

Proposal 2 : That the election of representatives of Apprenticeship Committees on the Technical School Advisory Board, Wellington, be made by committees by ballot, and the number be increased from two to four.

Mr. H. CAMPBELL thought it would be better if there was an election of representatives of those sent from the Apprenticeship Committees, to be made by committees by ballot. There was really nothing done on that Advisory Board ; he thought it went out of existence after a little while.

The DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION explained that the Advisory Board was set up, he thought, by Sir James Parr, and had done a great deal of useful work in preparing a syllabus of instruction in various technical subjects—a tremendous amount of useful work had been done by the Board ; such syllabuses had been sent around to the various technical schools. It was not a legally constituted Board. It was more or less a trial of the functions of such a Board, as it was felt by the Superintendent of Technical Education that technical advice was very badly needed by the Instructors from those who were actually engaged in industry. Consent was given to the Board being set up as an interim committee, although there was no Act or regulations saying that such Board should be set up. The Technical Schools' Association had been anxious to have that Board properly constituted, and the position was now that the original interim committee had gone out of existence and no Board had been appointed to take its place, nor was there any statutory authority whereby such could be constituted. He did not know the present Minister's views on the matter.

Mr. W. McLEOD said that the work of the Board in connection with the various syllabuses was found very impracticable. The work set down was out of date. It was not a practicable proposition. The associations were of opinion that the work should have been more practical and not based on some old customs. The Board was not now in existence, and he moved that it be reconstituted, and that the number of representatives be increased from two to four.

Mr. W. H. WINSOR asked whether this Board was set up as a result of the Conference of the Technical School Boards. It had never come up before any Apprenticeship Committee before.

The DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION said that he understood that it arose from the feeling on the part of the teachers that they desired advice of practical men : he was not sure—it was before his time.

Mr. H. BRADLEY did not think they should criticize the work of the Technical College Boards.

Mr. W. McLEOD thought that a Board should be appointed to control the syllabus and control examinations in the trades, and to issue certificates for all trades ; at present each technical school had its syllabus and issued the certificates. It would be better if it was made universal.

The DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION explained that the Department realized that the issue of certificates should be a Dominion matter. All public examinations up to that point had been in the hands of either the University or the Education Department. The matter concerned the Education Department more than the University, and technical examinations had been arranged by the Department in order that Dominion certificates might be issued. Whether it would be better for these certificates to be issued under the authority of a Board rather than the Department he was not prepared to say. He would suggest that there would be no harm in the Conference expressing an opinion as to whether or not that Board be revived.

Mr. A. C. MITCHELL asked what the present method of appointment to that Board was.

The SECRETARY OF LABOUR stated that he was a member of the preliminary Board, and the Apprenticeship Committees were not represented at that time. If they wanted the Minister of Education to set up the Board and select four representatives of the Apprenticeship Committees that he considered would most adequately represent the various trades concerned, perhaps a motion something like what they suggested might do.

The CHAIRMAN suggested that they could pass the motion in that form and let the Government wrestle with the method of selection.

After further discussion the motion was carried in the following form : " That the Technical Schools Advisory Board be reconstituted, and that the election of representatives of Apprenticeship Committees on that Board be made by committees by ballot, and that the number be increased from two to four."

Proposal 3 : Local Control : That the election of employers' and workers' representatives to local Technical School Boards be made by Apprenticeship Committees.

Mr. W. McLEOD said that the employers and workers' representation on Technical School Boards was limited according to regulations. He thought a strong representation from the Apprenticeship Committees would be of great benefit not only to the apprentices but also to the management of the technical schools, in order to ensure the practical side of technical education being made more useful and more helpful to the boys.

After further discussion the motion was lost.

Proposal 4 : That apprentices receive free technical-school training when attendance is compulsory, or employers to pay fees ; and if apprentice fails to attend 75 per cent. classes, employer to deduct fees from wages.

Mr. W. J. THOMAS said that he was not very much concerned as to who should pay, but he thought some provision should be made by the educational authorities to grant free places to any of those students who might not be qualified for free places.

Mr. W. McLEOD thought it was a step forward if they could bring this into force, and that it would do a great deal for the apprentices. In fact, it was a matter that was seriously retarding the work of the committees. At the present time the committees were expected to ask boys to go to the technical college, and if the lads failed to do so it was their duty as committeemen to take action