

This proposal received support from the United Kingdom and the United States. Although it seemed doubtful whether the additional considerations thus introduced were strictly relevant to the content of a commercial policy clause, the New Zealand delegation, after abstaining from voting in the Commissions, voted in favour of the amendment in the Plenary Sessions.

VI. THE DANUBE

Some of the earlier paragraphs of this report have already made it clear, at least by implication, that one of the main issues confronting the Conference was the extent to which formal approval was to be given to the special position in Eastern Europe at which many believed that the U.S.S.R. was aiming. This issue presented itself in a peculiarly acute form in regard to navigation on the Danube. In the view of the U.S.S.R., it was unnecessary to insert in the peace treaties any reference to the control of Danube shipping, and strong objection was taken by the delegations of the U.S.S.R. and their immediate associates to the admission of any share in rights of control over the Danube to non-riparian States. The formal ground for the U.S.S.R. objection to the Danube clauses proposed by the other members of the Council of Foreign Ministers was the alleged impropriety of including in the peace treaties provisions which not only infringed the sovereignty of Roumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria, but also purported to limit the freedom of action of victorious States such as Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia. The United Kingdom, on the other hand, was anxious once more to have approval of the principle of freedom of navigation formally enshrined in the peace treaties, and to provide therein also for a conference of "all interested States" to establish a new permanent international regime for the Danube. The 1921 Danube Convention, it was argued, was still in force, though it was agreed that the exclusion of the U.S.S.R. in 1921 has been a serious error which must now be rectified. The French, in particular, insisted that it would be highly paradoxical if the peace treaty were in effect to ratify the unilateral exclusion of France by Germany in 1940 from participation in Danube control. The United States also indicated its permanent interest in the Danube, which, moreover, was especially strong during the period when it had responsibilities as an occupying Power. When the Danubian clauses first appeared on the agenda of the Balkans Commission the United Kingdom and the United States presented a joint draft setting forth in some detail the methods whereby freedom of navigation was to be maintained on the Danube. In the course of the debate the French delegation presented a compromise draft, which omitted the details, and, moreover, applied only to the Danube, and not to "its navigable tributaries and connecting canals." It contained a general affirmation of the principle of freedom of navigation on the Danube, and proposed to bind the ex-enemy States to take part, "together with France, the