

Reflections on the shores of the Lemman

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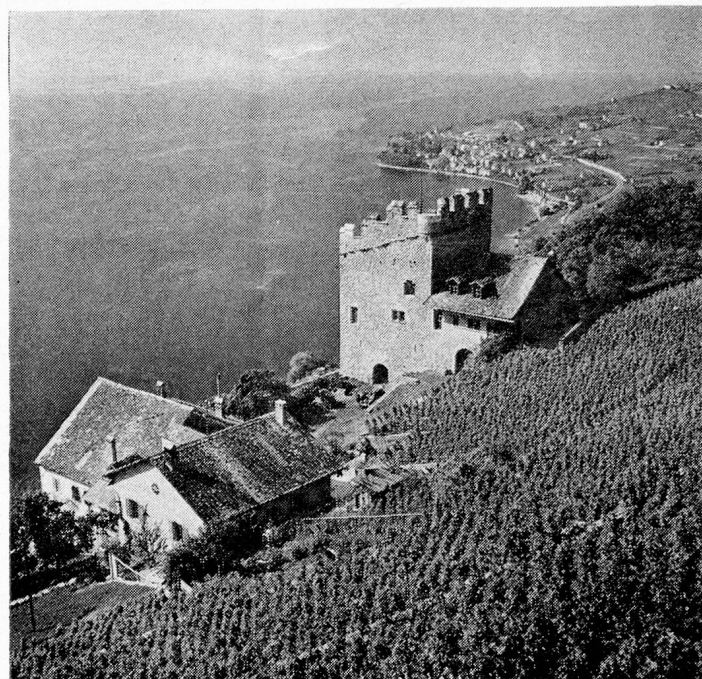
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Now all is over and again I stand,
O Love, alone on our remembered strand,
Whilst hills and waters all the dreamy day
Melt each other through silvery haze yet grey.
As the Valais takes the sunset so the Jura knows
Beyond the frozen plains the tranquil morning rose.
Lake of the lone, the exiled, the oppressed,
What thoughts have meandered over thy sea-blue breast:
What gaze has watched the suns that could not save
The flames from those peaks fading upon thy wave.
Great men and fallen on thy shores have shed
Their few hesitant tears for fame and fortune fled:
Sad men and wise have been content to see
In thy hibernal calm their last felicity.
And now that sunlit vault, those walls of thine
Seem as an unroofed and angel-haunted shrine;
Fair as my Love and from its midst ere espied
That monumental presence ageing Gibbon ne'er denied;
Those crowning glories which erstwhile at Coppet were
beheld
Through the eyes of Constant and de Staël who viewed it
it as their world.
Yet here stood my Love, in all her sylph-like graceful
spread
Until at last so sweet she spoke, those words full of tears
unshed;
Then out sprang her soul to meet mine and from its voice
I knew
How deep that hope we had both inspired was now so very
true.

Geoffrey H. Buchler



Lake Geneva

(SNT0)

THE DISMAYED COLONELS

Air Force Colonel Pierre Henchoz is one of the more controversial military thinkers in Switzerland. He has recently written a book called *Mirages sur La Suisse* containing a wealth of original ideas on the way our national defence should be conducted. The book was soon nicknamed as "the little blue book", in contrast to the now familiar Swiss "little red book". Colonel Henchoz considers in this book that the time has come for Swiss defence planners to stop thinking on the lines of World War II strategy. In a series of articles published in the "Tribune de Genève" he recalls various heresies and contradictions in Swiss defence thinking.

Twelve years ago the Federal Council, with the strong support of military circles, made it known that it was going to adopt a favourable position towards a possible Swiss nuclear deterrent. An action committee saw danger coming and collected the necessary signatures in a popular initiative aimed against the presence of atomic weapons on Swiss soil. The Federal Council explained at the same time to the Swiss people why the initiative had to be rejected. It was. Out of a hundred citizens, 38 approved the policy of the Government, 21 supported the initiative and 41 abstained from going to the polls.

A further attempt at changing the nuclear-minded policy of the nation was undertaken by the Socialist Party in 1963. The people returned to the polls and confirmed their former verdict, although with less conviction, thus giving the Federal Council the freedom of choosing the course which it thought best. Seven years later, in December 1969, the Federal Council decided to sign the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, thus adopting a policy of nuclear renouncement. This change of policy was remarkable in view of the fact that nothing had markedly changed in the political and strategic situation of Europe.

This new position should be welcomed as an adaptation to the times. Despite the fact that Switzerland has remained neutral and waived her membership to the United Nations for so many years, the Federal Council was ready to adopt a policy tallying with the resolutions of the 17th U.N. General Assembly, which stressed that the use of nuclear weapons by a member of the United Nations was a breach of the Charter, and those of the 22nd General Assembly (1968) which promoted the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty. Switzerland had been faced with the choice of a traditional policy of neutrality and independence, or a quest of security to be founded on a renewed

international solidarity. This second solution has been chosen.

But the military establishment was far from being unanimous in following the Government on its new course. It was after all "the colonels" who had urged the Federal Council to consider a nuclear defence back in 1958. The years that followed had been abundant in pro-nuclear literature produced by the Military Department, by the Society for Military Studies and by the Association of Officers. It was hardly surprising that the Army top brass should be somewhat upset by the Government's about-turn after having constructed their credo for so many years.

By signing the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, Switzerland has accepted, together with the hundred other countries who have signed it, not to manufacture or try to acquire its own national nuclear weapons. The Treaty was specifically designed to prevent an increase in the number of countries already equipped with such weapons, the underlying belief being that, the smaller the number of weapon holders, the smaller the chance that these weapons would actually be used.

The supporters of atomic weapons still believed that this argument was wrong and that the determining risk of a war came from the attitude of governments and not from their stocks of