

Problem of Voting in the Security Council

This question was among those referred by the second session of the Assembly to the Interim Committee for study.

The Rapporteur of the Committee (Mr Entezam of *Iran*) presented its report. The Committee made five recommendations ; firstly, that thirty-six possible decisions of the Security Council be regarded as procedural ; secondly, that a further twenty-one possible decisions be adopted by majority vote, whether they are considered procedural or non-procedural ; thirdly, that the permanent members should consult among themselves before a vote is taken in order to minimize the use of the veto ; fourthly, that in agreements conferring functions on the Security Council, provision should be made for the exclusion of the unanimity rule ; fifthly, that the Assembly consider whether or not the time has come to call a general conference to revise the Charter.

A proposal to convoke such a conference was formally made by the delegation of *Argentina*.

The delegations of *China*, *France*, the *United Kingdom*, and the *United States* submitted jointly a draft resolution which incorporated the first, third, and fourth recommendations of the Interim Committee and, with regard to the second, recommended the permanent members of the Security Council to "seek agreement among themselves upon what possible decisions they might forbear to exercise their veto, when seven affirmative votes have already been cast in the Council, giving favourable consideration to the list of such decisions contained in Conclusion 2, Part IV, of the Interim Committee's report."

All four sponsors of the resolution, and a majority of delegations, considered that the time was not ripe for a conference to revise the Charter.

For *New Zealand*, Mr Fraser recalled that at San Francisco his delegation, along with those of a number of other small nations, had opposed the introduction of the unanimity rule into the Charter. They had feared that the retention of that rule might end by paralysing and eventually destroying the Organization, and their fears had been justified by events. He did not share the views of those who protested not against the unanimity rule but against its misuse. It was not enough, for instance, to prohibit the use of atomic bombs ; their existence was a danger in itself. Similarly, the very existence of the veto power endangered the whole Organization, since it put in the hands of the Great Powers a defensive weapon which could be used as an offensive weapon. Originally the veto was intended to protect the Great Powers against the possible tyranny of the smaller powers ; it was comprehensible that