

assembly shall provide that, save in exceptional cases, the sessions of the general assembly shall be open to the public and the press of the world.

The chairman decided to put the Peruvian motion first and, if it were rejected, then the Canadian motion. This enabled many delegates to vote against the Peruvian motion on the ground that it would be better to adopt the Canadian motion by unanimity than the Peruvian motion on a split vote. The Peruvian motion was defeated by a vote of 15 to 22 and the Canadian motion adopted by a vote of 34 to 0 with U.S.S.R. abstaining. The delegate of the U.S.S.R. stated that his delegation had abstained from voting on the Canadian motion since such a resolution would be without force or effect unless it were ratified by the governments of the participating countries and that it would not be submitted to them for ratification.

The discussion over the powers and organization of the security council raised what proved to be the central question of the conference—how to maintain the unity of the great powers and at the same time create an organization which should be acceptable to the middle and smaller nations. This was the issue underlying the series of debates which took place over the veto powers of the permanent members of the security council. I do not think it would serve any useful purpose here to review that controversy, but without going into detail I shall say a few words about the position which the Canadian delegation took in this matter.

It will be recalled that under the Yalta voting formula, each permanent member of the security council has the power of veto over all questions of substance coming before the councils, with the exception that with respect to the peaceful settlement of disputes the party or parties to the dispute must abstain from voting. This veto power accorded to the United States, the United Kingdom, the Soviet Union, China and France extends over all those activities of the organization which depend upon decisions taken in the security council. It thus affects the entire character of the organization, and I think it is proper to point out that it does constitute a serious exception to the principle of the equal sovereignty of states regardless of their size.

This veto power was attacked with great vigour and persistence by the representatives of many of the middle and smaller countries at San Francisco. While it was generally accepted that there must be unanimity of the great powers in applying peace enforcement action, there was opposition to many other aspects of the veto power, and particularly to its extension to covering the field of the peaceful settlement of disputes. It seemed to many delegations to be unwise that a permanent member, when not a party to a dispute, should be in position to veto

the application of the peaceful settlement procedures of the charter in that dispute. It was over this particular aspect of the veto power that the debate really developed.

After a long drawn out discussion the sponsoring powers produced a joint statement in reply to a questionnaire which had been addressed to them as to the application of the Yalta voting formula. The joint statement, although it cleared up some obscurities, left many delegations unsatisfied as it envisaged the application of the rule of the unanimity of the great powers to the peaceful settlement provisions under the charter. The Canadian attitude throughout this controversy was based upon two principal considerations. It was felt in the first place that that veto power as applied to the processes of peaceful settlement was undesirable. We feared too that the incorporation of such a principle would seriously weaken the security council itself. The Canadian delegation recognized that this was in essence a political question as to what was possible of achievement in the way of compromise between the great powers themselves and between the great powers and the other united nations. It was apparent that the joint interpretation of the Yalta voting formula represented the greatest possible measure of agreement which could be obtained among the great powers themselves at this time on this subject.

The Canadian delegation, therefore, considered that while we could not accept the interpretation of the voting procedure as satisfactory, it was not too high a price to pay for a world organization which held so much promise in other respects. So that on the final vote in the conference the Canadian delegation did not oppose the adoption of the Yalta voting formula as defined in the answers made by the sponsoring powers to the questionnaire. We were influenced in this decision by the statement made by the representatives of the great powers that their special voting position would be used with a sense of responsibility and consideration for the interests of smaller states and, therefore, that the veto would be employed sparingly.

In connection with the organization of the security council, an amendment was introduced at the instance of the Canadian delegation, relating to the system of electing non-permanent members of the security council. Members of the house may recall from the Prime Minister's previous statements that the Canadian government felt that the provisions of the Dumbarton Oaks proposals were unsatisfactory in that they contained no qualification for eligibility of election to the council. The principle that power is to be