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THE IRISH TIMES

PRICE 10p DUBLIN, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1975 No. 37,258 CITY

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The scene at the Labour Party conference as delegates give a standing ovation after a speech by the party leader, Mr. Corish, who is on the platform with Mr. Roddy Connolly, Mr. Brendan Halligan and the Minister for Labour, Mr. O'Leary.—(Photograph: Tom Lawlor)

Lynch calls for review of rating system

THE Opposition leader, Mr. Lynch, has called for a serious review of the rating system: page 11.

106 to lose jobs

The Dublin plant of Gouldings, the fertilizer division of Fitzwilliam, is soon to resume production, but will be re-employing only 334 workers, leaving 106 others redundant: page 12.

Navy or else

British trawler skippers operating within Iceland's 200-mile fishing limit have given the British Government an ultimatum to send in the Royal Navy by noon today or they will pull out: page 6.

Flatdwellers' a.g.m.

The Dublin Flatdwellers' Association outlined sharp practice by landlords at its annual meeting: page 11.

New political crisis

A new political crisis has arisen in Portugal over the vexed question of military backing for the Sixth Provisional Government: page 6.

White House hopefuls

Sean Cronin takes a look at the present Democratic and Republican contenders for the American presidency in next year's election: page 7.

Drug abuse hit at

The abuse of drugs came in for

Big Army inquiry after ambush deaths

No clues from king

Bitter Budget gloom and election threat

Bitter budget Gloom and Election Threat

THIS ARTICLE FIRST APPEARED IN THE IRISH TIMES, 25 NOVEMBER 1975

By Dick Walsh, Political Correspondent

THE LABOUR leader, Mr. Corish, continued at the weekend to prepare the ground for a bitter Budget and to repeat the warning that a defeat for the Criminal Law (Jurisdiction) Bill in the Dáil would provoke a general election.

Mr. Corish's address to the Labour Party conference in Dun Laoghaire on Saturday night was rapturously received by over 1,000 delegates who, yesterday, resoundingly rejected all attempts to have Labour deputies vote against the Bill and refused blanket disapproval of repressive legislation.

The conference also, although narrowly, refused a demand by affiliated trade unions for more influence in the party's Administrative Council and put beyond doubt its support for the Government's attitude to Northern affairs, in a brief debate during which there were addresses by the SDLP leader, Mr Pitt, and the NILP chairman, Mr George Chambers.

Coalition as such was not on the agenda. But in almost every debate it lay close to the surface, and the answer to the question: Should it continue? was: Yes, but ... and the qualification was made by more middle-ground delegates than at any conference since the decision was taken to go into government when the opportunity offered.

These reservations did not prevent each Labour Minister receiving a standing ovation even as Mr Corish named him. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Social Welfare, Mr Cluskey, was the (albeit junior) Minister of the weekend. The Minister for Posts and Telegraphs, Dr David O'Brien, was given a standing ovation for issuing a stamp (commemorating Jim Larkin).

There was applause for two Fine Gael Ministers - Mr. Ryan (Finance) for his persistence, despite opposition, inside and outside the Dáil, which his capital taxation programme; Mr Cooney (Justice) for his cool and efficient handling of the Herrema affair. Apart from Mr Ryan and Mr Cooney, there was little reference to FineGael colleagues in Government.

Almost bland

The mood of the party, after more than two-and-a-half years sharing power, remained euphoric, almost bland. With its base in power consolidated, the crackle of protest was seldom heard and when it was, it was drowned in a roar of applause for the triumphal wielders of power.

There was much talk of the limitations imposed on a smaller party in coalition with a bigger one and even more of the failure of Fianna Fáil, both in Government and Opposition. A few delegates attempted to provide what could best be described as opposition from within – they were crushed.

The platform, with more care than was necessary, ensured that no more than a whimper of dissent would be heard, even when the orthodoxy of the parliamentary party was in no danger of being upset.

