

America commissions a swiss institute to carry out research

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"inner renewal" had come. No reference was made to the one power still at war with Germany and Italy, and that the final outcome of the war was by no means certain.

The presidential declaration by Federal President Pilet-Golaz thus presented the war as won by the Axis Powers, a result accepted almost cheerfully. This attitude, however, contrasted strongly with the feelings of the majority of the population. Instead of "following confidently" the Government, as Pilet-Golaz and his colleagues had asked the people to do, many, both civilians and soldiers, became doubtful and suspected the Federal Council to be weak, if not treacherous, an unspoken allegation which was definitely unjustified, for the Government had the welfare of the country at heart, and that needed a certain amount of *Anpassung* to the new pattern of Europe, set up, as they believed, for years to come by the Axis Powers.

The opposing forces, consciously or unconsciously aware of the fact that any sign of weakness towards the Third Reich would encourage the Germans to increase their pressure on Switzerland, advocated a firm stand and the highest possible military readiness rather than demobilisation. A few days after Pilet-Golaz's address to the nation, a number of younger Army officers got together and pledged themselves to unconditional armed resistance, even should any capitulation orders be issued by the Swiss Government or General Staff. One of the 37 participants in the "Officers' Conspiracy" was the already-mentioned Captain Hausammann. In his and his fellow-officers' creed laid down on 2nd July 1940, he stated their conviction that resistance and a firm, uncompromising stand against Germany was not only possible but vital, and that fiercest armed resistance would be given the Germans, as well as destruction of all installations, especially the transit railway lines from Germany to Italy.

With that point, Hausammann certainly touched on the most important element in Switzerland's wartime situation: the value of the Alpine tunnels for supplying coal and steel from North to South in exchange for Italian foodstuffs bound for Germany — and those lifelines were only available as long as the Axis Powers respected Switzerland's neutrality and integrity.

The Swiss Army Command, incidentally, would not have needed the "conspiring" officers' advice — they were fully aware of the importance of this point and prepared in case of emergency to destroy immediately all important bridges and tunnels.

In addition, General Guisan did not share the opinion that the war was over. Without openly approving of the conspiracy, he nevertheless adopted an important proposal put forward by some of the officers, agreeing that it would strengthen Army morale and public opinion if, contrary to the impression given by Pilet-Golaz's message, the Army still had a vital mission to fulfil and was determined to stand firm against any aggressor. General Guisan, exactly a month after the surrender of France, ordered all the commanding officers down to the level of battalion commander to the most suitable spot — the Rütli meadow, cradle of the Confederation. Part of the message, not revealed to the Press at the moment, was devoted to a new concept of the Army's role. The plan was to concentrate the troops mainly in the Alpine area, in the so-called *Réduit National*, where they would be prepared to

sustain a siege of, if necessary, two or more years and prevent the enemy from seizing control of vital North-South transit lines. The *Réduit Plan*'s main author was Colonel, later Corps Commander, Gonard.

The problems Switzerland had to tackle during the war were of course far from settled with the "Rütli Rapport", but the country had recovered part of its self-confidence and was morally better equipped to face further difficulties.

* * *

Other books to be mentioned in connection with Switzerland's war years are "Winged Diplomat" by Pat Reid. "The Diplomatic Smuggler" by John Lomax. "The Ruling Few", *Memoirs* by Sir David Kelly. "Q.N. Wusste Bescheid" by Kurt Emmenegger.

AMERICA COMMISSIONS A SWISS INSTITUTE TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH

Through its attaché in Berne, the American Department of Agriculture recently commissioned the Federal Testing Establishment for Arboriculture, Viticulture and Horticulture, at Wädenswil, to carry out research on the aromatic substances of three kinds of apples. The main purpose of this research is to determine the conditions governing the development and identification of the main ingredients of these aromas. The project is due to last a period of five years and a sum of over Fr.260.000.— has been set aside for it.

[O.S.E.C.]

BAD RAGAZ — LOYAL GUESTS

Nearly 25 years ago, the Tourist Office of Bad Ragaz created a badge which is presented once a year to its most loyal guests. This year, nine guests who had spent their 20th holiday at Bad Ragaz received the golden "Ragazer Tübli". The silver badge was handed to fifty-two guests who had spent ten holidays at Bad Ragaz.

[S.N.T.O.]

1967 SKI SCHOOL DIRECTORS' COURSE

After a discussion of organisational questions, the two resorts of Gstaad and Villars made joint application to the Swiss Ski School Association for the holding of the annual Ski School Directors' Course in December 1967. At a recent meeting of the Board of Directors, the application was approved. Thus in 1967 the world's largest ski-course will be divided between two winter resorts for the first time. It will mark the first time that Gstaad has participated in this important ski-ing event. Both at Villars and Gstaad, all necessary facilities are already available to ensure perfect functioning of the complex elements which go to make up the course.

[S.N.T.O.]

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