

procedural matters and come down to the substance of the items before it, it would remain a reproach and a byword to the peoples of the world. Secondly, it was absurd that the abstention or absence of a permanent member should be equivalent to a veto, as would seem to be the present position.

Thirdly, he could not understand why there should be a veto on any of the processes of peaceful settlement, even if there were to be a veto on enforcement measures. He therefore strongly supported the Australian proposal by which the permanent members were invited not to use the veto for any of the processes of peaceful settlement.

Turning to the Charter not as it was, but as it might be, he said that New Zealand had accepted the Charter under pressure and would abide by it. It had already accepted with regret the principle of an eternal veto on amendments. This last feature of the Charter, which seemed to some to be the quintessence of human wisdom, seemed to very many others to be a monumental piece of human folly. However, it had been accepted, and it was plain that no proposal for a revision could in present circumstances be effective. New Zealand, however, would vote for any proposal tending to amendment of the Charter in this respect, even if there were no prospect of success. Any other course would be a betrayal of the principles which must be inserted in the Charter at the appropriate time if the United Nations was ever to achieve the great and sacred purposes for which it had been established.

The great majority of the speakers concurred with the main thesis of the Australian proposal, that the voting privileges enjoyed by the permanent members of the Security Council had been abused, and appealed to those members to adopt in future a practice which would enable the Security Council to function. A few delegates supported the Cuban proposal for a revision. A number of speakers—especially the Spanish-American countries—expressed resentment of the accusation that, in abstaining from the vote on Article 27 at the San Francisco Conference, and thus permitting that Article to be adopted, they had acted under “pressure.”

The representative of the United States (Senator Connally) summarized his country's position as follows:—

- (1) The United States regarded the principle of the unanimity of the Great Powers as essential for the successful functioning of the United Nations. Any Council decision taken against the determined opposition of permanent members would mean war, not peace.

- (2) This requirement, however, must not be used to frustrate the functioning of the United Nations; it imposed a special responsibility on the Great Powers to reach agreement on important issues before the Council.

- (3) The permanent members should not use their “veto” power wilfully to obstruct the operation of the Council, but only in very rare and exceptional cases.

- (4) The permanent members of the Council were members of the United Nations before they were members of the Council. Membership of the Council exempted them from no obligation, but rather