

Frick Backs Expansion Of Major League Clubs

By FRED DOWN

New York — Commissioner Ford Frick today threw his weight behind a proposal designed to pave the way for "an orderly expansion" of major league baseball.

The proposal, drafted by a four-man committee and announced in Frick's office late Friday, will be submitted to the joint major league meetings in New York Jan. 25. Since Frick will cast the deciding vote in case of a tie, it is regarded as certain the plan will be carried.

The proposal reaffirms Frick's oft-stated position that New York City should not be closed to the National League because of the exodus of the Giants and Dodgers. "And it wipes out the old principle whereby major league clubs 'owned' territory."

Frick Optimistic

"If this proposal is passed, it should stop the endless bickering and confusion that has attended franchise transfers so far," said Frick. "In effect, we are attempting to lay new ground rules that will help in the orderly expansion of baseball."

The committee, chosen by Frick at the December baseball meetings at Colorado Springs, is composed of Frank Lane, general manager of the Cleveland Indians; Gabe Paul, general manager of the Cincinnati Redlegs; Dick Meyer, vice president of the St. Louis Cardinals; and Roy Egan, attorney for the Chicago White Sox.

The plan asks that major league Rule 1 be changed. Rule 1 states that a franchise change to a city in a rival circuit must be approved by the unanimous consent of the 16 clubs to include the following:

1. Cities with populations of 2 million or more should be eligible for two (i.e. a second major league) teams.

2. The city must have a park not less than five miles from the park of the existing club—although, in certain circumstances, the teams could occupy the same park.

3. A team invading minor league territory should compensate the minor league team for a proportionate share of its actual expenses.

4. New rules should make it definite how territory is to be considered when it has been abandoned by a major league club.

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