

# Switzerland and the death of Robert Kennedy

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In conjunction with the Cantons and, where necessary, with industry, a long-term educational and scientific research policy will have to be conceived. The promotion of cantonal universities, the extension of the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) and the take-over by the Confederation of its *Romand* counterpart in Lausanne, the EPUL, are urgent problems.

Social welfare priority will be given to one of the greatest problems, that of old age. Further, cultural exchange between the various regions of the country should be improved. Extremely urgent, however, is legislation dealing with results detrimental to health, stemming from technical and industrial development.

Finally, regarding finance and currency policy, the most important task will be to bring about an equilibrium between revenue and expenditure by creating a new Finance Order and effective *Notenbankinstrumentarium* (the means with which the Swiss National Bank (Bank of issue) makes its policy work).

The critics of the Government Programme say that it is rather meagre. This may be so, as the Federal Council only mentions the tasks whose solutions are already on the way. It deliberately leaves out all those problems which may crop up in a few years and does not mention demands which are not yet ripe for discussion. All the citizen gets is a catalogue of what is already being done in Berne. And that is no doubt of some help to all those outside politics. It is no binding Government programme. It has not been submitted to the Parties. It has not been discussed by the Parliamentary Commissions. This seems right and logical, for the programme is non-committal and can never be more than a kind of "time table" as long as Federal Policy is guided by the rules of Referendum Democracy. Every real Government Programme is a political planning effort, and the incalculability of Direct Democracy would make nonsense of it.

The question is therefore natural — why such a programme at all? National Councillor P. Duerrenmatt says that its value lies in the enumeration of all the problems and tasks which have grown like an avalanche in the past years. It serves as a basis for political discussion and is sufficient to make the citizen realise what a mountain of practical problems have to be dealt with by the politicians. It also makes one think about the difficulty if not impossibility of bringing idealistic convictions into the maze of such problems. Mr. Duerrenmatt wonders what the political bodies will make of it. If the Parties and the public take up the discussion, no blame, says he, should be put on the Federal Council. The Government has done no more and no less than could be expected of it.

*(Compiled by the Editor from news and information received by courtesy of the Agence Télégraphique Suisse, "Basler Nachrichten" and "Tages-Anzeiger.")*

### SWITZERLAND AND THE DEATH OF ROBERT KENNEDY

The Federal Council expressed Switzerland's deep sympathy with the Kennedy Family in a telegram sent to the Senator's widow by the President of the Confederation. In a special memorial programme on *Radio Suisse Romande*, Federal Councillor Bonvin gave an address. Swiss TV had a live transmission from New York.

Messages of sympathy were also sent on behalf of the International Committee of the Red Cross (to Mr. Edward Kennedy) and the Swiss Evangelical Church Federation (to the American Ambassador in Switzerland).

[A.T.S.]

### THE EFFECT OF THE FRENCH STRIKE ON SWITZERLAND

Rail and air traffic was interrupted between Switzerland and France. Perishable foodstuffs from Italy were transported to Basle, and from there, lorries carried them to Paris hospitals, etc. The "Festival International de Lausanne" (1st to 7th June) suffered badly — several concerts had to be cancelled because the orchestra of the French Radio could not come.

There were no customs officials on the Alsace-Swiss frontier in Basle, and in Geneva several hundred pilgrims stayed in or came to Switzerland because their way to or from Lourdes was affected.

The Geneva Trades Union made a collection in aid of French strikers as a sign of solidarity.

[A.T.S.]

### DIAMOND WEDDINGS

The following couples have recently celebrated their Diamond Weddings: Mr. and Mrs. Jakob and Elisabeth Rohner-Kuhn (Rorschach); Mr. and Mrs. Bernasconi (Neuchâtel); Mr. and Mrs. George and Josefina Meyer-Bauer (Goldach); Mr. and Mrs. C. Lachat-Haengi (Moutier); Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Cattin (Breuleux), at the same time, the husband is celebrating the 70th anniversary of his membership to the local choir, he is also the oldest Jura singer; Mr. and Mrs. Emil Eggs-Lambrigger (Fiesch).

[A.T.S.]

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