

# La politique

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**LA POLITIQUE.**

**En marge d'un petit incident.**

Comme en janvier la politique fédérale, engourdie tant par les digestions festives que par le froid polaire, est au point mort, on eût pu craindre que la mince affaire du *Landbote* et du *Popolo d'Italia* ne fournît un aliment à des polémiques menacées d' inanition. Mais ce risque ne paraît pas trop redoutable; la paix de Noël règne encore; et soit du côté de la presse, soit dans les milieux officiels, on garde le sang-froid qu'il sied d'avoir dans cette atmosphère boréale.

Nos lecteurs savent de quoi il s'agit.

Un journal de Winterthur, le *Landbote*, a publié en décembre un article contenant des appréciations malveillantes sur l'Italie, sa population et les vertus militaires de ses soldats. Certains des termes employés par l'auteur de la diatribe — lequel est selon toute probabilité un correspondant de Berne, bien connu pour sa haine du fascisme — frisent l'absurdité et ne méritent, à notre avis, en guise de réponse, qu'un haussement d'épaules.

Cependant, la coupure en question est parvenue à Rome, et le *Popolo d'Italia*, organe du Duce, n'a pas jugé inutile de relever ces critiques et de riposter par de violentes attaques contre la presse suisse dans son ensemble. Ces attaques sont d'autant plus suprenantes qu'elles coïncident avec les déclarations bienveillantes de M. Mussolini, dans le même journal, au sujet de notre démocratie.

En effet, le chef du gouvernement italien a écrit que la Suisse, "démocratie petite, mais classique," est "l'unique pays au monde où ce mot mal famé représente une réalité compréhensible et respectable."

D'une part, donc, le Duce loue notre régime; d'autre part, il accuse notre presse entière d'être hostile à son pays et au pouvoir qu'il représente. Car, à Berne, on est persuadé que la réponse au *Landbote* est de la plume même de M. Mussolini.

Il semble à première vue qu'on s'est mépris, à Rome, sur l'importance et l'influence du journal où ont paru les appréciations incriminées. Le *Landbote* est l'organe de ces démocrates zurichois qui eurent jadis leur époque de gloire, ou du moins de notoriété, et qui se situent un peu plus à gauche que les radicaux orthodoxes. C'est le groupe auquel appartient M. le conseiller national Wettstein, personnalité politique, mais qui n'a plus guère autour de lui des comparses assez pâles. La *Zürcher Post*, où brillait autrefois un journaliste de talent, est morte de sa belle mort, et c'est le *Landbote* qui a pris sa succession, sans d'ailleurs l'égaliser. Il paraît à Winterthur, ville industrielle d'où partit le mouvement des démocrates et où il conserve quelque prestige.

Loïn de nous, on l'entend bien, l'idée de discréditer la feuille en cause. Mais vraiment, il est impossible de voir, dans un article publié là, l'expression des idées de la presse suisse en général. En signalant cette affaire à ses collègues, M. Motta n'a pas manqué de souligner le fait que, dans leur grande majorité, les journaux suisses n'ont pas une attitude hostile à l'égard de l'Italie et que l'on aurait grand tort de tirer des conclusions générales d'un incident en lui-même aussi insignifiant.

Le ministre d'Italie, sur l'ordre de son gouvernement, a fait une démarche auprès du département politique. Une nouvelle entrevue devait avoir lieu mercredi entre M. Motta et M. Tamaro. Il est très probable que M. Motta en aura profité pour réduire le différend à ses justes proportions. Il n'y a pas de quoi fouetter un chat dans toute cette histoire.

Assurément, les publicistes suisses doivent se rappeler que les relations internationales étant basées sur la courtoisie réciproque, il est peu opportun de les troubler par des jugements empreints de partialité ou de malveillance. Mais nos voisins italiens ne peuvent ignorer qu'en général notre presse se garde, dans ce domaine, de tout excès. Certains organes d'extrême-gauche font exception, c'est indéniable. Mais nous vivons chez nous sous le régime de la liberté d'opinion. N'y a-t-il jamais eu, dans des journaux de la péninsule, pourtant contrôlés, des articles dont nous aurions pu nous émuover?

Léon Savary.  
(Tribune de Genève.)

**PERSONAL**

We extend our deep sympathy to Mlle. J. Matthey, on the death of her mother, which occurred at Woodbrige (Suffolk) at the age of 84.

**SWISS CLUB BIRMINGHAM.**

We are informed that the Annual Banquet and Ball of the Swiss Club Birmingham has been postponed from February 19th. to March 26th.

**EDITOR'S POST-BAG.**

January 11th, 1938.

To the Editor of the "S.O." and Dear Compatriots,

We know that "S.O." stands for "Swiss Observer," but when the "S.O." Editor finds it necessary to send out a special "S.O.S." — as he did in his "New Year's Thoughts and Wishes" — to try and save the "S.O." from an untimely death, then I do think it is also up to us subscribers and readers to make a mighty effort to prevent such a truly "Swiss-National-Calamity" from happening.

Being in possession of absolute reliable inside information, I know it to be a fact, that this "dear little rag" of ours — which, I am sure, failed to pay its way for the last few years, despite the fact that the Editor who sacrifices nearly four days a week in assembling its news, — gets very little for his services! And yet, who — I ask — would like to miss those personal "Notes and Gleanings" that week in week out he gives us and keeps us posted with of nearly everything that is going on in our "Swiss Colony" here in England? I say it without fear of contradiction: a more ardent patriot and unselfish servant of his compatriots than is our dear "Bernese" Editor, it would be difficult to find! Therefore do let us all pull together and this in the very near future — to give him all the support he asks for. He does not ask for "Money," all that he says is required is, that about 100 to 150 New Subscribers, occasional advertisements by a few more that are in a position to use the paper's columns, and this would suffice to keep the ship afloat! Considering we are about 12,000 Swiss Nationals here in England, and the present number of subscribers is much less than a thousand, it really should not require too strenuous a beating of the "covers" to find say a couple of hundred additional ones, especially if the "Swiss" that live in the provinces — about half the total number, — would come forward in anything like the same proportion that their compatriots in the London district subscribe? When I think how great, for instance, the response was at the time the Editor sent out an S.O.S. for the "Swiss in Spain," or even in support of the "Swiss-Henley-Regatta-team," then surely it must not come to pass that we leave him in the lurch now where his appeals are for nothing more than a somewhat increased support for our dear little "Swiss Observer" itself! So will you, — all of you dear readers and subscribers, help in the way indicated and thus instill the new life that the paper so badly needs. And thank you for listening to me!

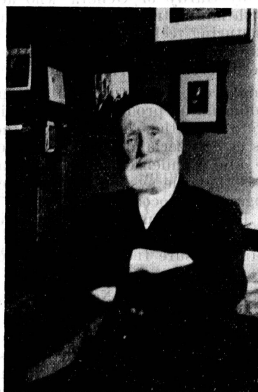
I am Sir, and dear compatriots,  
yours faithfully,  
W. F. GATTIKER.

10th January, 1938.

The Editor,  
Swiss Observer,  
23, Leonard Street, E.C.2.

Dear Mr. Editor,

I think you may like to know that my father, Mr. George Forrer, will attain the ripe old age of 94 on the 18th inst. As you can see from the photo, your oldest reader, both as regards age and seniority as one of the "souscripteurs-fondateurs" of your paper, is still in harness and continues to scan your and other periodicals with gusto.



Nearly seventy years ago my father was on the Committee of the City Swiss Club, at that time of comparatively recent creation, and whereas the annual banquets are now held in the most luxurious surroundings, in those early days the venue was in the drab atmosphere of the City (Cannon St. Hotel). It would seem that not too much importance was attached to those functions either, for it is on record, that a former President of the C.S.C. once clean forgot all about the

arrangements for the dinner until, the morning of the fateful day!

On another occasion the Treasurer politely but firmly refused to take charge of the collection of about £30. Possibly he found it too weighty. Anyhow in the end my father obliged by shouldering the burden!

Yours truly,  
F. FORRER.

We extend our heartiest birthday wishes to the Doyen of the Swiss Colony, hoping he will remain amongst us for many more years to come. Ed.

**EMIGRATION OF SWISS INDUSTRIES.**

By OSCAR WETZEL.  
(Continuation).

*Tinned Foods.*

The manufacture of tinned foods was started in Switzerland towards the end of the 19th century, but only developed into a big industry after 1900. The fact that this industry was specially meant for supplying the Swiss market did, however, not prevent some of the factories starting to manufacture on the other side of the frontiers. In 1899, Lenzbourg established the Helvetia Conserve factory at Gross-Geramy to avoid the very great import duties in Germany which really were so high as to exclude any business on a substantial scale. In 1912, the same Company started La Société Franco-Suisse des Conserves Lenzbourg at Lyons. In 1920 a factory was established in Holland, and one in Spain. Another factory was in 1923 built at Kulmbach (Bavaria), under the name of "Hero" Conserve Co.

The Maggi Concern started their first factory abroad in Singen in 1899. Successively, other foreign factories were added — Maggi, Bregenz and Vienna, Société Industrielle des spéciales alimentaires, Paris.

*Other Food and Tobacco Industries.*

The movement of emigration is also found in other industries. The Company of Dr. Wander of Bern, founded in 1865, which is making patent foods with the malt base (Ovaline) started factories in England, Germany, Hungary, Austria, Czecho-Slovakia, France, Italy and the United States. The foreign factories surpassed by far the importance of the Swiss establishments. The Franco-Suisse Malt Works at Basle are proprietors of different factories abroad — at Neutra (Czecho-Slovakia), France and Germany.

We find one after another of the Swiss industries being forced by circumstances to start working abroad. There are naturally other directions of our Swiss industries that would come under the same heading — the Chemical Industry of Switzerland which has subsidiary companies all over the world — the Paper-Making Industry — the production of bricks and tiles, an addition to the list as there is a newly built factory at Uxbridge which will soon commence operations.

After giving in the past some definite information about the different interests of Swiss firms abroad, we come now to an analysis of the reasons for such movement.

Before the French Revolution, one really cannot talk of big industries, as most of the work was done in very small enterprises, the biggest generally being a family of a certain number working together and making the same article. Later on, we find certain firms starting to give work out to home workers, as for instance in the textile industry, where a so-called manufacturer, who was the owner of, let us say, 50 looms out to 50 different families who worked them in a shed on their own ground, in a cellar or even in the living room, and delivered the final product to the manufacturer after having received all the necessary raw material from the same source.

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