

reply to certain details in your letter. The Government in Prague feels justified in maintaining that the proposals in my memorandum of September 23rd went far beyond the concession which it made to the British and French Governments and that the acceptance of the memorandum would rob Czechoslovakia of every guarantee for its national existence. This statement is based on the argument that Czechoslovakia is to give up a great part of her prepared defensive system before she can take steps elsewhere for her military protection. Thereby the political and economic independence of the country is automatically abolished. Moreover the exchange of population proposed by me would turn out in practice to be a panic stricken flight. I must openly declare that I cannot bring myself to understand these arguments or even admit that they can be regarded as seriously put forward. The Government in Prague simply passes over the fact that the actual arrangements for the final settlement of the Sudeten German problem in accordance with my proposals will be made dependent not on a unilateral German decision or on German measures of force but rather, on the one hand on a free vote under no outside influence, and on the other hand to a very wide degree on German-Czech agreement on matters of detail to be reached subsequently. Not only the exact definition of the territories in which the plebiscite is to take place but the execution of the plebiscite and the delimitation of the frontier to be made on the basis of its result are in accordance with my proposals to be met independently of any unilateral decision by Germany. Moreover all other details are to be reserved for agreement on the part of a German-Czech Commission. In the light of this interpretation of my proposals and in the light of the cession of the Sudeten population areas in fact agreed to by Czechoslovakia, the immediate occupation by German contingents demanded by me represents no more than a security measure which is intended to guarantee a quick and smooth achievement of the final settlement. This security measure is indispensable. If the German Government renounced it and left the whole further treatment of the problem simply to normal negotiations with Czechoslovakia, the present unbearable circumstances in the Sudeten German territories, which I described in my speech yesterday, would continue to exist for a period the length of which cannot be foreseen. The Czechoslovak Government would be completely in a position to drag out the negotiations on any point they liked and thus to delay the final settlement. You will understand, after everything that has passed, that I cannot place much confidence in the assurances received from the Prague Government. The British Government also would surely not be in a position to dispose of this danger by any use of diplomatic pressure. That Czechoslovakia should lose a part of her fortifications is naturally an unavoidable consequence of the cession of the Sudeten German territory agreed to by the Prague Government itself. If one were to wait for the entry into force of the final settlement in which Czechoslovakia had completed