

A further proposal, that the Conference should elect its own Chairman, failed to secure acceptance. Thus, the procedure suggested by the Council of Foreign Ministers prevailed.

CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE COMMISSIONS⁽¹⁾

The members of the Council of Foreign Ministers made a concession to small-Power feeling by accepting the United States proposal that they should declare themselves ineligible for the chairmanship of Commissions.

The relevant rules of procedure adopted by the Conference read :—

“ No member of the delegation of any State represented on the Council of Foreign Ministers shall be eligible for election to the chairmanship of any Commission.

“ No member of the delegation of any State having one of its members elected to the chairmanship of any Commission shall be eligible for election to the chairmanship of any other Commission.”

VOTING

The voting procedure suggested by the Council of Foreign Ministers was as follows⁽²⁾ :—

“ Decisions of the Conference on questions of procedure will be adopted by a majority vote. Decisions on all other questions and recommendations will be adopted by a two-thirds majority.”

New Zealand put forward an amendment, which read :—

“ Decisions and recommendations of the Conference will be adopted by a majority vote.”

The New Zealand delegates, Mr Mason and Mr Jordan, stated that the change was desirable because voting procedure should be democratic ; because the Conference had only the power of recommendation, not of decision ; because the prior commitment of the Big Four to agreed clauses made a simple majority of the full Conference equivalent to a two-thirds majority of the uncommitted seventeen ; because the Big Four procedure made it possible for a minority of less than one-third to prevent the will of the Conference being expressed ; and because the small Powers—whose sacrifice in the war had been proportionately as great as that of the Four Powers—should not be restricted to the role of advisers.

(1) The rules of procedure suggested by the Council of Foreign Ministers did not cover this point.

(2) The U.K. and U.S.A. did not consider themselves bound to support the suggested rules of procedure, but maintained that they were free to support any changes proposed by members of the Conference, which should be free to determine its own procedure. The U.S.S.R. insisted that the suggested rules of procedure were on the same basis as agreed articles—*i.e.*, no one of the Four should support a change unless all the Four desired it. The representatives of the U.S.S.R. denounced the U.K. and U.S.A. for breach of good faith when they supported changes of procedure desired by several other delegations.