

within their borders. States, like Poland, obligated by treaty to accord special rights to minorities generally favoured the Polish proposal for the same reason. Other States likely to be only remotely affected supported it on grounds of logic and humanity. It seemed to be generally agreed by those who had to submit to control in their dealings with minorities that the Treaties had been deflected from their intended purpose and opened the door to interference in domestic affairs.

According to the opponents of generalization, the present system of protection of minorities should be regarded as being bound up with the minority Treaties, and did not in any way embody principles of Government having the character of universal obligations. They argued that the clauses relating to minorities had their foundation and their *raison d'être* in special circumstances obtaining at the time when the treaties were concluded. The opponents of generalization further urged that any attempt to impose the present system of protection of minorities upon countries the territories of which are not inhabited by peoples of different race, language or religion, or which in the course of their history have successfully settled the mutual relations of such peoples, would in effect create an artificial problem in the countries concerned.

It is important to note that, while maintaining the principle of generalization of the international protection of minorities, the Polish delegate confined his remarks to analysing the conditions of such generalization in Europe, and avoided conditions peculiar to other continents.

Several delegates representing countries outside Europe stated that generalization of the protection of minorities could in no case be accepted by their countries, the conditions prevailing in other continents being totally different from those existing in Europe.

Speaking on behalf of the Canadian delegation, Dr. Skelton said that, while recognizing that the present system of the guarantee of minority rights in certain countries by outside control was open to definite objection, he thought that any alternative solution of the problem presented after the war by the existence of important minority groups in the area of the Continent of Europe which had been thrown into the melting pot as the result of war and revolution, would have presented still greater difficulties. Moreover, the existing solution had been accepted by the Governments of the States to whose jurisdiction the minorities in question were assigned as part of an agreed settlement.

After referring to the inconsistency of earlier speakers who had on the one hand criticised the existing arrangements for the protection of minorities and on the other advocated their extension to other countries, he pointed out that it was essential not to lose sight of the distinction between countries which had received minorities as the result of immigration and countries with minorities which were indigenous. There was no parallel between the position of minorities transferred bodily, and frequently without their own consent, to the jurisdiction of another State, and the position of individuals who had immigrated in recent years of their own free will to countries whose system of government they knew and accepted.

He expressed the hope that in time the system of external control will no longer be found necessary and that the gradual lessening of the antagonisms which were natural and inevitable at the beginning of the establishment of the new States, and the growing recognition by the majority and minority groups alike of the common interests they enjoyed in the new States, would create the conditions which would make revision both desirable and possible.

It became evident that if the Polish proposal were put to a vote, support would not be unanimous and no progress would be achieved. Hence, while maintaining its point of view, the Polish delegation, yielding to the Chairman's request, did not press for a vote.