

The ex-enemy States were neither permitted to take part in the discussion nor to table amendments to the draft treaties. On certain occasions they did put forward proposals in the form of amendments, but these only became eligible for consideration if one of the States member of the Commission adopted it and tabled it as its own amendment. The representations of the ex-enemy States had little effect upon the decisions of the Conference.

PUBLICITY

For the first time the press was admitted to a Peace Conference. The proposal of Mr Byrnes that the press should be admitted not only to the Plenary Conference, but also to all Commissions, was seconded by Mr Molotov on the ground that closed meetings might prevent the Soviet viewpoint from being understood.

There is a widespread opinion, expressed by pressmen as well as by delegates, that the relative futility of the Conference was due to the fact that its proceedings—and especially the proceedings of the Commissions—were open to the press. It is true that delegates found it physically difficult to examine problems objectively with the glare of flashlights in their eyes and the click of cameras in their ears. It is also true that the discussions of the Conference had little of the cut and thrust found in parliamentary debates, and that many of the meetings consisted in a series of relatively unconnected and often irrelevant formal statements directed at other ears than those of the delegates to the Conference. The evidence does seem to indicate, for better or for worse, that in the present state of international relations delicate negotiations cannot be conducted satisfactorily in public. It is noteworthy that one of the only compromises which satisfied all parties was achieved by a sub-committee of the Hungarian Commission, which worked *in camera*.

Many passionate speeches might not have been made had the press not been present, while many of those that were made seemed much more uncompromising when reported in the outside press than they were known to be by delegates at the Conference who had better facilities for judging whether the words of a speech expressed its real purpose. Not a few issues were confused in this way.

Yet, against this view that it was publicity that ruined the Conference must be recorded the fact that the Conference had little real power. Thus it was natural that several delegations should use the enormous publicity opportunities at hand for purposes that had little in common with the Peace Conference.