attendance on the basis of 90 per cent. Here the average school life was only 7 years, equivalent on a 50 per cent. basis to only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years' actual schooling. These facts indicated the difficulties encountered by teachers in the attempt to revive the Irish language and traditions and make education racy of the soil, and the reaction of this on the teaching of ordinary subjects. Language teaching and religious instruction now occupied two hours out of every school day. In effect, therefore, an Irish child was getting only 300 hours a year of ordinary schooling as compared with 900 hours of the British child. It was futile to talk about compulsion: all law was that. Education was the lever of all reforms, and the neglect of it would not be repaired by indifference. They would have to pay for education, and incidentally they should see that the rancher, who under the present system of educational finance escaped lightly, would have to pay his fair share.

At this stage Congress adjourned and re-assembled at 2.45 p.m.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) sought permission to withdraw the amendment, saying that it had served its purpose in provoking discussion, but leave to withdraw was refused.

MR. D. A. MEEHAN (I.N.T.O., Leix) asked that the delegate who stated his child was supplied in school with books printed and published in London, should give the name of the school where such an incident occurred. The members of the I.N.T.O. would not be guilty of such a thing. They always did their best for the support of Irish-manufactured articles.

MR. T. RYAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Waterford)—"The schools are the Convent of Mercy Schools, at Philip Street, Waterford, run by a community of Nuns."

MR. A. WELDON (I.N.T.O. Agricultural and Technical Instructors, Cork) pointed out that defective primary schooling prevented efficiency in technical instruction. In the large Technical Schools an attempt was made to supply the deficiencies of entrants by preparatory courses, which were only a poor duplication of the work of the primary schools, and even that was not possible in the smaller Technical schools. The admission of unqualified students meant that the students began to absent themselves, and were soon not only lost to Technical Instruction, but reluctant to attend any other kind of school. The position was not fair to the students;



and it was not a fair expenditure of public money. There was need of classes for adult workers, but these would be useless unless they could be based on a sound elementary education. Technical Instruction could do a very great deal for industrial revival, but it was essential to begin at the foundation.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) pointed out, in reply to Mr. Irwin, that previous Congresses had clearly committed the Movement to compulsory school attendance up to the ages of 14 and 16 years.

Leave to withdraw the amendment was then given, and the resolution was agreed to.

### **Housing.**

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary), on behalf of the National Executive, moved :—

In view of the urgency of the Housing problem in every part of the country, we call for the establishment of a National Housing Council comprising representatives of the Local Authorities and the Trade Unions in the Building Industry, this Council to take over the whole responsibility of Housing and Town Planning from existing authorities with full power to survey the housing requirements of the whole country, requisition or manufacture building materials as required, and build or arrange for the building of houses wherever required.

This resolution was similar to resolutions adopted by previous Congresses, and there was no need to elaborate the Labour policy on Housing. They must deal with this evil on a big national scale. By present methods it would take twenty years even to make up the existing deficiency of houses. With a well-organised national scheme the work could be accomplished in half the time.

MR. T. NAGLE, T.D. (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) seconded the resolution.

The following amendment, standing in the name of the Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, was not moved :—

To add :—And, further, in view of the excessive burden Interest and Profit places on the Nation, we demand that money for this purpose shall be requisitioned in the same manner as any other commodity necessary to house-building.

The resolution was agreed to.

### **Unemployment.**

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, moved the following resolution :—

This Congress directs attention to the condition of those thousands

of wage-earners who have been unemployed almost continuously for three years, and demands that:—

(a) The Government will take steps at once to provide work at Trade Union rates, or full maintenance for all unemployed men and women;

(b) Work of National reconstruction and works of public utility will be undertaken forthwith at full Trade Union Rates;

(c) The Unemployment Insurance Act be amended to provide benefit in accordance with the terms of this resolution.

He said that unemployment went to the foundation of all their problems. The motion would not be worth anything if it remained merely a pious resolution. They had made similar demands in the past, and the response to them had been, and would now be, in exact proportion to the driving force put behind them in the country.

MR. CATHAL O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), seconding the resolution, suggested driving force could be obtained if the Union Branches would keep a register of their unemployed members, and enable them to act in support of the National Executive in demanding attention. Their slogan should be work or maintenance at Trade Union rates, and they should oppose the using of the unemployed to cut down the standard of wages.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) declared there was sufficient money in the country at the disposal of the Government to deal with the matter if the Government only called on it. Their demand was not a mere propaganda demand. He believed that there were thousands of unemployed who would not be prepared to starve quietly during the coming winter.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) doubted if the resolution could be given effect. How could they compel the Government to take action when they had only an attenuated Labour Party in the Dáil, and when even at an election during the progress of a big strike in Cork the mass of workers voted for other political parties? If the Labour Party could even secure increased Unemployment Insurance Benefit they would be doing good work, but they could not do that unless and until they had a solid working-class body behind them.

The CHAIRMAN said that even if the Labour Party in the Dáil were three times its present strength, there would still be need for activity by the Congress and the movement in the country.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

### **Tariff on Imported Clothing.**

On the recommendation of Standing Orders Committee, the following resolutions, in the name of the Irish Union of Distributive



Workers and Clerks and the Limerick Trades' Council, respectively, were treated as one :—

That the Congress, being aware of the large sums of money expended in Ireland on imported ready-to-wear clothing and the consequent injury to an important Irish industry, demands that a substantial tariff be imposed on all ready-to-wear clothing imported into the country;

and

That we urge upon the Government an extension of the present tariffs to ready-made clothing coming into the Free State.

MR. J. W. KELLY (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Dublin), moving the composite resolution, said if some action were not taken, the industry would perish. The imposition of a tariff would encourage the factory owners to instal up-to-date machinery.

MR. J. WELDON (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Cork) seconding, cited the example of a boot factory in Cork, which had been practically idle for two years, but which was now, as a result of a tariff, working full time. But workers could do a great deal themselves to foster Irish industries.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) said the situation of the industry had grown alarmingly worse in the past few months. In Cork, a city of supposedly Gaelic outlook, £500 worth of goods had been imported through the Post Office in a single week. The clothing imported was made in "sweat-shops," and it was scandalous that there should be such a demand for it.

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) was prepared to support the resolution, but would not like Congress to be taken as committed altogether to Protection. There were two factories idle in Cork, capable of turning out articles as good and as cheap as those imported, which would require only a limited degree of Protection for a limited time.

MR. T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said it was impossible to support the resolution and at the same time oppose Protection, at any rate for the ready-made clothing industry. The argument about sweated competition was not warranted by the facts. The organisation of the British ready-made clothing industry was immensely superior to that of the Irish. The pay and conditions of the workers in Britain were as good or better, the business organisation was better, the advertising was better, possibly the style was better adapted to popular taste (or the taste adapted by advertising to the style). He could not support a tariff on these grounds, but he did so because he believed that in the present state of the industry and of the minds of the people, the Irish manufacturer could not compete on equal terms. The public must be required to support the

Irish industry, even, if necessary, by having to pay a somewhat higher price. Often it was not a matter of a shilling or two difference, but a matter of fashion. Until the organisation of the industry was improved, they could not hope for much improvement in the supply, but they must ensure that the industry had time to improve. He hoped that Irish manufacturers would some day introduce and popularise a style of garment really native to the country, and not a mere imitation of foreign fashions.

MR. J. P. DELANEY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Dublin) said the building industry suffered like the clothing industry from imported goods. They did not complain so long as Irish makers got an opportunity of tendering, but Burton's—a big imported tailoring firm—imported their shop fronts without asking for tenders.

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) said she would be more disposed to support the resolution if the tariff were to be substantial enough to prevent imports altogether. She feared that the present tariffs, which the resolution sought to extend, were deliberately framed so as to provide an argument for proving that tariffs were useless. Some of the present owners of the industry did not deserve protection; they were so incompetent as to expect women to buy dresses in a fashion five years out of date. The workers in the industry should have some control over these matters.

MR. J. LOUGHNAN (Tailors' and Garment Workers' Trade Union, Cork) asked for support for the resolution on purely economic grounds.

MR. J. HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks) said that the Government had imposed a 15 per cent. tariff on boots, although it was known that Ireland had neither sufficient factories nor sufficient trained workers to supply more than a fraction of the demand. In the clothing industry, both factories and skilled workers were available.

MR. J. KENNEDY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Belfast) said as a Socialist he must oppose Protection. He would support the proposal if it were directed against goods produced under unfair conditions. If the supporters of the proposal were consistent they would demand absolute prohibition and have nothing manufactured outside Ireland, builders should refuse to build Messrs. Burton's shops, transport workers should refuse to handle goods produced under unfair conditions, and so on. He did not believe that tariffs were good for the workers of any country.

The CHAIRMAN said it was a fact that the great bulk of the articles imported were made under much superior conditions than those produced at home.

The resolution was carried, with some dissentients.



## The Government's Wages Policy.

MR. T. J. O'CONNELL, T.D. (National Executive and I.N.T.O.), on behalf of the National Executive, moved the following resolution :

Believing that the various Government Departments are actively engaged in a conspiracy to reduce wages and the workers' standard of life, this Congress calls upon the affiliated Trade Unions and Councils to organise their members for effective opposition to this policy, and calls on the working-class to solidify their movement so that they may defeat this conspiracy."

He said that the Government had begun by reductions in the pay of its direct employees—Postal Workers, Teachers, and other Civil Servants—and had followed this by attaching a condition of low wages to its Road Grants for the relief of unemployment which had had the direct effect of causing local bodies to reduce the pay of their permanent employees. The Government had not told the electors this was their policy, but the Labour Party had warned them, and what had happened was largely due to the workers' own fault. The plea was made that wage reductions were necessary to reduce the cost of living, but since wages had fallen prices had risen. At such a time it was more than ever necessary that workers should be united; the pity of it was that now they were disunited.

MR. J. F. GILL (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Edenderry) seconded, and said the Government had not only instructed the County Councils to reduce wages under the Roads Grant, but had insisted on reductions in the wages of the permanent staff. Thus it was insisting on a reduction from 42s. 6d. weekly to 29s. in his area, and the only alternative was several months unemployment for the men.

MR. P. J. CURRAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Balbriggan) suggested that it was the Councils themselves who were to blame. The Dublin County Council had been able to insist on a wage of 46s. 6d. Workers who elected reactionary Councils could blame themselves.

MR. JAMES HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo) moved as an amendment to—

Delete all after the word "the" in line 3 and substitute :—

Labour Party in An Dáil and Seanad to hold up all Government business until the Ministry attends to the pressing claims of the thousands of workers who, because of Government policy or connivance are being forced down below the starvation level, and who in many parts of the country have now reached the limit of human endurance. Congress further affirms the interest of the working-class is the primary concern of the Labour Party, and so long as the State withholds from that class the right to work and the right to live, the Labour Party must continue to range itself in opposition to the Government in control of the State.

He said that objection might be taken to the course proposed as not being dignified, but they had to find the best means of compelling attention. Obstructionist tactics had been successful to a certain extent in such situations.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) formally seconded the amendment.

The amendment was put and declared lost without a division.

The following further amendment, in the name of the Irish Engineering Union—

To add:—And, further, if the Government Departments persist in their policy of reducing wages, that this Congress calls upon the Labour Deputies in An Dáil to withdraw from same.

was not moved, the Union's delegate not being present.

The resolution was adopted.

### **Trade Boards for Distributive Workers.**

MR. C. J. KENNY (Irish Clerical and Allied Workers' Union, Dublin) moved, and MR. JAMES HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo) seconded formally, the following resolution:—

Resolved:—That this Congress views with alarm the tendency of certain types of shops to employ children and young persons at very low rates of pay, and when Trade Union effort is unable because of their isolation to adequately protect them, impose on them exceptionally unfavourable conditions of employment, and we call for the extension of the Trade Boards Acts so as to embrace Distributive Workers generally and to provide in their case a legal minimum wage, and prevent the employment of child labour and unnatural exploitation of female labour generally.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

### **Irish Agricultural Needs.**

MR. D. CULLEN (National Executive and Irish Bakers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, moved:—

This Congress welcomes the Minority Report of the Agricultural Commission, and demands that, in the interests of the agricultural community and of the National well-being, steps be taken to give effect to its recommendations.

The Labour signatories to that Report deserved their thanks, for it gave them the outlines of the agricultural policy they all knew they needed. The report exposed the fallacy of the contention that wages determined the cost of living, and showed that a reduction of wages would not be a remedy for the undoubted depression in agriculture.



That depression was universal, but, in spite of it, countries like Holland and Denmark managed to maintain a fairly prosperous peasantry. It had been folly to allow wheat to go entirely out of cultivation in Ireland; they might have been able to get cheap wheat from America and Australia, but in so doing they had put themselves at the mercy of the speculators who were responsible for the rise in price of 12/- to 15/- per sack of flour, equal to 2d. per 4lb. loaf, since the beginning of the year.

MR. P. DORAN (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded the motion.

The resolution was agreed to.

### **The Abolition of Local Authorities.**

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union), on behalf of the National Executive, moved that—

This Congress protests against the arbitrary action of the Government in abolishing popularly-elected Local Authorities, and handing over to paid Commissioners appointed by the Government the functions of these Authorities. In our opinion, this policy is not only depriving the citizens of their right to control the levying and expenditure of local taxation; taking away the local responsibility that is in all well-governed countries regarded as essential to good citizenship, but at the same time is setting up a dangerous and irresponsible oligarchy against the abuses and excesses of which the public are without resource. We demand that the responsibility of Local Government be restored to the people without delay, and that, with this object in view, the elections for the Local Authorities be held forthwith.

They had recently seen the development whereby the Government proceeded to suppress public bodies whose politics did not suit them. An inquiry was set up as to how the members of those bodies discharged their duties, and then the report, whether it exonerated or blamed such assemblies, was ignored and those public bodies were abolished. That happened in connection with the Dublin Union. It was pointed out in the report that a considerable number of Guardians did not attend meetings of that body except on rare occasions. It was, however, 4½ years since those bodies had been elected, and a good deal had happened in the meantime, and through one reason and another those representatives were not able to attend to their public duties. That was no condemnation of the members who were able to and did attend to their duties. They also had the suppression of an important body in the Dublin Corporation, though no adequate reasons could be adduced for such action. They were forced to the conclusion that it was the political view of the majority of the members that brought about such action by the Government.

If the members did not discharge their duties properly, the method of dealing with them should be election and not suppression.

MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin) seconded, and said the suppression of any public body was a very serious matter, while the suppression of a body like the Dublin Corporation was an exceedingly serious matter. By what right could the Government say to him that he was not fit to take part in the administration of his city? There was no country in the world where there was more "freedom" and less liberty than in Ireland. The decision to suppress the Dublin Corporation was made before the Inquiry was ever held: the real intention was to reduce wages.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

### **Shops Legislation and Nurses' Working Conditions.**

MR. JAMES HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo) moved:—

Resolved:—That this Congress again emphasise the need for the immediate and radical amendment of the Shops Act, 1912, and records its belief that any amending legislation to be introduced should provide for the limitation of the working day to eight hours, the working week to 44 hours, limitation of apprentices, 18 working-days' annual holidays on full pay, the proper heating and cleaning of shops, the inclusion of offices within the scope of the Act, its application to Rural as to Urban areas, and the right of all shop-workers to participate in any plebiscite under the Act.

He pointed out that the Shops Act of 1912 had been greatly amended in Great Britain, but the amendments did not apply here, and said in some areas the conditions were exceedingly bad, particularly in small towns and villages. They had no holidays, and had to work long hours, and it was essential to take steps to remove the grievances from which such workers suffered, and which it was difficult to deal with by ordinary Trade Union methods.

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) seconded, and said they demanded a working-week of forty-four hours. That was fairly prevalent in many towns, but not so in a number of small towns. He also complained that it was working-class people who were responsible for the largest amount of late shopping. The assistants should not be compelled to work late hours.

MISS GLOSTER (Irish Women Workers' Union—Nurses' and Midwives Union, Dublin) was permitted, in accordance with the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, to speak on the subject of working conditions of Nurses on this item of the Agenda, a resolution on that subject from her Union having been



received late. She pointed out that nurses often had to work 14 hours of the 24, and yet the Government refused them any consideration. No section had more cause than nurses to regret that so many workers had put wrong votes in the ballot box. They had been the second class whose salaries and conditions had been attacked by the Government. Salaries had been reduced by 50 per cent. in many cases, and ration allowances had been cut down. Nurses were given ration allowances of only 10/- to 15/- weekly, and were then expected to keep in good health, even when nursing fever cases. She cited one case of a tuberculosis nurse whose health had broken down from overwork, and who, she feared, was not likely to recover. There was a tendency on the part of the Government to object to Trade Union representation on public bodies, as was shown by the Minister's recent action in making appointments to the Central Midwives' Board. She thanked the Labour Party in the Dáil and Sir James Craig, M.D., T.D., for the help they had given to nurses, and made a special appeal for support from Congress and from Labour members of public bodies on behalf of nurses, pointing out that they could not use the ordinary strike weapon.

The resolution was adopted.

### **Internal Disputes in Trade Unions.**

MISS MOLONEY (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) moved :—

That it be the first business of the Trades Congress to give its attention to ending the internal disputes at present disrupting the Labour Movement which are the cause of great scandal, growing weakness, and a loss of confidence amongst the rank and file.

She said it was obviously impossible at that stage to give to the resolution the full effect intended. They had hoped that Congress would hold a private session to deal with this matter, but the Standing Orders Committee had not thought fit to recommend that, and she was consequently unable to put forward suggestions which might have been put forward in private. Apart from the particular Union on which attention was centred, there was the whole question of the attitude to be adopted towards new groups and formations. If it were merely a question of a small riff-raff of workers, there would be no problem. They had got to face and deal with a specious propaganda on a wider scale and educate workers who were genuinely misled, and show them that disruption was really debasing the high ideals of the movement.

MISS O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded the motion.

The CHAIRMAN referred to the impossibility of giving effect to the resolution in its existing terms and suggested, in view of the discussion which had already taken place, and the general agreement with the spirit of the resolution, that the resolution might be withdrawn.

The CHAIRMAN'S suggestion was agreed to.

### **Emergency Resolution on the Boundary—Standing Orders Committee Recommendation.**

The Standing Orders Committee recommended that time be given for the discussion of the following resolution:—

That the Labour Party condemns the suggested agreement outlined in to-day's newspapers respecting the setting up of the Boundary Commission, and directs the Labour Deputies in the Dáil to oppose and endeavour to defeat the proposal.

The recommendation was objected to by MESSRS. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin), by D. A. MEEHAN (I.N.T.O., Mountrath), and F. McGRATH (I.T.G.W.U., Belfast), and supported by MESSRS. C. O'SHANNON (I.T.G.W.U., Dublin), D. MORRISSEY, T.D. (I.T.G.W.U., Nenagh), and T. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary). On a division the recommendation was accepted by 88 votes to 16.

### **Checkweighing.**

MR. J. HUNT (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Sligo) moved, and MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford), seconded the following resolution—

Congress demands the extension of the Checkweighing (in certain industries) Act so as to embrace those employed in the Distributive Trades.

The proposer and seconder pointed out that it should be obligatory on the employers to produce their books to prove that the Assistants' return of work was as the employers stated it to be.

The resolution was adopted.

### **Inter-Union Dispute.**

MR. R. G. CORCORAN (Amalgamated Society of Painters and Decorators, Belfast), on behalf of the Drogheda Workers' Council) moved:—

That the Balbriggan Branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and the Dublin Operative Plasterers' Society be censured for their actions in connection with a Building Trade Strike in Balbriggan.



He said that owing to the dismissal of two Trade Union painters on the job, a strike had been called by the Building Trades Federation. A plasterer on the job, who was a member of the Dublin Operative Plasterers' Society, was prepared to strike, but wanted the authorisation of his own organisation. Mr. Irwin had been written to, but had sent no reply. Later, when the Union Plasterer was on strike another member of the Dublin Operative Plasterers' Society had been sent to take his place. Mr. Irwin was again written to, but no reply was received. The labourers, who were members of the Balbriggan Branch of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, knew the facts of the dispute; they were not expected to strike at once, but it was pointed out to them that if any men were brought on to the job to replace strikers their position would be untenable. Nevertheless, the members of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union still continued to work with the plasterer and several blackleg joiners who had been expelled from the Union.

MR. J. MURPHY (Amalgamated Society of Painters and Decorators, Cork) seconded the motion, and asked the Executive to devise machinery to settle disputes of this sort.

On the suggestion of the Chairman, the matter was referred to the National Executive.

### **Factory Inspection.**

MR. R. S. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork) moved :—

That this Congress urges upon the Government the necessity for appointing additional factory inspectors (male and female) in the Free State generally, and the immediate appointment of at least one female factory inspector in Cork.

He said in Cork they sorely felt the need for such Inspectors. There was only one Male Inspector for all Munster, and no Woman Inspector at all for Cork, although there were a large number of women employed in factories.

MISS O'CONNOR (Irish Women Workers' Union, Dublin) seconded, and said her Union, dealing solely with women, heard a great many complaints about factory inspection. They had a Woman Inspector and she did a great deal of work, but it was impossible for one woman to cater for the whole country. There were not enough Inspectors, and they were not sufficiently equipped with technical knowledge. The special knowledge of workers ought to be availed of.

MR. JAMES HICKEY (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Cork) supported the motion, and said Inspectors appointed should have a technical knowledge of the work they had to perform.

The resolution was agreed to.

**Finance Act, 1923.**

MR. L. J. LARKIN (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Waterford) moved—

This Congress demands the repeal of Section 6 of the Finance Act, 1923, as it has become in the hands of the Revenue Commissioners an instrument of oppression, and is used by them to force employers to deduct large sums of money from the wages of their employees, regardless of their ability to pay.

Permission to move the resolution, which was not on the Agenda, had been given by Congress on the recommendation of Standing Orders Committee.

MR. LARKIN said that two or three years ago, when patriotism was brought to a very high pitch, they were told the most effective means to adopt on behalf of the country in its struggle for freedom was to ignore the British administration, and one of the recommendations put forward was to refuse to pay any levies made by that Government. That policy was adopted, but now demands were being made, by the people who put that policy before them, for payment of large arrears of income tax. In some cases demands were made for large sums which workers could not pay. Moreover, employers were being used to collect the tax by deductions from wages, sometimes even in one sum. That was a penal enactment and should be repealed.

MR. J. W. KELLY (Irish Union of Distributive Workers and Clerks, Dublin) seconded.

The resolution was agreed to.

**Douglas Report on Post Office.**

Permission to move the following resolution, which was not on the Agenda, had been given by Congress on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee :—

That this Congress affirms that it is the policy of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress to give effect to Part I. of the Douglas Report.

MR. W. J. NORTON (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Dublin), moving the resolution, said that in March, 1922, the Government had proposed a reduction in the wages of Post Office servants. Eventually the Union had agreed to a reduction on condition that a Government Commission, in effect an Arbitration Court, should inquire into the ability of Post Office employees to bear the reduction and into the whole question of Post Office conditions. The Commission found that the reduction was too great, and it had been



cancelled. The Commission presented the first part of its Report on December 14th, 1922. The Government held it up for a year and then announced that it did not intend to give effect to the Commission's recommendations in full. It had taken a warped view of some of the findings, and had applied them so as to make existing conditions worse. Two representatives of Congress had been members of the Commission, and the Congress ought to make the application of the Report one of the planks in its programme.

MR. M. J. McGOWAN (Irish Postoffice Workers' Union, Drogheda), seconding the resolution, pointed out that the Report of the Commission was unanimous, and was, therefore, concurred in by the Government's own representatives on it.

The resolution was agreed to.

### **Withdrawal of Delegates—Explanatory Statement.**

Permission having been given by Congress on the recommendation of the Standing Orders Committee, a delegate of the Irish Engineering Industrial Union made a statement in explanation of the action of himself and his colleagues in withdrawing from the Congress Chamber when their amendment to the resolution on Affiliation of Unions was discussed.\*

MR. J. TOOMEY (Irish Engineering Union, Dublin) said that his Union's amendment had been tabled in order to get an expression of opinion from Congress on industrial policy. So much time had been spent in political discussion that that had proved impossible. He pointed out that after a dispute in Dublin Dockyard had been carried on for two years, two Unions had agreed to reductions, without the assent of the other Unions concerned, and had undertaken also—and this was their main objection—to allow wages in Dublin to be determined by agreements made elsewhere. Any Union might have to accept reductions, but it was another matter for it to accept reductions in consequence of agreements to which they were not parties. Yet, if the resolution on the Agenda had been carried, these two Unions would have been invited to affiliate to Congress. Mr. Toomey repudiated Mr. O'Farrell's suggestion that they were a "flapper" Union, pointing out that they were seventh in order of membership affiliated to Congress.

The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the closure decision had been taken by Congress itself, and could not be attributed either to Mr. O'Farrell (who had spoken for himself) or the National Executive, or to the time spent on the National Executive Report, the last five and a half pages of which were devoted entirely, not to politics, but

\* See page 182.

to industrial policy. Personally, although he was afraid he might have had to rule the amendment out of order as involving an amendment to the Constitution, he was sorry that there had not been a discussion on it.

### **Emergency Resolution—The Boundary.**

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) moved :—

That Congress cannot approve of the agreement on the Boundary Commission suggested in to-day's newspapers, and accordingly directs the Labour Deputies in the Dáil to take such action as may be required for the amendment or rejection of the suggested proposals.

He said it would be no harm to reiterate the unanimous opposition of the Labour Movement to any boundary in the country. So far as they were concerned they would have no boundary, and their organisation would continue to be one body as long as they could maintain it. There had been an undesirable development in the Boundary situation within the past few days, and efforts were being made that would only make the position worse. Their representatives in the Dáil would be confronted by that development, and they should be given a mandate from Congress to refuse to whittle down the position in any way.

MR. A. HERON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) formally seconded the motion.

MR. C. O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin) said they ought to take the responsibility of instructing their representatives in this matter. The resolution was carefully worded so as to give the Labour Party both authority and freedom, and he hoped it would be passed unanimously.

MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin) admitted that he himself was not fully acquainted with the agreement announced in that day's papers, and thought many other delegates were in the same position. He was convinced that the politicians were juggling with the matter, and, the British being expert jugglers, that no good could come of it, and that Congress would be well advised to leave the matter alone.

MR. J. E. McNELIS (I.N.T.O., Co. Tyrone) said he did not believe in the partition of the country. All the same, they had to face the facts of the situation. He had said on the publication of the Treaty that the Boundary Clause was a mistake, and any development that had taken place did not come as a surprise to the people in the North of Ireland, as it was plain that the only way out of the difficulty was a fresh Act of the British Parliament. There were aspects of the situation that a great many in the South



were not aware of. The representatives of the Dáil who accepted the Treaty were just as responsible as the British Parliament, who also accepted it, and it would not be fair for those gentlemen to raise fresh difficulties on a Treaty to which they were parties some time ago. The question should not be approached from the point of view of the two counties of Tyrone and Fermanagh, which had large Nationalist majorities, but from the point of view of the minorities that were in Belfast and the other four counties. These were being left out in the cold. Could they take any step now which would hinder the people in Tyrone and Fermanagh who wanted to come into the Free State? Once the Treaty was approved, they had to carry it out, and they were as much responsible as the British for the Treaty and any defects in it.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary)—“But Labour was not in the Dáil when the Treaty was accepted.”

MR. McNELIS admitted that was so, but said Labour went into the Dáil to work the Treaty, and that amounted to much the same thing. For Congress to take any decision on the matter would only create difficulties. Delegates had no instructions in the matter, and it was one that could not be discussed in the Branches of his own Organisation. They should not commit themselves, but let the politicians do the best they could. Things would be just as bad the day after the Commission sat as before.

MR. J. KENNEDY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Belfast) supported the previous speaker. He hoped the Labour members in the Dáil would see that their fingers were not burned over the Boundary question. Something new had occurred according to the newspapers, but what could appear new with regard to the question that they should order their Deputies to oppose it? There was only one real solution of the Boundary problem, and that could be achieved only by the Labour Party in the North and South. Any slicing on either side of the present boundary would only lead them deeper into the morass, and Labour ought to keep itself free and not tie its hands in the future by action now.

MR. D. A. MEEHAN (I.N.T.O., Leix) said, as one who belonged to an organisation that refused to be bound by any partition, he thought it would be a mistake to put the matter before Congress at that stage. If the delegates would study the form in which the resolution was proposed, they would find it had left a liberty to the Dáil Deputies that they had not under the resolution put forward from the Standing Orders Committee. He held it would be a fatal mistake for Congress to deal with the matter.

MR. HUGH O'DONNELL (I.N.T.O., Ballymote) raised a point of order as to whether the resolution before the Congress was the resolution brought in by the Standing Orders Committee.

The CHAIRMAN—“It is not.”

MR. W. O'BRIEN (Treasurer, and Irish Transport and General Workers' Union) said it was substantially the same, but had been reworded, and the Standing Orders Committee had agreed to that.

MR. J. WELDON (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Cork), Acting Chairman of the Standing Orders Committee, said the rewording of the resolution had been submitted to and approved by the Committee.

The CHAIRMAN having ruled the amended resolution out of order, MR. O'BRIEN moved in its stead the resolution as submitted by the Standing Orders Committee to Congress, viz. :—

That the Labour Party condemns the suggested agreement outlined in to-day's newspapers respecting the setting up of the Boundary Commission, and directs the Labour Deputies in the Dáil to oppose and endeavour to defeat the proposal.

MR. MEEHAN (I.N.T.O., Leix) said that the resolution bound them to something that they did not know fully. What was objected to, or what part of the agreement was objected to? They could not tell where Congress would land itself in discussing such a resolution.

MR. JOHNSON, T.D. (Secretary) said he could not understand the line being taken. The position that had been created by the publication in that morning's papers of the agreement signed between President Cosgrave and Mr. Ramsay McDonald would have to be discussed by the Labour Party in the Dáil the following Tuesday. If Congress said it had such confidence in the Party as to trust the matter to them, well and good, but he would have to make his own views clear. The situation now created was this. Apart from the question of the period to elapse between the adjournment of the British Parliament, and the putting into effect of the new proposal to set up a Boundary Commission, during which period there was going to be a great deal of political agitation and strife in England, the proposal was that the British Government was to appoint two of the Commissioners and the Irish Government one. He suggested that the Labour Deputies in the Dáil should oppose that. No matter what they might think of the impartiality of the persons forming that Commission, and however much confidence they might have in their judgment, if any group of people in any district found any defect, or were dissatisfied with any failure to accomplish what that group thought ought to be accomplished, the charge would be made that the Commission was not impartial, that it was biassed by reason of the fact that two of the nominees were British nominees. For that reason alone they ought to oppose the agreement. Mr. McNelis had suggested allowing the matter to go by default, and leaving the Government to follow its own bent and fix a new boundary, but their acquiescence would be just doing the thing that Mr.



McNelis and others suggested they should not do. His own view was that the Treaty and all its engagements had been fulfilled by the Irish side, and if it was found impossible on the other side to fulfil this clause, well that was not their fault. If the Treaty could not be accomplished, then let the Treaty be re-made without its present defects. They were to be asked next week not to carry out the Treaty, but to agree to the fixing of a new Boundary in a new way. He thought they ought be given liberty to oppose that proposal.

MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin) asked if an amendment could be proposed.

The CHAIRMAN—"No."

MR. F. McGRATH (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Belfast) said that voting either way on the resolution would commit delegates to the mere alteration of the Boundary.

MR. O'DONNELL (I.N.T.O., Belfast) said that delegates had nothing more than the newspaper reports to go upon. They should have time to consider the matter more carefully, and ought not to be asked to decide hurriedly. No one wanted to deprive the Labour T.D.'s of their proper liberty.

The CHAIRMAN asked if Congress was prepared to trust the matter to the discretion of the members in the Dáil, and cries of "Yes, yes," were heard.

The CHAIRMAN said his own view was that if one party to a bargain was unable to fulfil its part of the contract, the necessity for the other party to fulfil its part ceased, and that whatever the cost of following out the British failure to its logical conclusion, it could not be one-half the cost that had already been incurred because of the Treaty. He concluded by declaring the resolution withdrawn by general consent.

## DEATH OF A CORK TRADE UNIONIST.

The CHAIRMAN, seconded by MR. ANTHONY (Workers' Council, Cork), moved a vote of condolence with the relatives of the late Mr. William Byrne, a prominent member of the Woodcutting Machinists' Association and Cork Workers' Council, who had died during the holding of the Congress. The vote was passed in silence, all delegates standing.

## VOTE OF THANKS.

A vote of thanks to the Lord Mayor and Corporation of Cork, and in particular to the Technical Instruction Committee, for the use of the building in which Congress had met, was proposed by

ALDERMAN R. CORISH, T.D., Mayor of Wexford (Irish Transport and General Workers Union, Wexford), seconded by MR. T. IRWIN (Operative Plasterers' Society, Dublin), and carried by acclamation.

A vote of thanks to the Reception Committee of the Cork Workers' Council was moved by MR. J. KENNEDY (Amalgamated Society of Woodworkers, Belfast), and seconded by C. O'SHANNON (Irish Transport and General Workers' Union, Dublin). The vote was carried with applause, and acknowledged by MR. R. ANTHONY (Cork Workers' Council).

Delegates dispersed at the conclusion of the business of Congress to the singing of the "Red Flag."

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### REPORTS OF STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

*(Other reports of the Committee are shown in the preceding report of the proceedings).*

#### Attendance at Congress (4th August, 1924).

The Committee has examined the credentials of delegates and finds them in order. The total number of delegates accredited to Congress is 201, of whom 161 were present at the opening session. The aggregate membership of the Unions affiliated is 273,454, and of the Councils affiliated, 95,000.

#### Emergency Resolution (4th August, 1924).

The Committee has received and considered a request from the Irish Women Workers' Union, referred from the National Executive, for permission to move the following emergency resolution:—

"That as recent events in the Irish Trade Union Movement, involving disruption in the ranks of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Unions and disemployment of many members of other Unions, create a situation of grave menace for Irish Labour, the Congress resolves to set aside one day of the sessions to be held in private, in order to consider:—

"1. The creation of closer links of unification and co-operation under the Trade Union Congress, and the promotion of a more active industrial policy on the part of the Irish Labour Party, as a means of defence for the general body of organised workers against disruption and disorganisation.

"2. To consider the possibility of a settlement of the sharpest points of difference between the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union and their opponents."

The Committee cannot recommend Congress to agree to this request.



# TRADE UNIONS AND COUNCILS AFFILIATED

WITH

Membership, Affiliation Fees Paid,  
Secretary, Delegates and  
Delegation Fees Paid,  
1924-1925.



# TRADE UNIONS AFFILIATED.

WITH MEMBERSHIP, AFFILIATION FEES PAID, SECRETARY, DELEGATES, AND DELEGATION FEES PAID.

Name of Trade Union	No. of Members. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid £ s. d.	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Delegation Fees paid £
Assurance Workers, National Union of Life	237	1 19 6	B. Brooke, 316 Oxford Road, Manchester	J. Byrne, 6 Whitworth Place, Drumcondra, Dublin	1
Bakers', Confectioners and Allied Workers' Amalgamated Union (Irish)	2,000	16 13 4	Denis Cullen, 37 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin	T. McConnell, Artisans' Hall, Lower Garfield Street, Belfast P. Shanahan, 72 MacCurtain Buildings, College Road, Cork F. Moran, 37 Lr. Gardiner St., Dublin D. Cullen, 37 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin — McLarnen, 250 Hillman St., Belfast	4
Building Trade Workers, Amalgamated Union of	880	7 6 8	General Secretary—G. Hicks, "The Builders," Crescent Grove, Clapham Common, South Side, London, S.W. Irish Organiser—M. Coburn, Fort Road, Dowdallshill, Dundalk		1
Brick and Stone Layers (Ancient Guild of Incorporated)	600	5 0 0	Owen Hynes, 49 Cuffe St., Dublin	Owen Hynes, 49 Cuffe Street, Dublin M. O'Connor, 5 Malpas Terrace, Dublin	2
Brushmakers, National Society of (Dublin Branch)	100	1 0 0	Wm. Murphy, 17 Russell Street, N.C. Road, Dublin	Wm. Murphy, 17 Russell St., N.C.R. Dublin	1
Blacksmiths' and Ironworkers' Society, Associated (Dublin Branch)	150	1 5 0	A. W. Stevenson, 5 Myrtle Terrace (for 1922-3) Church Road Dublin		
Civil Service Clerical Association			J. Hogan, 11 Molesworth St., Dublin.		
Clerical and Allied Workers' Union (Irish)	1,500	12 10 0	W. F. Clifford, St. Andrew's Chambers, College Street, Dublin	L. Dunne, 35 The Manor, Waterford ... J. J. Wyley, 8 Olaf Street, Waterford C. J. Kenny, 79 Eccles Street, Dublin	3
Distributive Workers and Clerks (Irish Union of)	9,760	81 6 8	L. J. Duffy, Cavendish House, Cavendish Row, Dublin	L. J. Duffy, Cavendish House, Cavendish Row, Dublin J. W. Kelly, Cavendish House, Cavendish Row, Dublin Thomas Johnson, T.D., 32 Lower Abbey Street, Dublin Thomas O'Gorman, 54 O'Connell Street, Limerick James Hunt, 15 William Street, Sligo L. J. Larkin, 17 Lady Lane, Waterford J. F. Fitzgibbon, 23 South Mall, Cork D. Foley, 23 South Mall, Cork W. Barry, do. J. J. M'Namara, do.	10
Engineering Union, Amalgamated (Inchicore Branch)	142	1 3 8	L. Keegan, 2 First Ave., Inchicore	L. Keegan, 2 First Avenue, Inchicore, Dublin	1
Do. (Dublin No. 1 Branch) ...	162	1 7 0	B. Cunningham, 44 Pembroke Cottages, Donnybrook, Dublin	S. Bradley, 16 Dame Street, Dublin ...	1
Do. (Cork Branch) .....	201	1 13 6	Sean M'Auliffe, 2 Seminary Villas, Cork	Sean M'Auliffe, 2 Seminary Villas, Cork	1
Engineering Industrial Union (Irish) ...	3,166	26 7 8	P. O'Hagan, 6 Gardiner's Row, Dublin	Jos. Toomey, 6 Gardiner's Row, Dublin James Bell, 6 Gardiner's Row, Dublin W. Cremen, 8 Electric Terrace, Cork F. Magee, 8 Railway Terrace, Dundalk Patrick Whelan, c/o Patrick Hassett, 17 Charlotte Quay, Limerick	5
Fire Brigade Men's Union, Dublin ....			The Sec., Fire Brigade Men's Union, Tara Street Fire Station, Dublin		
Furnishing Trades Association (National Amalgamated)	918	7 13 0	General Secretary — Alex. Gossip, 58 Theobald's Road, London, W.C. 1 Irish Organiser — Jas. Collins, 11 Leo Avenue, Dublin	J. Collins, 11 Leo Avenue, Leo Street, Dublin L. Cullen, 26 Whitworth Road, Dublin	2
Flax Roughers and Yarn Spinners' Trade Union			Dawson Gordon, 99 Donegall Street Belfast		
Grocers and Vintners' Assistants, Irish National Union of			P. Hughes, 84 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin		
Locomotive Engine Drivers and Firemen's Trade Union (Belfast & Dublin)		10 0 0 (2 years)	Wm. Reid, 9 Canada Street, Belfast		



Name of Trade Union	No. of Mem- bers. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid £ s. d.	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid £
Mental Hospital Workers' Union (Irish)	1,600	1 6 8	M. J. O'Connor, 21 Lower St. Brigid Road, Drumcondra, Dublin	M. J. O'Connor, 21 Lr. St. Brigid's Road, Drumcondra Jas. Ramsey, Mental Hospital, Letter-kenny	2
Municipal Employees' Trade Union (Irish)	1,550	12 18 4	Thomas Lawlor, 24 Winetavern St., Dublin	Robt. Tynan, 24/25 Winetavern Street, Dublin Thos. Lawlor, 24/25 Winetavern Street, Dublin Robt. Farrell, 24/25 Winetavern Street, Dublin Jas. Delarey, 24/25 Winetavern Street, Dublin	4
Packing Case Makers (Dublin)	...	3 0 0 (3 years—1922-23-24)	W. Shanks, 3 Chamber Street, Dublin	W. Shanks, 3 Chamber Street, Dublin ...	1
Painters & Decorators, National Amalg. Society of Operative House and Ship	1,953	16 5 6	J. A. Gibson, 4 Camp Street, Lower Broughton, Manchester	R. G. Corecran, 5 Belmont Street, Belfast J. Murphv, 12 St. Catherine's Place, Cork	2
Painters and Decorators, Irish National Union of	...	...	Thos. Fogarty, 27 Aungier St., Dublin	...	...
Plasterers' Trade Society (Dublin Op.)	250	2 4 8	Thomas Irwin, 32 East Essex Street, Dublin	T. Irwin, 32 East Essex Street, Dublin ...	1
Plumbers' & Domestic Engineers' United Operative	1,336	11 2 8	General Secretary—L. McDonald, 15 Abbeyville Rd., Clapham, S.W., 4. Secretary Dublin Branch—R. Boyd, 61 Caledon Road, Dublin	John Coghlan, 25 St. Finbar's Street, Cork E. Power, 9 Blackrock Road, Cork	2
Post Office Workers, Union of	900	7 10 0	J. W. Bowen, 43 Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London, S.W. 7	T. Irvine, 13 Cadogan Street, Belfast ...	1
Post Office Workers' Union (Irish)	3,000	25 0 0	W. Norton, 4 Cavendish Row Dublin	M. J. McGowan, 46 Magdalen Street, Drogheda. M. O'Brien, 24 St. Vincent Cottages, Limerick W. Norton, 1 Mount Pleasant Buildings, Ranelagh	3

ailway Clerks' Association	2,300	19 3 4	General Secretary — A. G. Walkden, 25 Euston Road, London, N.W. 1 Irish Secretary—John T. O'Farrell, 48 Henry Street, Dublin	W. P. Greene, 33 Primrose Ave., Dublin J. M'Cooke, 8 Parkside Gardens, Belfast S. J. O'Reilly, 1 Sun View Villas, S. Douglas Rd., Cork John T. O'Farrell, 48 Henry Street, Dublin	...
ailwaymen, National Union of	11,700	97 10 0	Indus. Gen. Secretary—C. T. Cramp, Unity House, Euston Road, London, N.W. 1. Irish Secretary—J. Bermingham, 33 Parnell Square, Dublin	T. Ward, 54 Eliza Street, Belfast ... J. Kelly, 2 Gt. Western Sq., Phibsboro', Dublin J. Bermingham, 33 Parnell Square, Dublin	3
aters' and Tilers' Amalgamated Soc. (Dublin Branch)	100	1 0 0	J. Sheppard, 77 Eccles Street, Dublin	J. Sheppard, 77 Eccles Street, Dublin ...	1
heet Metal Workers and Gas Meter Makers of Ireland, National Union of (Dublin Branch)	150	1 5 0	J. Farren, 20 Blackhall Place, Dublin	J. Farren, 20 Blackhall Place, Dublin	1
arment Makers' Industrial Union (Irish)	300	2 10 0	W. Carpenter, 44 York St., Dublin	...	...
ilors' and Garment Workers' Trade Union	2,594	21 12 2	A. Conley, 20 Park Place, Leeds	J. Loughnan, 2 Convent Place, Crosses Green, Cork	1
teachers' Organisation, Irish National Association, Secondary Teachers ...	12,742	106 3 8	T. J. O'Connell, T.D., 9 Gardiner's Place, Dublin (I.N.T.O.) T. J. Burke, 9 Gardiner's Place, Dublin (A.S.T.I.) F. McNamara, Reenmore, Arklow (A. and T.I.A.)	J. E. McNelis, Castlecaulfield, County Tyrone D. A. Meehan, Ballyfin, Mountrath, Leix E. Mansfield, Cullen N.S., Tipperary W. McSweeney, Killorglin, Co. Kerry P. J. Quinn, 10 Ring Street, Inchicore, Thos. Frisby, Freshford, Kilkenny Hugh O'Donnell, Cloonanure, Gurteen, Ballymote D. F. Courell, Arran Street, Ballina T. J. O'Connell, T.D., 9 Gardiner's Pl., Dublin T. J. Burke, 9 Gardiner's Place, Dublin M. Kearney	14
Agricultural and Technical In- structors' Association	...	...	...	...	...



Name of Trade Union	No. of Members. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid £ s. d.			Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid £
N. T. O.—continued							
ypographical Association (Manchester)	1,634	13	12	4	Gen. Secretary—H. Skinner, "Beechwood," Oak Drive, Fallowfield, Manchester Irish Organiser—T. Cassidy, 41 Chapel Road, Waterside, Derry	F. McNamara, Reenmore, Arklow Jer. Hurley, c/o Mr. Murphy, Annmount, Friar's Walk, Cork F. O'Driscoll, c/o Mr. Murphy, Annmount, Friar's Walk, Cork T. Cassidy, 41 Chapel Road, Waterside, Derry J F Nolan, 8 St Brigid's Street, Cork H T Whitley, 12 Frederick St, Belfast	3
ypographical Provident Soc. (Dublin)	1,050	8	15	0	W. J. Whelan, 35 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin	W. J. Whelan, 35 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin Sean P Campbell, 35 Lower Gardiner St, Dublin Wm MacEwan, 35 Lower Gardiner St, Dublin	3
ehicle Builders, National Union of, ...	1,500	12	10	0	J. Nicholson, 195 Oxford Road, Manchester Irish Sec.—T. O'Hanlon, 104 Middle Abbey Street, Dublin	Denis Kieley, 3 Summerville Ter., Evergreen Road, Cork George Milner, 19 Upr. Northbrook Ave., Dublin	2
Woodworkers, Amalgamated Society of	7,750	64	11	8	General Secretary—A. G. Cameron, 131 Wilmslow Road, Withington, Manchester P. Kiernan, 442 N. C. Road, Dublin	J. P. Delaney, 168 Nth. Strand, Dublin J Kennedy, 19 Hillview Crescent, Ballyhackamore, Belfast J Grant, c/o P Kiernan, 442 N C Rd, Dublin	2
Do. (Dublin No. 1 Branch) ...					J. O'Kelly, 442 N. C. Road, Dublin	J. Brown, 97 Pearse Street, Dublin	1
Do. (Dublin No. 5 Branch) ...					J. Brophy, 32 Lower Ormond Quay, Dublin	John Brophy, 32 Lower Ormond Quay, Dublin	1
Do. (Dublin No. 7 Branch) ...							
Do. (Cork District) ...					E. Fitzgerald, 21 Friar's Walk, Cork	John Weldon, 20 Grattan Street, Cork	2
Woodcutting Machinists, Amalgamated Society of	5,000	5	0	0	W. J. Wentworth, 32 Milton Street, C-on-M., Manchester	Patrick Cronin, 39 Main Street, Cork W. O'Connor, 142 Francis St., Dublin	1
Women Workers' Union (Irish) ...	3,000	25	0	0	Miss L. Bennett, 7 Eden Quay, Dublin Miss H. Chenevix, 7 Eden Quay, Dublin	Miss Brennan, 5 "A" Road, Fairbrothers Field, Dublin Miss Gloster, Irish Nurses' and Midwives' Union, 29 South Anne Street, Dublin Miss K. Kelly, 11 Buckingham Place, Dublin Miss Molcney, 9 Belgrave Road, Rathmines, Dublin Miss E. O'Connor, 152 Leinster Road, Rathmines, Dublin	5
ish Transport and General Workers' Union	89,000	741	13	4	Gen. Secretary—Wm. O'Brien, 35 Parnell Square, Dublin	Patk. Kelly, 55 Lepper Street, Belfast Thos Cosgrave, Tullowbeg St., Tullow, Co. Carlow Michael Glynn, Doorra, Ennis, Co. Clare Patrick Barry, Robert Day, T. Harrington, James Hickey, Jer. Murphy, John O'Callaghan, Dom. O'Sullivan, Sean O'Connor, 91 Pearse's Sq., Cobh, P. J. Mullane, Mt. View Terr., Mallow, Co. Cork Tadhg O'Quill, Clondrohid, Macroom, Co. Cork Timothy Jones, Bandon, Co. Cork F. McGrath, 122 Corporation Street, Belfast	91



Name of Trade Union	No. of Mem- bers. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid £ s. d.	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid £
h Transport and General Workers' on—(Continued)				Patrick Byrne, Michael Carroll, Patrick Doran, Michael Murphy, John E. Nolan, John Nolan, Joseph O'Neill, Peter Osborne, Michael Ryan,	42 York St., Dublin
				P. J. Brophy, 1 Harold's Cross, Dublin Mat Usher, 47 Bow Lane, Dublin Rd. Maher, 12 Upper Buckingham St., Dublin Patrick Byrne, 60 Lr. Dominick Street, Dublin George O'Driscoll, Chapel Lane, Blanch- ardstown, Co. Dublin P. J. Curran, Market Fields, Balbriggan, Co. Dublin Patrick McCarthy, 8 North Dock Street, Dublin P. Mulvanny, 172 Dean's Grange, Co. Dublin Thos. Kelly, Trades' Hall, Dun Laogh- aire. M. Gannon, I.T. & G.W.U., Lucan, Co. Dublin Mark Carroll, Sallins Road, Naas, Co. Kildare Phil. Grogan, The Curragh, Kildare Michael Smyth, Liberty Hall, Droichead Nua, Co. Kildare	

James Lawlor, Bennett's Bridge, Co. Kil-  
 kenny  
 James Daly, High St., Rathdowney, Leix  
 Patrick Horgan, 91 O'Connell Street,  
 Limerick  
 M. Doyle, 91 O'Connell Street, Limerick  
 Denis Clohesy, 91 O'Connell Street,  
 Limerick  
 Jer. Murphy, 73 Boherbee, Tralee, Co.  
 Kerry  
 Patrick Lynch, Carnane, Fedamore, Co.  
 Limerick  
 Jas. Larkin, Boherbee, Newcastle West,  
 Co. Limerick  
 Michael Connor, Liberty Hall, Drogheda  
 Chris. Mathews, Oakestown, Trim, Co.  
 Meath  
 Laurence Smyth, Possextown, Nobber,  
 Co. Meath  
 Stephen Walsh, Navan, Co. Meath  
 John F. Gill, New Row, Edenderry,  
 Offaly  
 Dan Morrissey, T.D., Ormond Street,  
 Nenagh  
 Michael Lennon, 7 Mary Street, Clonmel  
 Patk. Keating, 61 Poleberry, Waterford  
 Thomas McCarthy, 18 Thomas Terrace,  
 Dungarvan  
 Patk. Walsh, Clonea, Co. Waterford  
 Chris. Duffy, O'Rahilly Street, Mullingar  
 Malachy Murray, Ballymahon, Co. Long-  
 ford  
 Martin Kehoe, 4 Court St., Enniscorthy  
 Richard Corish, T.D., Wexford  
 Charles Gaule, 35 Main Street, Arklow



Name of Trade Union	No. of Mem- bers. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid
		£ s. d.			£
Irish Transport and General Workers' Union—(Continued)				John Dunne, 10 Dargan Street, Bray John Breen, Workers' Hall, Tipperary William Stone, 59 Townsend St., Dublin T. J. Murphy (T.D.), Sackville Street, Dunmanway, Co. Cork Thomas Nagle (T.D.), 1 Oxford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin Sean Butler (T.D.), 1 Oxford Road, Ranelagh, Dublin Hugh Colohan, (T.D.), 4 Rowan Terrace, Droichead Nua, Co. Kildare E. Doyle (T.D.), Laragh, Ballon, Co. Carlow Seumas Everett (T.D.), Labour Hall, Wicklow David Hall (T.D.), Cultrumer, Drumree, Co. Meath Patrick Hogan (T.D.), Newmarket-on- Fergus, Co. Clare Thomas Foran, 35 Parnell Sq., Dublin William O'Brien, 35 Parnell Sq., Dublin Michael Duffy, Readesland, Dunshaugh- lin, Co. Meath Daniel Clancy, 91 O'Connell Street, Limerick Michael Hill, 35 Roche's Bldgs., Cork Thos. Ryan, 29 Shortcourse, Waterford Eamon Lynch, Cuskinny, Cobh, Co. Cork P. Hanratty, M. Keane, } 42 York St., Dublin P. Rooney,	

Name of Trade Union	No. of Mem- bers. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid
		£ s. d.			£
Irish Transport and General Workers' Union—continued				C. O'Shannon, 35 Parnell Sq., Dublin A. Heron, 11a Casimir Road, Harold's Cross, Dublin Thomas Kennedy, 20 Charlemont Mall, Dublin W. Purcell H. Hynes P. Gray P. Martin } 42 York St., Dublin P. Spain J. Foley J. Geoghen	
Amalgamated Transport and General Workers' Union	6,000	50 0 0	General Secretary—Ernest Bevin, 3 Cen- tral Buildings, Westminster, London, S.W. 1  Irish Secretary—G. F. Gillespie, 112 Marlboro' St., Dublin.	G. F. Gillespie, 112 Marlboro' Street, Dublin P. McGowan, 64 Wellington St., Derry J. Healy, 36 Morrison's Rd., Waterford	3

## FRATERNAL DELEGATE.

Scottish Trade Union Congress

Wm Elgar, 33 Elmbank Crescent,  
Glasgow.John MacKay (Amal. Soc. Woodcutting  
Machinists), 35 Robertson St., Glasgow



# Trades and Workers' Councils Affiliated.

WITH MEMBERSHIP, AFFILIATION FEES PAID, SECRETARY, AND DELEGATION FEES PAID.

Name of Council.	No. of Mem- bers. Jan. 1st 1924	Affiliation Fees paid	Secretary	Delegates to 1924 Congress	Dele- gation Fees paid
Athlone	...	1 0 0	Peter Mulvihill, Trades Hall, Athlone.		£
Ballina (Workers' Council)	...	...	H. McGlade, Ballina		
Ballinasloe (Workers' Council)	...	...	D. McCarthy, Ballinasloe		
Belfast	15,000	3 0 0	David R. Campbell, 11 Kimberley St., Belfast	D. R. Campbell, 11 Kimberley Street, Belfast	2
Bri Cualann and District Clare (Workers' Council)	5,000	1 0 0	J. Metcalfe, 15 Main Street, Bray J. Real, 9 Linnane's Ter., Ennis, Co. Clare.	A. Stewart, 2 Convention Street, Belfast James Lynch, 14 Pearse Square, Bray ...	1
Clones	...	...	M. Johnstone, Trades Council, Clones		
Clonmel	...	...	W. Prendergast, Trades' Hall, Clonmel		
Cork (Workers' Council)	10,000	4 0 0 (2 years 1923-24)	G. Duncan, 1 Annville, Ballinlough Road, Cork	R. S. Anthony, 5 St. Anthony's Villas, Pouladuff Road, Cork G. Duncan, 1 Annville, Ballinlough Rd., Cork	2
Cobh (Workers' Council)	...	1 0 0	J. Dunne, 25 The Mall, Cobh		
Drogheda (Workers' Council)	5,000	1 0 0	Jos. McDonnell, Foresters' Hall, Drogheda		
Dublin (Workers' Council)	50,000	10 0 0	Thomas Farren, 37 Lr. Gardiner St., Dublin	T. Irwin, 32 East Essex Street, Dublin F. Robbins, 42 York Street, Dublin Thomas Farren, 37 Lower Gardiner St., Dublin	3
Dundalk	...	...	James Smith, 7 Annville Ter., Chapel Street, Dundalk		
Edenderry	...	...	John Gill, New Row, Edenderry, Offaly		
Kildare (Workers' Council)	...	...	M. MacGabhann, Liberty Hall, Droi- thead Nua		
Kilkenny	5,000	1 0 0 (for 1923)	John Reid, Dean Street, Kilkenny	James Reade, 3 Blackmill St., Kilkenny	1
Killarney	...	1 0 0	D. O'Sullivan, 12 Lower Sunney Hill, Killarney		
Limerick	10,000	2 0 0	Jas. Carr, Mechanics' Inst., Limerick		
North Leix (Workers' Council)	...	...	James Lacy, Grattan St., Portlaoighise		
Mullingar	...	...	T. Gavan, Trades' Hall, Mullingar	James Martin, c/o Mr. T. Gavan, Sec. Mullingar and District Wkrs.' Council	£1
Sligo (and District)	...	1 0 0	J. Lambert, Trades' Hall, Sligo		
Tralee (Workers' Council)	...	...	W. McEnery, 18 Urban Cottages, Upr. Rock Street, Tralee.		
Waterford (Workers' Council)	...	...	Leo. Dunne, 35 Manor St., Waterford		
Wexford	...	...	P. White, King Street, Wexford		



# PAST CONGRESSES, 1894-1924.

Year	No. of Delegates	Place of Meeting	President	Secretary	Treasurer
1894	119	Dublin ...	Thomas O'Connell (Carpenter) ...	John Simmons ...	Patrick Dowd
1895	121	Cork ...	J. H. Jolley (Printer) ...	" ...	J. H. Jolley
1896	93	Limerick ...	James Dalton (Printer) ...	" ...	"
1897	86	Waterford ...	P. J. Leo (Pork Butcher) ...	" ...	"
1898	90	Belfast ...	Richard Wortley (Tailor) ...	" ...	P. J. Trevenan
1899	62	Derry ...	James McCarron (Tailor) ...	" ...	"
1900	77	Dublin ...	George Leahy (Plasterer) ...	Hugh McManus ...	Alex. Taylor
1901	73	Sligo ...	A. Bowman, T.C. (Flax Dresser) ...	E. L. Richardson ...	"
1902	98	Cork ...	William Cave (Bootmaker) ...	" ...	Geo. Leahy
1903	86	Newry ...	Walter Hudson, M.P. (A.S.R.S.) ...	" ...	"
1904	74	Kilkenny ...	William Walker (Carpenter) ...	" ...	"
1905	72	Wexford ...	Jas. Chambers (Saddler) ...	" ...	E. W. Stewart
1906	72	Athlone ...	Stephen Dineen (Baker) ...	" ...	"
1907	87	Dublin ...	James McCarron (Tailor) ...	" ...	"
1908	85	Belfast ...	John Murphy (Printer) ...	" ...	"
1909	108	Limerick ...	M. Egan (Coachmaker) ...	" ...	"
1910	85	Dundalk ...	James McCarron (Tailor) ...	P. T. Daly ...	M. J. O'Lehane
1911	75	Galway ...	D. R. Campbell (Insurance Agent) ...	" ...	"
1912	87	Clonmel ...	M. J. O'Lehane (Drapers' Assist.) ...	" ...	D. R. Campbell
1913	99	Cork ...	William O'Brien (Tailor) ...	" ...	"
1914	94	Dublin ...	James Larkin (Transport Worker) ...	" ...	"
1915	—	— ...	NO CONGRESS HELD ...	" ...	"
1916	81	Sligo ...	Thomas Johnson (Shop Assistants) ...	" ...	"
1917	111	Derry ...	Thomas MacPartlin (Carpenter) ..	" ...	"
1918	240	Waterford ...	William O'Brien (Tailor) ...	" ...	"
1919	220	Drogheda ...	Thomas Cassidy (Printer) ...	William O'Brien ...	Thomas Johnson
1920	246	Cork ...	Thomas Farren (Stonecutter) ...	" ...	"
1921	250	Dublin ...	Thomas Foran (I.T. & G.W.U.) ...	Thomas Johnson ...	William O'Brien
1922	244	Dublin ...	Cathal O'Shannon (I.T. & G.W.U.) ...	" ...	"
1923	241	Dublin ...	L. J. Duffy (I.U.D.W. & C.) ...	" ...	"
1924	201	Cork ...	William O'Brien (I.T. & G.W.U.) ...	" ...	A. Heron



# IRISH LABOUR PARTY

AND

## TRADE UNION CONGRESS.

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### CONSTITUTION.

*(Revised to August, 1924.)*

**1.—NAME.**—IRISH LABOUR PARTY AND TRADE UNION CONGRESS.

**2.—OBJECTS AND METHODS.**—

(a) To recover for the Nation complete possession of all the natural physical sources of wealth of this country.

(b) To win for the workers of Ireland, collectively, the ownership and control of the whole produce of their labour.

(c) To secure the democratic management and control of all industries and services by the whole body of workers, manual and mental, engaged therein, in the interest of the Nation and subject to the supreme authority of the National Government.

(d) To obtain for all adults who give allegiance and service to the Commonwealth, irrespective of sex, race or religious belief, equality of political and social rights and opportunities.

(e) To abolish all powers and privileges, social and political, of institutions or persons, based upon property or ancestry, or not granted or confirmed by the freely expressed will of the Irish people; and to insist that in the making and administering of the laws, in the pursuit of industry and commerce, and in the education of the young, Property must always be subordinate to Humanity, and Private Gain must ever give place to the Welfare of the People.

(f) With the foregoing objects in view, to promote the organisation of the working-class industrially, socially and politically, e.g., in Trade Unions, in Co-operative Societies (both of producers and consumers), and in a Political Labour Party.

(g) To secure labour representation on all national and local legislative and administrative bodies.

(h) To co-ordinate the work of the several sections of the working-class movement.

(i) To promote fraternal relations between the workers of Ireland and of other countries through affiliation with the international Labour movement;

(j) To co-operate with that movement in promoting the establishment of democratic machinery for the settlement of disputes between Nations; and in raising the standard of social legislation in all countries to the level of the highest; and

(k) Generally to assist in the efforts of the working-class of all Nations in their struggle for emancipation.

**3.—MEMBERSHIP.**—The Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress shall consist of its affiliated organisations, i.e.: Trade Unions, Branches of Trade Unions, Trades Councils, Local Labour Parties, together with those men and women who are individual subscribing members of a recognised local Labour Party group and who accept the Constitution and Policy of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress.

#### **4.—NATIONAL CONGRESS.—**

(a) The supreme governing authority shall be the National Congress, which shall meet as provided for in the Standing Orders.

(b) The basis of representation at the National Congress shall be as follows:—

Trade Unions or Branches of Trade Unions having less than 500 members—One delegate;

500 members or over, but not exceeding 1,000—Two delegates;

Over 1,000 members, but not exceeding 1,500—Three delegates;

Over 1,500 members, but not exceeding 2,000—Four delegates;

and one additional delegate for every complete 1,000 members above 2,000.

(Where a Trade Union has paid affiliation fees on the whole of its membership in Ireland, the payment by a branch of affiliation fees on the branch membership shall not entitle it to additional representation).

Trades' Councils shall be entitled to send one delegate for 5,000 members or fraction thereof for whom affiliation fees



have been paid by the Council, and one additional delegate for every additional 5,000 members.

(c) Where the local Trades' Council undertakes the duties of a local Labour Party, it shall be entitled to send one additional delegate to represent the Labour Party in each parliamentary constituency covered by the activities of the Council, provided that there shall have been three months prior to the date of the Congress not less than 100 individual subscribing members of the Party in the constituency claiming to send a delegate, such delegates to be individual subscribing members of the Party, men or women, and voters in the constituency they represent.

(d) In towns or constituencies where a local Labour Party has been formed according to Clause 5 (below) such local Labour Party shall be entitled to send one delegate for each constituency covered by its activities, provided that there shall have been three months prior to the date of the Congress not less than 100 individual subscribing members of the Party in the constituency claiming to send a delegate, such delegates to be individual subscribing members of the Party, men or women, and voters in the constituency they represent.

**5.—LOCAL LABOUR PARTIES.**—Where a local Trades' Council does not discharge the functions of a local Labour Party, or in the opinion of the National Executive has failed to do the work in a satisfactory manner, the National Executive shall have power to organise a local Labour Party independent of the Trades' Council, such local Labour Party to consist of individual subscribing members of the Party, Trade Unions, or Trade Union Branches, and such other working-class organisations as subscribe to the constitution and policy of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress, and are approved of by the National Executive.

**6.—INDIVIDUAL SUBSCRIBING MEMBERS.**—Individual subscribing members shall be organised into Divisional or Ward Groups under the direction of the Trades' Council or local Labour Parties. They shall be expected to undertake the electoral activities and propaganda work of the Party in the constituencies.

## **7.—FINANCE.—**

(a) Trade Unions or Branches of Trade Unions shall pay to the Central Funds of the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress threepence per member on the full certified membership in Ireland on the first day of January in each year.

(b) Trades' Councils shall pay £3 for the first 5,000 members, and £1 5s. 0d. for each additional 5,000 or part thereof.

(c) The minimum annual contribution from affiliated Societies shall be three pounds (£3).

(d) Individual subscribing members shall pay at the rate of sixpence per member per month, of which sum threepence shall be paid to the Central Fund and threepence retained by the local Trades Council or local Labour Party for organisation and labour representation purposes, subject, where necessary, to a payment out of the local moiety of one half-penny for the expenses of collection.

(e) A woman member who has paid a total of three shillings within the year shall be deemed to be a fully-paid subscribing member.

(f) The National Executive shall be authorised to make special appeals for funds for political and other purposes from time to time as may be desirable.

(g) Any Society whose affiliation has been accepted shall be considered to be permanently affiliated and liable for affiliation fees unless such Society has given six months' notice of withdrawal or has been excluded by the special decision of Congress.

**8.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE.**—There shall be a National Executive consisting of a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, and thirteen other members, elected by the National Congress at its regular Annual Meeting in accordance with the Standing Orders, and this National Executive shall, subject to the control and direction of the National Congress, be the administrative authority and be responsible for the conduct of the general work of the organisation.

It shall interpret the Constitution and Standing Orders in all cases of dispute, subject to an appeal to the next regular Annual Meeting by the organisation or person concerned.

It shall ensure that Labour is represented by a properly constituted organisation in each constituency in which this is found practicable.

It shall give effect to the decisions of the National Congress, watch all legislative measures affecting labour in Ireland, initiate such legislative and other action as may be deemed necessary, and generally promote the objects of the organisation in the most effective manner within its power.

In case of the death or resignation of any of its members, the remaining members shall have power to co-opt a successor.



**9.—SUB-COMMITTEES.**—The National Executive shall be empowered to appoint Sub-committees to undertake any specified branch of its work and to invite the assistance of any persons with special knowledge to advise and co-operate. It may appoint the necessary officials and make all arrangements to carry on its work. The Executive as a whole shall be responsible to the National Congress for the work and decisions of all Sub-Committees.\*

**10.—PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES.—**

(a) A Candidate for election to Parliament must be nominated by the National Executive, or by one or more of the affiliated bodies, and before adoption for any constituency must be approved of by a special local conference convened by the Trades Council or local Labour Party.

(b) The basis of representation at the local Conferences shall be as follows:—

One delegate for Societies and Divisional Groups having 100 members or less;

One delegate for each additional 100 members up to 500;

One delegate for each additional 250 members up to 1,000; and

One delegate for each additional 1,000 members afterwards.

(c) Before any action towards the selection of a Candidate for Parliament is taken, the National Executive shall be consulted. No candidature can be promoted by an affiliated organisation until endorsed by the National Executive.

(d) In constituencies or divided boroughs where no Trades Council or local Labour Party exists, or where in its opinion special circumstances warrant such action, the National Executive shall have power to promote a Candidature.

\*NOTE.—Under this Clause the National Executive may divide itself into **Industrial** and **Political** Committees: the former to promote Trade Union organisation, to compile statistics of Industry, provide legal information, watch all legislative proposals affecting industry, and keep in touch with all wage movements, disputes, etc., etc.; the latter to supervise the conduct of the political work of the Party, the preparation of literature and propaganda, the organisation of constituencies, and to keep informed regarding local government activities. It may also appoint Sub-Committees to deal with important problems affecting different industrial groups—Agricultural, Building, Transport, Distributive, Civil Service, etc., and may invite assistance from the Trade Unions particularly interested; also Sub-Committees to deal with specific problems such as Housing, Education, Food Supply, Local Government, Military Service, etc.

(e) The expenses of Candidates for election to Parliament shall be borne by the organisation or organisations nominating the Candidates, with such financial assistance as the Central Fund can afford.

(f) The expenses of Candidates for election to local bodies shall be borne by the organisation or organisations nominating the Candidates. In special circumstances financial assistance may be given out of the Central Funds at the discretion of the National Executive.

(g) Candidates for election to Parliament must have been for not less than twelve months prior to the election, and if elected must continue to be, members in good standing of a Labour organisation eligible for affiliation to the Irish Labour Party and Trade Union Congress. They shall also pledge themselves to accept this Constitution, to agree to abide by the decisions of the National Congress and the National Executive in carrying out the aims of the Constitution, and to appear before their constituencies as "Labour Candidates" only.

(h) Candidates for election to Parliament and members of the National Executive shall abstain strictly from identifying themselves with or promoting the interests of any candidature not endorsed by the National Executive.

**11.**—This Constitution shall come into operation on and from November 7th, 1918.

## STANDING ORDERS.

*(Revised to August, 1924).*

**1.—NATIONAL CONGRESS.**—The Annual Congress shall be held regularly on the first Monday in August in each year and three following days.

Special Congresses may be called at such other times as may be decided upon by the National Executive, or upon the receipt by the National Executive of a requisition from at least five Trades Councils having a total affiliated strength of 15,000 members.

The Congress shall assemble on the first day at 11 a.m., on the following days at 9.30 a.m., adjourn at 1 p.m., reassemble at 2 p.m., and adjourn for the day at 5 p.m.

**2.—DELEGATES' QUALIFICATIONS.**—Persons to be eligible as Delegates to the National Congress must be bona-fide members or permanent officials of the Trade Union they represent; or Delegates to or officials of a Trades Council or a local Labour Party recognised by the National Executive.



The names and addresses of the Delegates, together with the Delegates' fees, must be forwarded to the Secretary three weeks prior to the date fixed for the Annual Meeting.

**3.—DELEGATION FEES.**—A delegation fee of one pound (£1) for each delegate attending the Annual Congress shall be paid. For special Congresses such lesser fees as may be decided upon by the National Executive shall be paid.

All Fees—delegation and affiliation—and the expenses of Delegates attending Congress must be borne by the affiliated organisations.

**4.—FINANCIAL YEAR.**—The financial year shall end on the thirtieth day of June, and all affiliation fees shall be paid and accounts for the year closed on that date.

A Balance Sheet and Financial Statement shall be prepared, audited by a public auditor or qualified accountant, and sent to the affiliated Societies at least seven days before the opening of the Annual Congress.

**5.—CONGRESS ARRANGEMENTS SUB-COMMITTEE.**—The National Executive shall appoint a Congress Arrangements Sub-Committee to act with the local Committee in the town where the next Congress is to meet, for the purpose of arranging the business of the Congress. This Sub-Committee shall be empowered to consider the Agenda before the Congress meets, to make suggestions to the Standing Orders Committee (to be appointed by the Congress) respecting the grouping or re-drafting of the Resolutions, and respecting any other matter which in their opinion will facilitate the business of the Congress.

**6.—STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.**—A Standing Orders Committee of five members shall be elected on the first day of the Congress from the Delegates present and their duties shall be to :—

(a) Verify and report upon the credentials of the Delegates.

(b) Co-operate with the movers of Resolutions and Amendments, in order that composite Resolutions may be obtained whenever possible.

(c) Submit to the Chairman of Congress a programme of all propositions and amendments approved by them as being in accordance with Standing Orders, together with any suggestions for the proper conduct of the business of the Congress.

(d) Control the distribution of all literature.

(e) Transact any other special business not provided for in these Standing Orders.

They shall meet not later than half-an-hour prior to each sitting of Congress for the purpose of arranging the despatch of business and carrying through the Agenda. They shall report to Congress any violation of the Standing Orders that may be brought to their notice, together with any recommendations agreed upon.

**7.—TELLERS AND SCRUTINEERS.**—Three delegates, or such other number as may be agreed upon at the time of election, shall be appointed as Tellers, whose duty shall be to count and record the votes on every occasion on which a division is taken. Their decision as to the numbers recorded on any vote shall be final. In cases where the Tellers disagree the Chairman shall order a recount.

Three or more delegates shall be appointed as Scrutineers. They shall be responsible for the arrangements for the election by ballot of the National Executive and Officers for the coming year. They shall take account of the number of ballot papers printed and distributed, shall, before the ballot is taken, destroy all unused ballot papers in excess of the numbers distributed to the delegates and take such other steps as will ensure the validity of the election.

**8.—METHOD OF VOTING.**—The voting on resolutions shall be by show of hands except when a proposition to be voted upon involves financial liability to the affiliated Societies, in which case a "card vote" may be demanded. Cards will be issued to delegates of Trade Unions on the basis of one card for every 250 members on which affiliation fees are paid; to Trades Councils and local Labour Parties: one card to each delegate attending the Congress.

**9.—RESOLUTIONS AND AMENDMENTS.**—**Propositions** for the Congress Agenda must be signed by the authorised officials of the Organisations submitting them and must reach the Secretary of Congress at least eight weeks before the meeting of Congress. They shall be printed and copies sent immediately to the Secretaries of affiliated organisations.

**Amendments** to the propositions on the Agenda must be sent to the Secretary in writing, endorsed by the authorised officials of the organisations submitting them, at least three weeks before the opening of Congress. They shall thereupon be printed and sent to the Secretaries of affiliated organisations immediately.

In order to ensure that important questions affecting Labour may not be omitted from the discussions at Congress, the National Executive shall be empowered to place Resolutions on the Agenda, and may in cases of urgency submit Resolutions which have not appeared in the printed Agenda.

The order in which Resolutions shall be inserted in the agenda shall be decided by the National Executive.



**10.—LIMITATION OF SPEECHES.**—The proposer of a Resolution or Amendment shall be allowed ten minutes, and each subsequent speaker five minutes.

A Delegate shall not speak more than once on the same question except the mover of the original Resolution, who shall be allowed ten minutes to reply to the discussion. Each delegate on rising to speak must announce his (or her) name and the Society he (or she) represents.

**11.**—In the event of a proposal to take “the previous question” or to proceed to the next business, being moved and seconded, it shall, after the proposer of the resolution in question has been heard, be put to the vote, and if the proposal is carried, the resolution under discussion shall be deemed to be disposed of and Congress will proceed to the next item on the Agenda.

**12.—ELECTION OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE.**—The National Executive shall be elected by ballot on the third day of the Annual Congress. Delegates only shall be eligible for election.

Nominations must be sent in by affiliated organisations three weeks prior to the opening of Congress, the list of Nominees to be printed and sent to the Secretaries of affiliated organisations at the same time as the Final Agenda.

The maximum number of delegates from any one organisation that may be elected to membership of the National Executive, otherwise than as officers, shall be :—

For an organisation with a membership not over 10,000—  
One.

For an organisation with a membership over 10,000, but not over 20,000—Two.

For an organisation with a membership over 20,000, but not over 50,000—Three.

For an organisation with a membership of over 50,000—  
Four.

Members of the National Executive shall attend the Congress by virtue of their office, and remain in attendance until the disposal of their Report. They shall not be entitled to vote unless they are duly qualified as delegates. If qualified as delegates they shall be eligible for re-election.

The officers for the year shall remain in office until the close of Congress.

**13.—MEETINGS AND QUORUM.**—The National Executive shall meet at least once a quarter, five members at any meeting to form a quorum.

**14.—NATIONAL EXECUTIVE REPORT.**—The Report of the National Executive, which shall have been transmitted to the delegates at least three days before the assembly of Congress, shall be presented and considered immediately following the presidential address. The report shall be discussed paragraph by paragraph, each speaker being limited to five minutes on any one paragraph.

Interim reports of the activities of the National Executive shall be issued periodically throughout the year and sent to all affiliated bodies for their information and guidance. Consideration of the Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall follow as the next business after the Annual Report is disposed of.

**15.—APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS.**—A public auditor or qualified accountant for the succeeding year shall be appointed at the Annual Meeting who shall have access to all the papers and documents relating to the income and expenditure of the National Executive.

**16.—PUBLIC MEETINGS.**—At least two public meetings shall be held under the auspices of the National Executive in the town appointed for the Annual Congress, one of these meetings to take place during Congress week.

**17.—SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS.**—Standing Orders shall not be suspended unless previous intimation shall have been given to the Standing Orders Committee and the Motion agreed to by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present.

32 Lower Abbey Street,  
Dublin.

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