

there could be an arrangement under which the maintenance of law and order in certain agreed Sudeten German areas would be entrusted to the Sudeten Germans themselves by the creation of a suitable force or by the use of forces already in existence, possibly acting under the supervision of neutral observers.

As you know, I did last night, in accordance with my understanding with you, urge the Czechoslovak Government to do all within their power to maintain order in the meantime.

The Czechoslovak Government cannot, of course, withdraw their forces nor can they be expected to withdraw state police so long as they are faced with the prospect of forcible invasion: but I should be ready at once to ascertain their views on the alternative suggestion I have made and if the plan proved acceptable I would urge them to withdraw their forces and state police from the areas where Sudeten Germans are in a position to maintain order.

Further steps that need to be taken to complete the transfer could be worked out quite rapidly.

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#### No. 4

*Translation of letter from the Chancellor of the German Reich to the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.*

September 23, 1938.

Your Excellency, a thorough examination of your letter which reached me to-day as well as the necessity of clearing up the situation definitely lead me to make the following communication.

For nearly two decades the German as well as various other nationalities in Czechoslovakia have been maltreated in the most unworthy manner, brutalised, economically destroyed and above all prevented from realising for themselves also the right of a nation to self-determination. All attempts of the oppressed to change their lot failed in the face of the brutal will to destruction of the Czechs. The latter were in possession of the power of the State and did not hesitate to employ it ruthlessly and barbarically. England and France have never made an endeavour to alter this situation. In my speech before the Reichstag of February 22 I declared that the German Reich would take the initiative in putting an end to any further oppression of these Germans. I have in a further declaration during the Nazi party Congress given a clear and unmistakable expression to this decision. I recognise gratefully that at last after 20 years the British Government, represented by Your Excellency, have now decided for its part also to undertake steps to put an end to a situation which from day to day, and indeed from hour to hour, is becoming more unbearable. For if formerly the behaviour of the Czechoslovak Government was