

LEINSTER LEADER 7th January 1922

[Report of Meeting of North Kildare Farmers held in Naas Town Hall on 31 December 1921]

NORTH KILDARE FARMERS

A public meeting of the farmers of North Kildare, called by the Co. Kildare Farmers Union was held in the Town Hall, Naas, on Saturday evening “to call upon Dail Eireann to ratify the treaty in the best interests of the country.” The meeting was representative of the farmers of Naas, Robertstown, Maynooth, Celbridge, Clane, Carbury, Newbridge, Kildare, and Ballymore Eustace.

Mr. James Walker, Chairman Kilcullen branch Farmers Union, presided. And he said Ireland had now a chance she had not gotten for the last 700 years of doing something to place their country in its proper place amongst the nations of the Earth, and it behoved every Man to fall into line. They were getting into their own hands the management of their affairs and he trusted that in the very near future they would have peace and prosperity in the country, and that all parties would work shoulder to shoulder and do their best to make that old land of theirs, one of the most foremost industrial, economically, and patriotic in the world. During the 700 years of servitude, they had never laid down under the yoke. They had always claimed Ireland as a free nation, and only submitted to force. They hoped there would be no split in the country, whatever happened.

Mr. Joseph O'Connor proposed the following resolution: “That we, the farmers of North Kildare in the public meeting assembled, call upon the deputies representing this county in Dail Eireann to vote for the ratification of the Peace Treaty. We believed that the treaty contained all the essentials of national freedom, of economic development and lays the foundation of peace with honor, and that ratification is the only course open to Dail Eireann in the best interests of our nation. We record our profound conviction that it is the bounden duty of the deputies indicated by the very designation of their office to faithfully and scrupulously interpret in their votes the will of the people by not only voting for, but using their influence to secure the ratification of the pact signed by the Irish Plenipotentiaries”. That copies of this resolution be sent to Messrs. Donal Buckley, Art O'Connor, C.M. Byrne, Erskine Childers, and R. C. Barton, the deputies for the joint constituencies of Kildare and Wicklow, and also Mr. De Valera, Mr. Arthur Griffith, and the Minister for Propaganda, Dail Eireann.” Mr. John Jackson. [Ballymore Eustace] seconded.

Mr. B. H. Barton associated himself with what had been said by the Chairman. He thought they should work in the spirit of unanimity. The time had come. when they should bury the past feelings of animosity and look ahead. They had gotten all their interests in the country and their aspiration for the country. They should not look back, but forward. As a hunting man his object in the field all to get over obstacles as best he could, but having surmounted them, he didn't look back. If they in Ireland adopted that spirit it would help them along towards a better future.

Mr. Wray also spoke, as did Messrs. Read and Wolfe., the latter stating that this treaty might not be perfect, yet there were undoubtedly advanced advantages that had never been offered to Ireland and if Ireland refused the terms now no one in their lifetime was ever likely to see better terms secured, if at all as good. Whatever the opinions of deputies might be, they were bound as long as they held office to carry out the instructions given to them by the overwhelming majority of their constituents (Hear, hear).

The resolution was declared carried unanimously.

The Chairman said he had been associated with the national movement in Ireland since his youth, and it was the greatest pleasure of his life to have to declare the resolution carried unanimously by his

fellow farmers of formerly various shades of the political thought, all know united as one man for the sake of their common country, emerging into the full splendor of national freedom, for which their country had so long struggled. It lay with the Sinn Fein movement to bring that long age struggle to the fullness of the success they had achieved. The present fruit of that success was the Treaty which that county, and the whole country in fact, was unanimous in demanding it should be accepted and which it would be the most utter madness, despite defects which had been pointed out, to reject. These defects they firmly believed time and rational unity would remedy. Never before were the people so united and the most striking proof of the absolute unanimity of the demand made by Kildare for ratification of the Treaty was afforded by the fact that all the public bodies and organized bodies of the County... [were in favour].

Our thanks to Martha Kennedy for transcribing this report from the original hardcopy held in the Local Studies, Genealogy & Archives Collections of Kildare Library & Arts Service.