

(2) That if either Government accepted this task, the result would be damaging to the appearance and reality of Anglo-American solidarity and likely to cause prejudice to the larger issues. (See today's Dominions Office telegram[†] on this subject reporting more fully considerations advanced by Mr. Cordell Hull in conversation with Lord Halifax.)

Apart from the difficulties referred to above and in Dominions Office telegram Circular D. 262, May 3rd, United Kingdom Government are particularly influenced by following considerations:

(a) Relations between United Kingdom and Soviet Government have appreciably improved in recent months and if United Kingdom were now to approach Soviet Government constantly with the many and very real Polish grievances, a very heavy strain would be placed on these relations.

(b) Owing to the fact that Russia claims as Soviet citizens all former inhabitants of the Eastern Provinces of Poland which are now claimed as Soviet territory by the Soviet Government, while the Poles regard as Polish citizens all who enjoyed Polish citizenship in pre-war Poland, United Kingdom would, in protecting Polish interests, be forced into taking up a definite attitude on the Polish-Soviet frontier dispute.

As regards alternative Protecting Powers, as indicated in paragraph 2 of Circular D. 262, United Kingdom Government feels that to go outside of ranks of United Nations and to appeal to a neutral would give a further handle to German propaganda to detriment of United Nations. In any case no doubt German propaganda would make the most of unwillingness of United Kingdom in particular to accept this duty.

As regards neutrals, there are very few represented at Moscow, the only possible candidates being Sweden and Turkey, who in view of their delicate relations with the Soviet Government would be most unlikely to undertake the task.

In the circumstances, the United Kingdom Government after careful consideration feel the best course would be to make utmost effort to find some other member of United Nations willing and able to undertake the task. I have been approached by the United Kingdom Government to ascertain whether the Canadian Government would be willing to undertake protection of Polish interests in the Soviet Union if approached by Polish Government. This approach of the United Kingdom Government should not be construed as request but only to ascertain views of Canadian Government. As matter is pressing, I should be grateful for an early reply.

MASSEY