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verture de la frontière. Une organisation d'alarme permet de renforcer rapidement ces détachements permanents par du personnel habitant les environs immédiats de l'ouvrage. Il y a jusqu'ici dix de ces compagnies. Les volontaires qui en font partie, sont engagés pour douze mois, après quoi ils sont licenciés et remplacés immédiatement par d'autres volontaires. De cette manière, nous pouvons disposer d'un nombre d'hommes toujours plus grand, initiés aux méthodes de combat de l'attaque brusquée et instruits dans la défense des ouvrages et dans le maniement de toutes les armes modernes de l'infanterie, mitrailleuses, canons anti-chars, lance-mines. Cependant, ces derniers temps, surtout depuis qu'il y a moins de chômeurs, le recrutement de ces volontaires est devenu plus difficile. Il est possible que le problème de l'occupation permanente des ouvrages se pose à nouveau dans un avenir prochain.

— "Comment a été conçu le plan général des fortifications et qui est chargé de l'exécution des travaux?"

— "C'est la tâche de notre état-major général, en collaboration étroite avec le chef d'arme du génie. Le bureau des fortifications dont l'activité avait été suspendue en 1921, a été reconstitué. Il comprend actuellement 60 ou 70 ingénieurs et techniciens. Le public se rend difficilement compte de l'importance des études et des travaux préliminaires et de toutes les difficultés qu'il faut surmonter avant de pouvoir commencer la construction d'un de ces ouvrages fortifiés. Pour un seul petit fortin, il faut jusqu'à deux cents plans différents ou même davantage. L'étude du terrain doit être extrêmement précise. Les plaques de blindage pour la défense des fortifications et leur résistance au feu, leur armement et leur protection contre les gaz sont autant de problèmes dont la solution a exigé de nombreux essais. Il va sans dire que nous disposons d'un personnel de toute confiance pour ces travaux et que les maisons privées qui sont chargées de les exécuter, sont constamment contrôlées."

— "En regard de ce système défensif moderne, quel rôle jouent aujourd'hui nos anciennes forteresses de Saint-Maurice et du Gothard?"

— "Leur rôle n'a pas diminué le moins du monde par la construction des ouvrages à la frontière. Protégeant les principaux passages des Alpes, elles offriraient des points d'appui solides à l'armée dans des opérations ultérieures à la phase de couverture. Leur construction ingénieuse en terrain de montagne leur confère une grande valeur; elles résisteraient certainement fort bien à des attaques. Ces grandes fortifications ont si bien leur raison d'être que nous pensons en construire d'autres. C'est à cette fin que seront employés, en partie du moins, les nouveaux crédits importants qui nous sont accordés. Il y a encore chez nous des voies de pénétration qui ne sont pas assez défendues. — je pense surtout au défilé de Sargans particulièrement exposé. C'est ce passage que nous allons commencer à fortifier..."

Conclusion de notre entretien, ces mots du colonel Labhart soulignent l'une des préoccupations actuelles de l'état-major général. Nous avions quatre fronts à défendre avant le rattachement de l'Autriche à l'Allemagne. Maintenant nous n'avons plus que trois frontières. Il importe plus qu'auparavant que notre protection soit assurée sur le Haut-Rhin, aux frontières des Grisons et de Saint-Gall, afin que nos positions défensives du nord ne puissent être tournées éventuellement par une armée d'invasion venant de l'est.

Jean-G. MARTIN.  
(Tribune de Genève.)

#### WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF US. United States of Europe Patterned by the Swiss.

By DEMAREE BESS.  
Staff Correspondent of  
The Christian Science Monitor.

We came back to Geneva after a tour of investigation through German and Italian Switzerland, convinced by our survey that German National Socialism has gained almost no hold upon the German Swiss and that Italian Fascism has achieved few, if any, converts among the Italian Swiss.

But what of French influence? France is Switzerland's third great neighbour, and Switzerland's ties with France have always been particularly close. Has Switzerland shared with France the period of political and social turbulence through which its great neighbour has been passing? Has France transmitted to Switzerland the enthusiasm of so many of its own people for Marxian Socialism and the "Popular Front?"

Geneva is a convenient city in which to study this question. For Geneva is not only Switzerland's "international city," but it is also the largest city in French-speaking Switzerland and is so nearly surrounded by French territory that it might well be more French than Swiss. In fact, we have been assured by Swiss acquaint-

ances that Geneva is not Swiss, and by Frenchmen that it is not Swiss. When we asked: "What is it, then?" the reply was: "It is Genevese."

#### Reminders of Socialism.

When we arrived in Geneva last December, we observed some apartment buildings of a rather repellent yellow colour. A Geneva resident, pointing out these buildings, exclaimed: "We had a Socialist Government here, and see what happened!" We have discovered since that many Geneva residents are disposed to attribute not only objectionable architecture but other disagreeable manifestations to their late Socialist Government.

As a matter of fact, Geneva never had a real Socialist Government. The Socialist leader, M. Nicole, obtained four years ago a bare majority in the executive branch of the Cantonal Government, but never had a majority in the Legislative branch. As a result of M. Nicole's uncompromising policy, the local regime was deadlocked for three years, with unpleasant consequences. The voters of Geneva Canton, as a reaction, not only swept Socialists out of office but passed by a large majority laws forbidding Communism, the extreme form of Socialism.

The political unrest in France has therefore been reflected to some extent in Switzerland. Swiss Socialists have achieved substantial support not only in French Switzerland but in the cities of German Switzerland as well. The industrial cities of Basel and Zurich have had Socialist majorities.

#### Socialists for Full Neutrality.

Socialism, however, is the most elastic of all political terms, and Swiss Socialism reflects the tendency of the Swiss people toward mutual tolerance and a spirit of compromise. The tension created by M. Nicole in Geneva Canton has not been repeated elsewhere, because the majority of Swiss Socialists have not shared M. Nicole's uncompromising views. An overwhelming majority at the last Socialist congress, held at Basel in May, passed resolutions approving additional expenditures for national defense and endorsing the fundamental of complete neutrality for Switzerland.

Swiss Socialism is of the same brand as that of the British Labour Party. It repudiates the conception of "class warfare" and holds that Socialist objectives can be achieved without resort to violent revolution.

The more closely one scrutinizes the remarkable Swiss Confederation, the more one becomes convinced that a mode of existence has been worked out here which can absorb and relieve the tensions of Europe's new "holy wars." If only this miniature "United States of Europe" could have been expanded to include the entire continent, as M. Aristide Briand dreamed!

#### Accustomed to Independence.

Switzerland, at any rate, has come very close to achieving M. Briand's ideal. National Socialism, Fascism, Marxian Socialism, press upon Switzerland from every side, insistently urging their respective claims upon various Swiss groups. But we have seen, as we went about the country talking with the people, that none of these movements can make a permanent impression upon people accustomed, for generations, to local self-rule, sturdy local independence. The principles of the Swiss Confederation have survived a period of severe testing.

When an attempt was made, in 1935, to unite all embryonic Fascist organizations in Switzerland, the resulting organization, the Swiss Union, could marshal only 12,000 votes. At the other extreme, the Swiss Communist Party has polled a maximum of 13,000 votes and has two Deputies in the Federal Assembly.

The founder of Russian Bolshevism, V. I. Lenin, lived in Switzerland for some time as a refugee during the World War. His wife relates in her memoirs that he came home one day in a depressed state, and when she asked him what was wrong, he explained that he had been trying to persuade some Swiss workmen of the necessity for "class warfare," but they refused to take any interest in the idea. Dorothy Thompson, noting that the British Conservative Party has such a large following, observed that the British are conservative because they have something to conserve. That remark surely holds true of the Swiss.

#### MISCELLANEOUS ADVERTISEMENTS

CAN TAKE One or Two passengers in private motor-car to Switzerland from Manchester or London districts leaving 20th August (single journey only). Write Box No. 76, c/o, Swiss Observer, 23, Leonard Street, E.C.2.

#### SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY.

Would a lady of our Colony be so good as to help the cause of our Poor, by spending three hours of one afternoon a week at our office at Swiss House, 34, Fitzroy Square, W.1. Applicants would be welcomed by the Secretary.

Theo. Ritter.

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#### PERSONAL

We extend our deep sympathy to Mr. George Pape, of "Cobham," Green Lane, New Eltham, S.E.9, on the sudden passing away, through heart failure, of his wife Mme. E. Pape.

#### Divine Services.

EGLISE SUISSE (1762).

(Langue française).

79, Endell Street, Shaftesbury Avenue, W.C.2.

(Near New Oxford Street).

Dimanche 7 août 1938 :

11h. — Culte. M. M. Pradervand.

Les cultes du soir sont suspendus pendant le mois d'août.

#### SCHWEIZERKIRCHE

(Deutschsprachige Gemeinde).

St. Anne's Church, 9, Gresham Street, E.C.2.

(near General Post Office.)

Sonntag, den August 7. 1938.

Predgt : Pfarrer Rud. Kägi aus Rothrist.  
Während der Monate Juli und August finden keine Abendgottesdienste statt.

Anfragen wegen Amtshandlungen und Besuchen sind zu richten — an Herrn Pfarrer Rud. Kägi, c/o Foyer Suisse, 12, Upper Bedford Way, Russell Square, W.C.1. — Tel. : MUSEum 2982.