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O' B R I E N, William, (Alderman).  
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PEACE CONFERENCE.

LABOUR'S PROPOSALS.

Alderman William O'Brien, who presided at Platform No. 3, also denounced the bogus Treaty. He said that they were met on the occasion of one of the gravest crises in the life of the Irish nation, for the issues at stake lay at the foundation of their national existence. For the past eight or nine years, as a nation, they had been leading a strenuous life, and had seen more history made than, perhaps, in the last century. Never before was the settlement of the Irish question more generally recognised throughout the world to be an international one, imperatively demanding that the claim of the Irish people to manage their own affairs without interference be conceded. They had now arrived at a point where a false move might lose all that has been gained in the past, by the example and self-sacrifice of the past few years.

The situation now demanded of their best thought so as to secure and hold the maximum of national freedom. The Labour Party had always been in support of the fullest national freedom, realising that it was only through national freedom that they could press forward for that industrial and social freedom which they demanded equally with political freedom, and without which political freedom would be but a sham. In the fight the workers of Ireland had given good and loyal service, both as individuals and as an organised movement. Mr. de Valera and Mr. Griffith had each borne testimony to that fact.

As workers, they had nothing but unqualified admiration for the men of the I.R.A. Let it not be said that the mistakes were all on one side. He believed that there were honourable men and women on both sides of this controversy, whose sole desire was to do what they considered was in the best interests of Ireland's freedom. The action taken recently by the Labour movement had been necessitated by a perhaps inevitable development of the epidemic of militarism which Ireland and the rest of the world had in recent years.

Labour did not take the view of the pacifist, or non-resister, that an appeal to arms was not justified under certain circumstances. But it was not prepared to tolerate a state of affairs in which the sole right to rule was vested in the possession of a gun. (Applause.)

THE ISSUE.

Recent events had shown that Labour required its own armed force to protect it against aggression. On behalf of the organised workers, they had taken up that issue, and they had undertaken to submit certain proposals to the Conference summoned by Archbishop Byrne and the Lord Mayor. They realised the grave responsibility they had undertaken in doing so, but the life of the nation was at stake, and at worst they could but fail. With the growth of feeling between the rival parties there was grave danger that they might lose sight of the real issue, and be led astray by catch-cries and party warfare.

The problem before them required their calmest thought and judgment. The all-Ireland stoppage of work and that great demonstration would invest the Labour Party with authority to do what it could to re-establish order. They demanded freedom—the fullest possible freedom. Until political, industrial, and social freedom was secured they of the Labour Party could not regard themselves as possessing full freedom. (Applause.)

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Ald. Wm. O'Brien.

'IRISH INDEPENDENT' 25-4-'22.

FREEMAN'S Journal

7. 6. 22.

WORKERS' INTERESTS

Labour Meeting In Support Of Alderman O'Brien.

A meeting in support of the candidature of Alderman William O'Brien, Labour candidate, in the forthcoming elections for the South City division of Dublin, was held in the hall of the Irish Municipal Employes' Trades Union last night.

Mr. Robert Tynan, Chairman of the Union, who presided, said the meeting was called for the purpose of organising support for the Labour candidate. Their union was heart and soul with the Irish Labour Party in its desire to return to the coming Parliament a number of Labour leaders, who would safeguard the interests of the workers. He felt sure that every member resident in the division would render every possible assistance to Alderman O'Brien, whose work in the Corporation and the labour movement generally was well known to the members.

Ald. O'Brien outlined the programme of the Labour Party, and urged that it was absolutely essential that the workers of Ireland should assert themselves, as it was never more necessary than the great questions of unemployment, housing, support of Irish industry, and increased tillage should be grappled with. The Labour Party had a definite policy on all these problems, and no Parliament could be said to be truly representative of the nation unless it contained direct representatives of Labour.

TO DEPEND ON ITSELF.

Ald. T. Lawlor said since the commencement of the contest he had done everything he could to secure support for the Labour candidate, and he intended to continue at it up to the day of the poll. He was sure all members realised the issues that were at stake, and how vital the need was that they should have Labour men to represent them. They were too long depending upon other political parties, and from this onwards Labour must depend upon itself.

There were many questions which vitally affected them, not only as Corporation employes, but as citizens. In the near future the national assembly would be dealing with such questions as the extension of the city's boundaries, in which trades unionists had a big interest. A man such as Alderman O'Brien, who had experience of Corporation work, would be a great asset when such questions were being discussed.

Mr. T. Kennedy, T.C., said that he had been engaged in organising this contest, and he was more than pleased with the support that he received on all sides from the workers, who received them with open arms. It only needed thorough organisation to ensure victory. He appealed to them not to slacken their efforts until June 16.



MEETING ABORTIVE.

Only Twelve T.D's. Answer Labour Party Call.

LORD MAYOR PRESENT.

Only twelve T.D's. turned up at the Mansion House yesterday for the meeting of members of the Provisional Parliament, which had been summoned by the Irish Labour Party for the purpose of considering peace proposals. The meeting accordingly fell through.

Of the seventeen members of the Labour Party who signed the circular calling the meeting but eleven attended, it being stated that the others could not attend owing to the difficulties of travelling. The Lord Mayor of Dublin was the only T.D. outside the Labour Party who attended.

There was little public interest taken in the proceedings, but a group of women, including Mrs Despard, Mrs Sheehy Skeffington, Mrs Maude Gonne-McBride and others assembled in front of the building displaying posters calling for the release of the prisoners.

This demonstration attracted the attention of some passers-by, who assembled on the opposite side of the street and watched the proceedings.

THOSE WHO ATTENDED.

It is understood that the members of the Labour Party first met in private to discuss whether or not the proceedings would be open to the Press and after about three-quarters of an hour it was announced that a statement would be issued in the Oak Room.

There Alderman William O'Brien occupied the chair, and other present were - The Lord Mayor of Dublin, Messrs Thomas Johnson (Co. Dublin) John Lyons (Westmeath and Longford), Daniel Morrissy (Tipperary), Daniel O'Callaghan and Alderman Corish (Wexford), Cathal O'Shannon (Louth and Meath), Hugh Colohan and James Everett (Wicklow and Kildare), T.J. O'Connell (Galway) and William Davin (Leix and Offally).

When the Press representatives had assembled, the Chairman said he had to announce that in response to the summons - a copy of which appeared in the Press a few days ago - the only member in addition to the available members of the Labour Party present was the Lord Mayor of Dublin.

THE ONLY COURSE.

In these circumstances, he continued, nothing remained for them to do except to announce that the meeting was abortive. The Labour Party believed that a good purpose would be gained by summoning that meeting, and as the invitations had not been responded to, the responsibility for the meeting not being held rested on other shoulders.

They had received communications on behalf of all the available Anti-Treaty members stating that that party did not see its way to attend the meeting. They had received no communication from any other member or party, and in the circumstances they had nothing more to say except to bring the proceedings to a termination.

The meeting then adjourned.

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O'BRIEN, William,

Liberty Hall, Dublin.

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77 Botanic Road, Dublin.

Age.....

Occupation.....

Was President of the Dublin Branch, Communist Party.

TREASURER OF NATIONAL EXECUTIVE & GENERAL TREASURER OF THE IRISH TRANSPORT & GENERAL WORKERS UNION. (Extract from "Voice Of Labour", dated 29.4.22.)

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An Alderman.

House raided 21.8.20. and lists were found showing Labour Men of Sinn Fein sympathies.

With Thomas JOHNSON & other Labour agitators purchased the newspaper 'Irish Opinion' & published it with the title of 'Irish Opinion & Voice Of Labour' as a Labour organ.

This paper was suppressed by the Government in 1920.

One of the speakers at monster Labour Rally & Anti-Militarism Demonstration held in Dublin on Monday, 24th. April, 1922. A strike was proclaimed throughout Southern Ireland for this day by the National Executive of the Irish Labour Party & Trade Union Congress as a protest against the present military 'split' & political situation. (See 'Irish Times' dated 25.4.22.)

Represented Labour Party at Irish Peace Conference held in the Mansion House, Dublin on 26.4.22. (Extract 'Irish Times' dated 27.4.22.)

Selected as Labour candidate for S.Dublin to contest in elections, June, 1922. (See 'Irish Times' dated 17.5.22.)

Elected member of 3rd.Dail.

Represented Labour at a conference with the object of ending destruction caused by the conflict between P.G.Troops and Irregulars. (See 'Irish Times' dated 6.7.22.)

One of the signatories to a manifesto issued by the Irish Labour Party calling a meeting to discuss Peace proposals. (See Press cutting dated 20.7.22.)

The above meeting fell through. (See 'Freeman's Journal' dated 21.7.22.)



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