

prevailing at the time when their object is achieved that the lines of any territorial settlement can be profitably considered. It would therefore be premature to enter into detailed discussion of territorial questions. For this reason His Majesty's Government have been careful not to define in precise terms what they imply by the restoration of independence to Poland and Czechoslovakia, and to limit themselves to referring in general terms to the recovery by the Polish, Czech and Slovak peoples of their liberties. His Majesty's Government trust that the French Government will adopt a similar attitude. It should, however, be pointed out that while it is hoped to secure independence for all European peoples, one of the weaknesses of the post-war settlement was the establishment of a number of small national States which were "viable" neither in the military nor economic sense. The settlement was therefore highly unstable, and proved an ineffective barrier to the expansionist ambitions of Great Powers either in the West or in the East. Accordingly, it may be necessary to contemplate some form of closer association, at the least a system of financial and economic co-operation in Central and South-Eastern Europe.

5. For this purpose His Majesty's Government suggest that it would be wise to encourage at once closer co-operation between the Balkan States and closer co-operation between the various refugee groups of Poles, Czechs, Slovaks and Austrians.

6. As regards the future of the German Reich, His Majesty's Government agree that the removal of Herr Hitler and his entourage will not of itself be a sufficient remedy against the re-emergence of German militarist and expansionist ideas, but it is not at present possible to tell in what conditions the defeat or surrender of Germany will take place, and any suggestion that it was the intention of His Majesty's Government and the French Government to seek the political dismemberment of Germany or to disrupt German unity, whatever arguments might be adduced on one side or the other in any discussion on these matters, would have the immediate effect of rallying the German people behind their present leaders. His Majesty's Government therefore consider it wiser to watch the course of events and to arrange for further consultation as soon as it is possible more closely to forecast the course of internal political developments in Germany.

7. As regards material guarantees, the first must evidently be that Germany shall never again be allowed to build up a preponderance of armed force to menace the peace of European nations and of the world. The methods of establishing this guarantee may perhaps be left for further consideration and in view of what has been said above it would seem premature to make any public statement of war aims in precise terms. His Majesty's Government would prefer that the two Governments in agreement should limit their public declarations to the general principles on which their common policy is, and will continue to be, based, and that, while protecting the world, so far as is humanly possible, from a recurrence of war, they should emphasise their common desire to secure a post-war settlement, which would be satisfactory not only to themselves but to all other peoples whose collaboration will be essential in the work of reconstruction.

8. These are the preliminary comments of His Majesty's Government on the approach made by the French Government. His Majesty's Government will welcome a further exchange of views with the French Government, and will be glad to consider any proposals which the French Government have to make both in regard to the terms on which peace should be concluded with Germany, and the wider European settlement which might follow the termination of hostilities.