

directly or through the medium of private enterprise, may accede to the present Convention. Such accession will be notified through the diplomatic channel to the Contracting Government in whose territory the last Conference was held, and by that Government to the other Contracting Governments.

The accession will, in itself, carry with it acceptance of all the clauses of, and admission to all the advantages conferred by, the present Convention.

In the event of the accession to the present Convention of the Government of a State having colonies, possessions, protectorates, or territories under mandate, the notice of accession shall state whether or not it applies to such colonies, possessions, protectorates, or territories, or any of them.

C. For the purposes of the present Convention any Government on whose behalf a separate signature has been affixed to the Convention, or an individual notice of accession is given under Article B, shall be regarded as a Contracting Government.

DRAFT NOTE ON THE BRITISH PROPOSALS REGARDING VOTES AND ACCESSIONS.

The draft prepared at Washington assigned multiple votes to certain specified Governments. This proposal, though it might perhaps be held to represent the telegraphic importance of the Powers concerned, seems logically to involve a general grading of States for purposes of votes, a matter which it would obviously be difficult to arrange satisfactorily, and which might involve the Conference at its outset in long and fruitless debate.

The British Government, on further consideration, is inclined to think that the principle of the equality within the Convention of the Contracting Governments as defined in Article C should be taken as the basis, and that one vote only should be exercised by each Contracting Government. The existing signatories of the Telegraph and Radio-telegraph Conventions will naturally form the great majority of signatories of the combined Convention, each Government which is separately represented being regarded as a Contracting Government. In the provision made in Article B for future accessions it is proposed to restrict the right of accession to Governments which conduct their own telegraph administration either directly or through the medium of private enterprise.

It is thought that this proposal will meet with general assent, its object being to ensure that each territory which for telegraph purpose may be regarded as an administrative unit, and capable as such of making a useful and independent contribution to the deliberations of Conferences, and which has a substantial amount of international telegraph traffic, shall be qualified for a vote.

So far as the British Government is concerned, it is suggested that not more than one vote should be claimed in respect of the British non-self-governing colonies, protectorates, &c., it being understood that the British Government itself and the Governments of each of the self-governing Dominions and of India would be entitled, in view of their international telegraphic importance, to sign separately or to accede separately under Article 23.

No. 19.

New Zealand, No. 147.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 6th July, 1923.

I have the honour to request Your Excellency to inform your Ministers that the Minister of Pensions has recently had under consideration the arrangement under which the Governments of the various Dominions and colonies undertake the payment of pensions and other incidental charges in respect of Imperial pensioners resident overseas.

2. Such arrangements have included the transmission of periodical schedules of payment made, supported by various vouchers and documents to enable the Ministry of Pensions to carry out the necessary verification. Arising out of this verification considerable correspondence and requests for further information on particular payments have been necessary before the accounts could be cleared finally. Moreover, the time which has elapsed before many of the investigations could be completed has rendered the result abortive in many cases.

3. With a view to avoiding delay and unnecessary correspondence the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury have agreed that—

- (1.) Further investigation of accounts in respect of payments made prior to the 31st March, 1921, should be waived, and the accounts should be passed as they stand at present.
- (2.) Special arrangements should be made by the Ministry of Pensions to clear the accounts submitted for the years 1921–22 and 1922–23, provided a test check proves satisfactory.
- (3.) In each Dominion the appropriate Government Audit Department should be approached with a view to their carrying out, as from the 1st April, 1923, a local audit; and the claims should be certified by them as correct before transmission to the Ministry of Pensions, London.