

La politique

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Un sophisme détestable a cours ces temps-ci dans le monde officiel. Il consiste à dire qu'il vaut mieux tolérer l'existence du parti communiste et des officines qui en dépendent, parce que, de cette manière, on peut les surveiller, tandis que, légalement supprimés, ils renaîtraient sous d'autres formes. Nous ne saurions nous ranger à cette opinion, quand bien même il plaît à certains de traiter de "naïfs" les partisans d'une solution plus draconienne. Quand le Conseil fédéral a supprimé les centrales nazistes en Suisse, il n'a pas tenu le même raisonnement; il n'a pas dit qu'à l'instar des Phydre de Lerne, elles auraient bientôt de nouvelles têtes. Contrairement à la thèse officielle, le parti communiste serait extrêmement gêné, dans sa propagande, son activité, et surtout dans son recrutement, le jour où il ne lui serait plus loisible de s'afficher comme tel. Le nom d'un groupement n'est pas si indifférent, en politique, qu'on veut bien le dire. Tout le monde sait pertinemment que ce terme même de "communisme" est un signe de ralliement, un pôle d'attraction, un drapeau. Mettez à la place une dénomination quelconque, vous lui enlevez une grande partie de son pouvoir, qui est de l'ordre mystique. Cet aspect psychologique de la question dépasse peut-être l'entendement des juristes du palais, — ce qui ne serait pas pour nous étonner. Il n'en a pas moins une importance considérable.

Nous étions, nous demeurons convaincus qu'il fallait, d'une main sûre et prompte, porter le fer rouge dans la plaie et prononcer, contre le parti communiste, une interdiction générale et absolue. Il n'y a, dans une démocratie, aucune place pour un "parti" qui se propose la destruction par la violence de l'ordre constitutionnel. Les individus qui se réclament de cette doctrine et de ce programme devraient être mis, *ipso facto*, hors la loi. Le respect très grand et très sincère que nous avons pour les membres du Conseil fédéral ne saurait nous empêcher de dire et de répéter cette vérité évidente. Un jour viendra, et c'est fort triste à penser, où le gouvernement déplorera lui-même ce que nous sommes obligés d'appeler de la pusillanimité. Ce sera quand les ravages révolutionnaires se seront exercés à tel point que nul remède n'aura plus d'efficacité.

En revanche, pratiquement, les mesures édictées contre les publications bolchévistes, — la "littérature," ainsi qu'on dit en français fédéral — peuvent produire de bons résultats si elles sont appliquées avec vigilance. Il est aussi fort opportun de soumettre à un contrôle la participation d'orateurs étrangers à des assemblées publiques ou privées. Nous en avons assez de ces rhéteurs qui se mêlent de nos affaires et provoquent des incidents dans nos cités, au lieu de s'occuper de ce qui se passe chez eux. Mais notons que le mauvais exemple vient parfois de haut. Au banquet offert par l'Association de la presse suisse, à l'occasion du congrès de la Fédération internationale des journalistes, à Berne, en septembre dernier, le sous-secrétaire d'Etat français de Tesson a prononcé un discours, absolument scandaleux, de propagande pour le Front populaire, qui a produit sur l'assistance, où figuraient plusieurs conseillers fédéraux, une impression

déplorable. S'il ne s'était pas agi d'un hôte de la Suisse en mission quasi officielle, on lui eût fait sentir à quel point il abusait de la situation.

M. Baumann, on le sait, est chargé de préparer un projet d'arrêté urgent pour la protection de l'ordre public. Nous en reparlerons en temps voulu. Ce projet sera soumis aux Chambres en décembre déjà. Il n'est, en effet, pas possible d'attendre davantage.

Léon Savary.
(Tribune de Genève).

END OF ONE OF WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS JOKES.

There is a Swiss Navy — so dies another joke, almost as old as the Ark.

It is not long since the Port of Basle was opened as the first seaport of Switzerland.

Sailors, when they first heard the news, refused point-blank to believe it. One cannot blame them; the Swiss Navy joke, first cracked by Skipper Noah, has always been a favourite: age has improved it and the arrival of the League of Nations lent it many elaborations.

But even the most barnacle encrusted of seamen was forced at last to believe the tale, and the presence of a new competitor is now accepted on the ocean trade routes.

I determined to learn about this fleet where, I was assured, the look-out men would yodel that "lights were bright." I sent a very polite letter to the Swiss Legation; and I got a very polite letter in return.

If I wanted information, I was directed, I must write to Basle. The name of the gentleman (or the office) to whom I was to write was

Schleppschiffahrtsgenossenschaft.

Even that did not deter me. I wrote to S— at Basle and, after a decent interval, I received a courteous reply. Unfortunately he, or they, could not give me the information I required, and he, or they, referred me to their friends the N.V. Nederlandsch-Zwitsersche Scheepvaart Mij. of Rotterdam.

Hot on the trail I got in touch with the N.V.N.Z.S. Co. From there I was switched to a shipping and chartering firm who not only were kind enough to send me the information, but supplied me with a photograph as well.

It's no Joke.

There is no joke about the Swiss Merchant Navy. At present it consists of two very smart motor-craft, the M.S. Bernina and her sister ship the Albula. They carry a cargo of 400 tons on a draft of 2.80 metres. Each has two large hatches tended by a winch, and a 220 h.p. Sulzer motor to drive her through the water.

As a final blow to the jokers the Bernina made her first trip to Basle loaded with sugar which she took aboard at London.

There is one loophole left. As Switzerland has no merchant flag, the Bernina and the Albula are compelled by international law to fly the Dutch one.

(Reynold News).....

TO THE ARCTIC.

By M. E.

(Continuation).

The road went North for 343 miles of most interesting country. There was very little traffic here; — mostly buses. The whole way right up to Petsamo the road was lined by great healthy pines and birches. With its marvellous colouring, lakes as blue as the Mediterranean, trees as green as in England there stretched a panorama before us, that seemed as unlike anything I had expected to see in the Arctic. Along the road at intervals were wooden letter-boxes and miles and miles of firewood stacked up on the roadside for the winter. Cows and very fine horses were allowed to graze quite near the roads. The inhabitants looked more like Laplanders. We felt quite thrilled when we crossed the Arctic Circle after a wonderful drive. Some of the scenery viewed from the highlands looking out over miles of forest ending in deep blue line of hills was glorious.

When we arrived in Petsamo at 9.15 p.m. we found to our great discomfort there were no bedrooms to be had and we had to put up in dormitories. Mine was quite decent but my brother, who had to share his with two Laplanders who were sick all night, was not so fortunate. The sun never set and all night long it was bright as day.

Returning along the same road which somehow appeared different, we had the good fortune to see two reindeer. Then following a quiet day, the afternoon of which I spent driving to Jnari, and passed the night at Jvalo.

2nd July, what a day! We left Jvalo at 9.30 a.m., with the intention of sleeping in Oulu 361 miles away, but when we got to Oulu very tired and dirty, not having had a proper bath or wash for several days, we could not get rooms anywhere

in the town where 500 men had met to hold a convention. So we had to drive to Raabe which was quite off our route and 61 miles further away. We arrived there only to discover that a carload of convention people had just come and taken all the rooms in the town. Things were getting very difficult for us. One man offered us his room, but as there was only one bed in it which my brother could have and I was expected to sleep with the family, we decided to wait a little and make a few more enquiries before accepting this far from tempting offer. Then a woman from the village offered us two spotless, well-furnished and comfortable rooms. We were delighted. We went back to the hotel for some food and were lucky enough to get some Hamburg sausages and beer. Didn't we enjoy them! We slept like logs and had great difficulty in awakening the next morning. The actual day's run came to 422 miles. When we arose we had breakfast at the hotel. Heaven only knows at what time these people eat in this country! At whatever time you may arrive, a meal has either finished or not yet begun. Should you get there about 6 p.m., they ask you if you would like to have your lunch! After our meal we returned to Oulu, then on to Vaale, a place famous as the starting place of a trip down the rapids in a boat. Stopped the night at Sotkamo, a small town almost surrounded by lakes (called javis). Here we had the strangest meal I ever ate. The daughter of the house took us to see the bathing beach. It was lovely. A path winding through heavenly woods led us to the top of a cliff 100 feet high from which we could command a view of a wonderful and unspoiled beach.

Savolino was our next objective. We stopped at Koli for lunch, a fine lofty place. An amazing view spread before our eyes, — for miles around were to be seen nothing but colossal lakes and islands, a never-to-be-forgotten sight! Far away on the horizon to the East you could see dark

blue hills which was the border of Russia.

The people here resemble Russians. They also have Russian carts with hoops over the horses heads. I admired those horses, they were so frisky, and looked so healthy with their long manes and tails, but they were frightfully shy of cars.

Just before we reached Varkans we stopped in the very heart of the forest to do some repairs to the car, and to our astonishment an Englishman from Newcastle came up to us to see if he could be of any use in case we had broken down. He told us he was learning Forestry miles from anywhere in Finland.

Up and down, along a belt of islands we drove to Punkaharju and from thence to Imatra where we at last solved the mystery of meal-time in this strange country. Breakfast is at 10 a.m. Lunch at 4 p.m. and Dinner at 12 p.m. No wonder we never seemed to hit on the right times for our meals! Imatra is a nice place, but I cannot imagine why they don't put notices outside their hotels. One has to go entirely by intuition. I nearly walked into a barracks to ask if they had any rooms to let.

The road was very bad the whole way. I was surprised to discover the roads to Petsamo so good while a few miles from the capital the roads appeared in such a shocking state. We then stopped at Parvoo, a good idea we found because it enabled us to have a rest before proceeding to Helsinki. At Helsinki there was hardly any traffic and this surprised us very much. However, we passed a good and very jolly night at the Grand Hotel, and the next morning busied our selves with all preparations for shipping ourselves and car to Estonia changing money and attending to a lot of little things.

(To be continued).

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