

La "guerre des journaux"

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Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): - **(1934)**

Heft 665

PDF erstellt am: **12.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-691950>

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LA "GUERRE DES JOURNAUX."

Pourquoi donc cette chasse aux journaux suisses telle qu'elle a été pratiquée en Allemagne depuis une semaine environ? Le "Bund" a répondu en substance à cette question: Parce que, quelques jours après la tragédie du 30 juin, M. Gœbbels a donné un coup de sifflet à la presse allemande, pour annoncer que l'"incident était clos," et que les gazettes helvétiques n'ont pas suivi ce mot d'ordre, "Inde irac."

"Il s'agit, écrit d'autre part la "National Zeitung," d'une tentative avouée d'exercer une pression sur la presse suisse. Les hommes d'Etat allemands, avec la singulière conception qu'ils se font des autres pays, ont eu la candeur de s'imaginer que la presse suisse indépendante se laisserait impressionner par ce chantage du ministre de la propagande."

Ce qui frappe d'une façon particulière dans ces mesures, c'est qu'elles s'adressent exclusivement à des organes de langue allemande de Suisse et de Tchécoslovaquie, la diffusion des gazettes autrichiennes étant déjà proscrite depuis longtemps: il s'agit d'organes de régions que le régime national-socialiste considère déjà comme des parties intégrantes du "peuple allemand," et soumises par conséquent à des pouvoirs particuliers.

C'est là la signification réelle et profonde des mesures prises à Berlin contre des feuilles qui, dans leur appréciation des événements d'outre-Rhin, n'ont d'ailleurs jamais cessé de faire preuve de pondération et d'observer la retenue qui s'imposait. Si la Suisse admettait jamais la validité de la conception hitlérienne, elle suivrait l'exemple de la politique de suicide pratiquée à la fin du XVIIIème siècle par les dirigeants de Varsovie.

Telle est la vraie signification de cette "guerre des journaux" qui ruinerait le prestige du Conseil fédéral au cas où ce dernier s'aviserait de capituler. Aussi est-il douteux qu'il suive les conseils fallacieux de certains défaitistes, qui prônent un arrangement sur la base d'une côte mal taillée. Nos gouvernants se rappelleront que le Conseil national vient de leur enjoindre de la

façon la plus formelle de montrer plus de fermeté dans les incidents que suscitent régulièrement nos voisins du Nord.

Avec un certain sans-gêne, les défaitistes s'efforcent déjà de rejeter la responsabilité d'un échec sur les trois journaux interdits outre-Rhin. Ceux-ci, au point de vue commercial, s'en tirent en effet beaucoup mieux que les organes officiellement tolérés, qui voient chaque semaine des ballots entiers anéantis au passage de la frontière allemande.

On prétend aussi que, de représailles en représailles, les deux Etats en arriveraient à des interdictions prononcées pour des siècles. Evidemment, la presse suisse risque de partager le sort de sa sœur autrichienne, qui n'en est pas morte. Puis, il y a lieu d'admettre que le Conseil fédéral, lorsqu'il est entré dans cette voie, savait ce qu'il faisait, et que sa politique est dominée par la fameuse maxime: "Gouverner, c'est prévoir."

On peut donc être convaincu que le gouvernement fédéral, tout en conservant le sang-froid et la pondération dont il a fait preuve jusqu'ici, se tiendra fermement sur les positions qu'il a librement choisies, et qu'il continuera de défendre une presse qui, dans ses appréciations sur les tragiques événements du 30 juin, n'a nullement démerité, bien au contraire.

R. Bovet-Grisel.
(Tribune de Genève).

SOCIETY OF FRIENDS OF FOREIGNERS IN DISTRESS.

His Excellency, the Swiss Minister, M. C. R. Paravicini, presided at the Annual General Court of Governors of the Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress, held at their offices at 3, Suffolk Lane, London, E.C.4, on Wednesday, 11th July, 1934.

His Excellency, in moving the adoption of the Directors' Report for 1933, and the Auditors' Statement of Accounts, referred in very cordial terms to the long association and co-operation,

with the rising sun, stones began to fall methodically, and we were involved in their unpleasant company during ten hours. We were obliged to proceed by rushes, steering towards big boulders or other obstacles that might afford shelter. But the stones were kind to us and fell only at regular intervals, thus permitting us to pass between successive showers.

Yet another side of the Matterhorn to be recently climbed for the first time is the east face. It is easier than the other two faces, except in the upper part, where the victorious party were occupied for eleven hours in climbing only 1000 feet. On this side, too, the mountain is notorious for its avalanches of stones, and so great is the danger from this cause that on several occasions it has proved impossible to recover the bodies of victims that have fallen to the base of the precipice.

As a further instance of astonishing performances by ultra-modern climbers the first ascent of the north face of the Grosse Zinne may be quoted. The Grosse Zinne is a peak of 9850 feet, situated in the Dolomites. As the *Alpine Journal* points out, the ascent was only accomplished by means usually employed by steeplejacks in dealing with factory chimneys. In this case the party used:

- 800 feet of ordinary rope.
- 500 feet of supplementary rope.
- 500 feet of light rope.
- 90 pegs
- 50 karabiners (swivel-hooks).

As the *Journal* states, the north wall of this mountain is one of the most forbidding and impossibly smooth precipices in the Alps, and the operations to conquer it had extended over several years. By the end of 1932 one of the attackers attained a point in the precipice only 350 feet below the top, and with only that amount more of vertical precipice to overcome. By August 11, 1933, various guides had reduced this interval to little more than 160 feet. On August 12 it was again reduced, but a terrible overhanging still remained. Next day, as darkness came on, the young guide Dimai, in one last desperate effort, stormed the overhang. This brought the party to a portion of the face, no longer quite vertical, though still terribly steep, where they were able to bivouac. Starting at 6.30 the next morning, with easier going, the summit was reached in three hours. The ascent was repeated soon afterwards by two men who spent their first night suspended in slings on the precipice and remained the next night on the top of the mountain.

In the Himalaya, also, the new spirit is stirring. The campaign for Kangchenjunga is frankly regarded by many of the protagonists as a prolonged battle in which lives may be sacrificed. The exaltation of such a state of mind will seem strange to most Englishmen. One of the

extending over a period of 128 years, between the Swiss charities in London and the Society of Friends of Foreigners in Distress. His Excellency expressed his pleasure in presiding on this occasion.

Mr. M. R. Jardine, Chairman of the Board of Directors, in moving a vote of thanks to His Excellency for the honour he had conferred on the Society in presiding over the Court, and the very able and delightful manner in which M. Paravicini had conducted the Meeting, referred to Members of the Swiss community who in years long passed had actively interested themselves in the Society's work. Among those mentioned were the names of John J. Chisy (who was for over forty years a Director of the Society), Alexis Bidéaux, Henry Vernet and Henry Pasteur. Mr. Jardine particularly referred to the useful work done by the present Swiss representative, Mr. C. Campart.

FUERSORGE ZU GUNSTEN BLINDER AUSLANDSCHWEIZER.

Wiederum möchten wir Ihnen Bericht erstatten über die Verwendung, der im letzten Jahre so zahlreich eingegangenen Gaben zu Gunsten unseres Hilfswerkes für blinde, bedürftige Auslandsschweizer. Die Einnahmen erreichten mit der Spende der Schweiz. Stiftung "für das Alter" ... 1150.— und den Gaben unserer Landsleute aus beinahe allen Erdteilen ... 1972.77 sowie einem Beitrag aus unserer Kasse 2121.33

(in der Schweiz gesammeltes Geld) 5244.10

Wir möchten allen Gebern auch an dieser Stelle herzlich danken und *sie bitten, unser Hilfswerk auch in diesem Jahre nicht zu vergessen.* Das erhaltene Geld wurde restlos ausgegeben für Unterstützungen an 39 blinde, bedürftige Schweizer überall im Auslande. 5 von ihnen befinden sich in Anstalten und die andern 34 leben entweder bei Angehörigen oder werden von be-

English members of the international expedition, himself a hardened mountaineer, wrote:

after nineteen days it was a relief to get back to the base camp. I have never spent a more nerve-racking time in my life, for during the majority of those nineteen days one never felt safe from the huge avalanches that fell down Kangchenjunga. I can only say that anyone who approaches this side of Kangchenjunga must take his own life and the life of his porters in his hand.

These remarks are scarcely surprising, for the expedition was encamped all the time on glacier-plateaux that were liable to be swept by ice avalanches a mile wide. Some idea of the difficulties on Kangchenjunga may be gathered from the fact that one of the climbers while step-cutting on an ice slope, although at least 4 yards below the knife-edged crest of the ridge in which the slope culminated, suddenly saw to his horror that a blow from his axe had broken right through the mountain and that blue sky was showing in the hole that the axe had made. As the editor of the *Alpine Journal* says in regard to the second Bavarian expedition in 1931:

No one ... can have realised hitherto how terrible and tremendous is an attack on Kangchenjunga pushed right home. ... Two solid months anchored to a knife-edged and binnacle-ridged ridge; never a single step to be taken lightly, never a moment of relaxation of tension, and with the ever-present menace of the inevitable Kangchenjunga tempest.

Indeed, all these attacks on Kangchenjunga are quite a new departure in Himalayan mountaineering, for before these attempts very few Himalayan climbers would have ventured to embark on ascents that would have been considered difficult and dangerous even according to the most exacting Alpine standards, quite apart from the question of altitude.

To attribute such astounding feats as these solely to vanity or to a craving for notoriety seems absurdly inadequate, for it is probable that these strange heroes are often dismayed by the publicity which their performances confer on them. One explanation of their actions may be that they are the result of a new attitude to the conduct of life. Again, it is possible that the mainspring actuating the behaviour of the generation subsequent to the war is a contempt for life so deeply buried in the unconscious mind that no pessimism or despair betrays itself save when it leads to the perpetration of deeds such as have been described. At any rate, whatever the cause, it may be worth while to study the method of this madness, for it is possible that those who have a more conventional outlook on life than the new adventurers might find that there is something to be learnt from them. It is even conceivable, too, that the lesson might be profitable.

C. F. Meade.
(Nineteenth Century and After).

in an attack on this same ghastly precipice the assailants used 750 feet of rope, seventy-eight pegs for rock, twenty pegs for ice, twenty-five karabiners or swivel-hooks, ten stirrups, and six hammers. The attack failed and two of the climbers were killed.

A more successful effort was the celebrated *tour de force* of the brothers Schmidt on the previously unclimbed northern face of the Matterhorn. One of the young men had already taken part in a new ascent of the Ortlerspitze, in Tirol, and the route chosen on that occasion had been described as "an enormous ice-couloir situated between threatening rocky banks and under the constant menace of the gigantic overhanging sérac-bastion of the upper Ortler Glacier." The critic went on to say that only a person desirous of uselessly exposing his life would dream of ascending this funnel, swept as it is by continuous stones and ice avalanches. But the brothers' ascent of the Matterhorn was a longer and more serious business, for the north face of this mountain is peculiar in that it is probably only possible to attack it with any chance of getting up alive when the conditions may be said to be at their worst — that is to say, when the rocks happen to be plastered with ice and snow. Without the coherence which an armour of ice and snow supplies, the whole face is a precipice in process of disintegration, discharging incessant volleys and avalanches of stones. Owing, therefore, to the conditions under which the brothers were obliged to make the attempt, holds for hands and feet had to be scraped with an axe in the ice and snow. Slowly they worked their way up the long, steep slope, grooved by stone falls. Occasionally the leader was able to hammer in a peg in order to secure the rope uniting him with his companion, but there was no security from the stones falling from hundreds of feet above. In places the thinness of the ice that coated the rocks allowed only the smallest notches to be scratched for hands and feet. Only one halting-place could be found before they were obliged by the onset of darkness to bivouac, crouching roped to the cliff. The constant toil had permitted them only time to eat one bar of chocolate since dawn, and the rope was frozen as stiff as a hawser. Next morning at seven o'clock they staggered on again from their roosting-perches and reached the top of the Matterhorn at two in the afternoon. Throughout the latter part of the climb they had been in great danger from the storminess of the weather, and in descending from the top to Zermatt they wasted considerable time, because, as they had never been on the mountain before, they were unfamiliar with the way. One of the brothers has since perished on a very difficult climb on the Wiesbachhorn.

Of a similar ascent on the south face of the Matterhorn, also only recently effected, one of the successful party writes: