

# The faithful witness

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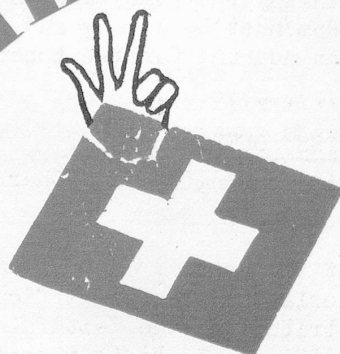
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## THE FAITHFUL WITNESS.

We are obliged to the "American Swiss Journal" of New York of 3rd February 1943 for having brought to our knowledge an article written by the star columnist of newspaperdom in the United States, Walter Lippmann, in defence of Switzerland against slipshod, unjust criticism by Mr. Charles Lanius, the American radio broadcaster, who recently passed through Switzerland on his way back to the United States. After his arrival in America Lanius published an article in the well-known weekly of Philadelphia "The Saturday Evening Post", styled "Switzerland, a Captive".

The article by Walter Lippmann has no doubt been warmly acclaimed by Swiss citizens abroad, scattered all over the globe, because "Laniuses" are to be found everywhere, and in our experience they are sometimes even recruited from the ranks of foreigners who have personally found in Switzerland a temporary haven of refuge, kind hospitality and protection, in what were probably the darkest hours in their lives. Criticism of such kind hurts the pride of every good Swiss abroad, particularly so because the more the drama and tragedy of the world-war unfolds its sombre panorama, the more are we impressed by the strength of character of the Swiss people at home confronted with an unparalleled situation in world history, and their faithfulness to their principles of government, and their traditional way of life.

Fortunately, there is always a ready response abroad, in defence of Switzerland, from intellectual quarters of the highest standing, whenever our country is misrepresented. Thus the "incriminating" article of Mr. Lanius in "The Saturday Evening Post" also brought an eloquent answer from the world famous biographer, Emil Ludwig, who is a Swiss by his own choice (naturalised), at present residing in the United States of America. In this issue we will confine ourselves to Mr. Walter Lippmann's article of which an extract follows: -

Mr. Lanius certainly did not mean to do an injustice to a nation which is of such particular moral importance to America and to all the United Nations. But though I have not been in Switzerland as recently as has Mr. Lanius, there is no doubt in my mind that quite unintentionally he has wronged the Swiss and hurt our own cause.

Mr. Lanius tells us that the 4,000,000 Swiss are entirely surrounded. That is obvious. Mr. Lanius then reminds us that Switzerland, which has almost none of the raw materials for manufacturing, is making goods for Germany out of raw materials which Germany supplies. That also is obvious. What was not so obvious to Mr. Lanius, though it should have been, is that the Swiss nation which is entirely surrounded, beyond reach of any help from the democracies, that Switzerland which cannot live without trading with the surrounding countries, still is an independent democracy. The "engulfing sea of 125,000,000 neighbours" has not yet engulfed the Swiss. That is the remarkable thing about Switzerland. The real news is not that her factories make goods for Germany, but that the Swiss have an army which stands guard against invasion, that their frontiers are defended, that their free institutions continue to exist. The Swiss remained true to themselves even in the darkest days of 1940 and 1941. Surely, if ever the honour of a people was put to the test,

the honour of the Swiss was tested and proved then and there. How easy it would have been then for them to say that they must haste to join the new order. Their devotion to freedom must be strong and deep. For no ordinary worldly material calculation can account for the behaviour of the Swiss.

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SWISS OUTLOOK 1943.

Address of the Swiss Minister in Washington, Dr. Charles Druggmann, in New York, 23rd January 1943.

The following recent address of the head of our Diplomatic Mission in Washington concisely reveals Switzerland's present difficulties of supplies, the discipline upheld in their distribution, the faithfulness of the Swiss people to their democratic tradition, the basic reasons and aspects of Swiss neutrality, and Switzerland's humane obligations, the position of Swiss citizens in the United States, and a warning against misunderstanding and misrepresentations.

This should be profitable reading for our subscribers.

"Three and a half years of world-war lay heavily upon our land. Our supplies are dwindling fast, the struggle to nourish our people and to procure necessary raw materials is severe. Our stony soil notwithstanding all efforts to make it yield more, can by far not produce what we need. Our small fleet carries over the ocean what it gets. Our route of supply resembles indeed a very narrow mountain path between two boulders: blockade and counter-blockade. What have we not undertaken to widen this narrow path!

Negotiations with the belligerent countries are continuously being carried on and though the results seem small, we persist and refuse to be discouraged.

I need not describe the discipline with which all that, thus obtained, is then distributed in our country and how willingly our people help each other. No one must starve in Switzerland and no one complains. Our people know that our fate is a happy one compared with that of other peoples and that we have to be thankful.

For we have kept our most precious treasure intact: our beautiful homeland is ours, free as it always has been and order there expresses the will of our democratic people. No sacrifice is too great for such a result.

And we have been able to keep our historical neutrality for whose guarantee our valiant army is still watching the frontiers, ready to fight against aggression.

Neutrality was and is the necessary condition for the independence of our country. Surrounded by big nations whose languages we share, we would otherwise have had to face annihilation each time war broke out on the old continent.

For this reason neutrality has to be the principle of Swiss foreign policy which has no other aims and aspirations than the protection of our country and its freedom. Our neutrality does not permit of any military alliance with other nations. Are we therefore quite alone? No, neutrality does allow an alliance with humanity and to this ally we stand steadfast.

The more other peoples must suffer because of war, the closer must be the Swiss allegiance to humanity. In this thought our Government looks after the human interests of belligerents. Under the guidance of the Red Cross of Geneva the Swiss people devote themselves to this purpose, sharing gladly their supplies with the war internees, refugees and many foreign children who in our country seek recovery from sickness, starvation and despair.

So we are allowed to think that our neutral attitude is not deserving of disapproval or blame. It cannot hurt the legitimate interests of other countries, who after all have recognized our fundamental right to neutrality at all times. Is it then not rather a reason for friendship?