

Some reflections on the 1st of August

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE 1st OF AUGUST.

(One of our constant readers has sent us an article about the 1st of August, having received it too late for publication in our last issue, we herewith re-produce a part of it, although we are not entirely in agreement with the opinion expressed. (Ed.)

Dealing with the future, our correspondent writes :

... "What rôle is Switzerland going to play in creating a United Europe, without which the proposed establishment of the United Nations is impossible?"

We are glad that the Swiss Government has sent a delegation to Paris to take part in the European Economic Committee of Co-operation. If successful it will obviously lead to closer collaboration on other matters, without necessitating undue interference with national sovereignty. It would however, at some later stage, involve the acceptance of some measure of federal or external control over certain national activities.

But if Europe is to be saved from anarchy and chaos some kind of unity must emerge soon. Let us hope it will be unity freely accepted and maintained by a community of interest rather than unity founded by force and maintained by tyranny.

Once a United Europe is firmly established there should be no difficulty in founding the United Nations. After expensive lessons, the isolationists in America have seen the error of their ways, and, no doubt, Russia and its satellites will also find out, that co-operation is more sensible and advantageous than isolation.

After all the British Commonwealth shows what benefit and blessings can accrue from a group of freely united and self governing Nations. Whenever they become members of a World Government the Federation of Switzerland need not hesitate to follow suit as they would be in good company.

As a poet says there is an affinity between mountaineers and seafaring people:—

"Two voices are there, one is of the sea,
One of the mountains, each a mighty voice,
In both from age to age thou' didst rejoice,
They were the chosen music, Liberty!"

There are, no doubt, a large number of Swiss who are dead against foreign entanglements and wish the Government to adhere to traditional neutrality. They hold that this policy has stood us in good stead, but lose sight of the possibility that if Hitler, Mussolini and their ruthless clique had been equipped with rockets and atom bombs at the outset of the last war, and if their General Staffs had considered Swiss Neu-

trality a hindrance to their plans of campaign, Swiss arsenals, engineering and munition works and military depôts would have been destroyed. Even given the chance to erect a Reduit, it would have been of no avail, in spite of heroic defence and skillful Generalship.

If, which God forbids, another World War should break out in due course, the havoc and destruction, due to the latest and most modern weapons which will find their marks from large distances, will be more brutal and terrifying than ever before. There are two sides to all questions, one of them is right and the other is wrong, and Governments and people have to choose between them. Wrong must be conquered before Right can prevail. In the final battle for the soul of the world there is no room for Neutrality, and the Swiss will have to search their hearts and find an answer to the following question:—

*When civilisation is doomed to perdition
Is Neutrality still a noble tradition?*

What can be done to stop Western Europe and other countries still ruled by freely elected democratic Governments become an open prey to anarchy and dictatorship? The obvious answer is to make sure that their Governments' first duty is to put the good of the country before any other purpose and the unity of the people before party interests. Secondly the civilised nations of the world must plan and work together and each must agree to do what is best for the whole. Thirdly, all the nations must lose the habit of war and acquire the habit of Peace. Fourth, let the people know the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth.

World affairs and communications have become too closely knitted for Switzerland to keep aloof from international deliberations, either economical or political. Being a small nation, which cannot be accused of power politics and whose main desire is to live in peace and to preserve their age-long freedom and liberty, their unbiased advice, given without fear or favour, laced with logic and common sense, is likely to be valued and respected, even if it should not be adopted.

Last but not least, let Switzerland lead the way in a spiritual revival, making it clear that a nation with no morals and no religion has no future.

There are plenty of examples in history to prove this."

F. ISLER.

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(Any comments on the above article will be gladly published.)

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