

conclusions derived from the account furnished to them of the work of his mission by Lord Runciman. We are both convinced after recent events that the point has now been reached where the further maintenance within the boundaries of the Czechoslovak State of the districts inhabited by the Sudeten Deutsch cannot in fact continue any longer without imperilling the interests of Czechoslovakia herself and of European peace. In the light of these considerations both Governments have been compelled to the conclusion that the maintenance of peace and the safety of Czechoslovakia's vital interests can not effectively be assured unless these areas are now transferred to the Reich.

This could be done either by direct transfer or as the result of a plebiscite. We realize the difficulties involved in a plebiscite and we are aware of your objections already expressed to this course, particularly the possibility of far-reaching repercussions if matters were treated on the basis of so wide a principle. For this reason we anticipate, in the absence of indications to the contrary, that you may prefer to deal with the Sudeten Deutsch problem by the method of direct transfer, and as a case by itself.

The area for transfer would probably have to include areas with over 50 per cent German inhabitants, but we should hope to arrange by negotiations provisions for adjustment of frontiers, where circumstances render it necessary, by some international body including a Czech representative. We are satisfied that the transfer of smaller areas based on a higher percentage would not meet the case.

The international body referred to might also be charged with the question of the possible exchange of populations on the basis of the right to opt within some specified time-limit.

We recognize that if the Czechoslovak Government is prepared to concur in the measures proposed, involving extensive changes in the conditions of the State, they are entitled to ask for some assurance of their future security.

Accordingly, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be prepared, as a contribution to the pacification of Europe, to join in an international guarantee of the new boundaries of the Czechoslovak State against unprovoked aggression. One of the principal conditions of such a guarantee would be the safeguarding of the independence of Czechoslovakia by the substitution of a general guarantee against unprovoked aggression in the place of existing treaties which involve reciprocal obligations of a military character.

Both the French and British Governments recognize how great is the sacrifice thus required of the Czechoslovak Government in the cause of peace. But because that cause is common both to Europe in general and in particular to Czechoslovakia herself they have felt it their duty jointly to set forth frankly the conditions essential to the security of it.