

The unanimity rule had been employed to obtain national political advantages and not to further the interests of the United Nations. Those who favoured it on the ground that the Great Powers possessed the real strength in the economic and military fields were upholding the principle that "might is right" against the principle of equality, liberty, and independence of the small States, which alone could guarantee peace. Mr Belt considered on the contrary, that the right of the veto was the last bulwark of isolationism. The opponents of the abolition of the "veto" claimed that its withdrawal would destroy the conception of a united world and favour the formation of antagonistic blocs. On the contrary, in Mr Belt's view, it was the retention of the "veto" that would have this result, for the small Powers would look to the great for the support and protection which might be expected from them by reason of their right of "veto." Thus the small Powers would become the vassals and satellites of the great. The Cuban representative did not favour an attempt to limit the use of the unanimity rule by means of agreement between the Great Powers. The promise they had made at San Francisco had not been kept; they were, therefore, not to be trusted, and the proposed procedure would, in fact, amount to a confirmation of the privileges enjoyed by the Great Powers.

The representative of New Zealand (Sir Carl Berendsen) had chosen, as indeed did the leaders of the majority of other delegations, to make his principal comments on the question of the veto during the general debate at the opening of the Assembly. This seemed especially desirable in view of the fact that, in the light of the Charter as it exists and of present circumstances, there could be no possibility of any review of the Charter at this stage, and that therefore the utmost that could be achieved at this meeting was to keep the question of the veto alive by a firm but moderate expression of our views on this matter in the widest possible forum—namely, the General Assembly itself. Suitable extracts from Sir Carl Berendsen's address on this matter are attached to this report as an Appendix. It is worth noting at this point that more than three-quarters of the whole membership of the United Nations, including four out of the five Great Powers themselves, expressed dissatisfaction with the existing voting provisions on the Security Council or their application, and the hope that, at some early date, either by agreement amongst the Great Powers or, in due course, by revision of the Charter, it will be found possible to alter provisions which are now generally accepted as unsatisfactory and inadequate.

In the Committee Sir Carl Berendsen spoke early in the discussion. He said that he would not repeat the views expressed on previous occasions by Mr Peter Fraser or by himself in the general debate. He would merely emphasize that New Zealand remained opposed to the veto "root and branch."

Considering the Charter as it actually was, he thought that unless the Security Council could find means by which it could promptly solve