

Zeitschrift: The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK

Herausgeber: Federation of Swiss Societies in the United Kingdom

Band: - (1970)

Heft: 1594

Artikel: The Dismayed Colonels

Autor: [s.n.]

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-688562>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

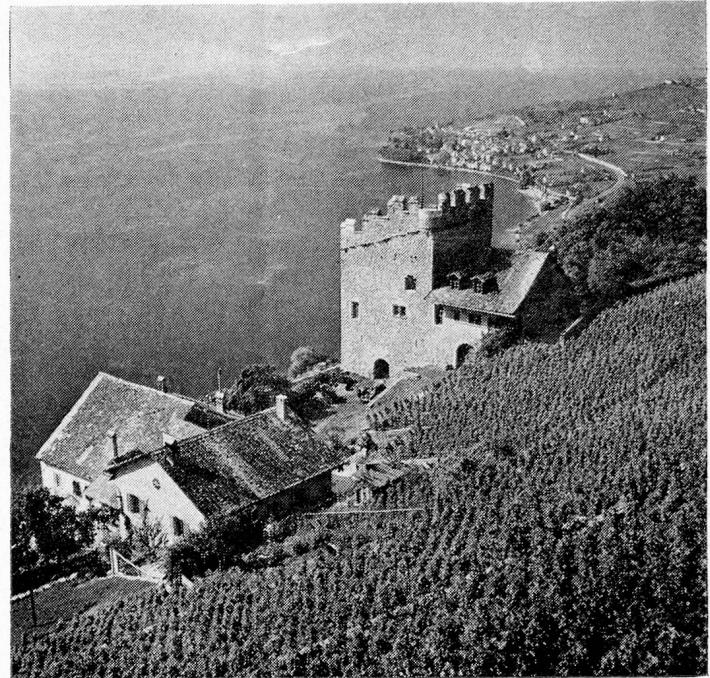
The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 16.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

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

(SNTO)

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 renunciation. 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



More branches in Continental Europe than any other British bank

Lloyds Bank Europe provides directly or through its wholly owned subsidiaries, a comprehensive domestic and international banking service in Belgium, Holland, France and Switzerland.

Some of the services of Lloyds Bank Europe

Accepting deposits in Sterling, Eurodollars or other foreign currencies at fully competitive rates.

Issuing Negotiable Certificates of Deposit in Sterling and U.S. Dollars.

Short or medium term loans in London or on the Continent to finance expansion outside the U.K.

Discounting Foreign Currency Bills.

International Portfolio Management in Switzerland.

HEAD OFFICE: 100 Pall Mall, London, S.W.1.

AMSTERDAM · ROTTERDAM · THE HAGUE · GENEVA · ZURICH · ANTWERP · BRUSSELS · PARIS · BIARRITZ · BORDEAUX · CALAIS · CANNES · LE HAVRE · LILLE · NICE · ROUBAIX · ST. JEAN DE LUZ · MONTE CARLO

nuclear bombs. The risk of Switzerland starting a war would not be made larger by her being in possession of such weapons. There were two more considerations advanced in favour of a national nuclear deterrent. The first was that nuclear warfare now belonged to the realm of actual possibilities, it was just a form of warfare which should be coolly acknowledged, which was not more condemnable than the others but

only naturally prolonged, with some accentuation, the age-old developments of warfare. Given this it was necessary to accept atomic warfare as a *real* threat and take the corresponding measures. Secondly, by increasing her nuclear potential Switzerland was increasing her power of dissuasion and thus filling a dangerously-empty military vacuum in the heart of Europe. Tactical nuclear weapons would moreover strengthen the position of our forces in combat.

INVENTIONS GALORE

NEW PROCESS FOR THE PURIFICATION OF EXHAUST FUMES

Will the appeal launched by "S.O.S. Nature" on the occasion of the European Year for the Protection of Nature be heard? The problem of atmospheric pollution, to which the exhaust fumes from automobiles contribute a good 25%, is becoming more and more acute. A Swiss firm provides a solution to the problem of exhaust fumes: after many years of research, it has just produced a device for direct post-combustion, making possible the radical purification of automobile exhaust fumes. Experience has shown in fact that only direct combustion is independent of the quality of fuels and of the state of wear of internal combustion engines and their accessories. This instrument makes it possible for every vehicle, whether new or old, whether petrol or diesel driven, easily to satisfy the very strict regulations of the famous California Text. In particular it ensures the complete combustion of the carbon monoxide at lower speeds, when the CO content may be as high as 14%, making the exhaust fumes particularly harmful. Fitted on the exhaust pipe, between the engine and the silencer, it also helps to cut down noise. The system consists of a mixer and an air-suction device, in which pre-heated fresh air mixed with the exhaust gases produces a new inflammable mixture, and a combustion chamber, with two heating elements connected to the car battery. This device, whose life in the laboratory exceeds 125,000 miles, is no more expensive than the repeated replacement of exhaust pipes after every 25,000. It can be fitted on any vehicle and has no adverse effect on engine power.

A SWISS NOVELTY IN THE SERVICE OF THE HOUSEWIFE

A Swiss firm has just launched on the market a new table gas-burner that is both practical and elegant. This apparatus, sold either separately or in a set including heater and pan, can be adapted to fit any heater. It has the advantage of ensuring a perfectly even flame and, consequently, even source of heat. Furthermore, it is completely odourless and very easy to look after. Small in size (diameter: 8 cm, height:

7 cm, roughly 3.15 and 2.75 in. respectively), this mini-burner is easy to carry and can also render countless services not only at home ("fondues", "flambés", bachelor meals) but also when travelling, camping, etc. On an identical principle, the same firm has designed a standard-size gas candle, which will be useful for replacing the traditional wax candle in dish-warmers, tea-kettles, lanterns, etc.

A SWISS INVENTION TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF KEYS AND DISCOURAGE BURGLARS

At the last Inventors' Salon in Brussels, a Geneva firm presented a new type of numerical lock in the form of a door handle. The safety device, designed for numbers from 1 to 7 figures, allows some 10 million different combinations. Although very simple to operate, this lock offers every required guarantee of safety. Even in the dark, it is easy for the person who knows the combination to operate the lock by feeling the setting notches. But it is impossible for a thief, no matter how clever, to discover the right combination, either by touch or by ear. In any case, it is easy to lock quickly with a touch of the hand from either the inside or outside, making it impossible for a third party to manipulate the lock.

A NEW SYSTEM FOR CHECKING STARTS IN ATHLETICS

A new system for checking starts in athletics has been devised by the Swiss firm of Longines Co. Ltd. at St. Imier (canton of Berne). It was used for the first time in March 1970 for the European Indoor Athletics Championships in Vienna, where it gave complete satisfaction. This new device consists of a contact maker, placed just behind the starting block, on a small plate independent of the latter; it operates the lighting of a lamp fixed on the same plate and the lighting of another lamp corresponding to the lane and located on the system's general switchboard. Each lane is provided with a contact maker. If an athlete starts too early, the starting pistol is automatically blocked and a lamp lights up on the starting block and on the control desk; this makes it possible to identify the athlete who started too soon and who is called back by an acoustic signal. The device can also be connected direct to the timing instruments. In this case the athlete