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... of 1798 to 1803
.....
UNIVERSITY... Carleton University
DEGREE... M. A. YEAR GRANTED 1972

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RELUCTANT PATRIOTS;
THE SWISS REVOLUTION OF 1798 TO 1803

by

Rudolf Ervin Aksim, B.A.

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

Department of History
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Ottawa, Ontario
24 April, 1972

The undersigned hereby recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies acceptance of this thesis, submitted by Rudolf E. Aksim in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

In 1798, France invaded Switzerland and established a centralized "democratic" regime there. Accounts of this by French and Swiss historians differ over the historical interpretation of the Helvetic Republic as to its European significance and over its relationship to the "Democratic Revolution" thesis of R. R. Palmer.

The French invaded for strategic not altruistic reasons. Their campaign was not a "liberation" of Switzerland but rather an attack on Berne. Their attempt to create a "revolutionary" government under Ochs and Laharpe failed. They also failed to find alternate leaders for the republic and Switzerland was returned to federalism in 1803.

The French supported the centralized constitution but it is unclear what local forces the "revolutionaries" represented. Ochs was clearly a French puppet, but Laharpe apparently had some Swiss support. Laharpe's motivation requires further study, but it appears possible that the real issue here was local French-German rivalry.

Switzerland, that country which in the dark ages of ignorance, superstition, and barbarity, produced these plain and honest men, whose names are recorded in history and the annals of the country; whose names are still so dear to their grandchildren: these heroes who first carried the ensigns of liberty in the face of their tyrants: who became the defenders of the rights of mankind, and proved to the world, that with a true courage, blended and supported by virtue, and the love of one's country, independency may be obtained and preserved: Switzerland, notwithstanding the small space it occupies on the great globe of the world, is not unworthy of notice; and there is no man who is a true patriot, and a lover of liberty, but must rejoice at seeing a new altar erected to liberty.

--from a letter to the London Chronicle, 25 - 27 February, 1790.

FOREWORD

Français, en guerriers magnanimes,
Portez ou retenez vos coups!
Epargnez ces tristes victimes,
A regret s'armant contre nous.

Roget de Lisle wrote these lines for the Marseillaise in response to a contest set by Mayor Dietrich of Strasbourg in 1792. Sibylle, the Mayor's wife, helped compose the verse. One wonders whether they sensed the immortal appeal this piece of music was to have. In any case, beyond the Quai maire Diétrich the connection of the Dietrich family with the Marseillaise has been largely forgotten. Dietrich himself was guillotined shortly after this, when his revolutionary awareness failed to keep pace with that of his fellows. Sibylle, after a period of imprisonment, was released in October 1794 to return to her original home, Basel, and to the house of her brother, Peter Ochs.

Peter Ochs was a historian with political ambitions, to whom the amazing events in France made strong appeal. In 1790 he completed a history of the city of Basel, where he was secretary to the municipality. By 1794, it was apparent to him, however, that much history remained to be written: he was by this time deeply involved in the great issues raised by the Revolution. Such was his enthusiasm, that not even the violent death of his brother-in-law prevented Ochs desiring a revolution of his own in Switzerland. When the French government made this possible, in 1798, it was a dismal failure, and by 1803 Ochs himself had suffered financial ruin and

political eclipse.

In retirement from politics, Ochs resumed his chronicle. This now included his reflections on the Swiss revolution: the object of his efforts and the cause of his downfall. He was unrepentant. He stated that his views on fundamental matters were unchanged. Switzerland had failed him: its people had not rallied to his high, utopian ideals.

One can say easily, if asked to account for this, that the Swiss did not like "French liberty". This was undoubtedly true, perhaps mainly because it conflicted with the strongly particularist traditions of the Swiss confederation. Peter Ochs underestimated the vitality of the small intricate motifs -- of the ancien régime in Switzerland -- which swelled often to become Mediaeval themes of almost perverse complexity. The student must also be careful here. He must guard against being swept into a generalized world-view like that of a Swiss revolutionary. This is perhaps not too difficult, since the student is not called upon to reform but only to rework his subject. His recastings must furthermore not bear the weight of partisan scrutiny: the issues they present are now as dormant as those once vital exhortations of the half-remembered, penultimate verse of the Marseillaise.

Contemplation of the reactions of the Swiss to the French Revolution can nevertheless be a sobering process. Similar situations come to mind, and the student is ultimately perplexed by the task of determining where Ochs and his compatriots went wrong. The fact that a citizen of Canada can

readily grasp the essentials of this problem only serves to throw the dilemma of the Swiss into starker relief. It should be impossible for a Canadian not to be sympathetic to the apprehensions of a small state which feels itself threatened by the military, diplomatic and cultural hegemony of a dominant neighbour. When the stability of that hegemony is shaken by political turmoil, or when it must accomodate itself to a period of intense international confrontation, the situation of a small peripheral state often becomes very precarious.

This was the position of the Swiss Confederation one hundred and eighty years ago. The following essay is a synthesis which attempts to re-evaluate the history of the Swiss republics at that time, and examines one aspect of their most notable failure to cope with their collective predicament.

I should like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to Professor M. J. Sydenham for his constant encouragement of my work these past two years, and to thank the staff of the Directorate of History for much cheerful criticism.

R. E. A.

April, 1972.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ABS.: G. Meyer von Knonau, (ed.), Amtliche Sammlung der älteren Eidgenössischen Abschiede, (Zürich, 1850).
- AeS.: Archives nationales: Affaires etrangeres, correspondance diplomatique, fonds Suisse.
- Aktensammlung: J. Strickler (ed.), Actensammlung aus der Zeit der Helvetischen Republik, (Berne, 1886 - 1957), 14 volumes.
- FAH.: His (Ochs') Family Archives (Familien Archiven His).
- Monnard.: C. Monnard, Histoire de la Confederation Suisse (Paris, 1847) XVI and XVII.
- Ochs.: G. Steiner (ed.) Korrespondenz des Peter Ochs, 1752 - 1821, "Quellen zur Schweizer Geschichte, Neue folge, III, ii," (Basel, 1935) 3 volumes.

THE CORPS HELVETIQUE

There were thirteen sovereign cantons in the "Corps helvétique", whose relationships were governed by a multiplicity of individual conventions. These cantons were: Appenzell; Basel; Berne; Fribourg; Glarus; Lucerne; Schaffhausen; Schwyz; Solothurn; Unterwalden; Uri; Zug; and Zürich. Of these, Berne and Zürich, the most powerful, as well as Basel and Schaffhausen were Protestant. Allies of the Confederation were: the Catholic Bishop of Saint Gall; the Protestant town of Saint Gall; the league of the Grisons (Graubunden); Valais; Biel (although an ally of Berne, Fribourg and Solothurn only, it was represented on the Swiss Diet); and Mulhouse (an ally of the Protestant cantons only). Gersau (on the Vierwäldstätter See, or Lake Lucerne), the southern valleys of the Bishopric of Basel (extending through the Jura mountains to Biel), Neuchâtel and Geneva were under the protection of the Confederation, although the Protestant valleys of the Bishopric of Basel were allied to Berne only, Neuchâtel was a principality of the King of Prussia, and Geneva was allied to Berne and Zürich only.

The convent of Einselden was governed by Schwyz, the convent of Engelberg by Lucerne, Schwyz and Unterwalden. (Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, taken together, are traditionally referred to as the forest cantons, or "Waldstäten".)

In Zürich, Berne (including the present canton, Vaud and part of Aargau, but not the Jura, then part of the Bishopric of Basel), Lucerne, Basel, Fribourg, Solothurn and Schaffhausen, the countryside was governed by the town, as was the

case in Geneva. In Uri, the people of the upper valleys of the Reuss and Ticino were subject to the rest of the canton; as was that part of Schwyz which slopes down to the Zürcher See (Lake Zürich) subject to the rest of that canton. Bas-Valais was governed by Haut-Valais, while the Valtelline and Chiavenna were subject to the Grisons.

Orbe, Granson and Morat were subject to Berne and Fribourg. The territory between the Zürcher See and the Wallen See belonged to Uri, Schwyz and Nidwald (a demi-canton); Aargau, Thurgau and Rheinthal (the valleys of the Aare, Thur and Rhein rivers) were administered by up to ten cantons, while the greater part of Ticino was administered by all the cantons except Appenzell.

Sir,

The spirit with which you have always attacked old prejudices bids me fair hopes that you will readily give the following piece of news a place in your paper, as it concerns the check received lately by the oligarchy of Switzerland.

You already know, without doubt that the republics of Zurich, Berne, Lucern, Soleure and Basil were all aristocracies...; but there are other important facts, which neither you, Sir, nor any traveller have been yet informed of;....

--"Philanthropus"

I. A QUESTION OF PERSPECTIVE

The revolution proclaimed by Philanthropus is no more than a fiction; for the subjects of the canton of Bern have not put on any cockade; the States of the Pays de Vaud have not been convened at Moudon, nor have they declared themselves independent; the oligarchy of Bern has not been overthrown, and they have not been employed in reforming the constitution. The Citizen of Bern justly exclaims against these assertions, and with a spirit that cannot be blamed in him. A Patrician who considers the prerogatives of his class as sacred as the right of property, is not likely to hear, without emotion, the voice of discontent, and the murmurs which these prerogatives have excited on all sides, and cannot, without a degree of ill humour, see those he has been used to call his inferiors, aspire to become his equals.

These excerpts from the London Chronicle are typical of a polite discussion of Swiss, and specifically Vaudois, affairs which continued through 1790 in the English press.¹ The

¹See the letters of "Philanthropus", "A Citizen of Bern", and "Helvetus" (a pseudonym adopted by Frédéric Cèsar Laharpe) in the London Chronicle, 25 - 27 February, 27 April, 16 - 18 and 25 - 28 September and 12 - 14 October, 1790.

concern of "Philanthropus" and "Helvetus" for universal regeneration and local rights reflected the buoyant early experience of the Revolution in France, and when viewed in retrospect, anticipated the erection in 1798 of an insecure new altar to freedom in Switzerland. During the intervening eight years positions substantially hardened, and particularly those of "A Citizen of Bern" and "Helvetus". The immediate result of this was the Swiss "Revolution": the liberation of Vaud by French armies and the dissonant course of the Helvetic Republic to 1803. This very dissonance is one of the principal reasons for the importance of these events to any interpretation of Swiss history, but it also raises questions of wider interest, relating not only to the expansion of Revolutionary France, but to the whole debate surrounding the thesis of the "Atlantic" or "Western" Revolution.

This point can be best illustrated by a brief synopsis of French relations with Switzerland through the revolutionary period.² After years of traditional peace, friction developed along the Franco-Swiss frontier following 1789, and increased in relation to the fortunes of the Swiss regiments employed by the French King, and to the intensity of French

²See for example, G. P. Gooch, "Europe and the French Revolution", the Cambridge Modern History (Cambridge, 1907) X: The French Revolution, pp. 781 - 82, and A. Guillard, "France and her Tributaries", Ibid. XI: Napoleon, pp. 95 - 106; or Geoffrey Bruhn, Europe and the French Imperium, 1799 - 1814, (New York, 1965) pp. 57 - 59.

propaganda (and military commitment) in the east, which Swiss governments inevitably associated with disturbing displays of public unrest.³ These causes combined with a clear threat of French invasion to produce a particularly threatening situation in 1792.⁴ Peaceful relations were nevertheless maintained by the moderate French ambassador Barthélemy, whose influence in this direction continued after he was recalled to a seat in the French Directory in 1797.⁵ He was removed from office,

³The Swiss governments were close to the source of the revolutionary disturbances and were menaced by the same general rejection of authority. In September 1789, peasants in Schaffhausen revolted, and agitation followed in Hallau, the Toggenburg, Valais and in Vaud, where large pro-revolutionary demonstrations (to which the London Chronicle articles refer) were sternly repressed by the Bernese, who attributed them to French propaganda. See F. Barthélemy (the French ambassador to Switzerland) to Dumouriez, 20 April 1792, in Kaulek, Papiers de Barthélemy (Paris, 1888) I, 155. See also Ed. Chapuisat, La Suisse et la Révolution française (Geneva, 1947) pp. 98-99.

⁴Chapuisat, La Suisse et la Révolution française, pp. 102-119; G.-B. Galiffe, D'un siècle à l'autre (Geneva, 1877) I, pp. 231 - 51. See also J. Godechot, La Grande Nation (Paris, 1956) I, pp. 189 - 92.

⁵Barthélemy left Switzerland in June, 1797. See the Moniteur, 22 prairial V (10 June 1797). Barthélemy's activities in Switzerland have received the favourable notice not only of Sorel, Europe et la Révolution française (Paris, 1910) III, p. 121, but of many Swiss writers, this being the result "...ben meritato da cinque anni di sforzi incessanti per conservare alle Svizzera la pace et la tranquillità." L. Delcros, II Ticino e la Rivoluzione Francese (Bellinzona, 1959) p. 8. A Swiss contemporary, the Bernese Bonstetten, wrote to Peter Ochs, 9 June, 1797, and expressed one view of Barthélemy. He was glad that Barthélemy was elected to the Directory, ".... vous savez nos tribulations du côté de Buonaparte." Gustav Steiner (ed.), Korrespondenz des Peter Ochs, 1752 - 1821 (Basel, 1935) "Quellen zur Schweizergeschichte Neue Folge, III, ii." II, 71. (Hereafter cited as Ochs.) Peter Ochs took the opposite view, and saw him as an "aristocrate" and a "royaliste", but nevertheless testified to his moderation: "Sa politique était de faire ce qui était agréable à nos gouvernements. Son cœur était bon, mais faible." Ochs to Meister, 28 September 1797, Ochs, II, 74.

however, along with the "royalist" Carnot during the coup of Fructidor in the fall of 1797 and the situation changed. The French Government took advantage of its new unanimity to despatch three pressing concerns: the encampment of émigrés in Switzerland; the problem of communication through the Alpine passes to Italy; and the uncertain status of the French eastern frontier.⁶

With the approval of various Swiss malcontents, notably Frédéric-César Laharpe of Vaud and Peter Ochs of the city of Basel, the Directory sent troops into the Confederation in January 1798. The presence of a French army assured the success of a "Revolution" in Switzerland, organized by Ochs and Laharpe, but along lines suggested by the French. By March of that year, the governments of every Swiss canton had been turned from office and replaced by a "democratic" order based on the contemporary French model, the constitution of 1795. Whether this result^{can} be considered the principal object of French intervention or merely an incidental consequence of it, the new régime in Switzerland was certainly directed by a small group of Swiss "revolutionaries" sponsored by France. As the French agent Mengaud expressed it, Switzerland had taken "la décision nécessaire à son salut" and had

⁶The security of which depended on Swiss good faith in their relations with France on one side and Austria on the other. There were no fortifications from Basel in the north to Fort-de-l'Ecluse in the south. A. Boehtlingk, Frédéric César Laharpe, (Neuchâtel, 1969) p. 95. See Chapter II below.

accepted the French government's fait accompli. In spite of protestations of disinterestedness, the latter was well compensated for its services in terms both of continuing political influence and of confiscated Swiss treasure.⁷

The "revolution" in Switzerland however soon encountered serious problems. Although the French were now firmly established on the Alpine passes, resistance to Ochs' revolutionary programme disrupted the new Helvetic Republic. Fundamental revision of the new order, which was apparently required for the restoration of tranquility, was only vouchsafed by Napoleon in 1803.

It is therefore possible for Geoffrey Bruhn to say that: "Switzerland had fallen a victim to the rapacity of the Directory...."⁸ This view indeed, reflects the considerable adverse comment, much of it contemporary, which has been excited by this operation. Carnot, although scarcely an objective observer -- he had been proscribed as a royalist at the coup of Fructidor -- produced the best remembered comment:

⁷The French government had issued a disclaimer on 1 March, 1798, through Mengaud: "Que les suisses soient libres, qu'ils soient heureux, le Directoire exécutif sera satisfait. Si vous craignez la République française...les intentions de la République..., ne vous sont point connus." Archives nationales, Affaires étrangères, fonds Suisse (Hereafter cited AeS.) CCCLXVI, 1, published by Emile Dunant, Les Relations diplomatiques entre la France et la République helvétique (Basel, 1901) "Quellen zur Schweizer Geschichte, XI", 1. See W.H. Rappard, Cinq siècles de sécurité collective, (Geneva, 1942) p. 540.

⁸Bruhn, French Imperium, p. 57.

O guerre impie, dans laquelle il semble que le Directoire ait eu pour objet de savoir combien il pouvait immoler à son caprice, de victimes choisies parmi les hommes libres, les plus pauvres et les plus vertueux; d'égorger la liberté dans son berceau, de punir les rochers helvétiques pour lui avoir donné le jour.⁹

Rapacity has been associated chiefly with the name Rapinat, unfortunately that of a principal French agent in Switzerland, which has been conveyed to perhaps unwarranted immortality by the wit of an anonymous critic:

Le pauvre suisse qu'on ruine
Voudrait, au moins, qu'on décidât,
Si Rapinat vient de rapine,
Ou rapine de Rapinat.¹⁰

In addition to these more predictable observations, there appears to have been a surprising consensus in official circles that the Swiss operation was at best a qualified success. Barras, for instance, subsequently emphasized the strategic justification for the invasion, but stated that "...le Directoire a nécessairement fait une chose exécrable en révolutionnant la Suisse."¹¹ While it solved the immediate defence and communications problem, French involvement in Switzer-

⁹P.-F. Tissot, Mémoires historiques et militaires sur Carnot (Paris, 1824) pp. 95 - 96. Carnot was in flight, and stopped in Geneva at the time. See E. Chapuisat, "Carnot à Genève", La Révolution française LIV (1908) p. 335. Chapuisat prints a slightly different text.

¹⁰Barras, Mémoires (Paris, 1885) III, p. 297. As Barras indicates, the authorship of this verse has been a matter of debate. See E. Chapuisat, "L'influence de la Révolution française sur la Suisse," Cahiers de la Révolution française, II (1936) p. 27.

¹¹Barras, Mémoires, III, pp. 87 and 137.

land provoked much criticism, and was the source of perpetual political difficulties. Bonaparte, deeply implicated in the invasion by Barras, Reubell and many historians of these events,¹² puts the blame firmly on the Directory in his Mémoires.¹³ The general's correspondence, as will be shown below, belies his studied innocence.¹⁴

A selective review of historians who have touched this subject shows that in general, French writers have not followed the lead of Barras. With the notable exception of Sorel, who said that it was in order to supply the Army of England and the depleted French arsenals that the Directory invaded Switzerland, "...entreprise à la fois de prosélytisme, de fiscalité,"¹⁵ they have tended not to admit that

¹²Barras, Mémoires, III, pp. 87 and 137. On Reubell, see G. D. Homan, "Jean-François Reubell, Director", French Historical Studies, I, 4 (December, 1960) pp. 431 - 33 and passim. Specific references to Reubell are elusive, and the above comes from a collection of papers labelled "Anecdotes de Reubell", a manuscript in the His (Ochs) Family Archives (hereafter cited as FAH.), and printed in Ochs, II, 421 A. See the reports of Ochs, to be found in his correspondence, Ochs, II 420, 421 and 453, and Fouché, Mémoires (Paris, 1969) p. 160. Bonaparte's continuing interest in the Swiss situation can be traced in Louis Delcros, Il Ticino e la rivoluzione francese (1959) pp. 217 - 230, and in Rappard, Cinq siècles, pp. 539 et seq. In particular, see Edouard Guillon, Napoléon et la Suisse (Paris, 1910) pp. 20 - 22 and passim.

¹³Napoléon, Mémoires, Lacroix (ed.), (Paris, n.d.) II, p. 230.

¹⁴Bonaparte, Correspondance (Paris, 1858 - 70) III, 1957, 1979, 2172, 2352 and 2424.

¹⁵Albert Sorel, Europe et la Révolution française (Paris, 1887 - 1906) V, p. 293.

the French experiment in Switzerland was less altruistically inspired than had been originally reported, or met with wider resistance than had been anticipated. They are also sensitive in the matter of alleged French rapacity. Michelet, for example, felt the situation to be clear-cut: the Swiss were oppressed, then liberated by the French. Any confiscation of treasure was, in this context, an insignificant matter.¹⁶ Thiers saw confiscation of treasure as a legitimate right of conquest. French armies, dispatched moreover after the Swiss "revolution" had caught the Directory unawares, defeated the Bernese and delivered the Swiss, who were "horriblement tyrannisés": "La révolution faisait donc des progrès inévitables...."¹⁷ This theme is continued by Soboul. It was natural for the "Grande Nation" to surround itself with sister republics, the Helvetic among them, liberated from the "joug de l'aristocratie et du despôtisme."¹⁸

Georges Lefebvre presents a more comprehensive picture of the Swiss situation. He admits, as does Sorel,¹⁹ that the Swiss "revolution" followed collusion between Bonaparte, the French Directors, Laharpe and Ochs. While he concedes the

¹⁶Histoire de la Révolution française (Paris, 1857) IX, pp. 275 - 81.

¹⁷La Révolution française (Paris, 1865) IX pp. 389 - 93.

¹⁸Albert Soboul, La Première République (Paris, 1968) p. 264.

¹⁹Sorel, Europe, V, p. 293.

legitimacy of resistance to the Helvetic scheme, he nevertheless belittles its significance, attributing it in the main to the weight of French requisitions and to pillage, which the army commissioners, their efforts notwithstanding, were unable to suppress. He continues to make the interesting point that the Swiss "revolutionaries" who were most prominent in the French connection, Ochs and Laharpe, lacked the popularity necessary to gain election to the new Helvetic Directory. Jacques Godechot makes this point more firmly, and assigns a cause: the Ochs constitution for Switzerland, which the French adopted as their plan for the reorganization of the Confederation, "...tenait fort peu compte des anciennes traditions suisses."²⁰

This last is the point of departure for most Swiss histories of the same events. Swiss writers view matters from a markedly different perspective, and would not agree with Godechot that the most important consideration in the Swiss case was the abolition of the ancien régime.²¹ They take on the whole a strong stand for a more pragmatic interpretation

²⁰ Georges Lefebvre, The French Revolution (New York, 1964) II: From 1793 to 1799 Stewart and Friguglietti, (transs.), pp. 225 - 227. Jacques Godechot, La Grande Nation (Paris, 1956) p. 445.

²¹ Godechot, Grande Nation, p. 449.

of these events, and see French violence and extortion, rather than strategic interests, or even the "liberation" of Switzerland, as the truly important matters. The very fact of the French connection, indeed, tends to prejudice their opinions not only of the initial "revolution", but of the whole course of the Helvetic Republic.

Two of the earliest Swiss historians of this period, Ludwig Meyer von Knonau and Charles Monnard,²² inaugurate identifiable themes in Swiss historical literature, neither of which gives favourable treatment to France, or to the Ochsen-Laharpe school of "revolutionary". Meyer von Knonau and Monnard were nevertheless writing from opposite sides of the "Bundesstaat-Staatenbund" (Federal state versus a federation of states) controversy, which only found political solution, to the advantage of the "Bundesstaat" party in 1848, following civil war. As one of their contemporaries, Johann Anton Tillier has stated, the Swiss "revolution" of 1798 and the admittedly ephemeral existence of the Helvetic Republic 1798-1801 profoundly strengthened the slight centralist tendencies present in the old (pre-1798) Confederation. The year of the

²²Meyer von Knonau (1769-1841), a patrician from Zürich, spent ten years in city and cantonal government, until with failing eyesight he retired to work on his history, which appeared in two volumes in 1826 and 1829. Monnard (1790-1865) was from Vaud, a professor of French literature at Lausanne. He wrote the last three volumes (in French) of Johann von Müller's history of the Swiss Confederation, originally begun in 1780 and completed in eighteen volumes by Monnard in 1851.

French invasion saw the end of old Switzerland, and inextricably tied to this, the end of specifically Bernese power.²³ While Monnard deplored this development, Meyer von Knonau in his Handbuch der Geschichte der schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft did not. He believed that the most important single problem with the old Confederation was its political and diplomatic disunity,²⁴ which had made a successful French invasion possible. This interpretation was contradicted by Monnard, whose Histoire de la Confédération suisse stressed the desirability of continuing cultural and political diversity.²⁵ The "revolution" was in his view deplorable because of its attempts at increased centralization, and so were the "revolutionaries", because they had become, under French influence, advocates of a unitary, highly centralized régime for Switzerland.²⁶

After 1848, the differences between these two interpretations became gradually less marked, but their influence can be traced through more recent literature. For Wilhelm

²³Tillier (1792 - 1854) Geschichte des eidgenössischen Freistaats Bern von seinem Ursprung bis zu seinem Untergang im Jahre 1798, (Berne, 1839) V, pp. 478 and 600.

²⁴Meyer von Knonau, Handbuch der Geschichte der schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft (Berne, 1829) II, pp. 554 - 56.

²⁵Charles Monnard, Histoire de la Confédération suisse (Paris and Geneva, 1847) (Hereafter cited as Monnard) XVI, p. 2, and passim.

²⁶Monnard, XVI, pp. 5-6.

Oechsli, as for Meyer von Knonau, the over-riding consideration in the matter of the Helvetic "revolution" was the French invasion. Nothing else was of equal importance to the fact that:

Switzerland lost for a time her independence, was plundered and trodden underfoot, suffered in a word, all the shame and misery which foreign rule commonly brings on a land.

William H. Rappard pursues the same general theme, which condemns the blindness of the "revolutionaries", who "desired to secure their freedom with the aid of foreign bayonets."²⁷ Rappard, in Cinq siècles de sécurité collective, observed that old Switzerland resembled the League of Nations, and stated that the debacle of 1798 resulted from the failure of the Confederation effectively to prosecute collective-security guarantees.²⁸

In the other vein, Karl Dändliker's Geschichte der Schweiz tells us that deplorable as the French suzerainty was, difficulties were exacerbated and sterner resistance provoked by

²⁷ Wilhelm Oechsli, History of Switzerland E. and C. Paul transs., (Cambridge, 1922) p. 315. Oechsli (1841 - 1919) came from Zürich and studied in Germany under Mommsen. After study in Holland, England and France he returned to instruct in Switzerland in 1876. In 1893 he was appointed to the chair of Swiss history at the University of Zürich. His principal work, the Geschichte der schweizerischen Neutralität, appeared in 1895.

²⁸ Rappard, Cinq siècles, pp. 511 et seq. Rappard's main source for the period in question is volume VIII of the Amtliche Sammlung der älteren Eidgenössischen Abschiede, a collection of documents from the archives of Berne, Zürich, Fribourg, Volume VIII was edited by G. Meyer von Knonau, and covered the 1778 - 1798 (Zürich, 1850). This collection will be cited below as ABS.

the French support for a "unitary" republican regime.

Überhaupt zeigte sich erst beim Versuche der Einführung, wie wenig die Verfassung mit den praktischen Verhältnissen gerechnet hatte....²⁹

While French interest and involvement in Swiss affairs was by this time customary, it was not accepted that this should be so fundamental as to alter the essential "Staatenbund" basis of the Confederation, which glorified and protected diversity. Similar views are expressed in Johannes Dierauer's Geschichte der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft. The French and their clients gave little regard to the practical aspects of the situation, and had no comprehension of the historical development of Switzerland.³⁰ William Martin, in Histoire de la Suisse, continues this analysis: the conception of "indivisibilité de la république" was imported to Switzerland from France. Only a superficial comparison, he adds, could identify the development of a body of opinion favouring reform of the old Confederation with the creation of a group of ardent "revolutionaries". The "revolution", he said, was a foreign product:

Nulle part, des troubles sérieux n'ont éclaté avant l'arrivée des troupes françaises. Les gouvernements aristocratiques n'ont pas été renversés par leurs sujets.³¹

²⁹Karl Dändliker, Geschichte der Schweiz (Zürich, 1905) III, pp. 367 and 382.

³⁰Johannes Dierauer, Geschichte der Schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft (Gotha, 1921) IV p. 584. Dierauer (1842-1920) was a professor of ancient history at Saint Gall. See R. Feller and E. Bonjour, Geschichtsschreibung der Schweiz (Basel, 1968) II, pp. 863 - 867, and E. Bonjour, Die Schweiz und Europa (Basel, 1958) pp. 303 - 306.

³¹W.H. Martin, Histoire de la Suisse (Lausanne, 1963) pp. 167 - 168.

Furthermore, given the agricultural and generally discontinuous nature of the old Confederation, Martin felt that no widespread revolution would have been possible without the universal presence of the French troops. He went so far as to suggest that Swiss citizens, enjoying some degree of privilege, outnumbered "subjects" properly so called. The Swiss, according to Martin, did not need to be "liberated", a point which has been made with equal if not greater force by other Swiss authorities, most notably, Tillier.³²

While Martin therefore sustains the universal condemnation of the French-sponsored "révolutionnement de la Suisse", he does not deny the need for some reform of the old Confederation. Indeed, most writers concede the necessity for reform but not Anton Rufer's contention that there existed a "necessity for revolution".³³ There is wide agreement as to the abuses of the old regime in Switzerland: oligarchic political systems, restrictive economic legislation, and entrenched inequalities which restricted social development.³⁴

³²Tillier, op. cit. V, p. 478. "Die Bevölkerung derselben [Berne] fühlte sich, ungeachtet der keineswegs zu verkennenden Mängel ihrer Regierung, glücklich...."

³³Anton Rufer, "Helvétique (République)", Dictionnaire historique et biographique de la Suisse (Neuchâtel, 1921 - 33) III, pp. 25 et seq. Rufer takes the most radical position of recent Swiss historians of this subject, possible as a result of the influence of Jacques Godechot. See J. Godechot and A. Rufer, "Lettres de soldats suisses sur la journée du 10 août, 1792", Annales historiques de la Révolution française, IX (1932) pp. 534 - 540.

³⁴See Oechsli, pp. 287 - 92; Dierauer, IV, pp. 580 - 81.

All these writers, on the other hand, shun the constitutional solutions advanced by the proponents of the "Helvetische Einheitstaat" (centralized Helvetic state).

Emile Dunant, writing in 1901, nevertheless described the period of the Helvetic Republic as "une des temps les plus féconds de notre histoire."³⁵ It was a time he felt, of considerable creative activity, involving an extension of democratic participation in government, and productive of commendably enlightened legislation.³⁶ As Dunant says, it also saw the beginnings of the great debate over the Swiss constitution, and while this debate was finally resolved in a centralist sense, the original proponents of this solution remained tainted by their connection with France. Laharpe's papers were first published only in 1925.³⁷

Thus French and Swiss historians agree that some measure of reform was necessary in 1798, but they differ noticeably over the interpretation of the unitary model attributed to

³⁵Emile Dunant, op. cit. Dunant's work is the principal printed source for the study of French-Swiss relations during this period, being a comprehensive edition of French documents from the Archives nationales relating to Swiss affairs. This work is complementary to the more encyclopaedic work of J. Strickler (ed.) Actensammlung aus der Zeit der Helvetischen Republik (Berne, 1886 - 1957) 14 volumes (volumes 12 - 14 edited by Anton Rufer, cited below as Aktensammlung.) See Feller and Bonjour, Geschichtsschreibung, II, pp. 843 - 846.

³⁶A convenient summary of which is available in Rufer, op. cit., pp. 53 - 59.

³⁷Arthur Boehtlingk, op. cit., p. 11. This volume originally appeared as Friedrich Caesar Laharpe, der Erzieher und Berater Alexanders I von Russland, des Saegers über Napoleon I und Anbahner der modernen Schweiz (Berne and Leipzig, 1925), and was the result of the first comprehensive study of Laharpe's correspondence.

Ochs. The Swiss in general feel that resistance to the Helvetic regime was provoked by the precipitous manner in which reform was attempted, by the essentially centralist direction of this reform, and by the reliance on French arms to sustain it. There is surprising unanimity of opinion regarding the question of liberalization of restrictive social and economic practices: the suggestion is that the "revolution" achieved this only in anticipation of the natural evolution of Switzerland and that it did so without the participation of Ochs, Laharpe or the French. The real issue, they feel, was increased centralization.

On the other hand, French historians, represented most recently by Lefebvre, persist in denying the essential legitimacy of the resistance to the constitutional form of the Helvetic Republic. For them, the relevant context was the liberation of the Swiss Confederation from political obscurantism and oligarchic despotism. Recognizing the problems which wide resistance raises for their interpretation, they have attributed this resistance in the main to reaction not against French "liberty" but against the avarice displayed by French officials.

The implications of this division of opinion for the debate over the thesis of "Western" or "Atlantic" revolution, as proposed by Jacques Godechot and R. R. Palmer, are clear. French and Swiss historians are divided as to the importance of "democratic" agitation in Switzerland. It is just this question that is emphasized in R. R. Palmer's Age of Democratic

Revolution In the first volume of his work, Professor Palmer deals extensively with the political history of Geneva during the latter half of the eighteenth century. While Jacques Godechot, Professor Palmer's predecessor in the exposition of this argument, has subsequently regretted what he sees as the latter's neglect of social and economic evidence, necessary in his view for understanding "...dans ses profondeurs le mécanisme du mouvement révolutionnaire",³⁸ he apparently agrees with the basic analysis. Professor Palmer describes a process beginning in Geneva in the 1760's where he says a political movement essentially "democratic" in character clashed with the oligarchic system of government in 1768 and secured some relaxation of the controls on representative political action. According to Professor Palmer, this was followed eventually by an aristocratic reformation, consummated by the intervention of France, Zürich and Berne in 1782, which restored the oligarchs to the full extent of their former discretion.³⁹

From this perspective, lines of aristocratic-democratic confrontation can be traced through the general history of the Swiss states in the period leading to the French intervention of 1798. He cites Peter Ochs, whose enthusiasm for the regeneration of the world made him, in Palmer's view, a representative "collaborator with the revolution in France."⁴⁰

³⁸Writing in Revue historique CCLXXVII (1962) p. 493.

³⁹R. R. Palmer, The Age of Democratic Revolution (Princeton, 1959) I, pp. 127 - 129.

⁴⁰Ibid. II, pp. 395 - 491.

Professor Palmer's view, while conforming to the general lines of French historical opinion about the Swiss revolution, obviously conflicts with that of the majority of Swiss writers. From their point of view, Professor Palmer's work is severely compromised by the implications of the French perspective which it adopts. The Swiss feel that the Ochs style of "revolutionary" was representative only of those Swiss who allowed themselves to become instruments of French policy, and not of a body of opinion favouring even limited reform of the old Confederation.⁴¹ Although Ochs' correspondence may be "...die bedeutendste⁴²
Dokumentierung der schweizerischen Revolution," it casts light on what was in essence a French "revolution" in Switzerland.

Swiss historical writing on this subject tends therefore to contradict both the mainstream of French historical opinion, and also what may be called in this context the Palmer-Godechot variant. The argument always returns to the problems raised by the resistance to the Helvetic regime. Swiss authorities deny by implication the over-riding importance of the oligarchic-democratic confrontation, if only because they give the French invasion greater emphasis. Moreover, what may well be the reverse side of the same coin, they deny the essential

⁴¹See Monnard, XVI, pp. 23 - 24.

⁴²Gustav Steiner, editor of Ochs' correspondence, in Ochs, I, pp. xxxi - xxxii.

unity of Swiss reaction to the French Revolution which the French historians and Palmer maintain. The particular difficulty is created by the apparent unpopularity of the French "liberators" and their Swiss dependents. Unlike their French colleagues, Swiss historians maintain that something more than resentment of alien exploitation was involved: in their view, the Helvetic "Revolution" was unnecessary and unappreciated.

While this division of opinion exists, any attempt to relate the detailed studies of Swiss material to the mainstream of French historical writing must be hampered by confusion. There would appear, therefore, to be a real need to establish the relationship between the regional diversity of Switzerland and the wider European revolutionary experience. In particular this would seem to require a re-examination of the continuing rationale of French policy for Switzerland and a re-evaluation of the implications of French sponsorship of Ochs, Laharpe and the unitary constitution. Such an investigation is not, of course, necessarily incompatible with what is commonly called the "Palmer thesis". As Alfred Cobban has suggested, detailed regional research, while it may tend to qualify some of the broad statements Professor Palmer makes as a result of his large-scale perspective, may not

...affect the validity of his thesis of a single democratic revolution dominating the period, or diminish his belief in the value of that revolution.⁴³

It may even, in the case of the Swiss material, add slightly

⁴³ Alfred Cobban, "The Age of Democratic Revolution", History LXV (1960) pp. 234 - 39 passim.

to a true appreciation of France's European experience during its great period of revolution.

Furthermore, to study the literature of the Swiss "revolution" is rapidly to become aware of populations unsatisfied by apparently serious reform, of heroes unappreciated, and of enlightenment disavowed; and this again suggests that a new attempt to evaluate the events of 1798 to 1803 may well be rewarding.

7

C'est ici que les chefs des émigrés formèrent leur bandes parricides. Ici l'Anglais Wickham, secondé par Carnot, manoeuvrait à cette grande trahison que vous avez déjouée le 18 fructidor. C'est à Berne que les rebelles eurent constamment leur arsenal, leurs conseils. C'est encore dans la magistrature de cette ville que le gouvernement anglais trouve les agents les plus actifs de ses intrigues....
--General Brune to the French troops assembled at Payerne, 11 ventôse VI (1 March, 1798).

II. FRENCH INTEREST AND INVOLVEMENT

The indisputable condition for the sudden Swiss "revolution" of date was the French invasion. That this was to some extent prompted by the strategic requirements of France is not debated by either French or Swiss writers. We have seen, however, that there is no concensus as to the relationship between the large-scale French policy and the internal affairs of Switzerland. In this context it is important in the first instance to determine how such intrinsically French concerns as the "Royalist plot" came to have a Swiss significance. Secondly, we must assess the extent to which the justification for the invasion which the French government cited for Swiss consumption in 1798 -- that Switzerland, and more particularly Vaud, was to be liberated -- was qualified by resultant French policy.

It is therefore necessary to determine how these two elements found a focal point in Switzerland, and how they thereby caused, as Tillier has observed,¹ the end of the old Swiss

¹Tillier, Geschichte des eidgenössischen Freistaats Bern (1839) V, p. 478.

Confederation; this disintegration was signalled by the fact that Berne alone of all the Swiss cantons seriously resisted the invading armies.

It has already been noted that in the period following the outbreak of the French Revolution, tension between France and the Swiss Confederation varied in relation to the intensity of French propaganda and military commitment in the east. After 1789, relations deteriorated as Switzerland provided refuge to the ever larger groups of émigrés from France. Its geographic position placed Switzerland between the warring armies of France and Austria when war broke out, and it was perhaps inevitable that the Swiss should be drawn into the conflict of fundamental principles which the antagonism between these two states came to represent.

After the Swiss Confederation received official notification of the state of war between France and Austria in May, 1792, it declared its neutrality. This was ultimately recognized by both parties. During that year, following the clear threat presented by the French occupation of the Imperial territories of the Bishop of Basel, the protection of Swiss neutrality was extended to the remaining Jura lands of the bishopric, which were allied to the Confederation, and to Neuchâtel and Geneva.² The effectiveness of the Confederation as a guarantor was, however, from the beginning doubtful.

²ABS. VIII, pp. 169 - 170, cited Rappard, Cinq siècles, pp. 515 - 516. Rappard's is the best account of Swiss diplomatic activity during this period. See pp. 515 et seq. The most comprehensive recent work on Switzerland between 1789 and 1798 is however, Hermann Büchi, Vorgeschichte der helvetischen Revolution (Solothurn, 1925) I: Die Schweiz in den Jahren 1789 - 1798.

Switzerland was plagued by its extreme decentralization, and compromised by its general attitude, clearly antagonistic to the progress of the French Revolution.³

The Confederation was therefore reluctant to recognize the new regime in France.⁴ It was at the same time pledged to defend Switzerland against "...toute attaque hostile à la religion, à la moralité, à sa constitution, à sa tranquillité et à sa prospérité."⁵ Nevertheless, the best efforts of particularly the Bernese to create an effective defence force were unavailing. The hesitations of the majority in the Swiss Diet were completed by Schwyz, whose representative on the Diet declared that his canton did not approve the principle of "die so geheissene bewaffnete Neutralität."⁶ Furthermore, the efforts of Berne to create an effective armed neutrality caused that canton to be specifically identified from an early date as the main French antagonist in Switzerland.⁷

³It is not difficult to find evidence of Swiss hostility for the French Revolution. Jean Henri Polier de Vernaude, in Lausanne, on 5 August 1789, deplored "la nouvelle des horribles scènes à Paris". Pierre Morren, La Vie lausannoise au XVIII^e siècle d'après Jean Henri Polier de Vernaude (Neuchâtel, 1969) p. 30. At the time of Varennes, émigrés were joined by many Swiss in the celebrations at the false news that Louis had escaped. Boehtlingk, Laharpe, p. 60. Such examples from this period could be multiplied almost indefinitely. Reubell, visiting Switzerland in 1792, was struck by the intensity of anti-French feeling. Reubell to Chambonas, 24 June 1792, Kaulek, Papiers de Barthélemy, I, 195, Ochs, I, 391.

⁴ABS. VIII, p. 174, Rappard, p. 520.

⁵ABS. VIII, p. 190, Rappard, p. 521.

⁶ABS. VIII, p. 170, Rappard, p. 517.

⁷Dumouriez to Barthélemy, 9 April, 1792, Kaulek, I, 120.

This was the result not only of Berne's views on Swiss neutrality, but also of its well known lack of sympathy for the French Revolution.⁸ The French were correct in attributing counter-revolutionary feeling to the Bernese, but as the French ambassador Barthelemy said, the threat of French military reprisals should have prevented any serious action on their part.⁹ French power was indeed a clear restraint to overt acts against France, but it did not prevent close contact between sympathetic Swiss and the many émigrés who had found refuge in the Confederation.¹⁰ Although the Diet recommended in July 1796 that it would be wise for the cantons to disentangle themselves from the émigrés, this was not done.¹¹

Perhaps the principal reason for this was the lack of a real sense of urgency over their situation. The Swiss cantons indeed based their policy during 1796 and 1797 on recurring hopes for European peace.¹² These proved futile, and the continuing belligerence, together with the internal politics

⁸"In Alpine departments the sans-culottes of Savoy did not fail to complain about Swiss selfishness and local committees denounced in particular the cantonal authorities of Berne, well known for their hostility to the principles of the Revolution." R.C. Cobb, "Some Aspects of the Revolutionary Mentality" in J. Kaplow (ed.) New Perspectives on the French Revolution (New York, 1965) p. 332.

⁹Barthelemy to Dumouriez, 20 April, 1792, Kaulek I, 155, Ochs, I, 388.

¹⁰ABS. VIII, p. 228, Rappard, p. 525.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²•Emigrés began arriving in Switzerland in July 1789. Ed. Chapuisat, La Suisse et la Révolution française, (Geneva, 1905) p. 85. See Ochs' reports to his brother-in-law, Dietrich, (Cont'd)

of France ultimately re-emphasized the importance of the anti-revolutionary exiles. This directed French attention to Berne in particular, the largest Swiss canton and the main military power of the Confederation, although all governments of the old Confederation were to some extent tainted by this liaison with reaction.

The French government eventually moved to take strong action to clear Switzerland of émigrés, and to destroy the military capability of Berne. The evolution of the situation up until the invasion of 1798, however, demonstrated that these concerns were not of themselves, sufficient cause for action. The invasion of 1798 only followed the largely successful application of diplomatic pressure on the Swiss cantons, whose timorous compliance should have alleviated these French anxieties. Following September 1797, the French secured the

the "prêtreur royale" of Strasbourg, 2 August, 1789, Ochs I, 146; Ochs to Meister, 25 April, 1789 and 18 February 1791, Ochs, I, 139 and 180. See also Ochs, I, 177, 178, 179, 285 and 329. Polier de Vernaud was reporting by December 1789 that "Nous avons un flux et reflux de Français prodigeux, on a compté que leur dépense allait à mille francs par jour." Morren, op. cit. p. 341. These visitors and their money were presumably not totally unwelcome. From the early days of the Revolution, the geographic position of Switzerland made it a "terre d'élection" of the émigrés. Donald Greer, The Incidence of the Emigration during the French Revolution (Cambridge [Mass.] , 1951) p. 93. Greer estimates that some 5,000 stayed in Fribourg during this period, some 1,165 at Lausanne between 1794 and 1797. Although many of these were French citizens without any individual political significance, (as for instance the Alsatian peasants coming to Basel in August, 1789, Ochs, I, 147), they did not fail, whatever their status, to create problems for the Swiss governments, which had not only to feed them, but also suffer French hostility as a result of their presence. Ochs, I, 181.

premature departure of William Wickham (the British representative who was well known to be intriguing against France) from Berne,¹³ as well as the general expulsion of French émigrés from Swiss territory.¹⁴ No serious criticism was voiced in the Swiss Diet when a local revolution in the Valtelline, a part of the Swiss Grisons (Graubunden) and the entrance to the eastern Alpine passes was given the sanction of French protection. The Valtelline revolt was particularly threatening to the restricted governments of Switzerland, since it saw Napoleon Bonaparte mediating essentially Swiss political differences, and announcing the principle that "...un peuple ne peut pas être sujet d'un autre sans violer les principes du droit public et naturel."¹⁵ The Valtelline became part of the Cisalpine Republic in November.¹⁶

¹³Wickham was deeply involved in counter-revolutionary intrigues in Berne. His expulsion had been demanded by the French for this very reason. See Moniteur, 17 October, 1797. See Harvey Mitchell, The Underground War against Revolutionary France (London, 1965) pp. 220 - 22 and passim. In 1792, when Barthélemy was sent to Switzerland, the émigrés had not appeared a serious threat, "...ils n'ont ni argent, ni appui", (Dumouriez to Barthélemy, 9 April, 1792, Kaulek, I, 120) and the British minister in Berne, Fitzgerald, was considered ineffective (Barthélemy to Buchot, 3 fructidor II [20 August, 1794] Kaulek, IV, 954, Ochs, I, 402); but by 1796, Delecroix was convinced "...qu'il existe en Suisse des dessins formels contre la République française", with British and Austrian support. (to Barthélemy, 11 floreal IV [29 April, 1796] Ochs, II, 388.

¹⁴Moniteur, an VI, 44 (4 November, 1797) and Rufer, op. cit. p. 24.

¹⁵Ochs to Laharpe, 6 November, 1797, Ochs, II, 89. Moniteur an V, 296 (14 July, 1797) and an VI, 35 (25 October, 1797).

¹⁶Louis Delcros, Ticino e la rivoluzione francese, "L'incidente Bonaparte", pp. 217 - 230. Napoleon Correspondance, III, 1957 (24 June, 1797), 1979 (2 July, 1797), 2172 (9 September 1797) and 2352 (11 November, 1797). Oechsli, History of Switzerland, p. 303.

The occupation in December of the remaining portion of the Bishopric of Basel, which had been untouched in 1792 since it was a Swiss ally and not a part of the Holy Roman Empire, passed without Swiss protest.¹⁷

The submissiveness of the Swiss governments nevertheless failed to avert the attentions of the French Directory. The reason for this soon became clear -- the Directory was determined to gain direct control of Switzerland. In this context French interest in the Valtelline was particularly significant. While the French Directory was concerned about the émigrés, and the threat which the Bernese connection with the counter-revolution posed to its eastern frontier, it was the French concern with the state of the Alpine passes, illustrated by Napoleon Bonaparte's interest in Swiss affairs, which precipitated French action, once more against Berne in particular. In order to explain this development, and its prerequisite conditions, we must examine contemporary French internal politics.

The coup d'état of Fructidor, 1797, had had the important result, as far as Switzerland was concerned, of removing Barthélemy and Carnot from the seat of power in France. These two men had continuously opposed serious French interference in Swiss affairs, which were of particular interest to Barthélemy, who had been French ambassador there from 1792 to 1797.¹⁸

¹⁷Rappard, Cinq siècles, pp. 539 - 540. Oechsli, p. 307.

¹⁸Barthelemy consistently pursued a moderate line in Swiss affairs, which has been appreciatively noted by many Swiss historians. Delcros, Ticino p. 8, or Karl Dändliker, Geschichte der Schweiz (1904) III. p. 312. He became the (cont'd)

The French elections of the year V (1796 - 97) had been a victory for the so-called "Royalists", who, it was claimed were using "Republican means for Royalist ends".¹⁹ Certainly some of those who represented the unpopularity of the existing government intended to effect a "legal" restoration of the monarchy through "Royalist" electoral success. The story of the "Royalist plot" is a complicated one, but various features emerge which were to have a profound significance for Switzerland, whence H. M. minister in Berne had been channeling substantial British encouragement to the "Royalists". While a clear "Royalist" coup was perhaps unlikely,²⁰ the Fructidor coup was clearly designed to reinforce the tottering position of the republican government of France.

advocate of a firm but tactful, largely pragmatic, policy for the Swiss Confederation, which he hoped to maintain as a unified and neutral unit on the French eastern frontier. See Kaulek, II, pp. 165 - 166, III, 1053 (Printed in Ochs, I, 398), and Kaulek, III, 395. See also the Delecroix-Barthélemy correspondence printed by Steiner in Ochs, II, 393 and 393, from the Archives nationales, Affaires étrangères, Suisse, volume 457. (Hereafter cited AeS.) See Chapuisat, "L'Ambassadeur Barthélemy" in La Suisse et la Révolution française. Barthélemy left Switzerland on 3 June, 1797 (Moniteur, 22 prairial V), having been elected to the Directory to replace Le Tourneur on 1 prairial (20 May, 1797). At Fructidor, he fled France, to return after Brumaire, and on 4 nivôse VII (25 December, 1799) was made a senator, in which capacity he participated in Mediation, in the winter of 1803. See Fouché, Mémoires, p. 163.

¹⁹W. Fryer, Restoration or Revolution in France, 1794 - 1797: The Politics of French Royalism (Manchester, 1965) p. xi.

²⁰H. Mitchell, The Underground War, pp. 214 - 15. On this point see also the review by Richard Cobb, "Our man in Berne", Times Literary Supplement, 24 February, 1966, in which he discounts the effectiveness of British machinations and the seriousness of the "Royalist plot". An official version of the "plot" story can be found in the statement issued by Merlin, and published in the Moniteur, 11 germinal VI (31 March, 1798).

Following Fructidor, the results of the recent elections were swept aside, new measures were passed more sternly to restrict émigré-"Royalist" activities,²¹ and a new determination appeared in French foreign policy. This new resolution achieved the impressive results in Switzerland -- the departure of Wickham and the expulsion of the émigrés -- which have been mentioned above. The policy of repression of "Royalism" meant that action was to be taken against collaborators with foreign governments within and without France, but it must be emphasized that while it clearly indicated increased Franco-Swiss tension, it in no way made an invasion of Switzerland inevitable. It is nevertheless significant that the Fructidor coup brought enhanced power to Reubell, one of the principal advocates of French expansion to the so-called "natural frontiers."²²

The "natural frontiers" had been a principal issue of the elections in Year V. The "Royalists", whether monarchists proper or only moderates, felt that peace with Europe was only possible if the advance to the Rhine, the "natural frontier" of France facing the Holy Roman Empire, was stopped. These

²¹Which provoked a new, if small, wave of emigration, reversing for the moment the pattern of flow continuing since 1794. See Greer, op. cit. p. 102, and E. Daudet, Histoire de l'Emigration (Paris, 1905) II, pp. 1 - 127.

²²Lefebvre, Thermidorians and Directory (New York, 1965) pp. 327 - 328. See Homan, loc. cit., and J. Suratteau, "Reubell et la frontière du Rhin", Annales historiques de la Révolution française, XL (1968) pp. 553 - 556. See Barras, Mémoires, III, pp. 1 - 45 and 438 - 439.

men were apparently prepared to accept that France might be restrained to its "constitutional limits" (Old France, with Avignon, Belgium and Savoy annexed)²³, if this were necessary to placate the many enemies of the French régime. On the other hand, advocacy of a "natural frontiers" policy had become an identifying mark of stout republicanism. As Lefebvre points out, Carnot, in turning to the right in politics, at the same time moved away from the "natural frontiers" policy.²⁴ One might add that the converse would probably be equally if not more true.

Fructidor also brought Napoleon Bonaparte a new influence near the French Directory, a fact of immense importance to the subsequent history of Switzerland. Although Reubell, as has been noted above, was convinced that the Bernese particularly were "non seulement anti-révolutionnaire, mais anti-français,"²⁵ he apparently did not wish to extend the war beyond the Rhine as a matter of principle. He was, however, prepared to do so, if this were required by military necessity, to reinforce the Rhine position against counter attack,²⁶ or, more immediately, to assure communication with the Army of Italy. It was in

²³Lefebvre, Thermidorians and Directory, pp. 248 - 249. See also the account in J. Godechot, La Contre-révolution, doctrine et action, 1789 - 1804, (Paris, 1961) pp. 298 - 314.

²⁴Lefebvre, Thermidorians and Directory, p. 303.

²⁵Reubell to Chambonas, 24 June, 1792, Kaulek, I, 195, Ochs, I, 391.

²⁶Homan, op. cit. pp. 431 - 32. A letter which Reubell wrote to Ochs, 26 floréal IV (15 May, 1796) (Cont'd)

this area that Bonaparte provided the decisive impetus to French policy which made necessary not so much an invasion of Switzerland as a destruction of Bernese military power over the Alpine passes to Italy.

Bonaparte had a specific interest in Switzerland, which had developed during his Italian campaigns. Through him, the French Directory became interested in clearing the strategic Simplon route from Paris to Milan passing through the territory of Bernese Vaud and through that of Valais, an ally of the Swiss Confederation. As well as having expressed displeasure with the neutrality policy of Swiss governments while he was in Italy, Bonaparte had requested and been denied military passage through Valais on 19 June, 1797.²⁷ This was before the Directory, as it was then constituted, instructed him to desist from his demands.²⁸ Bonaparte felt that the route

provides us with a significant statement of the former's interests: "Vous auriez dû aussi vous ressouvenir que mes principes n'ont jamais été de révolutionner votre pays et vous savez que je ne change pas de principes. Tout que le Directoire exécutif est en droit d'exiger, c'est qu'on s'exprime à son égard dans les termes convenables à la dignité de la République française et qu'on ne se comporte pas d'une manière si molle avec ses ennemis." FAH, printed in Ochs, Basler Geschichte VIII, pp. 194 et seq. published Ochs, I, 7.

²⁷See Napoleon, Correspondance III, 1796 and Moniteur an V, nos. 281 and 291 (29 June and 9 July, 1797). There had been strained relations between Bonaparte and the Swiss since February, 1797, when Bonaparte had placed armed barges on Lake Lugano to control contraband, and this had been protested by the Swiss. ABS. VIII, 238, Rappard, p. 526. Bonaparte took the position that "nous [the French] avons le droit d'exiger qu'ils se conduisent avec égard," according to the report of a Swiss diplomat sent to discuss matters with him in May. He threatened, indeed, to march into Switzerland with 30,000 men if there were any more trouble. ABS.VIII, p. 243, Rappard, p. 528.

²⁸Rappard, pp. 529 - 530. A nice measure of Bonaparte's political weight at this juncture is in the Moniteur report (Cont'd)

from Geneva to the Simplon pass by either Lake Léman or the north shore should be in French possession and had sent a party of surveyors to chart the Simplon in June.²⁹ As the French commitment in Italy increased, it was natural for the lines of communication from France to increase in importance. In this sense it was also to be expected that the French commander in Italy should be among the first to realize this.³⁰

The Swiss situation, central at the time to the concerns of both Reubell and Bonaparte, was consequently being given serious consideration when Bonaparte surveyed the Confederation on his way to Rastatt in November, 1797. The general crossed Switzerland "in sovereign triumph" according to the Mémoires of Barras,³¹ although Swiss writers hasten to point out that this was in fact the case only in Bernese Vaud and the country-

of this incident, 11 messidor V (29 June, 1797). The one sentence report stated without elaboration that Bonaparte had made this request, and this had been refused.

²⁹Napoleon, Correspondance, VII, 5366 and 5499. The principal study of these passes in their contemporary context is M. Blanchard, Les routes des Alpes occidentales à l'époque napoléonniene (Grenoble, 1920) The report to the Diet of Bonaparte's engineers on the Simplon is from ABS. VIII, p. 250, Rappard, p. 529.

³⁰Blanchard, Routes, p. 2.

³¹Barras, Mémoires, III, p. 133, Oechsli, op. cit. p. 303.

THE ALPINE PASSES

ROUTES TO ITALY

SWISS CANTONS

BERNE

side of Basel.³² Bonaparte appears to have been particularly impressed by his friendly reception in Basel.³³ He certainly had the city in mind when on his return to Paris he began to press for a French invasion of Switzerland, and began to cultivate a new acquaintance, Peter Ochs.³⁴

On 8 December, 1797, Bonaparte and Ochs met, chez Reubell. In the small red diary which Ochs was using to record his trip to Paris, he made the following brief report:

J'arrivai le cinq décembre. 8 décembre, grand diner chez le directeur Reubell, donné à Bonaparte. Après le diner, conférence entre Reubell, Bonaparte et moi. Bonaparte ouvrit la conférence et annonça une révolution en Suisse. Pendant le diner, il n'avait fait que se moquer de l'aristocratie suisse, des Bernois, des Grisons.³⁵

³²Boehtlingk, Laharpe, p. 97.

³³The French agent in Basel, Mengaud, wrote to Reubell after this to announce that Bonaparte was determined to cut Swiss relations with the émigrés, and was convinced that Basel was on the point of having its own revolution, whatever happened in the other cantons. Mengaud to Reubell, 5 frimaire VI (25 November 1797) FAH, Ochs, II 409.

³⁴Peter Ochs was the chancellor of Basel, and was more specifically the friend of Reubell, with whom he had been in contact since 1791. He was in Paris at Reubell's request, having met with Bonaparte in Basel, and again at Meaux, where they again conferred. Mengaud to Reubell, 5 frimaire VI (25 November, 1797), FAH, Ochs II, 411; Reubell to Ochs, 12 vendémiaire VI (3 October 1797) and Ochs to Meister, 4 October 1797 Ochs, II, 75 and 76. On the Basel visit see Ochs to Meister, 25 November 1797, Ochs, II, 453 and Moniteur 14 frimaire VI (4 December, 1797); Ochs' brother-in-law, Vischer, wrote to Hirzel on 25 November 1797 that "Nach 12 Uhr gestern Morgen stieg dieser welterühmte Mann...hier zu Drei König ab... Am Mittagessen unterhielt er sich mehrentheils mit meinem Schwager Ochs..." Ochs, II, 490. Guillon, Napoleon, pp. 20 - 22; Barras, III, 136, Boehtlingk, p. 97, Capuisat, Suisse, p. 125; See also Ochs II, 92, 94, 96, 97, letters of 17 November (to Laharpe), 19 November, 22 November, 24 November, 1797. See Moniteur, 16 and 17 frimaire VI (6-7 December, 1797).

³⁵Ochs II, Anhang, 421 D. from "Lebenslauf, rotes (Cont'd)

Thus a plan for the regeneration of Switzerland emerged from these discussions in Paris in December, and from the exhortations of Frédéric César Laharpe, who was in exile in Paris at the time, agitating for French intervention in Switzerland, specifically to liberate the Vaudois from the yoke of Bernese oppression.³⁶ To this plan each of the participants made a distinctive contribution. There was to be a French invasion of Switzerland, which would remove Reubell's and Bonaparte's apprehensions about the émigrés, English and Austrian intrigue in Switzerland, and which would assure the security of the French eastern frontier. It would in addition allow the French to grasp the western Alpine passes and thus assure their communications to Italy, which was Bonaparte's specific desire. The invasion would be consolidated by a "revolution" in Switzerland, which, at least initially, would involve an overthrow of the traditional status quo in Basel, and the destruction of the allegedly oppressive Bernese régime in Vaud.

Büchlein", in Ochs' own hand. See also Revolutionierung der Schweiz, from the manuscript (folio 21) of the Basler Geschichte, vol. VIII. Ochs II, 420.

³⁶Bonaparte was already aware of Laharpe's designs for a revolution in Vaud in November, 1797, since he mentioned these to Ochs when he met him in Basel, 25 November, 1797. Ochs to Meister, 27 November, 1797, Ochs II, 453. Laharpe had apparently appreciated already in Fructidor that the reformed French government might review its Swiss policy, for he gave to Jean Debry on 23 fructidor V (8 September 1797) a "Mémoire demandant la libération du Pays de Vaud et la convocation des Etats généraux en vue d'une plébiscite -- au besoin par la force," with the understanding that Debry would discuss the matter with his colleagues. Laharpe in addition suggested that the operation could be financed by French confiscation of the large Bernese treasury, and began circulating a petition in this sense among Swiss exiles in Paris in December, 1797. Boehtlingk, pp. 105 - 108. Aktensammlung, I, p. 108.

Bonaparte: "Les patriotes en Suisse, ne pourraient-ils pas entreprendre une révolution si nous nous tenions en arrière-ligne?"

Ochs: "Non."

Bonaparte: "Pourquoi non?"

Ochs: "Parce que les patriotes ne réussiraient en rien."

Bonaparte: "Eh! Comment cela?"

Ochs: ["Ils n'ont pas l'appui nécessaire."]

Reubell: "Eh bien, il faudra tuer le bourreau."

Bonaparte: "Il faut cependant qu'elle se fasse, et cela bientôt."

--from Ochs' report of the dialogue at the conference of 8 December, 1797, from folio 21 of the manuscript for the Basler Geschichte.

III. THE SWISS CONSTITUTION

The French plan was not allowed to gather dust before it was implemented. On 28 December, 1797, the Directory publicly charged the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Talleyrand, to investigate the possibility of French participation in the re-establishment of Vaudois rights.¹ The French press turned from its well-established theme of the connection of Swiss governments with the counter-revolution and the émigrés² to concentrate on their unredeemed character. The Swiss must be liberated from "noble" oppression, and redress found for grievances which were "très fondés".³

¹Moniteur and VI, 98.

²See for instance, Moniteur, 19 ventôse V (9 March, 1797), 20 germinal V (9 April 1797), 6 brumaire VI (27 October 1797), 14 brumaire VI (4 November, 1797).

³Moniteur, 3 germinal V (23 March, 1797), and in particular, "Les ballifs suisses démasqués" Moniteur 10 pluviôse VI (29

The plan to invade Switzerland and emasculate Berne had matured well by this point. The "liberation" of Vaud from Bernese "tyranny" would also considerably reduce the land area and the power of that canton. The plan was to "...détruire ... la prépondérance trop dominante de ce canton," as the French agent, Mengaud expressed it later.⁴ The French plan for the regeneration of the Confederation, in as much as this immediately concerned Berne, was clear and incisive. As will be shown below, however, French provision for the subsequent organization of Switzerland did not demonstrate the same clarity of purpose. Indeed the confusion into which the area was plunged by the French incursion amply testified to the want of foresight and deliberation which characterized French policy on the new government and constitution of Switzerland.

The French invasion of Switzerland coincided with the outbreak of a "revolution" in Basel and Vaud. In Basel, where the disturbances began, a rural rising, instigated by Ochs,^{4a} forced the resignation of the city government on 18 January.

January, 1798), also 24 germinal V (13 April, 1797), 6 floréal V (25 April, 1797), 30 prairial V (18 June, 1797), 5 messidor V (23 June, 1797), 26 messidor V (14 July, 1797), 2 thermidor V (20 July, 1797), 22 thermidor V (9 August, 1797), 28 fructidor V (14 September, 1797), 26 vendémiaire VI (17 October, 1797), 14 brumaire VI (4 November, 1797) 19 frimaire VI (9 December, 1797), 19 nivôse VI (8 January, 1798) and 20 nivôse VI (9 January, 1798).

⁴Mengaud to Talleyrand, 24 ventôse VI (14 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 53 Dunant, 19. Aargau and the Oberland were also delivered from Berne in this way, this being consistent with French purpose, if not specifically premeditated.

^{4a}Ochs to Burckhardt, Bürgermeister of Basel, 28 November 1797, 11 December, 1797, 19 December, 1797, 26 December, 1797,

This was quickly followed, according to plan, by a revolt in Vaud.⁵ A Vaudois deputation led by Daniel-Louis Frossard de Saugy went to Ferney-Voltaire, where it requested the aid of the French general Ménard.⁶ The rising on the Rhône and the reformation of the rest of Switzerland was therefore given decisive impetus by the incursion of French troops, which entered Switzerland ostensibly to protect the Vaudois revolution from Bernese repression.

The revolution in Vaud led to the declaration of the République lémanique in Lausanne on 24 January, which was granted official French protection on 18 pluviôse (6 February 1798).⁷ The apparent success of the Vaudois revolt gave the French their entry to Switzerland.⁸ Ménard seized the opportunity to move into Vaud on 28 January after a small encounter between a party of French troops and a Bernese-Vaudois patrol near Thierrens.⁹ Although Ménard was removed from the command of this army on 27 January, his successor,

Ochs II 101, 116, 130, 147; Ochs to Conseil secret of Basel, 22 and 23 December, 1797, Ochs, II, 140, 141; Ochs to Burchardt, 12, 14, and 19 January 1798, Ochs II, 179, 183, 189; Ochs to Vischer (his brother-in-law) 22 January 1798 and 5 February, 1798, Ochs II, 194 and 214.

⁵Ochs to Burckhardt, 23 December, 1797, Ochs II, 142; same to same 25 December 1797, Ochs II, 145. The specific plan, as Ochs explained it, was to have a revolution in Vaud which would require French aid, and once this was obtained, which would then call on the other cantons to follow the Vaudois example. Ochs to Huber, 10 January 1798, Ochs II, 177. Boehtlingk, p. 107.

⁶Chapuisat, Suisse, p. 129.

⁷Moniteur, 19 pluviôse VI (7 February, 1798).

⁸The revolution was to open Switzerland to the French at three points: Vaud, Basel and Ticino. Steiner, Ochs, II pp. cxiii-iv. Of these, the Vaudois rapidly assumed a predominant importance.

⁹Barras, III, p. 198.

General Brune, continued his war-like policies in spite of the fact that Berne was, by this point, prepared to grant full freedom to Vaud. Indeed, with its allies, Fribourg and Solothurn, Berne had offered at Payerne on 16 and 17 February to modify its constitution along lines to be suggested by France.¹⁰

This solution was not, however, suitable to the French, who were determined to destroy Bernese power completely. On 22 February, Brune moved against Berne after calling for the resignation of the government and declaring its members personally responsible for any damage or loss of life resulting from French action.¹¹ This action was indeed becoming increasingly appropriate, for Berne had failed to organize a unified defence of the Confederation. The Diet of Arrau which it had called for this purpose on 26 December had been unproductive and, with the exception of Fribourg and Solothurn, the city had been deserted by its allies.¹² Amid this fragmentation, which opened Switzerland to the French, traditional governments were being overturned. The subject districts had risen in revolt and Lucerne on 31 January, Saint Gall and Zurich on 5 February and Schaffhausen on the following day had turned out their city administrations, inspired by French

¹⁰Oechsli, p. 310.

¹¹Brune's ultimatum, dated 12 ventôse VI (2 March, 1798) is printed from AeS. v. 466, 14, in Dunant, 4. See Moniteur VI, p. 706 and p. 730, where the reports of Brune and Schauenbourg of 14 ventôse (4 March), 15 ventôse (5 March) and 17 ventôse (7 March) are published. See Mengaud to Directory, 12 ventôse VI (2 March, 1798) from AF III 85, printed Ochs II, 436.

¹²Rappard, pp. 543 - 549.

support for the Vaudois prototype. Through the increasing disorder, Brune moved successively against Fribourg, Solothurn and Berne. Fribourg surrendered without a fight, Solothurn followed after the battle of Lengnau,¹³ and on 5 March, at one in the afternoon, after the battles of Neuenegg, Fraubrunnen and Grauholz, the French army entered Berne.¹⁴

Thus from 5 March 1798, with the defeat of Berne and the timorous acquiescence of the other Swiss cantons, the French were in a powerful position to dictate policy to the Swiss but, although they were assured of ultimate dominance of the Swiss political situation, the French were nevertheless frustrated in their plans by continuing Swiss resistance to their policies. This resistance can be attributed in part to the manner in which the new order arrived in Switzerland: as a result of a foreign invasion, and accompanied by the normal

¹³Schauenbourg to Mengaud, 12 ventôse VI (2 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 11, Dunant, 3.

¹⁴The military detail of this campaign can be found in R.-W. Phipps, The Armies of the First French Republic (Oxford, 1968) V, pp. 67 - 85. The desertion of Berne by its allies was practical, if not theoretical. All the cantons except Basel provided contingents to the Bernese to fight the French, but these did not substantially alter the situation. Lucerne only allowed its troops to depart on 2 March, and Schaffhausen sent men to Berne also, but the city had fallen before they arrived. Rappard, pp. 558 - 559, Ochs, II, 238. When Berne called on Basel for aid and troops, Ochs' comment adequately reflected the Balois feeling that resistance was inconceivable: "...ont-ils donc perdu la tête?" Ochs, II, 194. See Schauenbourg to Mengaud, 15 ventôse VI (5 March, 1798), AeS. v. 466, 22, Dunant 9; Mengaud to Talleyrand, 18 ventôse and 26 ventôse VI (8 and 16 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, nos. 29 and 57, Dunant, 11 and 21. The Bernese had 17,000 troops to meet the French under Brune and Schauenbourg with 32,000 including Reserves. In these three engagements the Bernese apparently suffered some fourteen hundred casualties. Monnard, XVI, pp. 46 and 64.

rapacity and foreign political control associated with conquest. More importantly, however, Swiss resistance must be seen as the result of fundamental objections to the political system which the French government had chosen to support.

After their conference in December, Bonaparte and Reubell had decided that the revolution in Switzerland should be consolidated by the establishment of a centralized government there. This had been in the first instance Ochs' suggestion. It recommended itself to the French as an expedient because the implementation of a "constitution unitaire" would theoretically allow new central authorities to control all areas of a "regenerated" Switzerland.¹⁵

The unitary constitution proposal was presented to the Swiss as an element of more general French efforts to convince the Swiss to revolutionize themselves.^{15a} The French govern-

¹⁵Ochs to Bonaparte, 12 December, 1797, Ochs II, 423. See also Chapter IV, below.

^{15a}French persuasion tended to fall on fertile ground. By December, many Swiss realized the seriousness of French intent, and urged the Bernese in particular, but also all the oligarchic governments of Switzerland to reform themselves, before the French came and did it for them. In this area Paul Usteri and Johann Müller were particularly notable. Hauptmann Graf of Appenzell realized in November that "Eine Revolution steht uns bevor", but this could be accomplished without French intervention. Graf to Ochs, 18 November, 1797, Ochs, II, 93. Usteri was in contact with Ochs through a Dr. Ebel, a citizen of Zürich resident in Paris, and took the same line: Usteri to Ochs, 17 December, 1797, transmitted by Ebel to Ochs, 1 January 1797, Ochs II, 156; Usteri to Ochs, 8 January, 1798, Ochs II, 174; Ochs to Ebel, 1 January, 1798, Ochs II, 158; Ebel to Ochs 2 January, 1798, Ochs II, 159. Already on 20 December, 1797, representatives of Zürich, Lucerne, Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden went to Berne "pour éclairer le gouvernement sur ses vrais intérêts," and to persuade it to comply with French requirements, Meister to Ochs, 20 December, 1797, Ochs II, 135. They cannot have realized that already by this point the French were planning a general revolution in Switzerland to follow the defeat of Berne. See Boehtlingk, p. 101.

LIBERTÉ
Enregist.
No.

ÉGALITÉ

RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE.

Au Quartier-général de Berne le 6. Carmine
an 6 de la République, une & indivisible.

Le Général BRUNE, Commandant en Chef
l'Armée Française en Helvétie.

*Il est ordonné au chef de B. d'interposer l'indisposition
la plus grande de toutes tentatives en faveur des conspirateurs
pour faire continuer à Paris dans la connaissance les
travaux qui sont dans les files de Berne. Il
ne fera prendre aucune mesure en attendant
que les frais sont payés d'avance à Berne.
Il pourra requerrir une escorte au besoin
afin que les animaux ne soient ni arrêtés ni
emprisonnés, ou même lâchés.
En conséquence les autorités civiles et
militaires sont invitées de prêter assistance et
secours au plus grand pour qu'il puisse accomplir
la mission qui lui est confiée.*

[Signature]
P.S. Le Ministre de la police, ^{et de l'intérieur} ~~seigneur~~
instruit du présent

AN ORDER SIGNED BY BRUNE

ment used Ochs and his connections, particularly in Basel, to urge the Swiss in this direction. Ochs' reports from Paris in December 1797 and January 1798 made it clear that the French were determined to revise the structure of the Swiss Confederation, and that this would involve the creation of a republic, "une et indivisible".¹⁶

Immediate French attempts to implement this plan however only resulted in the continuing political fragmentation of Switzerland. The publication of the Ochs' proposal had indicated general French support for the principles of administrative unity and representative democracy which this exemplified, but did not make clear the determination of the French government to implement this plan without alteration. The situation was further confused by the actions of individual French agents and Ochs. When he returned from Paris to Basel in March, Ochs allowed himself to participate in the revision of the Paris constitutional proposal, to allow for a greater degree of local autonomy. The French agent in Valais, Mangourit, was encouraging the Valaisans in the direction of independence from the new Switzerland.¹⁷ More fundamentally,

¹⁶Ochs to Burckhardt, 28 November 1797, Ochs II, 101; same to same, 11 December 1797, Ochs II, 110; 19 December, 1797, Ochs II, 114; 18 December, 1797, Ochs II, 130; 26 December, 1797, Ochs II, 147. Ochs to Secret Council of Basel, 22 and 23 December, 1797, Ochs II, 140 and 141; Ochs to Burckhardt, 29 December, 1797, Ochs II, 153, same to same, 23 nivose VI (12 January, 1798) Ochs II, 179, same to same, 25 nivose VI (14 January 1798) Ochs II, 183.

¹⁷Mangourit to Merlin, 20 germinal VI (9 April, 1798) AF^{III} 83, v. 343, 47, Dunant, 157. Provisional Directory of Valais to French Directory, AF^{III} 83, v. 343, 45, Dunant, 158;

as Mengaud observed, General Brune was pursuing policies which ran directly counter to declared French policy.¹⁸

French activities in Switzerland indeed appeared a "déluge de contradictions" when on 27 February Brune began to implement a tri-partite division of Switzerland whereby the French and Italian speaking areas, the forest cantons and the cantons of the German-speaking north were all to become separate entities. Brune's experiment appears to have been the result of a misunderstanding on his part of the instructions he had received from Paris,¹⁹ but at the same time it must be seen as the logical conclusion of the campaign to secure the Alpine passes. When on 16 March 1798 Brune proclaimed the "République rhodanique" this was to include the Italian bailiwicks, Valais, Vaud, Fribourg, Morat and Nidau, with Lausanne as capital.²⁰ It can be seen, however, that while this division of Switzerland allowed the Swiss passes to come under closer French control, it did not in fact satisfy the other, equally

Lecarlier to Directory 20 floreal VI (9 May, 1798) AF^{III}86, v. 366, 30, Dunant, 151; Proclamation of Directory of Valais, 20 March, 1798, AF^{III}83, v. 343, 67, Dunant, 153. Valaisans to French Directory, 11 April, 1798, AF^{III}86, v. 366, 17, Dunant, 156. Rufer, op. cit. p. 27.

¹⁸Mengaud to Reubell, 22 ventose VI (12 March, 1798) AF^{III}85, v. 351, 78 Dunant, 133. Ibid. number 85, Dunant, 137. Ochs to Talleyrand, 10 March, 1798, Ochs II, 238; Bignon to Talleyrand, AeS v. 466, 85 and 89, Dunant, 30 and 31; Ochs to Talleyrand, 7 germinal VI (27 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 100, Dunant, 33. Mengaud to Talleyrand, AF^{III}85, v. 351, 79 Dunant, 134. Talleyrand report to French Directory, no date, AeS. v. 467, 9, Dunant, 169.

¹⁹Dunant, pp. xxiii - xiv, citing W. Oechsli, Die Schweiz in den Jahren 1798 und 1799 pp. et seq. Mengaud to Directory, 2 germinal VI (22 March, 1798) AF^{III}85, v. 351, 114, Dunant 137. Report of Gauthier to Directory 21 ventose VI (11 March, 1798) AF^{III}83, v. 343, 69, Dunant, 152. See also Ochs, II, 248

²⁰Boehtlingk, p. 126. See report from Brune in Moniteur 26 ventose VI (29 March, 1798).

important French requirement that Switzerland be organized as a unified buffer against Austria on the east.

On 27 ventôse VI (17 March, 1798) Brune was therefore instructed to work for the implementation of a centralized constitution for all of Switzerland. The French Directory at the same time publicly affirmed its support for the Ochs' constitution.²¹ Mengaud received instructions to use all means to destroy resistance to the unification "...de la Suisse en une seule république."²² Talleyrand wrote to Ochs in this sense also on 27 ventôse:

Comme il est de nature à assurer le bonheur de L'Helvétie, le Directoire ne cessera point de favoriser son entière adoption et en continuant de travailler dans ce sens vous avez la certitude d'obtenir le suffrage de la nation française....²³

There was to be no question of modification of this fundamental point, for as Talleyrand expressed it, "...c'est à ce prix que la République française promet aux suisses son alliance et sa protection."²⁴

²¹Mengaud to Ochs, 29 ventose VI (19 March, 1798) FAH. Ochs, II, 248.

²²Talleyrand to Mengaud, 12 ventose VI (2 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 16, Dunant 6.

²³Talleyrand to Ochs, 27 ventose VI (17 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 68, Dunant, 22. Bignon to Talleyrand, 12 germinal VI (1 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 114, Dunant, 40; Talleyrand to Mengaud, 14 germinal VI (3 April, 1798) AeS, v. 466, 117, Dunant 42.

²⁴Talleyrand to Mengaud, 12 ventose VI (2 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, Dunant, 6.

RÉPUBLIQUE RHODANIQUE	HELVÉTIE	TELLGAU	GRISONS (RHÉTIE)

The unitary constitution was to be imposed on the Swiss, in spite of any hesitations they might have. As Ochs said in February, "...l'intention est qu'elle soit acceptée le plus tôt possible, mais que nous avons l'air de l'accepter volontairement." Mengaud seized all occasions to indicate the fundamental importance of this proposition, "...quoique je conaisse déjà l'aversion du plus grand nombre à cet égard."²⁵ Swiss reservations did appear to be serious. When the Balois constitutional proposal had been presented on 15 March, many cantons had seized the opportunity to declare for greater local autonomy. While the Paris constitution was accepted by Vaud, Fribourg and Valais (with qualifications), the Basel version was ultimately adopted by Aargau, Baden, Berne, Lucerne, the Oberland, Obwald, Schaffhausen, Solothurn, the Thurgau and Zürich.²⁶ While the latter areas objected to the centralized nature of the Paris constitution, the forest cantons objected specifically to the proposal to institute representative democracy as opposed to the direct forms of the "landesgemeinde". When the new legislature of the Helvetic Republic met on 12 April, of the forest cantons, only

²⁵Ochs to Vischer, 5 February, 1798, Ochs, II, 214; Mengaud to Talleyrand, 12 ventose VI (2 March, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 7, Dunant 2. Talleyrand to Bignon, 24 germinal VI (13 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 138, Dunant, 52. French agents had received the order on 23 pluviôse VI (11 February 1798) to insist on the acceptance of the unitary constitution. Ochs to Burckhardt, 23 pluviôse VI, Ochs II, 221. All deputies who were elected to the new Helvetic government sitting at Arrau were required in addition to report to Brune, where they could be once more encouraged in this direction. Ochs to Laharpe, 20 March, 1798, Ochs II, 249.

²⁶Rufer, op. cit. pp. 27 - 28. See also Rufer's article, "A propos de la constitution du Valais", Annales historiques de la Révolution française, XXII (1950) pp. 60 - 61.

representatives from Obwald were present. There were reports of armed resistance being prepared in these areas to the imposition of the new constitution.²⁷ In addition, the Grisons, Valais and Ticino were not represented, and when the French imposed sanctions on the recalcitrant areas, the Waldstätten, including Obwald, which had been induced to revoke its earlier adhesion to the Republic, marched on Lucerne. With unexpected determination, they captured it on the first of May.²⁸ The Helvetic legislature nevertheless had constituted itself on 12 April, and had elected a government,²⁹ which fatefully was required to call on immediate French protection from the insurgents.

²⁷Lecarlier had hoped that these cantons "se fussent rapprochés du centre commun et surtout s'ils n'eussent pas été égarés au point de se porter à des actes hostiles contre ceux de leurs anciens alliés qui avoient adopté le nouveau mode de gouvernement...." AFIII86, v. 366, 30, Dunant, 151.

²⁸The sanctions were imposed as a means of pacific persuasion. Talleyrand to Bignon, 9 floréal VI (28 April 1798): "J'espère que la proclamation qui interdit toute communication avec les cantons dissidens, les amenera dans peu à l'unité de la République." AeS. v. 466, 171, Dunant, 68. Schauenbourg decree, Berne 24 germinal VI (13 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 134, Dunant, 50; Lecarlier to Directory, 20 floréal VI (9 May, 1798) AFIII86, v. 366, 30 Dunant, 151; Mengaud and Bignon to Talleyrand, 12 floréal VI (1 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, nos. 176 and 179. Dunant, 70 and 71.

²⁹Ochs was elected to the presidency of the Senate, and Kuhn from Berne to that of the other part of the legislature, the Great Council. The five Directors were elected: Lucas Legrand from Basel; Maurice Glayre from Vaud; Victor Oberlin from Solothurn; Ludwig Bay of Berne and Alphonse Pfyffer of Lucerne; as well as the new ministers of the government: Bégos, from Vaud (foreign affairs); Finsler, from Zürich (finance); F.-B. Meyer von Sohauensee, from Lucerne (justice); Phillippe-A. Stäpfer of Brugg (education) and A. Rengger from Berne (interior ministry). See notes by Ochs, 3 April to 6 May, 1798, Ochs, II, 440; Mengaud to Talleyrand, 28-30 germinal VI (17-19 April 1798), AeS. v. 466, 144 and 147, Dunant, 55 and 56.

The French were in any case not prepared to allow this resistance to continue, and sent Brune's successor, Schauenbourg, into the area to quash this revolt. Lucerne was recaptured on 5 May, 1798, and the Waldstätten capitulated.³⁰ An insurrection which had broken out in Valais by this time was quelled with equal alacrity by Schauenbourg. The provisional Valaisan régime, sponsored by Mangourit, which had accepted a qualified version of the Paris constitution on 16 April but had been overthrown by armed insurgents from Haut-Valais. These were decisively defeated by Schauenbourg on his return from Schwyz on 17 May.³¹ The aftermath of this revolt in the vicinity of the strategic Alpine passes was marked by deliberately severe French reprisals.³² Coercion, however, was not required to induce the adherence of Ticino to the Helvetic Republic for, after initial hesitations, Italian speaking representatives appeared in Arrau in August.³³

³⁰Mengaud to Talleyrand, 16 floréal VI (5 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 197, Dunant, 82; Laharpe to Talleyrand, 17 floréal VI (6 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 202, Dunant 84; Mengaud to Talleyrand, 26 floréal VI (15 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 240, Dunant 108.

³¹Mangourit to Merlin, 20 germinal VI (9 April, 1798) AFIII83, v. 343, 47, Dunant, 157; Provisional Directory of Valais to French Directory, 16 April, 1798, AFIII83, v. 343, 45, Dunant, 158; Lecarlier to Directory, 20 floréal VI (9 May, 1798) AFIII86, v. 366, 30 Dunant, 151; Proclamation of Directory of Valais, 20 March, 1798, AFIII83, v. 343, 67, Dunant, 153; and proclamation of 22 germinal VI (11 April, 1798) AFIII86, v. 366 annex, 17, Dunant, 156.

³²Mangourit to Merlin, 18 floréal VI (7 May, 1798) AFIII83, v. 343, 57, Dunant 160; Mangourit report 3 prairial VI (22 May, 1798) and letters to Merlin, 29 floréal VI (18 May 1798) and 30 floréal VI (19 May, 1798) AFIII83, v. 343, 23, 50 and 51, Dunant, 164, 162 and 163; Rapinat to Directory, 4 prairial VI (23 May, 1798) Dunant, 276.

³³On the Revolution in Ticino, see Rappard, p. 533; Helvetic Directory to Mengaud, 7 May, 1798, AeS. v. 466, 205, Dunant, 85.

Thus by the summer of 1798, initial resistance to the Helvetic scheme had been quelled and the French requirements which had led to the French invasion of Switzerland appeared to be fulfilled. The unitary constitution had been imposed on those areas of the former Confederation which had resisted French promptings in this direction. A new Helvetic government, based on the French model, had entered into its functions in early April, and its jurisdiction had been extended to all areas of the Confederation with the exception of the Grisons and those areas which had been annexed.^{33a} Not only the Helvetic government, but the recently elected representatives to the Helvetic legislature clearly looked to France for guidance in their newly unified political affairs.³⁴ The influence of the forest cantons and the other "landes-gemeinde" areas of the east had been reduced through adjustment of cantonal representations,³⁵ and Berne was not only

^{33a}The Valtelline and the entire old Bishopric of Basel had been annexed, as noted above. In addition, at noon, 15 April, 1798, 600 troops under General Girard quietly occupied Geneva at the instigation of the French resident there, Felix Desportes. Geneva was incorporated into the French department of Léman on 8 fructidor VI (25 August, 1798) and was governed under French law from 1 vendémiaire VII (22 September, 1798). Under the new arrangement, Geneva was in theory to enjoy substantial advantages as the "chef-lieu" of the department, but in fact suffered from competition with Lyons, as well as from French duties and the requirement to provide conscripts to French armies. Edouard Chapuisat, Le Commerce et l'industrie à Genève pendant la domination française (Geneva, 1908) passim, and pp. 363 - 372.

³⁴Talleyrand to Directory, n.d. AeS. v. 466, 8 Dunant, 169. Mengaud to Talleyrand, 28 germinal VI (17 April, 1798): "Les patriotes pleins de confiance en moi vinrent me consulter sur le choix qu'ils oient à faire [concerning the creation of the government] et j'ai la satisfaction de voir que ce sont ceux que j'ai indirectement désignés qui ont réuni les suffrages." AeS. v. 466, 144, Dunant, 155.

³⁵The forest cantons which would have sent forty-eight

under military occupation, but had also been divided into three parts by the creation of the two new cantons of Vaud and the Oberland.³⁶ As the deputies met at Arrau in assemblies which reflected not only the fundamental changes which had been wrought in the Swiss constitution but also a striking redistribution of political influence inside Switzerland, Bignon, secretary to the French legation reported that: "Le calme le plus profond règne en ce moment dans toutes les parties de la Suisse."³⁷

During the initial conflicts, however, the extent to which the new Helvetic régime was compromised by the connection with the French government and its armies had become increasingly apparent. French troops were required to defend the central government from indigenous resistance to what was in essence a foreign formula for the reorganization of Switzerland. The Swiss, whose tranquillity was therefore assured by the French,

delegates to Arrau, were reorganized into a single unit, "Waldstätten" from which they sent twelve. In a similar manner, Glaris, Sargans, Saint Gall and Appenzell were united into the two new cantons of Linth and Sentis. In theory this was done to reduce administrative costs to the cantons themselves, but it effectively reduced the vital influence of the lands of the landesgemeinde. Aktensammlung I, p. 940; Rapinat to Directory, 16 floréal VI (5 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 195, Dunant 80. See also the memoir annotated by Reubell, dated 18 April, 1798, "Inconvénients de la division actuelle du territoire helvétique", Reubell Papers, Georges Privat catalogue, 175, 622, printed in Ochs, II, 442.

³⁶Remarks of Reubell on the note of 5 floréal VI (24 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 157, Dunant, 61 and the note by Talleyrand, 8 floréal VI (27 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 163, Dunant, 66.

³⁷Bignon to Talleyrand, 28 floréal VI (17 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 245, Dunant, 110.

came increasingly to resent the cost of their liberation. Not only those areas which had risen in revolt, but indeed the whole of Switzerland was required to pay the costs of the initial invasion and the continuing French military presence through "contributions" to the French government.³⁸

The Swiss had reason to be indignant at the pillage, outlined in an appendix to this paper, which rapidly destroyed their financial resources.³⁹ Their concern was justifiably reflected in the many notes of protest sent by the Helvetic Government to Paris, which had nevertheless strikingly little effect. These demanded the restitution of confiscated treasure and arms, the reduction of the numbers of French troops in Switzerland, and an end to the ravages of French troops in passage through the Helvetic Republic to Italy. French agents were called upon to conduct themselves less arbitrarily and to work in concert with Helvetic government policy.⁴⁰

³⁸Since the French theoretically had no interest in a revolution in Switzerland beyond the purely altruistic, the Swiss were called upon to pay French costs, Talleyrand to Lecarlier, 13 floréal VI (2 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 189, Dunant, 75; Lecarlier to Directory, 20 floréal VI (9 May, 1798) AFIII86, v. 366, 30, Dunant, 151; Mengaud, to Directory, 16 ventôse VI (6 March, 1798) AFIII85, v. 351, 71, Dunant, 131. The initial contribution required was sixteen million livres.

³⁹See Appendix One, "A Note on Rapacity".

⁴⁰See in particular the note from Luthard, Stapfer and Laharpe, 5 floréal VI (24 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 156, Dunant, 60. See also V. 466, 141, 207, 227, 228, Dunant, 53, 93, 99, 100. See Zeltner to French Directory, 7 prairial VI (25 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 285, Dunant, 122. Also Rufer,

A CONTEMPORARY WOODCUT

A CONTEMPORARY WOODCUT

While Talleyrand felt that the Swiss government should be self-supporting in financial matters, French exactions to an ever greater extent restricted the economic resources upon which the Helvetic government was based and antagonized the Swiss population to the extent that the government's main support, French military power, became its principal liability.

It is not surprising, in this context, to find that the Helvetic government was ineffective. It clearly lacked the power to command the allegiance of its citizens, largely if not principally because it could not protect them from its foreign mentor. The situation was complicated by the fact that many participants in the Helvetic government and legislature did not believe in the fundamental proposition on which the government was based, the unitary constitution.⁴¹ As the situation evolved, given the French appreciation of the fundamental reluctance of the Swiss to make the unitary constitution a success, French representatives, and in partic-

"Helvétique", p. 29. There is a resumé of the representations of Zeltner, the Helvetic minister in Paris in AeS. v. 466, 285, Dunant 122, noted above. See the protest to Schauenbourg, 30 May, 1798 AeS. v. 466, 303, Dunant, 129, and the protest to Paris, same date, AeS. v. 466, 304, Dunant, 130.

⁴¹Even the executive power of the Directory of the Helvetic Republic was divided along these lines. In the new Directory Bay and Legrand declared openly for a return to "federalism", while Pfyffer expressed criticism of the Ochs' constitution. Mengaud was convinced that these objections were the result of the disfavour with which the Swiss tended to view Ochs. "C'était moins la chose qui déplaisait que son auteur." to Directory, 16 germinal VI (5 April, 1798) AFIII 85, 123, Dunant, 142, Chapuisat, Suisse, p. 135.

ular Rapinat, developed deep suspicions of the Swiss government. Rapinat, who had become the principal French agent in Switzerland in May, quickly came to the conclusion that the Helvetic Directory was in the hands of Anglophiles.⁴² The Swiss government was ineffective, he thought, because of obstruction from within, particularly by those Bernese who had managed, in spite of a French predisposition against them, to reach high positions under the Helvetic régime. Rapinat in particular resented the justifiable Swiss complaints against French rapacity and against his own imperiousness. He therefore staged a coup d'état in June 1798 with a view to replacing the Helvetic Directors Bay and Pfyffer by individuals who were more sympathetic to the French government.

Rapinat's original plan was to put into the Directory Ochs and Dolder, a manufacturer from Wildegg in Aargau. As the complicated intrigue developed, Laharpe replaced Dolder as the fifth member of the reformed Directory. The crisis in Switzerland lasted some ten days, during which Bay and Pfyffer resigned, were re-instated, Rapinat was suspended in his functions by the French government, and Ochs found himself

⁴²Rapinat felt that all those who were complaining about French exactions were "oligarcues", to Directory, 12 prairial VI (31 May, 1798), AFIII86, v. 365, 29, Dunant, 278. The Helvetic Directors were only "fonctionnaires" who were resisting French supervision, to Directory, 6 prairial VI (25 May, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 18 Dunant, 277 and AFIII84, v. 346, 12, Dunant, 276; Bignon to Talleyrand, 2 prairial VI (21 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 258, Dunant, 116. See Mangourit to Directory, 25 prairial VI (13 June, 1798) where he suggested a coup to "Fructidoriser" the Swiss government, AFIII83, v. 343, 43, Dunant, 165. Rapinat had apparently discussed this matter with Ochs on prairial (16 June, 1798), after Ochs had written to him in support of his contention that the complaints of the Helvetic Government were excessive. AFIII84, d. 346, 56 Annex C, Dunant, 289 and 291, C.

alternately a Director and not a Director.⁴³ In fact the French government appears to have been caught unprepared for Rapinat's initiative, and only later came to realize the significance of what he had done, to create a francophile Helvetic government.

The new Directory was therefore the creation of Rapinat, whose principal purpose had been to introduce Ochs into the government as an antidote to what he saw as anglophile tendencies in the Directory,⁴⁴ In this specific instance, Ochs was seen as the spokesman for the unitary constitution and as the advocate of the defensive and offensive alliance with France which the French had found they could not induce the former government to support.⁴⁵ More fundamentally, Ochs was introduced as a French voice on the Helvetic Directory, as the means by which the French government could have access to the confidential discussions of the Helvetic Directory. As Bignon expressed it, "...on apprécie généralement la nécessité

⁴³Aktensammlung, II, pp. 234, 237, 239, 253 and 319. "J'eusse bien désiré pouvoir également écarter un citoyen Legrand mais comme il est nécessaire que les Directeurs restent en nombre suffisant pour gouverner, j'ai laissé Legrand, Glayre et Oberlin en place jusqu'après la nomination des citoyens Ochs et Dolder...." Rapinat to Directory AFIII81, Dunant, 288, Ochs, II, 444C. Rapinat to Directory, 10 messidor VI (28 June, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 64 Dunant 292; Rapinat to Directory, 28 prairial VI (16 June, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 49 Dunant, 288; Bignon to Talleyrand, 10 messidor VI (28 June, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 63, Dunant, 201; same to same 12 messidor VI (30 June, 1798) AeS. v. 467, Dunant, 200.

⁴⁴Rapinat to Directory, 28 prairial VI (16 June, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 49 Dunant, 288.

⁴⁵Ochs to Talleyrand, 23 Thermidor VI (10 August, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 162 Dunant, 235. Laharpe was also pressed to the advocacy of this alliance when the French Directory congratulated him on his elevation, 19 messidor VI (7 July, 1798) AFIII175, Dunant, 270.

de ce choix."⁴⁶

Rapinat was however not entirely satisfied by this arrangement, since he felt that for his purposes, Laharpe was a less satisfactory Director than Dolder would have been and thought that Dolder, Oberlin and Ochs would have formed a majority in the Directory which would have been completely subservient to France. As things stood, Laharpe, through his contacts with Glayre and Legrand, the other Directors, might come to dominate the Helvetic government. Laharpe, although he had used French support as openly as Ochs had done in order to accomplish the "revolution" in Switzerland, and the liberation of Vaud, had displayed a disconcerting bitterness over French rapacity. Ochs' devotion to French interests, however, could be expected to have served as a brake on any feelings of ingratitude which Laharpe might have had. Ochs was on the other hand pleased with developments, and informed Rapinat on 21 June of his pleasure at finding himself in the Helvetic Directory, "...où vous avez bien voulu me placer."⁴⁷ Rapinat was at the same time informed by Ochs of all that passed inside the Directory,⁴⁸ and was thus enabled to offset any incipient francophobia among his colleagues.

⁴⁶Bignon to Talleyrand, 6 messidor VI (24 June 1798) AeS. v. 467, 55, Dunant, 195.

⁴⁷Ochs to Rapinat, 3 messidor VI (21 June, 1798) AFIII81, v. 337, Dunant, 291.

⁴⁸Rapinat to Directory, 24 messidor VI (12 July, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 76, Dunant, 299. See Palmer, Democratic Revolution, II, p. 409.

The immediate result of Ochs' election to the Directory was that the reformed Helvetic government concluded an offensive and defensive alliance with France on 19 August, 1798.⁴⁹ The Swiss had been reluctant to take this final step to acknowledge the reality of the 1798 invasion. On a theoretical level, as Talleyrand observed, this was because it would involve a complete revolution in Swiss external relations.⁵⁰ On a more practical and immediate plane, however, although the alliance provided for mutual assistance in war and peace, it opened Switzerland to Austrian attack as an ally of France, which also committed the Swiss to providing eighteen thousand auxiliaries for French wars. On the other hand, the French promised in secret articles to cede the Frickthal to Switzerland, to work for the unification of the Grisons and the Vorarlberg to the Helvetic republic, and to withdraw French troops within three months. French troops were in addition to be maintained during the interim at French expense.⁵¹

⁴⁹Bignon to Talleyrand, 8 fructidor VI (25 August, 1798) AeS. v. 467, Dunant, 251; Talleyrand to Directory, n.d. AeS. v. 467, 8, Dunant, 169; Ochs to Talleyrand, 28 thermidor VI (15 August, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 177, Dunant, 240.

⁵⁰Talleyrand to Directory, loc. cit. AeS. v. 467, 8 Dunant, 169.

⁵¹The treaty appropriately guaranteed the integrity of Swiss territory and of the unitary constitution. It also provided for the joining of the Rhine and the Rhône by a canal, for the supply of Switzerland with French salt, and for the negotiation of a reciprocal commerce treaty, which proved difficult of realization, since the French tended to see it as a lever with which they could bring pressure upon the Helvetic Government. Aktensammlung, III, p. 79; AeS. v. 368, 127, Dunant, 354; See Aktensammlung, II, p. 894; Rapinat to Directory, n.d. AeS. v. 467, 81, Dunant, 213. The cost of the troops on a monthly basis was estimated to be 965,926 livres, 71 centimes. See War Ministry memorandum, 14 fructidor VI (31 August, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 216, Dunant, 258.

With the ratification of the Treaty of Alliance, normal diplomatic relations between France and Switzerland were ostensibly resumed. It was therefore appropriate that the "commissaires" should be replaced in Switzerland by an ambassador. To this end the French government named a "Ministre plénipotentiaire auprès de la république helvétique", Perrochel. The illusion of a new departure was further enhanced when Rapinat, feeling that Perrochel's appointment indicated a loss of confidence in him, resigned.⁵² Yet, it must be noted that the French government had a useful lever inside the Helvetic Directory, in the person of Ochs, who remained consistently devoted to the French interest during this period.⁵³ In addition, the French did not in any case envisage a departure from Berne, which was to remain under occupation.⁵⁴ Perrochel's instructions, indeed, indicated clearly that French intentions toward Switzerland had not

⁵²Rapinat to Directory, 27 vendémiaire VII (10 October, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 119, Dunant 431. Rapinat had strongly objected to any proposal that the Directory might reduce the strength of French troops in Switzerland. Rapinat to Directory, n.d. AeS. v. 467, 81, Dunant, 213. He left Switzerland on 5 nivôse VII (25 December, 1798). Same to same 11 frimaire VII (1 December, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, Dunant, 436.

⁵³Ochs II: 314; 316; 318; 319; 321; 322; 323; 324; 325; 326; 327; 328; 329; 331; 332; 333; 334; 335; 337; 338; 339; 341; 342; 343; 344; 345; 346; 347; 348; 349; 350; 351; 352; 360; 362; Dunant, 232; 235; 240; 251; 324; 380; 366; 385; 486; 536; 542; 653. Ochs correspondence with the French Directory, covering the period from June, 1798 to June 1799.

⁵⁴Troops would only be removed from Berne were the officer commanding to feel that this was safe. Talleyrand to Rapinat, 17 prairial VI (5 June, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 115, Dunant, 221.

changed even if the policy had become more conciliatory. Perrochel was to work for the practical implementation of the August alliance, and to prepare the Alpine routes for increased French passage.⁵⁵

Circumstances, however, were to discourage a French withdrawal, even if this was genuinely contemplated. The newly revised relations with France antagonized Austria, whose frontier was no longer defended by Swiss neutrality. At the same time a new revolt broke out in Zug, Schwyz and Unterwalden when these areas were required to swear an oath of loyalty to the new régime, to liberty and equality, and of hatred for anarchy and aristocratic license.⁵⁶ Although the Helvetic government managed to subdue the area with its own troops, the essential instability of the régime in the eastern areas was once more made clear. The situation was especially critical since this area was adjacent to the Grisons, which following the failure of the efforts of the French resident

⁵⁵In particular, troops were to be disengaged from the Helvetic Republic so that they could be used in the anticipated conflict with Austria. Talleyrand to Perrochel, n.d. AeS. v. 368, 199, Dunant, 381.

⁵⁶Zeltner to Talleyrand, 1 nivôse VII (21 December, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 276, Dunant, 413; Rapinat to Directory, 1 thermidor VI (19 July, 1798) AFIII84, v. 346, 82, Dunant, 301; Steinherr (Secretary of the Imperial legation in Basel) to the prefect of Basel, 9 July 1798, AeS. v. 467, 86, Dunant, 214; Zeltner and Jenner to Talleyrand, 3 thermidor VI (21 July 1798) AeS. v. 467, 112, Dunant, 220; Talleyrand to Zeltner, 14 fructidor VI (31 August, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 215, Dunant, 276, Bignon to Talleyrand, 12 and 16 fructidor VI (29 August and 2 September, 1798) AeS. v. 467, 208 and v. 468, 2, Dunant, 252 and 306.

there to have it declared for the "Helvétique", had already been occupied by the Austrians.⁵⁷

The Austrian move into the Grisons was but one of the protracted preliminaries to the War of the Second Coalition. Just as the Peace of Campo Formio had failed to protect Switzerland from French invasion, so it had failed to provide for enduring European peace. While Bonaparte's fertile intellect and grandiose ambition had led him to Egypt, the French also re-inforced their position in Switzerland and the Alpine passes. In Switzerland the most obvious effect of the movement back to war in Europe was that the French did not withdraw their troops by the 19 October deadline, as stipulated in the August 1798 Alliance. French occupation was rather extended to include Ticino and Basel, the first to protect the route from Haut-Rhin to Milan, and the second to protect the left wing of the French army in Switzerland.⁵⁸ In spite of agreements to the contrary, the Swiss were once more called upon to fill French requisitions, and were pressed to provide Swiss troops and other military support to their allies under the provisions of the August alliance.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Guiot (French resident in the Grisons) to Directory, 13 prairial VI (1 June, 1798) AFII 184, v. 346, 30 Dunant, 279. Supplement to the instructions to Perrochel, n.d. AeS. v. 368, 200 Dunant, 382: "Les Grisons se sont départis envers la France du système de neutralité qu'ils avaient observé, entraînés qu'ils sont par l'Autriche." Zeltner to Talleyrand, 16 brumaire VII (6 November, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 184, Dunant, 376.

⁵⁸War Ministry to Talleyrand, 3 brumaire VII (24 October, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 142, Dunant, 359; Schauenbourg to French Directory, 9 brumaire VII (30 October, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 159 Dunant, 368 and same to same 14 brumaire VII (4 November 1798) AeS. v. 368, 174, Dunant, 370; Aktensammlung III, 28; Talleyrand to Zeltner, 18 brumaire VII (8 November, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 196, Dunant, 379.

⁵⁹Zeltner to French Directory, 15 brumaire VII (5 November,

Auxiliary Swiss troops were not forthcoming mainly for reasons involving their equipment, which the Helvetic government could not afford. Funds were very limited and of the estimated five hundred thousand francs felt to be necessary to raise the auxiliaries, by mid-March 1799, the Helvetic Directory had only some twenty thousand at its disposal.⁶⁰ The lack of resources had become generally known, and under these conditions Swiss were reluctant to enlist.⁶¹ The military resources of the Helvetic Republic were indeed strained at this point, for it was simultaneously organizing frontier and home defence units, with an eye on the Austrian danger.

The precariousness of the Swiss situation did not however become immediately apparent. It was only made clear after Schauenbourg's successor in command of the French army in Switzerland had defeated the Austrian Army on 7 March, 1799. Massena's victory drove the Austrians from the Grisons, and made the completion of Helvetic unity possible. The Grisons

1798) AeS. v. 368, 180, Dunant, 372; Helvetic Directory to Ratinat, 8 October 1798 AeS. v. 368, 149 and same to same 14 October, 1798, AeS. v. 368, 150, Dunant, 361 and 362.

⁶⁰Law of 22 November, 1798, Aktensammlung, III, p. 621; Talleyrand to Perrochel, 26 frimaire VII (16 December, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 271, Dunant, 408; AeS. v. 368, 142, 143, 154, 155, 156, 157, Dunant, 359, 360, 363, 364, 365, 366; Schauenbourg to Directory, 14 brumaire VII (4 November, 1798) AeS. v. 368, 174, Dunant, 370. It was decided that any auxiliaries to be raised in Switzerland must be recruited at French expense. Ochs to Talleyrand, 14 November, 1798, AeS. v. 368, 209, Dunant, 385; Talleyrand to Ochs, 17 pluviôse VII (5 February 1799) AeS. v. 469, 65, Dunant, 479; Barras, III, p. 347; Perrochel to Talleyrand, 11 germinal VII (31 March, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 180, Dunant, 529.

⁶¹Perrochel to Schauenbourg, 17 ventôse VII (7 March, 1799) AFIII 86, v. 369, Dunant, 588.

were formally incorporated into the Republic on 11 March 1799⁶² and the Helvetic Republic was immediately called upon to muster all its resources from its whole geographic extent to maintain its part in the war in 1799. The strain of this great effort ultimately destroyed the Helvetic régime, as it had been originally constituted.

The pressure on the Helvetic Republic reflected the real threat to France that was posed not only by immediate Austrian interest in Switzerland but also by the preparations for war made by all the allies of the Second Coalition, and in particular Russia. The Russians had sent two armies west, one of which, under Souvarov, succeeded in driving the French from Italy, while the Royal navy participated in the capture of Naples in June and ferried Russian troops for a major landing under the Duke of York in Holland in August. In Italy and on the Rhine, the allies had drawn up massive forces to oppose the numerically weaker French armies. When in August Korsakov moved into Switzerland to hold the positions won by the Austrians under Archduke Charles and then in September Souvarov followed, it became obvious that Switzerland was seen by the allies as the key to eastern France. While the French armies wanted both material and reinforcements, and their lines were severely tried after the Russian success in Italy, Wickham returned to Austrian-occupied Switzerland to resume his communications into France, and his connections with the Swiss.^{62a}

⁶²Aktensammlung, III, 362.

^{62a}Lefebvre, The French Revolution, II, pp. 237 - 251.

Switzerland was now not only caught between Austria and France, but now found itself a battle ground as large Austrian, Russian and French armies swept across the continent. The Helvetic Directory, as Rapinat had predicted, had now come under the predominant leadership of Laharpe, who after initial hesitations,⁶³ rallied to the support of the French system in Switzerland. The Vaudois patriote became "le veritable chef du Directoire".^{63a} Laharpe used his influence, with French support, to begin a programme designed to increase potential Swiss resistance to the Austrian threat, and also to cope with internal disorders. Stringent laws were passed to make the refusal to do military service or the participation in counter-revolutionary activity punishable by death.⁶⁴ These measures reflected the seriousness with which the Helvetic government viewed the situation, and its determination to be equal to its commitments. The pressure of the war measures however caused renewed revolts in the eastern areas of the Republic, and at the same time caused divisions to develop among the Helvetic leaders, with Laharpe taking ever more extreme positions.⁶⁵ The continuing insurgency and the apparent helplessness of the Helvetic Government moved the French

⁶³See Chapter IV, below, pp.

^{63a}Rufer, "Helvétique", p. 37.

⁶⁴Aktensammlung, III, 424, 425, 426; Perrochel to Talleyrand, 11 germinal Vii (31 March, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 180, Dunant, 529.

⁶⁵In addition, Laharpe became the advocate of military taxation and forced loan, and spoke of founding popular societies. Rufer, "Helvétique", p. 37. His attitude was most

as we shall see to a fundamental re-consideration of their whole position in Switzerland.

Under the strain of the war measures, popular revolts undermined the credibility of the government. These began in the Toggenburg, and in the spring of 1799 ran through Linth, Lucerne, Fribourg, Solothurn, the Oberland, Aargau and the Seeland. A part of the French garrison in Schwyz was massacred, and in Haut-Valais government officials were put to flight. The Helvetic Directory called on French aid, and the re-appearance of French troops quickly ended resistance in Valais. The revolt on the passes was severely repressed, and Valais was put under martial law.⁶⁶

Resistance in the eastern areas of revolt was not so easily overcome, for the Austrians had invaded eastern Switzerland in force, and enjoyed such success that by 6 June, 1799 they had occupied Zürich, Schwyz, Glaris, Uri, Ticino and Haut-Falais.⁶⁷ Their military success did not however imply a political victory for the Austrians. Both as a result of

aptly presented by the observation which he made to Ochs in early June, 1799: "Audaces fortuna juvat." FAH. printed in Ochs, II, 376.

⁶⁶Perrochel to Talleyrand, 27 germinal and 5 floréal VII (16 April and 24 April, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 217 and 238, Dunant, 548 and 561; same to same, 13 floréal VII (2 May, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 4, Dunant 612 and Pichon to Reinhard, 29 vendémiaire VIII (20 October, 1799), AeS. v. 471, 123, Dunant, 835.

⁶⁷See Phipps, Armies, pp. 75 - 78 and 86 - 193.

their military occupation of the eastern areas and as a result of their attempts to restore the ancien régime in the areas under their control, the Austrians met much popular hostility. Perrochel reported with considerable candor that in the areas occupied by them, the Austrians were hated as much as the French.⁶⁸

The overthrow of the Republic was generally anticipated at this point. The Helvetic star was certainly low. In the face of the widespread revolts, the government administration had broken down. As the debt mounted the treasury was virtually empty. The French army was equally penniless and Swiss householders were once again required to feed and lodge French troops.⁶⁹ Lucerne was exposed to Austrian attack from the occupied regions. On 28 May, 1799 the Helvetic government retreated to Berne.⁷⁰ Perrochel's reports to Talleyrand painted a picture of steadily increasing gloom, ultimately arguing that the Swiss system should be abandoned.⁷¹ His

⁶⁸Perrochel to Talleyrand, 12 messidor VII (30 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 140, Dunant, 668.

⁶⁹The French army in Switzerland had no bread. By 13 messidor VII (31 July, 1799) it was down to 800 rations. Bertrand (Adjutant to the French army in Switzerland) to Deloës, (Helvetic government commissioner with the Valaisan division) 13 messidor VII (31 July, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 172, Dunant 683. The Military position was scarcely better. The army was in severe need of reinforcements, and at one point held only one fortified position beyond the Aare River. Perrochel to Talleyrand, 26 prairial VII (14 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 101, Dunant 651; same to same, 18 and 20 prairial VII (6 and 8 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 77 and 78, Dunant, 647 and 648.

⁷⁰Perrochel to Talleyrand, 14 prairial VII (2 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 69 Dunant, 642.

⁷¹Perrochel to Talleyrand, 14 germinal VII (3 April, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 185, Dunant, 532.

lack of optimism, it must be assumed, was not appreciated in Paris, for on 3 June, 1799, Talleyrand ordered his replacement by Reinhard.⁷²

It was in this context, essentially that of the disastrous results of the French alliance, that Ochs was forced on 25 June 1799 to resign from the Helvetic Directory. Discontent had focused on the August 1798 treaty and Laharpe seized the pretext of Ochs' intimate connections with the French government to secure his expulsion.⁷³ The idea appears to have been that the Directory might be saved by abandoning Ochs. The predominant French influence in the Directory was thus removed, and the government was substantially altered by the introduction of Philippe Secretan as Ochs' successor. While Legrand had been replaced on 29 January 1799 by Louis Bay, and Glayre by Dolder on 9 May, and then Bay by François Pierre Savary of Fribourg on 22 June, the dominant personality of Laharpe and the constant French support for Ochs had maintained an essential consistency in the Helvetic Government. When the French government allowed Ochs to be replaced,

⁷²Directory to Talleyrand, 15 prairial AeS. v. 470, 148 and 153, Dunant 674 and 676.

⁷³See Monnard, XVI, 453-455; Ochs to Talleyrand, 2 messidor VII (20 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 111, Dunant 653; Ochs resigned on 5 messidor VII (23 June, 1799) Perrochel to Talleyrand, 8 messidor VII (26 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 134, Dunant, 665. Perrochel reported on 10 messidor (28 June, 1799) that Ochs had been forced out of a position "...où on dit que le suffrage public ne l'avait pas appelé." AeS. v. 470, 139, Dunant, 667. Ochs furiously burnt his papers, and left for Basel, where he and his family met with considerable public hostility. Steiner, Ochs, II, pp. ccxcvi-vii. "Imaginez qu'avant la victoire de Masséna on insulta en pleine rue mon troisième fils, innocent créature qui, sous l'ancien gouvernement, était aussi modeste

this was taken as a signal that it was reconsidering its position in Switzerland. The Helvetic régime had by this point used up most of its credit in French eyes. The French government, in spite of many pleas from the Helvetic Directory, hesitated to come to its aid,⁷⁴ and in addition refused to rectify a reciprocal commerce treaty drafted on 30 May 1798. The French indicated that they would continue their procrastination until the Swiss produced the eighteen thousand auxiliaries, which the Helvetic government was clearly in no position to do.⁷⁵

The Helvetic Directory decided on 11 July, 1799 to send Maurice Glayre to Paris to seek termination of the August 1798 treaty and the return of Switzerland to neutrality.⁷⁶ Glayre arrived in Paris on 23 July, 1799, and informed Talleyrand that all the Helvetic Directors were prepared to resign unless something was done to satisfy their demands. Talleyrand however refused to discuss any such fundamental revision

que le dernier des citoyens, et que des jeunes gens vinrent former en rond autour de lui, criant à tue-tête; 'Guten Tag, Herr ex-Oberstzunftmeister, Burger ex-Director.'" Ochs to Laharpe, 29 March, 1802, Ochs III, 27.

⁷⁴See in particular the note from Jenner to Talleyrand, 21 floréal VII (10 May, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 30 Dunant, 623.

⁷⁵Talleyrand felt that the most important consideration here was the raising of 18,000 auxiliaries in Switzerland, according to the terms of the August, 1798 treaty. Talleyrand to Perrochel, 18 ventôse VII (8 March, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 128, Dunant, 499. He informed Ochs, 2 floréal VII (21 April, 1799) that while no troops were forthcoming, it would be impossible to come to a conclusion on the treaty of commerce. AeS. v. 469, 235, Dunant, 558. Jenner informed Talleyrand, 21 ventôse VII (11 March, 1799) that the Swiss were doing all they could to raise the troops, a position with which Perrochel agreed. AeS. v. 469, Dunant, 503 and Perrochel to Talleyrand, 23 ventôse VII (13 March, 1799) AeS. v. 469, 135, Dunant, 508.

⁷⁶Decree of Helvetic Directory, 11 July, 1799, AeS. v. 470,

of Franco-Swiss relations while the war continued, and ordered Masséna to arrest any Helvetic Director who resigned, and to ship him to France.⁷⁷

This is where matters stood when Masséna saved the Helvetic scheme from immediate catastrophe through his victory over the Austrians at Zürich on September, 1799. The news of the Austrian defeat also deterred the Russian general Souvarov, who had penetrated Switzerland to Altdorf, from continuing his campaign. By the middle of October, the Austrians and Russians had completely abandoned Switzerland, and the Helvetic administration had been re-established in their wake.⁷⁸

The Austrian and Russian failure, however, while it was a major blow to the Allies, did not signal an end to difficulties for the Helvetic government. Many of the old problems returned to plague Swiss politics, and not the least of these

164, Dunant, 681. As noted above, this solution was already being suggested by Perrochel. Helvetic Directory to French Directory, 11 July, 1799 AeS. v. 278, Dunant, 748; Aktensammlung, IV, pp. 1028 - 30. Glayre to Talleyrand, 23 July, 1799, AeS. v. 470, 207, Dunant, 702; Secretan to Talleyrand, 15 August, 1799, AeS. v. 470, 257, Dunant, 726.

⁷⁷Aktensammlung, IV, p. 1033; Zeltner to Talleyrand, 19 thermidor VII (6 August, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 234, Dunant, 714; Talleyrand to Masséna, 14 thermidor VII (1 August, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 227, Dunant, 710.

⁷⁸See J. Marshall-Cornwall, Marshall Massena (London, 1965), pp. 76-96; and Hans Nabholz, La Suisse sous la tutelle étreangère, volume 8 of Feldmann and Wirz, (ed.) Histoire militaire de la suisse (Basel, 1915), which has particularly useful maps. Perrochel to Talleyrand, 30 thermidor, 2 fructidor, and 4 fructidor VII (17 August, 19 August and 21 August, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 259, 261, 265, Dunant, 727, 728 and 730; Perrochel to Reinhard, 5 and 6 vendémiaire VIII (26 - 27 September, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 34 and 35, Dunant, 783 and 784; same to same, 13 vendémiaire VIII (4 October, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 47 Dunant, 790.

was a resurgence of French rapacity. Masséna had imposed new requisitions,⁷⁹ to fill the pressing need of his Army for supplies. There was terrible devastation in the recaptured areas.⁸⁰ In addition, the destructiveness of war was accompanied by a bad harvest in 1799. The winter of 1799-1800 was severe for all parts of Switzerland, and not less so in the more prosperous areas, which were overrun by French soldiers and forced to fill severe French requisitions. Perrochel took a strong stand against what he saw as unnecessarily heavy French exactions, and was recalled for his trouble,⁸¹ for, in Paris, Reinhard, who had just taken over from Talleyrand as Minister of Foreign Affairs, was no more sympathetic than his predecessor to Swiss problems.

The situation in the Helvetic Republic was sufficiently grave, however, that Pichon, formerly Perrochel's subordinate, now provisional secretary of the French legation in Helvetia, continued the line adopted by his predecessor.

⁷⁹Bégos to Perrochel, 9 October, 1799, and 11 October, 1799, AeS. v. 471, 59 and 60 Dunant, 798 and 799.

⁸⁰The Waldstätten were a "désert" -- after the passage of French troops, livestock had to be killed due to the lack of forage. In Valais, everything from Grimsel to the St. Bernard had been destroyed. Pichon to Reinhard, 29 brumaire VIII (19 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 123, Dunant, 835.

⁸¹Perrochel to French Directory, 19 vendémiaire VIII (10 October, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 56, Dunant, 797; Same to Reinhard, 20 vendémiaire, VIII (11 October, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 65, Dunant, 802; Reinhard to Perrochel, 7 brumaire VIII (28 October, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 75, Dunant, 808; Perrochel to Reinhard, 11 brumaire VIII (1 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 92, Dunant, 817; Perrochel to Talleyrand, 11 frimaire VIII (1 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 154, Dunant, 850. Boehtlingk, p. 171.

On est dans le chaos le plus parfait, et le premier pas à faire pour en sortir est de faire cesser une pression [sur le gouvernement helvétique] aussi forte que celle de la guerre. Tant que durera cette pression, c'est un rêve que la République helvétique, c'est une contradiction d'un jour à l'autre et dont tout le monde s'expose à être victime.⁸²

With the breakdown of Swiss administration and finances, Pichon called for French intervention to restore order, and for a clear statement from Paris which would define the French position on the internal affairs of Switzerland, following the fall of Ochs.⁸³ As Pichon saw it, what mattered to France was that Switzerland be calm, so that no matter what the internal organization of the Republic, the frontier of France would be defended.⁸⁴

Pichon's requests fell on fertile ground, for his last letters were received by the new Consulate of France, formed after Bonaparte's brumaire coup. This event had returned Talleyrand to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and it also meant that Bonaparte, who had played such a marked role in the 1798 revolution of Switzerland, was required to come to grips with a problem that he had done much to create.

⁸²Pichon to Talleyrand, 29 brumaire VIII (19 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 123, Dunant, 835.

⁸³Pichon to Talleyrand, 18 frimaire VIII (8 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 179, Dunant, 859.

⁸⁴Same to same, same date, AeS. v. 471, 174, Dunant, 860.

The time was ripe for a new departure. The Helvetic government had received official notification of the change in the French régime on 30 brumaire VIII (20 November, 1799) and already on 2 frimaire (22 November) Pichon was reporting that this change had encouraged the Swiss to hope for a change in their lot. Pichon felt that Swiss optimism should be used to advantage and that the French government should immediately abandon the use of force in its relations with the Helvetic Republic.⁸⁵ The Helvetic minister in Paris, Zeltner, made pointed reference to the fact that the control of French external relations was reserved explicitly to the First Consul.⁸⁶

As Pichon reported, there was a general desire in Switzerland to be done with foreign occupation. Even now, after the French victory over the Austrians, there were new "contributions" to pay, principally in Zürich but also in Basel and Saint Gall. Helvetic finances were in chaos. Grain supplies were virtually non-existent and Public servants, deputies and Directors included, had not received any remuneration in twelve to fifteen months. The administration functioned badly, and the peoples of Switzerland were both discontented and deprived.⁸⁷

⁸⁵Pichon to Reinhard, 21 brumaire VIII (11 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 106, Dunant, 824; Pichon to Bégos, 30 brumaire VIII (20 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 126, Dunant, 837; Pichon to Talleyrand, 2 and 7 frimaire VIII (22 and 27 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 130 and 141, Dunant, 840 and 844.

⁸⁶Zeltner to Talleyrand, 15 nivôse VIII (4 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 12, Dunant, 893.

⁸⁷Pichon to Reinhard, 18 and 19 brumaire VIII (8-9 September, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 99 and 103, Dunant, 819 and 821. Pichon to Reinhard, 26 brumaire VIII (16 November, 1798) AeS. 471, 114, Dunant 830; Pichon to Talleyrand, 5 frimaire VIII (25 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 139 Dunant, 843.

No. 6.

LIBERTÉ

ÉGALITÉ

LE DIRECTOIRE EXÉCUTIF
DE LA RÉPUBLIQUE HELVÉTIQUE UNE ET INDIVISIBLE

au Corps Législatif

Citoyens Représentants !

Le Directoire Exécutif doit se hâter de vous apprendre que le Gouvernement Français approuve sur l'article 2 du Traité d'Alliance, et conformément requiert votre coopération à la guerre qu'il se voit appelé à soutenir. Il le fait dans une lettre au Gouvernement helvétique, remise à celui-ci par le Citoyen Ministre Bernadotte le onze en courant, et dont l'extrait suit :

" Puisque le Traité qui nous a réunis, borne l'étendue de son application,
" la République française ne s'oppose point vos intérêts de l'Union, et ne
" lui d'attendre votre requête qui mettrait à votre honneur les bases
" que vous seroient convenus, c'est nous, Citoyens Directeurs, qui vous
" requerrons de mettre sur pied dix mille hommes pour être employés
" de la manière qui sera la plus avantageuse sur l'Etat. La République
" se nous ne s'oppose point encore contre que votre coopération est
" nécessaire, c'est parce que nous devons à la conservation l'esprit qui
" l'hostilité ne commencerait point."

AN ORDER FROM THE HELVETIC DIRECTORY

In particular the Helvetic government was protesting the presence of 4,600 men and 600 horses around Berne, posted there at Masséna's orders to be maintained by the inhabitants.⁸⁸ It was only to be expected that this situation would be exploited by the enemies of the Republic.

To meet this situation, Laharpe proposed drastic measures against all opposition, but unfortunately found himself supported only by a minority. His extraordinary remedies apparently would have involved more stringent levies, military taxation and the foundation of popular societies and clubs but they lacked support in both the Directory and the Legislature. Indeed a more moderate group led by Rengger, Kuhn, and Usteri specifically opposed his plans.⁸⁹ When Laharpe perceived that his only possible support would thus have to come from the French government, he proposed to Pichon a purge of the Helvetic Directory and Legislature.⁹⁰ Pichon reported to Paris a great fluidity in Helvetic affairs, and urged that the French government should take advantage of this to make a radical change in its posture in Switzerland. They should, in fact, abandon Laharpe, because he was "un homme très couvert, très ambitieux", and sever ~~their~~ relations with Ochs, for no specific reason.⁹¹

⁸⁸Zeltner to Reinhard, 24 brumaire VIII (14 November, 1798) AeS. v. 471, 110, Dunant, 826.

⁸⁹Rufer, "Helvétique" pp. 39-40; Pichon to Talleyrand, 6 nivôse VIII (26 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 186, Dunant, 873.

⁹⁰Pichon to Talleyrand, 5 frimaire VIII (25 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 139, Dunant, 843.

⁹¹Pichon to Talleyrand, 12 frimaire VIII (2 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 157, Dunant, 85.

In Switzerland, desultory discussion of revision of the constitution continued, while the Swiss awaited any new approaches which the rumoured appointment of Reinhard as French minister in Switzerland would bring. A Helvetic envoy appeared in Paris on 13 frimaire (3 December, 1799) and proposed to Talleyrand the re-establishment of Swiss neutrality, the ending of the offensive agreement; the removal of the constitutional guarantees and revision of the agreement allowing French military passage through Switzerland.⁹² According to Pichon, Rengger, Kuhn, Escher and Usteri wished to form a new government in Switzerland, which Pichon felt would represent not only the "paysans" but also the more traditional centres of political activity in Switzerland, the towns. They had also represented to Pichon the pressing need for measures to restore order in the Helvetic Republic.⁹³ Pichon attempted to stall all action until Reinhard should arrive in Switzerland with a definitive statement of French policy,⁹⁴ but he was nevertheless unable to prevent a collision.

Decisive action was precipitated by Laharpe, who proposed to Oberlin, and later to Dolder on 8 December 1799, that they

⁹²Zeltner to Talleyrand, 9 frimaire VIII (29 November, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 150, Dunant 848; Pichon to Talleyrand, 14 frimaire VIII (4 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 166, Dunant, 856; Jenner to Talleyrand, 13 and 14 frimaire VIII (3-4 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 162 and 165, Dunant, 854 and 855.

⁹³Pichon to Talleyrand, 26 and 30 frimaire VIII (16-20 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 183 and 191, Dunant, 865 and 870.

⁹⁴Pichon to Talleyrand, 21 and 26 frimaire VIII (11-16 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 178 and 184, Dunant, 861 and 866.

Stage a coup, and adjourn the legislature, thereby forestalling similar action against themselves by the Legislative Councils. Pichon prevented it by telling Oberlin that there would be no French aid for the project which Laharpe proposed.⁹⁵ As he did this, he also pressed for instructions from Paris for he felt that French action was imperative. At the least indication from France, he reported, the whole government or any part of it would immediately resign, "et tout se passerait tranquillement."⁹⁶

But while Paris had apparently decided to allow Laharpe to be overthrown, it made no move to give guidance to the individuals wishing to form the new régime. Pichon's requests for an official statement went unheeded. At the same time, Pichon reported increasing alarm in Switzerland at the ever more drastic measures advocated by Laharpe, and at hints of a coup.⁹⁷ When negotiations were begun on 3 nivôse (23 December, 1799) with a view to persuading Laharpe and Secretan to resign, they remained obdurate, and said they would only do so if this were requested by the French government.⁹⁸ On 3 January, 1800,

⁹⁵Pichon to Talleyrand, 26 frimaire VIII (16 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 183, Dunant, 865.

⁹⁶Pichon to Talleyrand, 30 frimaire VIII (20 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 191, Dunant, 870.

⁹⁷Pichon to Talleyrand, 27 frimaire VIII (17 December, 1799) and 30 frimaire VIII (20 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 185 and 191, Dunant, 867 and 870.

⁹⁸Pichon to Talleyrand, 6 nivôse VIII (26 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 197, Dunant, 873.

the Helvetic Senate chose commissions to co-operate with the Directory for the revision of the existing constitutional arrangements and on 6 January 1800 these reported for the dissolution of the government. Laharpe, Secretan and Oberlin met and attempted to requisition French aid under article three of the August 1798 Alliance, which made the French government the guarantor of the Swiss constitution, but this was declined by Pichon.⁹⁹ Lacking French aid, Laharpe fell on 7 January, 1800, and, as the result of a coup in which the French had played only a passive role.¹⁰⁰ Talleyrand reported to the French Consuls that:

Je vois avec plaisir par les dépêches en date du 7 nivôse, du chargé d'affaires de la République à Berne, que, selon toutes les apparences, les affaires ont pris en Suisse la tournure que vous désiriez. Ce qui vous sera surtout agréable, Citoyens Consuls, c'est que comme vous le vouliez expressément la lutte s'est engagée sans aucun déploiement direct ou indirect de l'influence française.¹⁰¹

Laharpe fell because French support had been withdrawn. No French encouragement to his opponents had been necessary, for as Pichon had written on 7 nivôse VIII (27 December, 1799),

⁹⁹Pichon to Talleyrand, 14, 16 and 17 nivôse VIII (3, 5 and 6 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 8, 14 and 15, Dunant, 892, 895 and 896.

¹⁰⁰Aktensammlung V, p. 525; Pichon to Talleyrand, 17 nivôse VIII (6 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 15, Dunant, 896.

¹⁰¹n.d. AeS. v. 471, 207, Dunant, 878.

La révolution qui se prépare n'est point faite par la France; la cause en est dans la nation qui est décidée à faire justice [à] des hommes que les commissaires ou le gouvernement français ont imposés et des lois que l'une et l'autre autorité ont données sans égard ni au besoin du pays.¹⁰²

As Lareveillière-Lépaux has observed, the "revolution" was over in Switzerland in January 1800.¹⁰³ As will be seen below, this did not mean that the French, as Pichon suggested, would abandon the "unitary constitution", or at least not immediately. In Lareveillière-Lépaux's sense of the term, it meant that the party which had supported the "unitary constitution", the Ochs-Laharpe party, was overturned without French interference. In this limited sense the French stopped sponsoring "revolution" in Switzerland when it withdrew its support of Laharpe. The "revolutionaries" in French eyes -- Ochs and Laharpe -- were considered to be such for the same reason as they had been originally introduced into the Helvetic Government in June 1798: because principally Ochs, and to a lesser extent Laharpe, were francophile. It will be observed that this had to all appearances nothing to do with any incidental desire on the part of the "revolutionaries" to reform the Swiss Confederation. The "revolutionary" party, in the most pragmatic sense, justified this name not because it was enlightened, but because it was attached to France. We may therefore turn to examine from a Swiss perspective these two "revolutionaries", the consequences of their alliance and the implications of their rule.

¹⁰²Pichon to Talleyrand, 7 nivôse, VIII (27 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 200 Dunant, 874.

¹⁰³Lareveillière-Lépaux, Mémoires IV: Pièces justificatives (Paris, 1895) p. 226.

7

Sie finden in dem mit Ihnen
erwählten Bürger Laharpe so wie
in Ihnen an deren Collegen Mit-
arbeiter am Heile des Vaterlandes....
--Helvetic Great Council to
Ochs, 30 June, 1798.

IV. THE REVOLUTIONARIES

When Ochs and Laharpe were introduced into the Helvetic Directory in June, 1798, they were seen by the French as the means of completing the revolutionary process begun with the 1798 invasion. Rapinat had found that the unitary constitution would not alone assure the success of the Helvetic experiment. What was needed in addition was a francophile Directory, and from the French point of view, these men certainly appeared the logical choice. Their intrigues with the French in the fall of 1797 and their support for the French programme during the invasion of Switzerland had cemented the attachments not only to the French government but also to the French Revolution for which both men had been well known before 1798.

To this point we have only considered Ochs and Laharpe as instruments of French policy. While it is not the intention here to unravel all the detail of local Swiss politics, but rather to consider the effect of French policy on the general Swiss situation, it would nevertheless appear useful to consider these two men individually, in order to throw light on their relationships with the French. In essence, they were the men who were to make the unitary constitution work, and

through their command of the executive power of the Helvetic Directory, and with obvious French support, they were to consolidate Switzerland under the French hegemony.

We have seen that the French persisted in this policy until January 1800, and continued to support Ochs' and Laharpe's revolution in Switzerland, although this, far from consolidating the country, provoked major resistance by itself and at the same time failed to restrain the natural resentment which the Swiss felt against their French conquerors. We must now turn from this determinedly French perspective, and attempt to see what sort of "revolutionaries" the French abandoned in January, 1800. Before we can assess what this "revolution" in Switzerland meant, we must form some appreciation of the aims of Ochs and Laharpe, and of the nature of their alliance, particularly since Ochs especially has been described by Professor Palmer as an important representative of the Forces of "Democratic Revolution" in Europe.¹

In the first instance Ochs was clearly the main Swiss collaborator with the French plan for a "revolution" in Switzerland. His career in Swiss politics can be divided into two parts, that before the 1798 revolution and that during the period of the Helvetic Republic, segments which were divided one from the other by the Helvetic "Revolution" which instituted Ochs' unitary constitution for Switzerland. Ochs'

¹R.R. Palmer, The Age of Democratic Revolution, II, pp. 404 et seq.

role in Swiss history during this period is of crucial importance to an understanding of the events which took place. He is representative however not so much of local Swiss forces as of the ascendancy which the French government had assumed in the affairs of Switzerland. In a limited sense, therefore, he symbolized the Swiss revolution. "Man hat schon zu seiner Zeit von der Ochsischen Revolution gesprochen."² It will be seen, however, that this was principally because he was the ultimate example of the compliant attitude to French policy demonstrated by the Swiss. As Monnard has said, Ochs had sold himself, heart and soul, to France.³

Ochs' early career in Swiss politics before the French invasion is important because it shows clearly how the confluence of his francophile and prorevolutionary views, together with his conception of Swiss neutrality, and admiration for the French Revolution, compelled him to seek French intervention in Switzerland. Ochs' background gave him strong sympathies with France, for he had been born in Nantes, and his mother was French.⁴ While he pursued his education in Hamburg, his most notable school colleague was Dumouriez.⁵

²Steiner, Ochs, I, p. xxxv.

³Monnard, XVI, p. 20.

⁴See the article "Ochs" in the Dictionnaire historique et biographique de la Suisse.

⁵Ochs to Dumouriez, 13 March, 1775, Ochs, I, 47; same to same, 20 March, 1792, Ochs, I, 250; Ochs to Meister, 27 March, 1792, Ochs, I, 253.

OCHS' FAILURE

Seal of the Helvetic Republic, 1798 (Left)

Seal of the Swiss Confederation, 1803 (Right)

Page from Ochs' Diary for 13 - 20 October, 1794 (Below)

Homme qui l'a fait charger de me parler, et
de me porter à m'employer dans cette négo-
ciation. Mayrink a fait tout son possible
pour me persuader que l'esprit de l'atmosphère avait
changé, qu'il falloit oublier l'année 1792. Un
singulier entretien relatif à la révolution de l'Ele-
ment Mayrink à Chatybonne, relatif à la paix.

Il a enveloppé M. de nest: "Kronprinz Jay Les Esclaves
des Haïti. Je lui ai parlé de la libération des Haïtiens.
— Il m'a beaucoup parlé de l'honneur de nos Haïtiens.
— J'ai fini par lui développer mes principes
politiques, en regard à la Suisse. "Kronprinz Jay
considère de mariage entre la République française
et quelques archiducs d'Autriche". — Arrête de
dire qu'ils ~~se~~ comptent de mariage,
par le moyen de Haïti, Luxembourg, et Mayence,
les Haïtiens de faire une invasion en Lorraine et
Alsace.

14. Vincent à Montgomery. Les assurances d'amitié.
J'ai refusé de laisser chez Gordis, avec emp. F. un
cousin avait été chargé de ne l'y inviter lui
même. Bachelor aussi refusé.

15. Bacher m'a parlé de lui donner un logement
hors de chez moi.

16 Diner chez Forcard avec de Morny et de
Chateaubriand. Bachelier a refusé d'y dîner.

18 Futchi, aus Baker. - Preis d. Bismarck.

17. Dielsche moi: Phayeurin K. der, Bracher,
Nivaly, Diadati, Wotstein, Porto, Forend, Bour
card, For 23, 1890, gemittelt Bourcard.

20. Butterfly at moor; for agony in k Gen. Butter

12 O. Kutter ^{en} ~~est~~ ^{est} sur le point de partir.
- Il a demandé le. Schulz ^{friz} / 3 table d'engages
Kreymann à loger chez lui. L'indiquer en
Monsieur a eu l'impression de se diriger en
compagnie le but du séjour de M. K. Grassi.
d'être de la confiance. - On fit courir la rumeur
que les Kutter sont chargés de régler la paye.

His letters were written, not surprisingly, in French, and he readily identified with the French political issues of his day.

An examination of his correspondence shows us that Ochs began discussing hard political news in his letters about July, 1785, and soon became involved in an informal correspondence society.⁶ His statements on contemporary politics were sporadic, desultory and abstract; they only began to demonstrate some general coherence as he was drawn into the great issues raised by the French Revolution. Ochs was in Paris in January, 1787 and witnessed the convocation of the Notables.⁷ He quickly took sides in the conflict of ideas represented by the disorder in France, and in the early revolution, deplored that the Swiss guards serving the French King should become, "les instruments du despôtisme."⁸

Ochs was initially encouraged in his views by the success of his sister, who had married Dietrich, then mayor of Strasbourg. His happiness at the "Fête de la fédération" in that city on 13 June, 1790 may be judged from the following lines he wrote for the occasion:

Le code des Francais devient la loi du monde,
S'élèver à leur rang, c'est s'immortaliser.⁹

⁶Bonstetten to Ochs, 18 May, 1785, and n.d. [1786] Ochs, I, 111 and 120; Ochs to Meister, 18 July, 1785, Ochs, I, 116.

⁷Ochs to Frey, 1 January, 1787, Ochs, I, 132.

⁸Ochs to Meister, 17 July, 1789, Ochs, I, 143.

⁹Ochs, I, 381.

After Dietrich was guillotined, and the inherent violence in the revolution made manifest, Ochs became a firm advocate of representative, as opposed to direct, democracy, which he felt could not counterbalance what he saw as the essential immoderation of the populace.¹⁰ Ochs continued to believe in the value of the revolution in France, and in the universal implications of enlightenment and the possibility of reform. He was enraptured by what must have been for him a largely theoretical revolution in America,¹¹ and was from the beginning a clear partisan of the revolutionary movement in France. Indeed, on an intellectual plane, Ochs appears the archtypal example of a "democrat". His views conform precisely to the pattern described by Professor Palmer.¹²

Les révolutions de l'Amérique, de la France et de la Pologne me paraissent visiblement appartenir à la chaîne des événements qui régénèrent le genre humain.¹³

It is however only when Ochs is considered not in the context of the Atlantic world of the eighteenth century, but in that of the politics of Basel and of Switzerland that his true measure can be taken.

Peter Ochs was a historian with political ambitions and a great concern for appearances. In his prosperous days be-

¹⁰Ochs to Dietrich, 14 August, 1789, Ochs, I, 148; Ochs to Meister, 9 August, 1794, Ochs, I, 321.

¹¹Ochs to Iselin, 2 May, 1777, Ochs, I, 71.

¹²See R.R. Palmer, "World Revolution in the West", Political Science Quarterly LXIX (1954) pp. 1 - 14.

¹³Ochs to Iselin, 2 May, 1777, Ochs, I, 71.

fore the Swiss revolution, he bought an imposing house, the Holsteinerhof in the Neuen Vorstadt in Basel, contemplated founding a "fabrique des rubans" in Alsace, and was quietly buying land in the Thurgau. Properties in the Thurgau were attractive because of the seigneurial rights involved, although Ochs was anxious that his activities there not become general knowledge. "[On]...se moquerait de moi d'avoir voulu jouer le seigneur."¹⁴ His fabrique in France would have to await the conclusion of the revolution there. He had been advised, he informed Dietrich on 12 November, 1789, not to make further French investments during those unsettled times, and he was anxious to extract the money which he had already committed there.¹⁵

Ochs became Stadtschreiber ("chancellier") of Basel on 22 July, 1790.¹⁶ He told his friend Meister the following year that he had only taken this position so that he could become eligible to hold one of the top positions in the city government.¹⁷ He anticipated a short career in Basel politics, after which he would return to writing a history of the city on which he had been working.¹⁸

This is exactly what happened, although the events through which Ochs' career was to develop involved rather more

¹⁴Ochs to Müller, 28 June, 1782, Ochs, I, 99; Ochs to Dietrich, 12 November, 1789, Ochs, I, 154.

¹⁵Ochs to Dietrich, 12 November, 1789, Ochs, I, 154; same to same, 5 October, 1790, Ochs, I, 169.

¹⁶Ochs to Meister, 19 July, 1790, Ochs, I, 165.

¹⁷Ochs to Meister, 14 March, 1791, Ochs, I, 182.

¹⁸Ochs to Müller, 18 December, 1793, Ochs, I, 310.

fundamental issues than he had at first anticipated. Although he was very francophile, he was also a firm believer in Swiss neutrality during the wars of the French Revolution. It was only when Ochs was drawn into the foreign implications of the "Royalist plot" that he became an advocate of French intervention in Switzerland. Ochs was suspicious of the Austrians and émigrés who were in contact in Basel during this period, and became increasingly convinced that the "oligarchy" of Berne was a threat to Swiss security, through its explicit connections to the counter-revolution.¹⁹ While Ochs desired some form of revolution in Switzerland which would rationalize the confused structure of the old Confederation,²⁰ and which would reduce the power of the obscurantist governments of Switzerland,²¹ he was restrained from any precipitous moves in this direction by hopes for peace in Europe which would allow Swiss politics to evolve without foreign pressure, and by the disfavour with which he felt the general population viewed the revolution in France.²² He sympathized with those

¹⁹See in particular, Ochs to Meister, 17 September, 1794, Ochs, I, 328; Ochs to Müller, 28 December, 1789, Ochs, I, 156; Ochs to Meister, 12 October, 1790, Ochs, I, 170; same to same, 15 February, 1791, Ochs, I, 179; Ochs to Haupter des Standes Basel, 1 June, 1791, Ochs, I, 200; Ochs to Meister, mid-November, 1797, Ochs, II, 452; Ochs to Laharpe, 13 November, 1797, Ochs II, 90.

²⁰Ochs to Zurlauben, 28 December, 1789, Ochs, I, 156; Ochs to Meister, 17 December, 1789, Ochs, I, 155.

²¹Ochs to Passavant, 25 November, 1793, Ochs, I, 193; Ochs to Meister, 14 December, 1790, Ochs, I, 172.

²²Ochs to Meister, 17 December, 1789, Ochs, I, 155; same to same, 6 April 1790, Ochs, I, 160.

Balois who were anxious to "...prévenir le mal français dans notre canton."²³ As long as the balance of power existed in Europe, and while he still had hopes for a general peace, Ochs was content to let his contemplated revolution develop slowly, in such a way as it might gradually win the favour of the whole of Switzerland. He was pleased when in May of 1797 it appeared to him, as to many other Swiss, that Europe was returning to calm:

Les Suisses se trouvent dans le port sans avoir couru les chances de l'orage....²⁴

After it became clear that peace would not be achieved immediately, Ochs came to feel that Basel was a "nid d'intrigues".²⁵ His natural suspicions of the émigrés, the Austrians and the Bernese assumed greater importance to him, and were extended to include various Balois whom he felt were not taking a sufficiently neutral position in the conflict between France and the Empire.²⁶ As a result of his apprehensions of danger to Swiss neutrality, mainly on the part of the Bernese,

²³Ochs to Meister, 6 April, 1790, Ochs, I, 160.

²⁴Ochs to Hardenburg, 9 May 1797, Ochs, II, 67. See also Ochs to Meister, 13 May, 1797, Ochs, II, 68.

²⁵Ochs to Pflieger, 14 October, 1797, Ochs, II, 81.

²⁶Ochs to Meister, 4 May, 1792, Ochs, I, 263 and same to same, 18 January, 1797, Ochs, II, 55. Ochs summarized his view of the importance of Swiss neutrality in a letter to Müller, 14 November, 1793: Si les français passent le Rhin, notre liberté est compromise, si l'Autriche s'empare de l'Alsace, notre indépendance est en danger". Ochs, I, 303.

but more generally on that of all "oligarques" in Switzerland, he came into what we can call for the purposes of this paper, significant contact with the French.

Ochs became convinced that the Bernese in particular were intriguing to bring Austrian forces into Switzerland, an action which would not only end Swiss neutrality, but which would plunge Switzerland into the depths of reaction. He sought to develop his contacts with the French government, that they might protect the cause of enlightenment in Switzerland. These contacts dated from before the revolution in some cases, and had been continued during the early revolutionary period by Ochs' attempts to have the French receive equitable treatment from the neutral but often fundamentally hostile Swiss governments. As has been mentioned, Ochs was in school with Dumouriez in Hamburg. When he visited Paris in 1791, he resumed his acquaintance with Dumouriez and met for the first time Hérault de Séchelles and Reubell. Ochs' friendship with Dumouriez developed during 1792 to the point where Ochs began acting as an informal advisor to the French Foreign Affairs Minister on Swiss matters, and he began to intrigue with the French to neutralize what both the French and Ochs saw as undue Austrian influence in Basel, and advised Barthelemy, the French ambassador, as to the best methods of presenting French views to the Swiss Diet. During April of 1792, Ochs confessed to Dumouriez his concern that the Austrians might be plotting against Swiss neutrality, while Dumouriez sought Ochs' aid in preventing any Austrian passage through Swiss

territories, particularly to the aid of the Bishop of Basel. Ochs nevertheless felt that he had the best interests of Swiss neutrality at heart, for he was not yet convinced of the complete intransigence of Berne, and hoped indeed that French and Bernese views might be reconciled.²⁷

When Dumouriez was replaced by Chambonas in the ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ochs had both Barthélemy and Reubell intercede on his behalf in June 1792, that his contacts with the French government might be continued.²⁸ Ochs' offer was accepted by Chambonas, and Ochs continued his informal advisory role under this ministry and under that of Desforgues. He used his connections in the French government to help him secure the release of his sister, Sybille, from Strasbourg, after Dietrich had been guillotined.²⁹ It was in

²⁷Ochs to Meister, May, 1790, Ochs I, 161; Hérault de Séchelles to Ochs, 13 May, 1790, Ochs I, 162; Ochs to Meister, 19 July, 1790, Ochs I, 165; same to same, 27 April, 1791, Ochs I, 183; Ochs to Haupter des Standes Basel, May 1791, Ochs I, 180, 202, 205; Barthélemy to Dumouriez, 19 May, 1792, Kaulek, I, 280, printed Ochs, I, 267; "Observations sur la Suisse" April, 1792, Ochs, I, 255; Dumouriez to Ochs, 26 April, 1792, Ochs I, 258; Ochs to Dumouriez, 29 April, 1792, Ochs, I, 259; Ochs to Barthélemy, 3 May, 1792, Ochs I, 262; Dumouriez to Ochs 14 May, 1792, Ochs, I, 266; Ochs to Barthélemy, 17 and 29 May, 1792, Ochs, I, 267 and 270.

²⁸Barthélemy to Chambonas, 20 June, 1792, Kaulek, I, 428, printed in Ochs, I, 392; Reubell to Chambonas, 24 June, 1792, Ochs, I, 391.

²⁹Chambonas to Ochs, 23 July, 1792, Ochs I, 276; Ochs to Meister, 28 June, 1792, Ochs, I, 297; Ochs to Barthélemy, 4 February, 1794, Ochs I, 313; Barthélemy to Desforgues, 17 pluviôse II (5 February, 1794, Kaulek III, 766, Ochs I, 394; same to same, 25 February 1794, Kaulek III, 930, Ochs I, 396; Desforgues to Barthélemy, 11 ventôse II (11 March, 1794) Kaulek III, 1054; Ochs I, 397; Barthélemy to Desforgues, 12 germinal II (1 April, 1794) Kaulek IV, 3; Ochs, I, 399; Secret council

his capacity as advisor and intermediary that Ochs participated in the negotiations for the peace of Basel in 1795. The French envoys stayed with Ochs. A hole was cut through the hedge to the neighbouring house so that Bacher, the French agent, and Goltz, the Prussian envoy, could meet secretly.³⁰

At the same time Ochs continued providing information to Reubell on matters of interest to the French government. This led Ochs ever more deeply into the preludes to the coup of Fructidor, while it provided Reubell with confirmation of his suspicions about émigré-Royalist activity. On 9 May, 1796, Ochs informed Reubell that émigré intrigues in Basel were becoming ever more serious, and, "mon cher Reubell", the counter-revolutionaries had such strong influence that without the presence of republican France, the "patriotes" in Basel and the rest of Switzerland would most certainly succumb.³¹

Ochs remained in close touch with Barthélemy during this time,³² while he came ever closer to adopting a completely French perspective on the European situation. He still

(Geheimer Rat-Conseil secret) of Basel to Barthélemy, 13 June, 1794, Kaulek IV, 567, Ochs I, 400; Barthélemy to Buchot, 29 prairial II (17 June, 1794) Kaulek IV, 507, Ochs I, 401.

³⁰Ochs to Meister, 31 December, 1794, Ochs, I, 340; Ochs to Meister, 25 July, 1795, Ochs I, 364; Barthélemy to Commission des Relations extérieures, 1 vendémiaire IV (23 September, 1795) Kaulek V, 495, printed Ochs I, 405; Barthélemy to Delacroix, 14 frimaire, 6 brumaire and 8 ventôse IV (5 December, 1795, 25 and 27 February, 1796) Kaulek, V, 526, 541, 542, printed in Ochs, 406, 407, 408.

³¹Ochs, II, 4.

³²Manderet (Barthélemy's secretary) to Ochs, 10 May, 1796, Ochs, II, 5.

founded his hopes on general European peace in May, 1796, but he described the situation as a balance between the power of France on the one side, and the "machiavellianisme" of England, Austria and Russia on the other.³³ When Ochs was sent by Basel to Paris in May 1796 to negotiate various financial matters, he renewed his contacts in the French government. These contacts continued during the summer of 1796 when he began advising Reubell on the niceties of Swiss inter-relationships, and were maintained up until Fructidor and afterwards. Reubell sent particular word to Ochs in October 1797, that he hoped "...que le 18 fructidor n'a pas diminué votre attachement à la cause de la liberté."³⁴

It had not, for during the fall of 1797, Ochs discussed with Bacher the possibility of French action on behalf of the "patriotes" of Switzerland, "...si les hostilités doivent recommencer."³⁵ Ochs also raised the question with Reubell, in a letter dated 25 brumaire VI (15 November, 1797), most likely without realizing that the French were in fact interested in taking serious action to change the Swiss situation.³⁶

³³Ochs to Perregaux, 15 May, 1796, Ochs, II, 6.

³⁴Reubell to Ochs, 26 floréal IV (15 May, 1796) Ochs, II, 7; Ochs to Meister, 4 October, 1797, Ochs, II, 76; Barthélemy to Burckhardt, 16 May, 1796, Ochs II, 390; Ochs to Burckhardt, 29 May, 4, 7, 9, and 13 June, 1796, Ochs, II, 14, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24; Barthélemy to Delacroix, 10 prairial IV (29 May, 1796) Ochs, II, 394; See the account of Ochs' visit to Paris in folio 370 of the draft Basler Geschichte, printed in Ochs, II, 397; Ochs to Reubell, 22 July, 1796, Ochs, II, 33 and Reubell to Ochs, 24 June, 1796, Ochs, II 26.

³⁵Ochs to Bacher, 1 October 1797 and 23 October, 1797, Ochs, II, 85 and 87.

³⁶Ochs to Reubell, 15 November, 1797, Ochs II, 91.

It is clear that when Bonaparte was in Basel in November, 1797, he expressed sympathy with Ochs concerning his apprehensions about the activities of the "aristocrates",³⁷ and that Ochs was sent at French request to Paris at the end of November to discuss the outstanding financial claims of Basel against the French government.³⁸ Ochs duly arrived in Paris at the end of the month, and stated that he felt himself entrusted with two missions. The first of these was his official Balois mission, concerning the financial adjustments³⁹, and the second concerned, he told Reubell, "...la cause de la liberté et de l'égalité."⁴⁰

On 8 December, 1797, the decisive interview occurred between Bonaparte and Ochs at Reubell's home. It was at this meeting that Ochs assured Bonaparte and Reubell that the Swiss patriotes could not revolutionize Switzerland, but that it would have to be done for them. The resistance which Ochs anticipated would be too great for the small numbers of patriotes to be able to contend with it. According to Ochs, Bonaparte then replied:

Il faut cependant qu'elle se fasse,
et cela bientôt.

³⁷Ochs to Laharpe, 24 November, 1797, Ochs II, 97.

³⁸Mengaud to Reubell, 5 frimaire VI (25 November, 1797) FAH, Ochs II, 411; same to same, 6 frimaire (26 November, 1797), FAH, Ochs II, 413; Mengaud to Burckhardt, 27 November, 1797, FAH, Ochs II, 414. It is not clear whether Ochs received copies of this correspondence at the time, or whether they were added to his papers later. According to Steiner, Ochs knew that the French were going to ask for him specifically, Ochs II, 414n.

³⁹Ochs to Talleyrand, 5 December, 1797, Ochs II, 109.

⁴⁰Ochs to Reubell, 5 December, 1797, Ochs II, 108.

Ochs persisted nevertheless in saying that the contemplated revolution would not receive the support of the populace of any canton, but that the leading classes of Switzerland, a group which Mengaud estimated to be only about two hundred strong,⁴¹ might be persuaded of its necessity. It was agreed in this light for Ochs to concern himself with the revolution in Basel, that Bonaparte and Reubell would support Laharpe's plans for a revolution in Vaud, and that Bonaparte would take care of the revolt in the Italian-speaking areas.⁴² Ochs only requested further that Bonaparte should instruct him as to the role which he and his fellow patriotes in Basel should play in what had so rapidly become a French revolution for Switzerland.⁴³

It was in this context that Ochs submitted on 9 nivôse VI (29 December, 1797) his plan for the reorganization of Switzerland after its regeneration, the unitary constitution proposal.⁴⁴ This was to be substantially revised by the French, particularly in the matter of territorial acquisitions which Ochs anticipated for the new Switzerland.⁴⁵ As far as

⁴¹Mengaud to Directory, 11 germinal VI (31 March, 1798) AFIII85, v. 351, 122, Dunant, 141.

⁴²Ochs, II, 120.

⁴³Ochs to Bonaparte, 19 December, 1797, Ochs, II, 134.

⁴⁴Ochs, II, 152.

⁴⁵Ibid.

Ochs was concerned, the essential principles which the French did not alter were first, representative democracy, second, the centralized organization of Switzerland, and third, "la propagation des lumières comme moyen infaillible de détruire insensiblement les préjugés et la rouille du moyen âge."⁴⁶

While the last may have been important to Ochs, the first two points were seized upon by Reubell and Bonaparte as the best means of controlling a fundamentally new Switzerland.

Ochs was restrained to theoretical observations about the general revolution in Switzerland, although the basis for French policy, the unitary constitution, had been in the first instance his suggestion. He had suggested that a unitary constitution was required which would allow the new Swiss government to control all areas of the new republic, while France would guarantee the new status of Vaud. Ochs felt in addition that with only the show of force all of the Swiss cantons would comply with French requirements, and that in this way a painless revolution could be accomplished.⁴⁷ In his last suggestion, however, Ochs had exceeded his discretion, and was immediately informed by Bonaparte that his views were sought only on the form that the constitution of Switzerland should take after the "revolution".⁴⁸ Ochs

⁴⁶Ochs, II, 177.

⁴⁷Ochs to Bonaparte, 12 December, 1797, Ochs, II, 423.

⁴⁸See "Revolutionierung der Schweiz" folio 21, Basler Geschichte manuscript, Ochs II, 420; Ochs to Bonaparte, 12 December, 1797, entitled "Révolutionnement de la Suisse", Ochs, II, 423.

quietly accepted this reprimand.

By 17 January, 1798, therefore, it had been decided to create a republic "une et indivisible" in Switzerland, and plans had been drawn for the creation of the necessary provisional governments, the calling of a national assembly, and most importantly, for the appointment of a Helvetic Directory.⁴⁹ As for the revolutionary, Ochs, he was concerned mainly that the French get the draft constitution into public view. As far as he was concerned, the French could make any alterations to his proposal which they felt necessary, but above all, they required a plan, so that the Swiss revolution might be an orderly affair.

The French therefore implemented their immediate plan for the "revolution" in Switzerland. As we have observed, this was to catch Berne between French-supported revolutions in Basel and Vaud, or as Ochs expressed it, the idea was to revolutionize the "Germans".⁵⁰ As the events described above traced the initial success of the French invasion and the Swiss "revolution", Ochs quietly returned to Basel, and found himself, as noted, elected to the presidency of the Helvetic Senate, but otherwise excluded from the seat of real power in the Helvetic Republic, the Directory. He was not once more to be in the main stream until Rapinat's coup placed him in the Directory in June.

⁴⁹Ochs, II, 185.

⁵⁰Ochs, II, 185.

Once in Basel, Ochs experienced some misgivings, particularly as the French displayed confusion about the organization of the new Switzerland. He wrote to Talleyrand on 10 March 1798 to complain that the French appeared unclear as to the purpose of their intervention in Switzerland, and that they did not appear to be pursuing the agreed plan of action, especially as this concerned the imposition of the unitary constitution.⁵¹ There was nevertheless no doubt in Ochs' mind as to the ultimate purpose of the French invasion: "...il faut que notre révolution serve à consolider celle de la France."⁵² Ochs was not surprised, moreover, at the initial successes of the revolution, or by the first skirmishes with resistance. These in fact served to corroborate Ochs' own view that the revolution as presented by the French would appeal first to the Vaudois, second to the people of the Italian bailiwicks, third to the Balois, and then progressively with time and in spite of resistance, to the inhabitants of the rest of Switzerland. The revolution had a chance he felt, as long as Berne remained thoroughly emasculated.

The clear sign of the submission of Berne was Frédéric-César Laharpe's election to the Helvetic Directory. It appears scarcely coincidental that Laharpe was from Vaud, the "liberation" of which from Bernese tyranny was the ostensible

⁵¹Ochs, II, 238.

⁵²Ochs, II, 196; Ochs to Talleyrand, 10 March, 1798, Ochs, II, 239.

object of the French invasion. The creation of Vaud had vastly decreased the land area of the canton of Berne, and had effectively cut it off from access to the Alpine passes. As Ochs observed, the Swiss revolution of 1798 was designed to appeal in the first instance to the Vaudois, and the election of Laharpe was one indicator of their emancipation. Ochs and Laharpe had entered into correspondence in November 1797, and from the beginning it was apparent that they were interested essentially in two different aspects of the Swiss situation. Ochs, under the influence of Reubell, was primarily interested in what was to Laharpe an incidental question, namely his "observations relatives à l'influence dangereuse de l'oligarchie suisse envers la République française."⁵³ Their correspondence had been instigated by Ochs, who had written to Laharpe on 13 October 1797.⁵⁴ When Laharpe expressed on 26 October a desire to come to an understanding with him, Ochs explained the situation to the Vaudois expatriate, and solicited his aid in the accomplishment of a Swiss "revolution". Ochs stated that he was now convinced that the oligarchy of Switzerland would never reform itself. Indeed, in order to accomplish a reform of Switzerland, the members of all existing governments would have to be coerced in that direction. Ochs felt that he was the only major cantonal official in Switzerland who hoped for a revolution, and he further estimated that in the councils of the other cantons

⁵³Ochs to Laharpe, 13 October, 1797, Ochs, II 80.

⁵⁴Ibid.

there might be another thirteen of like mind. "Que espérer de ce petit nombre?"

Cependant, combien il serait facile de voir vos vœux et les miens accomplis, si le gouvernement en France le voulait!

Ochs desired to work in this direction, and solicited Laharpe's aid.⁵⁵ By the time that Ochs enthusiastically reported to Laharpe on 24 November that Bonaparte was in clear sympathy with the "patriotes" and had expressed interest in Laharpe and in his ~~known~~ desire to remove Vaud from Bernese control,⁵⁶ Laharpe had already decided to solicit French aid. It will be noticed however, as the aims of Laharpe emerge, that he was never the compliant servant of French policy that Ochs rapidly became. It was for this reason, that Rapinat, when he staged his coup in June of 1798, found Laharpe a much less satisfactory Director than Ochs.

While Peter Ochs was content to let himself be used by the French, Frédéric-César Laharpe found himself in this position only reluctantly, and proved himself a more restive agent of French policy in Switzerland. This was because he entered the movement to the Swiss revolution with much more specific local goals than Peter Ochs.

Along with Ochs, Laharpe had been attracted by the early progress of the revolution in France, but had at an early date been forced to take sides, something which happened to Peter Ochs only in the spring of 1797. The immediate cause

⁵⁵Ochs to Laharpe, 6 November, 1797, Ochs, II, 89.

⁵⁶Ochs to Laharpe, 24 November, 1797, Ochs II, 97.

of this was a demonstration in Vaud against the Bernese government in which Laharpe and his brother Amedée participated in 1791. This resulted in the confiscation of their property by the Bernese courts and in their flight to France. During his exile from Switzerland, Laharpe came to formulate ever more specific arguments against what he saw as the deplorable condition of Vaud, which he attributed to Bernese tyranny. In its initial form, Laharpe's "Essai sur la constitution du Pays de Vaud" was a straight-forward Rousseauist statement. He argued that the house of Savoy, the ancient rulers of Vaud, had had a contractual arrangement with the country, which restrained them from raising new contingents there or from increasing taxes without the consent of the Estates of Vaud at the beginning of each reign. When the Bernese had assumed the suzerainty of Vaud from the Savoyards in 1564, they became responsible for not only the rights of Savoy, but also its obligations. They had then abused their power.⁵⁷

In 1790, in a series of letters to the London Chronicle Laharpe had outlined the specifics of his case against the Bernese. He claimed in general that the cities and corporations of the Pays de Vaud had had their rights usurped by Berne, and in particular their right of representation, since under the Bernese régime, the assembly of the States of Vaud had been abolished. As a result of this fundamental loss, the Vaudois were now subject to imprisonment without

⁵⁷Boehtlingk, p. 89

due process,⁵⁸ their cities had been deprived of their "droits utiles", and their people were subject to taxation without consent, and levies of excessive "feudal" exactions. This was being done, indeed, by only seventy-six families of Berne, who formed a dominant élite in that canton.⁵⁹ The result of the dominance of this group was that Berne was ruled by secret government, plagued by closed commercial monopolies, from the control of which the subjects of the Bernese, such as the Vaudois, were rigorously excluded.⁶⁰

Laharpe's claims that the rights of the Vaudois as free men had been usurped led to his being labelled a criminal by the Bernese. To escape the consequences of this he fled to France with his brother, who later went on to a career in the French army, until his death in Italy. Laharpe continued to refine his arguments about the Vaudois constitution, and naturally enough, came to see France as the natural protector and liberator of Vaud. He extended his argument one more step. Savoy had been under French rule from 1536 to 1559, during which period the French had assumed the Savoyard obligations in Vaud, and during which time also the Bernese had occupied the country. By virtue of its participation in the Treaty of Lausanne in 1564, which had transferred Vaud to Berne, France had thus become the guarantor of the rights of Vaud.⁶¹

⁵⁸London Chronicle, 16 - 18 September, 1790.

⁵⁹London Chronicle, 23 - 25 September, 1790.

⁶⁰London Chronicle, 25 - 28 September and 12 - 14 October, 1790.

⁶¹Boehtlingk, p. 91.

It must be observed that while Laharpe was in exile he remained in contact with his friend Henri Monod, in Vaud, who informed him that the revolution which he desired would find little or no support in his home canton. Monod reported to Laharpe a strong feeling in favour of the peaceful evolution of Vaud towards autonomy. Indeed, on 22 October, 1797, Monod told him that in his homeland, Laharpe's desires for a revolution were attributed in the main to hopes for vengeance against his Bernese persecutors.⁶²

Indications of lack of public support did not however deter Laharpe any more than they had deterred Ochs. Close on the heels of Fructidor, Laharpe appealed to the interest of the French government to clear Switzerland of counter-revolutionaries,⁶³ and presented to Jean Debry on 23 fructidor V (9 September, 1797) a "Mémoire demandant la libération du Pays de Vaud et la convocation des Etats généraux en vue d'un plébiscite--au besoin par la force."

In this document, Laharpe insisted on the Swiss connections of the Royalists, and said that a revolution in Switzerland would assure the French eastern frontier. He recommended that the French should ignore the German-speaking areas of Switzerland, that Berne and Fribourg should be forced to give up their subject areas, in other words, Vaud, and that France should annex Bas-Valais, which would give them free access to the St. Bernard. Eventually, France should remove Neuchâtel

⁶²Boehtlingk, p. 82 and pp. 116 - 117.

⁶³Boehtlingk, PP. 104 - 107.

from Prussia, in order to form, in addition to the liberated areas, a block of French-speaking Switzerland, allied to France.

He then suggested, by way of tactical plan, that the Estates of Vaud should be convened, and these should declare Vaudois independence. French aid could be requisitioned if required, and in this eventuality, the considerable Bernese treasure could be confiscated to cover the costs. On 12 November, 1797, Laharpe published his demands in the Ami des lois and, when Ochs saw this article, he sought Laharpe's co-operation in a general revolution in Switzerland, as we have seen above. Laharpe co-operated with Ochs, and submitted his petition on 14 December, 1797, demanding French aid for the liberation of Vaud.⁶⁴ The French plan, incorporating the suggestions of both Ochs and Laharpe was then implemented in early January, 1798, and aimed at destruction of the power of Berne, seen as the villain by all the participants.

Laharpe found himself in much the same position as Ochs, once the Swiss revolution was in progress. He appears to have been largely ignored by the French until he was brought into the Helvetic Directory by Rapinat in June. Laharpe's role during this interval was nevertheless important, for he came out strongly in favour of French regulation of the Swiss revolution, and in support of the Ochs constitution.⁶⁵ It indeed appears to have been mainly as a result of the influence

⁶⁴Laharpe to Ochs, 5 frimaire VI (25 November, 1797) Ochs, II, 98; Aktensammlung, I, p. 108, cited Rappard, p. 541.

⁶⁵Boehtlingk, pp. 125 - 126.

of Laharpe that the Vaudois Assembly, after initial hesitations, adopted Ochs' constitution with near unanimity on 9 February, 1798. On that date they also sent a letter expressing their gratitude for their deliverance, not only to the French Directory, but also, and significantly, to Laharpe.⁶⁶

During the period leading up to Rapinat's coup, Ochs and Laharpe resumed their correspondence, again at Ochs' instigation, the latter being anxious to force his views on Laharpe. Any tri-partite division of Switzerland, Ochs felt, was a mistake.⁶⁷ Ochs reported that he had been excluded from a position in the Helvetic Directory by intrigues, but he was convinced that the French Directory had no part in them. He nevertheless felt he had no influence in Arrau, and although he agreed with Laharpe that the creation of the cantons of Linth, Sentis and Waldstätten, after the first revolt of the landesgemeinde cantons, was appropriate, he saw the Helvetic Directory as dominated by Federalists: namely Legrand, Secretan and Bay.⁶⁸ His disappointment with the Helvetic government increased with the passage of time. Haller was a federalist, Bay an "aristocrate", Legrand an anarchist, while Oberlin was simply incompetent ("unfähig").⁶⁹

⁶⁶Boehtlingk, pp. 127 - 128.

⁶⁷Ochs to Laharpe, 20 March, 1798, Ochs II, 249.

⁶⁸Ochs to Laharpe, 17 April, 1798, Ochs, II, 267; same to same, 25 April, 1798, Ochs II, 274.

⁶⁹Ochs to Laharpe, 30 April, 1798, Ochs, II, 276.

Laharpe appears to have remained outside of the Helvetic government and legislature by choice which placed his inclinations in stark opposition to those of Ochs. He felt that his task had been accomplished with the achievement of cantonal status for Vaud, and stated that he would refuse any position under the Helvetic government so that none could impute ulterior motives to him for his participation in the revolution. While he was as concerned as Ochs that the revolution should not be taken over by the "voyoucratie", and agreed with Ochs on the constitutional formula, he felt that the new government of Switzerland should be formed of men "...hors partis et qui n'ont pas suscité d'animosité."⁷⁰ In his concern for the welfare of Switzerland during this period, he rapidly used up his credit in French eyes by writing strong letters of protest to the French government over the rapacity which the liberators exhibited.⁷¹ In the early stages of Rapinat's coup he strongly protested this fundamental French interference in the Swiss choice of their own leaders.⁷²

This is not to say that Laharpe was not so deeply involved with the French as was Ochs, but rather that he felt that once the revolution was accomplished, their predominant

⁷⁰Boehtlingk, p. 130; p. 132.

⁷¹Laharpe to Talleyrand, 7 germinal VI, 21 floréal VI, and 23 floréal VI (27 March, 10 and 12 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 99,, 217, and 228, Dunant, 32, 93 and 100.

⁷²Laharpe to Ochs, 21 prairial VI (9 June, 1798) Ochs, II, 281.

role in Swiss politics should end. He had no hesitation in calling for French aid to liberate Vaud, and as the revolution progressed, he freely gave the French his impressions of the development of the situation as revealed by his sources of information inside Switzerland.⁷³ Laharpe's protests of French rapacity, and of the imperiousness of Rapinat however demonstrated his concern for the independence of Switzerland after the revolution. When he was informed by Secretan that he had been elected to the Helvetic Directory, before he left Paris, Laharpe sought the approval of the French government before he returned to Arrau to take up his seat. He hoped that Switzerland might not be "...blessée une seconde fois dans la personne de ses chefs." He had told Merlin that while he would defend their common interests, he would be no foreign pawn.⁷⁴ Laharpe nevertheless received the blessing of the French government and returned to Switzerland.

We have observed that Rapinat experienced some misgivings at the election of Laharpe to the Directory. No doubt he had in mind not only Laharpe's strong protests about French conduct during the invasion of Switzerland, but he was also smarting from the very recent reclamations which the "patriote"

⁷³Laharpe to Talleyrand, 17 floréal VI (6 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 202, Dunant, 84.

⁷⁴Boehtlingk, pp. 136-137; Laharpe to Merlin, 26 floréal VI (15 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 238 and 239, Dunant, 107.

had made concerning Rapinat's part in the coup which ultimately brought him to power. Rapinat was afraid that Laharpe might come to dominate the Swiss government, and this presented a more fundamental reason for his apprehensions, for while Ochs had come to be a firm believer in the offensive and defensive alliance between France and the Helvetic Republic, Laharpe entered the government believing in the fundamental importance of Swiss neutrality for the consolidation of the new republic. Laharpe was indeed indignant at the French threats and at French insistence on the offensive and defensive agreements finally embodied in the August, 1798 alliance. He felt that these French demands were particularly inappropriate, given the not inconsiderable difficulties which stood in the way of success for the Helvetic Republic.⁷⁵

In spite of his belief in Swiss neutrality, Laharpe was prevailed upon to accept the August 1798 alliance. This was perhaps inevitable, given the French support for Ochs and their strong influence in contemporary Swiss affairs. In addition, Laharpe seized on the prospect of the withdrawal of French troops which the conclusion of the alliance with France promised, with the return of diplomatic relations to a more regular status.⁷⁶ In the beginning indeed, Laharpe was optimistic that French troops would be withdrawn, and the Helvetic Republic be allowed to follow its own course.

⁷⁵Laharpe to Jean Debry, 23 floréal VI (12 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 227, Dunant, 99; Boehtlingk, pp. 137 - 139.

⁷⁶Boehtlingk, p. 140.

We have seen however, that due to the internal disturbances and ultimately the Austrian incursion, this did not happen.

As the Helvetic government was kept in a continual atmosphere of crisis by both internal difficulties and foreign pressure, Laharpe began to display increasingly authoritarian tendencies, and an ever deeper suspicion of Ochs, who consistently supported French policy inside the Directory.⁷⁷ As a result of what he saw as obstruction from the Helvetic Legislature, Laharpe felt ever more frustrated at the government's failure to quell revolt and place the Republic on a secure footing. What had appeared only difficult to accomplish when it was begun came to seem impossible when the continuing war brought the Austrians into Switzerland. When he had requested French aid to liberate Vaud, Laharpe had anticipated an early general peace in Europe, which would give the new Republic a chance to develop. He now found himself forced to take a stand with the French in spite of his beliefs in Swiss neutrality.

Laharpe came to favour strong military preparations by the Republic which would not only help in repelling the Austrians, but which would also be useful in asserting Helvetic independence after the campaign. His colleagues in the Directory, however, only consented to a weak mobilization,⁷⁸ which they hoped would not further antagonize the already restive Swiss populations.

⁷⁷Boehtlingk, p. 145; Palmer, Democratic Revolution, II,

⁷⁸Boehtlingk, p. 154.

FREDERIC CESAR LAHARPE

Citoyens Législateurs! . J'ai vecu 18
mois de milieu de vous, en républicain
austère, probe, irréprochable. Vous m'avez
appelé j'ai tâché de mériter votre confiance.
vous m'en déclarez déchu; j'en suis plain-
=dri pas, si votre Décret ne tendoit pas à
me ravir l'honneur.

Nul ne souhaite plus que moi, le bonheur
et la prospérité de mon pays, sous le nouveau
gouvernement; mais vous trouverez juste
sans doute, que le passage d'un ordre de
choses à l'autre, ne soit pas marqué par
le froissement inutile d'un homme, qui
ne vit que pour la liberté et qui a
déjà tant souffert pour l'amour
d'elle.

Salut et Respect

Berne le 5 Janvier 1800

Frederic Cesar Laharpe

The Helvetic Directory was faced with problems of internal disorder, foreign invasion and financial chaos. Laharpe came to feel that internal difficulties could be reduced by the revision of Ochs' constitution, and the foreign menace removed by the return of Switzerland to the principle of neutrality which Laharpe had only under constraint been convinced to abandon. He wrote to Sieyes in May, 1799, and stated that no matter how the situation developed, the constitution required revision. This could have involved a return to a modified confederation of independent cantons, or to a Helvetic Republic with scope for greater local autonomy. In any case the present situation was unworkable, and no progress of any sort was possible while the Helvetic government was bound to an offensive alliance with France.⁷⁹

The French government, as we have observed, was not prepared to allow the Swiss to escape their engagements. Laharpe nevertheless seized the opportunity presented by Ochs' revelation of confidential documents to Perrochel to accuse him of improper relations with France, and forced his resignation on 26 June, 1799.⁸⁰ Ochs was the victim of the swell of resentment in Switzerland and in the Helvetic government against the disastrous consequences of the August, 1798 alliance with France, of which he had been the foremost advocate.

The reformed Directory now sought to present a united front to the French against the offensive alliance. Glayre was sent to Paris, but as we have seen, obtained no solace

⁷⁹Boehtlingk, pp. 156 - 157.

⁸⁰Steiner, Ochs, II, pp. ccxvii - cccxxvi.

from the French government. The joy which was expressed in the Legislative Council at Ochs' departure, however, made a profound impression on Perrochel. Could this mean that the Swiss revolution, the unitary constitution and the alliance with France "...ont contrarié le voeu général?"⁸¹

The question was more than rhetorical, for Perrochel began to argue for the abandonment of the French system in Switzerland. The situation had in any case substantially changed with the expulsion of Ochs. Ochs' connection with the French government, which Laharpe had described as traitorous,⁸² had been broken. This left Laharpe the dominant personality in the Directory, a position which he had gradually assumed even before June, with the support of Secretan and Oberlin,⁸³ and in the face of the increasing gloom of Ochs as the situation had moved from bad to worse during the summer of 1799.⁸⁴ He found, however, that he was unable to shake off the constraints which Ochs' presence had implied.

Although Massena's victory at Zürich had apparently saved the immediate situation, Laharpe found that the measures which he proposed for the reconstruction of Switzerland after the 1799 campaign met with opposition not only in the Councils but also from the minority of the Directory. He was prevented by the French from working for the constitutional revision

⁸¹Perrochel to Talleyrand, 10 messidor VII (28 June, 1799) AeS. v. 470, 139, Dunant, 667.

⁸²Boehtlingk, p. 159; Ochs, II, 450 A.

⁸³Dunant, pp. lix - lx; Monnard, XVI, p. 366.

⁸⁴Steiner, Ochs, II, pp. cccxvii - cccxviii.

which he felt would pacify at least some of the opposition to the government. While Perrochel described Laharpe as becoming increasingly restless and turbulent,⁸⁵ Laharpe came to see the only solution as being a coup which would allow the unitary constitution to be maintained, and yet which would eliminate the possibility of obstruction from the legislature.⁸⁶ It is not entirely clear from the available literature whether Laharpe saw this as a general solution or as an expedient for the moment. It appears that he felt change to have been particularly necessary in the financial system of the Republic,⁸⁷ that he wanted to found popular societies and clubs, and more generally to popularize the revolution. There is some suggestion that he would have removed many "Germans" from positions of responsibility in the government.⁸⁸

It all came to nothing. "Der Diktatur Laharpe", as Steiner has called him,⁸⁹ found that the new French Consulate was not prepared to support such a coup, and indeed

⁸⁵Perrochel to Reinhard, 1 jour complémentaire VII (17 September, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 20, Dunant, 778; Steiner, Ochs II, p. ccxcii.

⁸⁶Monnard, XVI p. 367.

⁸⁷Boehtlingk, p. 171, Pichon to Talleyrand, 1 nivôse VII (20 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 191, Dunant, 879; same to same 10 nivôse VII (30 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 206, Dunant 877; Report of Talleyrand to Consuls, no date, but based on despatches of 18 nivôse VII, (7 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 20 Dunant, 982.

⁸⁸Pichon to Talleyrand, 1 jour complémentaire VII, AeS. v. 471, Dunant, 778, Ochs II, 450, i.

⁸⁹Steiner, Ochs, II, p. ccxcviii.

would allow him to be turned from office. Those people who had charged Laharpe with want of moderation were to govern in his stead. When Laharpe fell on 7 January, 1800, in an immediate sense this was because the French government had decided to stop supporting the "revolution" in Switzerland, and had followed Pichon's recommendation to abandon the "revolutionaries", Laharpe and Ochs. In a wider perspective, it was the failure of French policy in Switzerland that their fall demonstrated. Ochs' constitution had been a failure, and the French were not prepared to allow Laharpe to attempt a local solution to the problem. The French were not prepared to allow alteration of the essential principles of their position in Switzerland, the unitary constitution and the offensive alliance, but thought that their difficulties might be ended if a more suitable leader for the Swiss could be found.

Laharpe, immediately before his fall, had hoped that with the new Consulate in France, he might be able to persuade the French to give him more latitude, or else firmer support, in his attempts to deal with the resistance in Switzerland. He described the situation of the republic, and assessed its causes, in a way which is only too readily confirmed by the observations which we have made about the progress of the Helvetic Government to January 1800. Laharpe said that up to that point, the French system had been to protect the persons and the property of the former oligarchs while keeping them from office. The country was overrun with French agents,

and no progress could be made on financial reconstruction, or military re-organization. It was constantly threatened by war and the government was denied the independence of foreign domination which was so necessary to the building of a new, unified republic. The resistance provoked by foreign prescriptions for the Swiss constitution had made the Helvetic Republic an unstable neighbour to France, and had prevented it becoming an efficient guardian of the French eastern frontier. Above all,

Notre révolution a été faite sans consulter, ou plutôt sans écouter les hommes intéressés à la faire marcher. L'ancien gouvernement français a fait à la fois trop et trop peu.⁹⁰

We must observe that Ochs and Laharpe had substantially contributed to the creation of this situation by their solicitation of French aid for their separate revolutions in Switzerland. The Helvetic revolution, as conceived by Ochs, failed because of the constraints which accompanied that aid, and prevented Laharpe from changing the course of the revolution, which the French considered ended with his fall. It was now left to the French to attempt, after the departure of Laharpe, to return Switzerland to some kind of tranquility which would still protect the aims of the 1798 invasion. They had abandoned the Swiss "revolutionaries", but the passes had to remain open, and Switzerland remain with some form of unity to protect their eastern frontier.

⁹⁰Laharpe to Bonaparte, II December 1799, AFIV1701, Dunant, 887.

7

Habitants de l'Helvétie:
vous offrez depuis deux ans
un spectacle affligeant.

--Napoleon Bonaparte,
30 September, 1802.

V. MEDIATION

During its short life, the Helvetic Republic was plagued by a bewildering series of coups d'état, civil war and widespread public disturbance. An incisive declaration by Napoleon Bonaparte, 30 September, 1802, aptly described the continuing disquietude, and made the important observation that the Swiss situation had particularly deteriorated during the immediately preceding two years.

Des factions opposées se sont succesivement
emparées du pouvoir; elles ont signalé leur empire
passager par un système de partialité qui accusait
leur inhabilité....

Vous vous êtes disputés trois ans sans vous
entendre. Si l'on vous abandonne plus longtemps à
vous mêmes, vous vous tuerez.... Votre histoire
prouve d'ailleurs que vos guerres intestines n'ont
jamais pu se terminer que par l'intervention
efficace de la France.¹

This message culminated in the announcement of an offer of French mediation, and the special messenger who took it to Berne was ordered to use military reprisals if necessary to ensure that the Swiss accepted Bonaparte's adjudication

¹Napoleon, Correspondance, VIII, 6352; Aktensammlung, VIII 1437 et seq.

within five days, a reflection of his urgent desire to restore order to Switzerland.² The measures taken were effective and, from 1803, Switzerland was tranquil for the duration of the Napoleonic era, apparently content under the "Mediation" settlement of Weiss political problems, often praised as an outstanding example of Napoleon's political expertise.³

This praise has not been universal, for Swiss writers in particular have argued that "Mediation" resulted not so much from Bonaparte's desire to see Switzerland content, as to see it quiet. They tend reasonably enough, to describe his policy as the result of the consideration of mainly French, as opposed to Swiss factors.⁴

After January, 1800, the same basic movements can be traced in French policy for Switzerland as have been identified in the preceding period. The first of these involved

²Il insinuera que, dans le cas contraire, il a les pouvoirs nécessaires pour faire entrer de tous côtés de troupes françaises en Helvétie, et qu'alors malheur à ceux qui auraient obligé à une réoccupation. Ibid. VIII, 6351.

³For contemporary views, see Fouché, Mémoires, pp. 162-163: "Il eut été difficile je crois, d'imaginer un régime transitoire plus conforme aux vrais besoins de ses habitants," or Bonaparte, Correspondance, VIII, 6719, 6724 and 6726. See also A. Guillard, "France and her Tributaries, 1801 - 1803" op. cit. pp. 95 - 106: "It cannot be denied that Bonaparte showed marvellous penetration in dealing with the conditions existing in Switzerland."

⁴Bonjour, Offler and Potter, A Short History of Switzerland (Oxford, 1952) p. 232. Other skeptics have seen strong indications of machiavellianism in Bonaparte's policies in Switzerland during this period. See Guillard, op. cit. where Mediation is termed "...a masterpiece of Machiavellian policy." J.L. Beatty observed that "Napoleon established [in Switzerland in 1803] a federal system...which effectively prevented its becoming a unified state and also guaranteed his own influence

the maintenance of free routes to Italy along the Alpine passes through Valais, and the second the consolidation of the Helvetic Republic on the French eastern frontier. To be efficient as a protection against Austrian attack, the Swiss government had to be stable within its limits. In this later period, however, the French government, instead of supporting revolution in Switzerland, exerted all its efforts to maintain a static condition, for Paris had discovered that the sponsorship of the small unitary party did not assure mastery of the situation. The central premise held by the French, nevertheless, that they could choose leaders for the Swiss, and through them control the issue of events in Switzerland, had not been abandoned. The history of the last years of the Helvetic Republic, from 1800 to 1803, is to a large extent a description of a deliberately concealed and reluctant French relinquishment of this proposition.

In the immediate Swiss situation, therefore, there were just as certainly two movements which must be traced from the date of the fall of the "revolutionaries", who had come to represent the unitary constitution and the Swiss revolution as much as the offensive alliance with France. The first of these was a turning away from the predominance of the "unitaires" in French politics, perhaps from a francophone

by installing himself as the 'Mediator'.... In this subservient status Switzerland lasted out the Napoleonic page in history." Napoleon and the Governance of Non-French Subject Peoples, Doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 1953 (unpublished) p. 20. One must add that, as we shall see below, Bonaparte's influence also prevented Switzerland dissolving into complete anarchy.

domination of the Helvetic government, as Pichon suggested,⁵ to a more traditional, "German" directorate. The second involved the consistent Swiss attempts to secure a return to neutrality, or at least the abrogation of the offensive articles in the treaty of alliance.⁶ The French government naturally resisted even the latter Swiss desires, since to French eyes, this appeared an endeavour to conclude a separate peace with Austria, under the pretence of a return to neutrality.

In addition the fact that French policy for Switzerland had changed by the time of Laharpe's overthrow was to some extent obscured by other continuities in the Swiss situation. Although the personnel of government had changed, there was no immediate amelioration of domestic conditions. Even as Laharpe's fate materialized, Zeltner was once more protesting in Paris about the weight of French requisitions.⁸ Switzerland was not yet free of famine.⁹ French troops, preparing

⁵Pichon to Talleyrand, 1 jour complémentaire VIII AeS. v. 471, Dunant, 778, Ochs II, 450, i.

⁶Haller to Maret, 5 February, 1800, Arch. nat. AFIV1700, Dunant, 983.

⁷Bonaparte to Talleyrand, 16 February, 1800, Correspondance VI, 4600.

⁸Zeltner to Talleyrand, 16 nivôse VIII (5 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 13, Dunant, 894.

⁹Pichon to Talleyrand, 13 nivôse VIII (2 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 7, Dunant, 891; same to same 20 and 21 nivôse VIII (9 - 10 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 27 and 28, Dunant, 903 and 904; same to same, 5 pluviôse VIII (24 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 59, Dunant, 915; Jenner to Talleyrand, 6 pluviôse VIII (25 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 62, Dunant, 916.

for the 1800 campaign, were making particularly heavy use of the Alpine passes.

It is scarcely surprising in this context, that discussion of remedies formed the core of political contention in Switzerland. The new executive commission (Glavyre, Dolder and Savary, members of the former government, together with Frisching, the former cantonal treasurer of Berne, Franz Müller of Zug, and K.-H. Gschwend of the Rheinthal) was formed from the opponents of Laharpe, together with three partisans of revision who had been specifically selected to appeal to alienated sections of public opinion.¹⁰ While Talleyrand was receiving anonymous letters in Paris which told him that Pichon was, from his actions, a proven instrument of the anti-republican party,¹¹ in Berne the Swiss debated whether the success of the 7 January coup implied some degree of restoration in Switzerland. Although the Legislative Councils which had formerly resisted Laharpe now stated that there could be no revision of the fundamental principles of equality of rights, of the unitary constitution and of representative democracy,¹² the executive commission apparently envisaged

¹⁰Frisching, for example, received French approval because it was felt that he would bring into the government federalist support from the countryside. Zeltner to Talleyrand, 23 nivôse VIII (12 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 33, Dunant, 908.

¹¹Letter dated 22 nivôse VIII (11 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 30, Dunant, 906.

¹²Pichon to Talleyrand, 30 nivôse VIII (19 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 50, Dunant, 910.

some degree of fundamental change. In January it proclaimed an amnesty for all infractions of security and public order during the period of the "revolution", which was now over.¹³ the constitutional discussions continued, and Pichon reported that distinct bodies of opinion favouring alternatively "féderalisme" and "unitarisme" were forming in Switzerland.¹⁴ At the same time Pichon was receiving representations from all sides to the effect that Switzerland must be returned to neutrality. In this specific matter, the Swiss desired a French initiative, since French policy had forced them to abandon their traditional posture two years earlier. In anticipation of this Jenner was named plenipotentiary minister in Paris.¹⁵

Here was the crux of the matter, and the particular issue on which Laharpe had found himself caught. After his fall, the French government was prepared to countenance the return of Switzerland to a less democratic form of government. In the interests of tranquillity, the French allowed the new Helvetic government to restrict the franchise, and generally to return political power to the traditionally dominant patrician classes,¹⁶ although there was no question

¹³Jenner to Talleyrand, 2 pluviôse VIII (21 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 55, Dunant, 912.

¹⁴Pichon to Talleyrand, 9 pluviôse VIII (28 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 67, Dunant, 919.

¹⁵Jenner to Talleyrand, 2 pluviôse VIII (21 January, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 55, Dunant, 912.

¹⁶Pichon to Talleyrand, 16 pluviôse VIII (4 February, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 83, Dunant, 927.

of revision of the constitution in a federalist sense. The concessions made to those very people whose unreliability had occasioned the initial French invasion, however, could not be made in such a way as to prejudice French strategic interests.

The expedient adopted was a simple one, which had been considered in the early days of the French invasion, and which Mangourit had been instructed to abandon. This was the separation of the Alpine passes from Switzerland. Valais had become part of the Helvetic Republic, and the French plan had once been to control all Swiss affairs and the passes through the Helvetic government. In view of the bankruptcy of the "revolutionary" party in Switzerland, and of the general dislike of the offensive alliance, the French government now reversed course. It became prepared to allow the Swiss some latitude in their internal affairs, within the context of the formal unitary constitution, an arrangement which signalled to the Swiss the possibility of a return to their traditional neutrality. The price for this, however, would be the cession to France of Valais. Talleyrand did not anticipate too severe a resistance to this plan, for, as he wrote to Bonaparte in April, 1800: "La neutralité est le cri général."¹⁷ While this plan developed, the new French ambassador, Reinhard, who arrived in Switzerland on 21 February, was instructed to prevent the Swiss altering their constitution before the peace, and to pacify their feelings

¹⁷Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 1 floréal VIII (19 April, 1800) AeS. v. 472, 167, Dunant, 963.

through commercial concessions and increased supplies of grain from France.¹⁸

The Swiss, however, were not to be so easily mollified. The new revisions to the franchise laws were rejected by the Helvetic Senate. Reinhard reported that "l'esprit de parti s'empare de toutes les questions."¹⁹ In the face of this obstruction, the Executive Commission began to discuss the possibility of adjourning the Legislative Councils. No amount of explanation from Reinhard of the necessity for tranquillity sufficed to calm the situation.²⁰ The Legislature had in fact succeeded in reducing the Executive Commission to the same point of frustration as it had Laharpe, and on 7 August 1800, the executive proceeded with a coup,²¹ on the "Fructidor" model. A new legislature was installed, formed of thirty-five former legislators who had formed a minority in the former Councils. The thirty-five augmented their numbers through the co-option of eight new members, and then elected seven new Directors (Frisching, Dolder, Glayre, Savary, K.-F. Zimmermann of Brug, J.-J. Schmid of Basel and Vincent Rüttimann of Lucerne).

¹⁸Reinhard to Talleyrand, 5 ventôse VIII (23 February, 1800)
AeS. v. 472, 113, Dunant, 936.

¹⁹Reinhard to Talleyrand, 19 ventôse VIII (8 March, 1800)
AeS. v. 472, 127, Dunant, 942.

²⁰Reinhard to Talleyrand, 21 germinal VIII (9 April, 1800)
AeS. v. 472, 158, Dunant, 957.

²¹Monnard, XVII, pp. 37 - 39.

This action in a sense completed the movement begun on 7 January, 1800, for now there was some commonality of views between executive and legislature although the reformed government was still required to work in terms of the French preponderance. Bonaparte had in June renewed the instructions to Reinhard that French policy was still to maintain the forms of the "new order", and the unitary constitution.²²

The victors of 7 August nevertheless proposed to present a new constitution to Switzerland. A constitutional commission named on 15 August, 1800 had long discussions with the new Directory, the result of which was a constitutional proposal announced on 8 January, 1801.²³ The proposition was presented to Reinhard on 11 January, 1801.²⁴ He reported to Paris that it was based on absolute Helvetic unity and aristocratic forms. He also suggested that it would automatically fail if it did not gain French approval, because "...[elle] restera sans partisans."²⁵

²²Reinhard to Bonaparte, 5 messidor VIII (22 June, 1800) AFIV1700, Dunant, 1123.

²³Aktensammlung, VI, p. 716; Swiss Executive Commission to Bonaparte, 9 October, 1800, AeS. v. 473, 187, Dunant, 1088; Reinhard to Talleyrand, 15 vendémiaire IX (6 October, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 183, Dunant, 1085.

²⁴Legislative Council to Reinhard, 12 February, 1801, AeS. v. 474, 75, Dunant, 1173.

²⁵Reinhard to Talleyrand, 22 nivôse IX (11 January, 1801) AeS. v. 474, 19, Dunant, 1152.

Rengger and Glayre were sent to Paris to revive Bonaparte's approval but French policy, the two emissaries found, continued to be that Switzerland should not adopt any definitive change in its constitution before the peace was concluded.²⁶ Rengger, concerned that Switzerland did not have the resources to support the French troops in transit across its territory, protested that arrangements needed to be made immediately.²⁷

When peace between Austria and France was achieved at Lunéville on 9 February, 1801, the road appeared open for settlement of Swiss constitutional difficulties. Among other provisions, the treaty guaranteed the independence of Switzerland. Although this provision had been introduced by France, the French government tended to take a sophistic attitude to that particular clause.²⁸ At the same time, the Frickthal was ceded to France by Austria at Lunéville. Bonaparte

²⁶Talleyrand to Reinhard, 12 pluviôse IX (31 January, 1801) AeS. v. 474, 53, Dunant, 1166.

²⁷In particular, 40,000 reservists under Brune, crossed Switzerland during the summer in an attempt to threaten Austrian positions in the Tyrol. Carnot to Talleyrand, 26 messidor VIII (13 July, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 60 Dunant, 1015. The support of these troops was a Helvetic responsibility, by specific order of Bonaparte. Talleyrand to Reinhard, 1 thermidor VIII (18 July, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 66, Dunant, 1020; Talleyrand to Reinhard, 27 thermidor VIII (13 August, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 118, Dunant, 1049. A provisional convention on this matter had been signed on 3 fructidor. Reinhard to Talleyrand, 4 fructidor VIII (20 August, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 124, Dunant, 1055.

²⁸France should in any case be allowed to preserve "... cette influence amicale et désintéressée qu'elle a dans tous les temps exercée en Helvétie." Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 18 germinal IX (7 April, 1801). AeS. v. 474, 157, Dunant, 1203.

proposed to cede the Frickthal to Switzerland, against a cession of Valais by the Swiss.²⁹ He in addition decided to make the cession of Valais the condition for the return of Switzerland to neutrality.³⁰

Even if Switzerland was to be neutral, it was expected that it also be calm. The possibility of continuing disorder determined Bonaparte to impose a new constitution on Switzerland which would put an end to controversy. This he dictated to Glayre and Stapfer at Malmaison on 9 May, 1801. In essence this was yet another "unitary" proposal, although, as a concession to "federalism", each of the seventeen Swiss cantons was granted the right to limited local autonomy and to a local constitution of its own choice.³¹ Provision was

²⁹Reinhard Memorandum, mid-messidor VIII (early July, 1800) AFIV 1700, 96, Dunant, 1127; Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 15 nivôse IX (4 January, 1801) AeS. v. 474, 6, 33, 34, Dunant, 1147, 1157, 1158.

³⁰Bonaparte, Correspondance, VII, 5366; Talleyrand to Reinhard, 23 vendémiaire IX (14 October, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 198, Dunant, 1093; Reinhard to Talleyrand, 1 brumaire IX (22 October, 1800) AeS. v. 473, 209, Dunant, 1098.

³¹Talleyrand to Stapfer, 19 floréal IX (8 May, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 12, Dunant, 1219. See the French government memorandum "Sur la Suisse" 8 germinal IX (28 March, 1801) AeS. v. 474, 157 Dunant, 1203, referred to Talleyrand by Bonaparte, 18 germinal IX (7 April, 1801) AeS. v. 474, 158, Dunant, 1204. Talleyrand commented that federalism recommended itself because its appeal to the Swiss would tend to quiet Swiss controversies. "Unitarisme" appealed to the French government because of the possibility that it presented of controlling the whole Swiss situation but without complete and continuous French attention, and indeed, even with it, this system could not be made to work. Talleyrand advised that the French government should modify the existing constitution in a federalist sense, yet leaving the fundamental unity of Switzerland unchanged. See also the note by Fitte on the Reinhard Memorandum, AeS. v. 474, 162, Dunant, 1208.

also made for cantonal representation in the central government, but the main legislative authority in the Helvetic Republic remained a Senate chosen on the old unitary basis.³²

On 18 May, 1801, the Helvetic government presented the Malmaison proposition to the Helvetic Legislature, with strong French backing.³³ Although on the 19th, this was communicated to the public, the debates continued behind closed doors, under conditions of strict press censorship.³⁴ The proposal was accepted by the Legislature on 29 May, and was promulgated on the 30th.

When the Malmaison formula was presented for the scrutiny of the nation, however, French policy received a major setback. The elections held under the Malmaison scheme returned a high percentage of former administrators who had a firm practical grasp of the problems of Switzerland. Reinhard sent a coded message to Paris which said that the government was in a quandary. The new legislature had wild hopes for Swiss independence and individuals associated with any former Helvetic government had done uniformly badly at the polls. Switzerland was in fact extremely excited, and factionalism

³²Talleyrand to Reinhard, 18 floréal IX (7 May, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 11, Dunant, 1209.

³³Reinhard to Talleyrand, 23 floréal IX (12 May, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 18, Dunant, 1221. "Le gouvernement de la République a fait connaître d'une manière positive que le dernier projet était le seul auquel il crût pouvoir donner son approbation." Reinhard to Talleyrand, 5 prairial IX (24 May, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 30, Dunant, 1225; Talleyrand to Reinhard, 13 prairial IX (1 June, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 40, Dunant, 1228.

³⁴During which debates the French minister was to use all his influence to gain the correct result. Talleyrand to Bonaparte, n.d. AeS. v. 475, 42, Dunant, 1229.

had returned in full force. New divisions opened between the Legislature and the Executive. The new Swiss legislature, from which the "federalists" and the Bernese patricians shortly retired, immediately appointed a commission to study means of modification of the Malmaison scheme.³⁵ At the same time, reports that France was considering the separation of Valais from the Republic provoked the Diet into declaring the "absolute integrity" of Helvetian territory.³⁶

Although the French were prepared to be somewhat flexible on questions of Swiss politics by this time this open resistance could not be tolerated. In spite of the fact that Talleyrand would shortly observe that:

Ce qui nous intéresse n'est pas de savoir avec une certitude mathématique la valeur réelle de tel ou tel individu, mais d'être assurés qu'il suivra la ligne qui a été tracée.³⁷

he stated that in this case the general rejection of the French proposal was clear evidence that the elections had been subverted by some factional intrigue.³⁸ Verninac, Reinhard's successor as French ambassador in Switzerland, was therefore

³⁵Reinhard to Talleyrand, 1 thermidor IX (19 July, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 104 and annex, 104bis, Dunant, 1248 and 1249; Reinhard to Talleyrand, 17 thermidor IX (4 August, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 131, Dunant, 1254; Frisching to Ochs, 2 August, 1801, Ochs, III, 13; Rufer, "Helvétique", p. 43.

³⁶Reinhard to Talleyrand, 21 messidor IX (9 July, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 87, Dunant, 1246; Monnard, XVII, 116-117.

³⁷Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 9 pliviôse X (28 January, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 31 Dunant, 1382.

³⁸Talleyrand to Verninac, 14 frimaire X (4 December, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 105, Dunant, 1330.

instructed to prepare yet another coup, "...sans laisser voir l'intérêt française."³⁹ On 28 October, 1801, the Diet was dissolved, and the Malmaison system re-established with no revisions. General Thureau occupied Valais.⁴⁰

This last departure opened the door for deepening political confusion in Switzerland. The coup brought clearly patrician elements to power, after the dissolution of the recalcitrant legislature.⁴¹ The trust which the French government now placed in a reformed Helvetic government under a new landamann, Aloys Reding, however, also proved misplaced.⁴² Reding was soon making demands on the French government to secure the revision of the Malmaison formula,⁴³ and was

³⁹Napoleon, Correspondance, VII, 6020; Instructions for Verninac, fructidor XX (August-September, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 153, Dunant, 1263. These clearly demonstrate French dissatisfaction with the state of affairs in Switzerland. Theoretically, the coup was staged because the Swiss government was acting contrary to the constitution imposed at Malmaison. Talleyrand to Verninac, 16 brumaire X (7 November, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 65, Dunant, 1308.

⁴⁰Verninac to Talleyrand, 8 vendémiaire X (29 September, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 199, Dunant, 1282; same to same, 10 vendémiaire X (1 October, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 1, Dunant, 1284; Talleyrand to Verninac, 7 brumaire X (28 October, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 48, Dunant, 1304.

⁴¹Talleyrand to Verninac, 14 frimaire X (4 December, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 105, Dunant, 1330.

⁴²Talleyrand to Verninac, 30 floréal X (19 May, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 181, Dunant, 1448; Verninac to Talleyrand, 18 pluviôse X (6 February, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 38 Dunant, 1305; Aktensammlung VII, p. 934.

⁴³Reding to Bonaparte, 24 November, 1801, AFIV 1701, 15, Dunant, 1365.

appealing to European capitals for support against French domination. Five "unitaries", introduced into the Senate at French demand in December 1801, had insufficient influence to be able to restrain Reding.⁴⁴ The French had once again failed to find the proper "master" for the Swiss.⁴⁵ Amid the continuing factionalism in Switzerland, they had once more failed to find a political solution to the problems of the Helvetic Republic which did not involve a fundamental change of the constitution.⁴⁶ As Reinhard had exclaimed in consternation in July, 1801:

...c'est la guerre des partis qui décidera si la Suisse sera unitaire ou fédéraliste.⁴⁷

The French turned their support away from the fédéralistes and Reding. On 4 April, 1802, Verninac was instructed to begin encouraging the "patriotes" again.⁴⁸

In the context of the discussions surrounding the new cantonal constitutions to be formed under Malmaison, Verninac had ample opportunity to exert his influence. As controversy and disruption in Switzerland increased, the executive Small

⁴⁴Talleyrand to Verninac, 14 frimaire X (4 December, 1801) AeS. v. 476, 105, Dunant, 1370; Reding to Bonaparte, 15 December, 1801, AeS. v. 476, 130, Dunant, 1336.

⁴⁵Verninac to Talleyrand, 11 nivôse X (31 December, 1801) Arch. nat. 1706a, 59, Dunant, 1370.

⁴⁶Talleyrand to Bonaparte, n.d. AeS. v. 476, 168, Dunant, 1356; Talleyrand to Verninac, 17 nivôse X (6 January, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 11, Dunant, 1374.

⁴⁷Reinhard to Talleyrand, 1 thermidor IX (19 July, 1801) AeS. v. 475, 104 bis. Dunant, 1249.

⁴⁸Talleyrand to Verninac, 15 germinal X (4 April, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 108, Dunant, 1419.

Council, from which Reding had retired in protest on 17 April, 1802, adjourned the Senate and submitted the constitutional questions to an assembly of notables.⁴⁹ The plan was that if the notables accepted the French constitution, which was a modified version of Malmaison, all would be well. If they did not, the "patriotes" with the support of Verninac, would stage a coup.⁵⁰

Elections for the acceptance had been held on 2 April, 1802, but there had been an uncertain result. Of the seventeen cantons, only Appenzell, Baden, Solothurn and Zürich voted for acceptance of the constitution as it stood, while seven cantons had accepted it with reservations and six rejected it outright.⁵¹ The situation had been clarified by 30 April when the notables met, for Verninac had discussed the new constitution with Rengger, and the assembly was forbidden to modify the proposal.⁵² The proposal itself was an imitation of Malmaison, changed only to allow the cantons increased voice in the formation of fiscal policy. On 20 May the proposition was accepted by the notables,⁵³ and on

⁴⁹Verninac to Talleyrand, 27 germinal X (16 April, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 125, Dunant, 1424, *Aktensammlung*, VII, p. 1230.

⁵⁰Verninac to Talleyrand, 30 germinal X (19 April, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 130, Dunant, 1426.

⁵¹Rufer, "Helvétique", p. 45.

⁵²Rengger had also consented to French desires for an independant Valais. Agreement between Verninac and Rengger, AeS. v. 477, 209, Dunant, 1456; Talleyrand to Bonaparte, prairial X (May-June, 1802) AeS. v. 477, Dunant, 1464.

⁵³Verninac to Talleyrand, 30 floreal X (19 May, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 176, Dunant, 1446.

the 25th it was submitted to the people, while a new senate of twenty-seven members was appointed by Rengger and the Small Council to serve as a provisional legislature.⁵⁴

Although the voting on the constitution was orderly, the result was disappointing. It was in fact rejected by 92,423 votes. This however, did not deter the "patriotes" who were prepared for this eventuality. The Small Council had adopted before the plebiscite the simple expedient of counting all abstentions as votes in favour of the constitution. On 2 July, 1802, it proclaimed that the constitution had been accepted by 167,172 votes.⁵⁵ On 3 July the new Senate met, and elected Dolder first magistrate and Rüttimann and Füssli as Statthalters.⁵⁶ On 27 July it agreed to the formation of the valley of the Rhône into an independent state. Rengger and Verninac between them produced a constitution for the new republic which was accepted by a plebiscite held on 30 August, 1802.⁵⁷ The new republic was proclaimed on 3 September, 1802, and the government installed on the fifth.

Now that Valais had been ceded, the time appeared ripe finally to restore Switzerland to some degree of freedom from French supervision. Under its new constitution, Bonaparte

⁵⁴Verninac to Talleyrand, 6 prairial X (25 May, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 187, Dunant, 1451; Aktensammlung, VII, p. 1372.

⁵⁵Rufer, p. 46; Memoire dated 27 messidor X (15 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 36, Dunant, 1496.

⁵⁶Verninac to Talleyrand, 16 messidor X (4 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, Dunant, 1486.

⁵⁷Verninac to Talleyrand, 20 messidor X (8 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 26, Dunant, 1491; Moniteur, 27 fructidor X.

expected Switzerland now to settle its differences without the abrasive presence of the French. The differences which the Swiss had to reconcile, however, were more fundamental than he imagined. The recent political speculation and the elections had provided an atmosphere in which new troubles had broken out in the interior.

Although Bonaparte was receiving representations from the Ministry of War that the French needed to increase their strength in Switzerland if they were to keep the peace there,⁵⁸ he plunged the situation into utter confusion by announcing the immediate withdrawal of French troops from Switzerland, "...laissant une indépendance entière et absolue à cette république."⁵⁹ There is no indication that Bonaparte anticipated the great disorders which were to follow on the heels of this action. This step was taken, on the one hand, to indicate to Europe French good intentions towards Switzerland. More importantly, however, the occupation of Valais had seemingly made further French intervention in the affairs of Switzerland unnecessary.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Berthier to Bonaparte, 26 prairial X (14 June, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 226, Dunant, 1462; Verninac to Talleyrand, 4 messidor X (22 June, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 247, Dunant, 1469.

⁵⁹Napoleon, Correspondance, VII, 6206, 6207, 6349, 6359, 6376 and 6406; Aktensammlung, VIII, pp. 365 et. seq.; Talleyrand to Verninac, 19 messidor X (7 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 24, Dunant, 1489.

⁶⁰Bonaparte to Talleyrand, 26 prairial X (14 June, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 225, Dunant, 1461; Verninac report, 8 messidor X (26 June, 1802) AeS. v. 477, 259, Dunant, 1472; Talleyrand to Verninac, 23 fructidor X (9 September, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 146, Dunant, 1545; Stapfer to Talleyrand, 3 thermidor X (21 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 47, Dunant, 504.

FRENCH ANNEXATIONS

1. ANNEXATION

1792

1797

1798

2. OCCUPATION

1798

1798-1802

3. DETACHED FROM SWISS CONFEDERATION

1802

1806

This view was, needlessto say, not shared by the new government of Switzerland, which correctly felt that it would be overwhelmed by disaster were the French to withdraw.⁶¹ As Rufer has said:

La présence de la petite armée française était aussi insupportable au pays qu'elle était nécessaire au gouvernement.⁶²

On 20 July, 1802, the Conseil d'exécution announced the French withdrawal, and exhorted the citizenry to new efforts. The unitaire Paul Usteri, however, immediately fled with his family into the countryside, and eventually to Tübingen, whence he condemned "die perfide Absicht" of Bonaparte.⁶³ Rumours indeed began to circulate of federalist intrigues in Schwyz.⁶⁴

Agitation shortly broke out in Schwyz for the re-establishment of the "landesgemeinde", and on 1 August, 1802, the popular assembly met and elected Reding landamann.⁶⁵ Although the revolt was not widely dispersed, the Helvetic government was unable to quell it. In the absence of concrete support from Bonaparte,⁶⁶ and amidst increasing dissension among the Helvetic legislators in Berne, the revolt spread

⁶¹Verninac to Talleyrand, 24 messidor X (12 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 34, Dunant, 1495.

⁶²Rufer, "Helvétique" p. 46; A detailed account of the consequences of the French withdrawal can be found in Monnard, XVII, pp. 219 - 326.

⁶³G. Guggenbühl, Bürgermeister Paul Usteri 1768 - 1831 (1924) I, pp. 328 et seq. cited Ochs, III, 32n.

⁶⁴Verninac to Talleyrand, n.d. AeS. v. 478, 67, Dunant, 1514.

⁶⁵Verninac to Talleyrand, 22 messidor X (10 July, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 85, Dunant, 1518.

⁶⁶Verninac was instructed, however, to have no relations with the insurgents. Talleyrand to Verninac, 29 thermidor

to Glaris and Appenzell, where on 30 August the old order, complete with subject districts, was reestablished. By September the insurrections had spread to Zürich, the Rheintal, Saint Gall, Lugano, Zug, Baden, Aargau, Basel and Schaffhausen.

In Berne, the situation deteriorated rapidly. While the Helvetic Senate occupied itself with increasingly excited scenes, disorders spread to the city itself. On 19 September, the Helvetic Government, after calling for French aid under the terms of the August 1798 alliance, retired to Lausanne.⁶⁷

On 21 September, 1802, the Grand Council of the Swiss Confederation met in Berne, and proclaimed a restoration.⁶⁸ The Helvetic Government in Lausanne was in dire straits, for it only had at its disposition the remnants of the "légion helvétique", while the insurgent forces numbered some eight thousand. The "légion" was defeated in a battle at Faoug on 3 October, 1802, and the troops retreated in disorder into Lausanne on the fourth.⁶⁹

X (16 August, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 99, Dunant, 1524.

⁶⁷Verninac to Talleyrand, 2 jour complémentaire X (18 September, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 172, Dunant, 1553; Stapfer to Talleyrand, 20 September, 1802, v. 478, 175, Dunant, 1554.

⁶⁸Verninac to Talleyrand, 2 vendémiaire XI (23 September, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 192, Dunant, 1559; F. von Mulinen to Bonaparte, 3 October, 1802, AFIV1700, 111, Dunant, 1622.

⁶⁹Verninac to Talleyrand, 10 vendémiaire XI (1 October, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 218, Dunant, 1570.

The complete destruction of the Helvetic government was prevented at this point by the arrival of Bonaparte's offer of mediation.⁷⁰ On 28 September, Ney had moved up to the frontiers of Switzerland, and on 1 October, 1802, an armistice was arranged between the belligerents.⁷¹ After some resistance to Bonaparte's dictation,⁷² the Swiss Diet dissolved on 27 October, and the Helvetic government returned to Berne on the eighteenth, to resume the administration of the country. Ultimately the whole of Switzerland was occupied by the French,⁷³ who this time made no charge on the Swiss for their services.⁷⁴ Reding was arrested and held as a hostage for federalist good behaviour.⁷⁵

On 25 October, 1802, the Helvetic Senate ordered elections to be held which would choose the delegates to attend

⁷⁰Talleyrand to Verninac, 8 vendémiaire XI (29 September, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 210, Dunant, 1566; Bonaparte, Correspondance, VIII, 6351, 6352, 6359, 6370, 6677.

⁷¹Talleyrand to Rapp, 8 vendémiaire XI (29 September, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 212, Dunant, 1518; Talleyrand to Ney, same date, AeS. v. 478, 213, Dunant, 1569; Rapp to Talleyrand, 13 vendémiaire XI (4 October, 1802) AeS. v. 478, 229, Dunant, 1578; Rapp to Bonaparte, 13, 16, 18, 31 vendémiaire XI (4, 7, 9, 12 October, 1802) AFIV1701, 85, Dunant, 1625, AeS. supplément, v. 28, folio 88, Dunant, 1627, AFIV1701, 86, Dunant, 1631 and AFIV1701, 84, Dunant, 1634.

⁷²Letters of protest sent to Vienna, Berlin and London, resulted only in a British protest to the French that Bonaparte's intervention was contrary to the terms of Lunéville, 1801. Guillard, pp. 105 - 106.

⁷³Ney to Talleyrand, 13 brumaire XI (4 November, 1802) AeS. v. 479, 5, Dunant, 1638.

⁷⁴Bonaparte, Correspondance, VIII 6404.

⁷⁵Ney to Talleyrand, 2 frimaire XI (22 November, 1802) AeS. v. 479, 59, Dunant, 1646.

the Consulta in Paris which Bonaparte had prescribed to deliberate on the Swiss situation.⁷⁶ The government itself sent three delegates, while the cantonal diets of 1801 and 1802 all sent representatives.⁷⁷

By the end of November, 1802, sixty delegates from Switzerland had assembled in Paris at Bonaparte's bidding, and of these only eighteen were federalists.⁷⁸ Bonaparte designated Talleyrand, Demeunier, Fouché, Roeder and Barthélemy,⁷⁹ as French representatives to the Consulta, whose role was to be restricted to reporting the Swiss deliberations to Bonaparte. On 10 December the meeting opened.⁸⁰ Bonaparte, through Barthélemy, declared for a federal constitution and equality of individual rights in the opening address. On 13 December, 1802, the Consulta, began its deliberations. It is important to observe that during these

⁷⁶Ney to Talleyrand, 2 frimaire XL (22 November, 1802) AeS. Ibid.

⁷⁷The curious position of the Swiss is amply demonstrated by the address of Ochs (who was preparing once again to do French bidding) and 49 citizens of Basel to Bonaparte, 7 brumaire XI (29 October, 1802). One needed to agree with the need for fundamental reform, yet not insult earlier French policy. "...déjà nous retombions, sauf quelques astucieuses modifications, sous l'ancien joug cantonal, dans le désordre d'un lâche fédéralisme...lorsque votre vienheureuse et confédérale déclaration retentit dans nos vallées." Ochs, III, 32.

⁷⁸Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 21 brumaire XI (11 November, 1802), D. Bertrand, Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoleon (Paris, 1886) 31.

⁷⁹Who had, according to Chapuisat, remained in contact with Ochs and Frisching after Brumaire. Chapuisat, Suisse, p. 67.

⁸⁰Bonaparte, Correspondance VIII, 6480; Proclamation of 13 frimaire XI (3 December, 1802) AeS. v. 479, 94, Dunant, 1654; Stapfer to Ochs, 7 December, 1802, Ochs III, 37; See Ochs to Talleyrand, 8 December, 1802, Ochs III, 38; Fouché, Mémoires, pp. 160 - 163.

sessions the Swiss were prevented from presenting lists of systematic grievances by canton.⁸¹ The French government apparently depended not on the deliberations of the delegates and public opinion but on its accumulated diplomatic reports, to form its impressions of the Swiss situation.⁸²

The discussions continued until 24 January, 1803, when Bonaparte announced that he was prepared to discuss a federal proposal with five members from each of the opposing parties.⁸³ This meeting took place at the Tuileries on 29 January, 1803.⁸⁴ Following slight further discussion, Bonaparte presented the final text of the Mediation Settlement to Louis d'Affry, named landamann of the new Swiss Confederation by the First Consul.⁸⁵ On 21 February, 1803, the Consulta dissolved, and after dining together chez Barthélemy, the delegates left for home.

On 5 March, 1803, the Helvetic Senate accepted the Mediation settlement. On 10 March, 1803, Louis d'Affry entered into his functions as landamann of the Swiss Confederation, resuscitated in spite of continuing French resistance, after a lapse of almost exactly five years.

⁸¹Ochs to Stapfer, January, 1803, Ochs, III, 42; Transcript dated 6 pluviôse XI (25 January, 1803) AeS. v. 479, 198, Dunant, 1666; Barthélemy to Bonaparte, 22 frimaire XI (12 December, 1802) AFIV1701, v. 1, 61, Dunant, 1676.

⁸²Bonaparte, Correspondance, VIII, 6368.

⁸³Ibid. VIII, 6483.

⁸⁴Ibid. VIII, 6560.

⁸⁵Mediation was published as a supplément to No. 151 of the Moniteur, 1 ventôse XI (19 February, 1803) pp. 609 - 620. Fouché, Mémoires, p. 162; Bonaparte Correspondance, VIII, 6590, 6600, 6680.

Tout ce qui précède, citoyen ministre, prouve la vérité de ce que vous m'avez dit quand je vous ai quitté, qu'il y avait un parti national [en Suisse] et un parti qui se targuait beaucoup d'un prétendu attachement à la France. Le choix n'est pas difficile entre eux, si une fois nous savons bien fixer la limite de l'influence que nous devons exercer sur ce petit état....

--Pichon to Talleyrand,
5 frimaire VIII (25 November, 1799).

VI. OCHS' REVOLUTION AND LAHARPE'S COUP

From its foundation in the thirteenth century, the Swiss Confederation has had a continuous existence which has only been interrupted once, and then for a short five years. The period of the Helvetic Republic occupied but a moment in history, however interminable it may have seemed to many Swiss. These were nevertheless extraordinary years in Switzerland, marked by foreign intervention, civil disturbance and natural disaster. They made a profound impression on the Confederation. The Swiss correctly identify the Republic as a major turning point in their history, as the beginning of their modern age, and of the great debate over the form of their constitution. As we return to consider the original question posed in this paper, we must keep foremost in our

minds the unprecedented French interference which interrupted the evolution of local Swiss politics and interposed the sweeping issues of revolution and war in Europe.

In order to consolidate the objectives of the 1798 invasion, the French had decided to reorganize Switzerland under the unitary constitution proposed by Ochs. For the life of the Helvetic Republic, this remained the fundamental proposition of French policy. The French persisted in this despite substantial Swiss resistance which clearly was directed against the French and the unitary constitution, and hardened by the rapacity of the French commissaires and troops. Beginning with Laharpe in May, 1799, all Helvetic governments successively demanded the return to some form of "federalism", which was only achieved with Mediation in 1803.

The fact that the Swiss did not like the unitary constitution appears clear to us in retrospect, and a major question must be why the French did not make this simple diagnosis of the Swiss problem. The abandonment of the unitary constitution was an obvious answer, even to the French, and indeed, as Talleyrand observed, this was the force of the reports of all their ambassadors to Switzerland.¹ The French government,

¹Talleyrand to Bonaparte, 30 frimaire VIII (20 December, 1799) AeS. v. 471, 193, Dunant, 871.

however, was anxious to retain the advantages of "unitarisme" -- a consolidated Switzerland which stretched to the Austrian frontier -- and spent these five years looking elsewhere for the answer to the Swiss problem. They continually searched for a "leader" or group of leaders who would be able to govern Switzerland from a central location. When the French abandoned the unitary constitution in 1803, they also abandoned the search for a governor for Switzerland. Those powers which did not devolve on the cantonal governments were entrusted to a landamann and two secretaries. Switzerland was to have no substantial central government at all.

The Helvetic "Revolution", as the French saw it, was an attempt to substitute one group of leaders for another. In this context, the unitary constitution was the means, not the end, and initially, Ochsen and Laharpe were the leaders who were to use the constitution to consolidate Switzerland. French policy therefore changed in January, 1800, when, in order to calm the Swiss situation, the French government decided to abandon the "revolutionaries" -- to change the personnel -- and yet leave the structure of the Helvetic Republic unchanged. From this point, the French allowed those whom they visualized as leaders more compatible to the Swiss to control the government of the republic, but this experiment also failed. No leader emerged who could simultaneously find the French-imposed constitution acceptable

and be popular with the Swiss. Mediation was the ultimate French recognition of their failure in Switzerland.

The Helvetic Revolution, however, had failed long before this. The French had stopped sponsoring the "revolutionaries" in January, 1800, and had, from that time, attempted to maintain a static situation in Switzerland, by allowing personnel changes, but not basic constitutional revision. French policy therefore supported a "revolutionary" party and the unitary constitution up to January, 1800, and then gradually retreated from that position, ultimately in 1803 abandoning the unitary constitution itself.

When we turn to consider the reluctant Swiss themselves, we must keep the changing and fixed elements of French policy, firmly in our minds. During the five year period from March, 1798 to March, 1803, the unitary constitution could not be changed. It was under this umbrella that all Helvetic politics developed. And while the struggle between "unitarisme" and "fédéralisme" dominated the latter years of the Helvetic Republic, beyond the areas which rose in revolt specifically against the unitary constitution, "fédéralisme" was simply not relevant to the interior situation of the Helvetic Republic before January 1800. It was only at that time that it seemed possible that the French would allow revision of the constitution in a federalist direction. In any case, the French did not conceive the Swiss question in these political

terms, but rather in terms of a personnel problem. During the period of the Helvetic Revolution, to January, 1800, contending factions inside the Helvetic Republic could not be identified by their support for "fédéralisme", for the possibility of evolution in this direction simply did not exist. At the same time to say that unitaire feeling was monolithic clearly would not be true. "Unitarisme" and "fédéralisme" can explain the controversies during the period after January, 1800, but cannot explain the internal controversies which disrupted the government and legislature of the unified Helvetic Republic, during the days of the revolution.

When they jettisoned Laharpe in 1800, the French saw their policy as turning to the support of those groups which had traditionally led the Swiss cantons. With the return to these leaders, the movement for the revision of the constitution was begun and agitation for a return to "federalism" persisted until Mediation was promulgated in 1803. During this later period, government followed government as each one in turn found that it could not secure revision of the constitution, but while they were all restrained to the context of the unitary constitution, it was only in the period before January, 1800, that the French actively supported a "revolutionary" party against the other contenders for political power in Switzerland.

It is when we ask the question: "What were the French

supporting here?", that we probe the fundamental nature of the Swiss revolution of 1798 - 1800. In terms of personnel, the individuals most concerned were, as we have seen, Ochs and Laharpe. It is on our evaluation of these two men that we must base our impressions of the Helvetic Revolution, for it was under their leadership that the French sought to consolidate the ends of the 1798 invasion.

In a most specific sense, this was Ochs' revolution, since he gave form to its birth and purpose to its development through the unitary constitution. But did this make it a democratic revolution? To the extent that the War of the Second Coalition was a war of aristocracy against democracy, of counter-revolution against revolution, to the extent that France was democratic and Austria aristocratic, the Swiss revolution, sponsored by France was a democratic one. Switzerland was a major battleground in the War of the Second Coalition, and one can describe those periods of French ascendancy as generally periods favouring the growth of "democratic" institutions. Similarly, in the areas occupied by the Austrians in 1799, there was undoubtedly an "aristocratic" resurgence.

In other words, it would appear that the politics of the Helvetic Republic during the period of the Helvetic Revolution, 1798 to 1800, assumed a "democratic" character only incidentally. Ochs felt representative democracy to be important, but

in the situation that he was in, it became a means, much like the unitary constitution, to the accomplishment of French policy. Both of these had the primary purpose of consolidating Switzerland under the French hegemony, an end with which Ochs complied, beginning with the intrigues which led to the French invasion, and continuing through his period in government. Ochs represented a French revolution in Switzerland, which only made incidental appeal to various individuals who desired reform of the old Confederation.

When we turn to a consideration of Laharpe, the situation appears to have been slightly different. Laharpe apparently represented something more intrinsic to the Swiss situation than Ochs ever did. Ochs' career was ended with the Helvetic Republic, and such was the public opprobrium over his role in the revolution that his sons changed their name to His. Laharpe on the other hand survived the Helvetic Revolution, and went on to lead the Swiss liberal party for many years after 1815.

It is difficult to determine what forces Laharpe actually represented. References in the Boehtlingk biography are few and vague. The research has simply not been done. There are however indications in the study which we have done here, which may show us the direction in which further research could most profitably be done.

In relation to the government of France, Laharpe was always a much more restive servant of French policy than was Ochs. One can assume that this was because he identified with some specific group in Switzerland, and espoused their goals, while Ochs was vague about specific ends, and had to rely exclusively on the French for support. It is only in this context that Laharpe's career in Swiss politics can be understood. His actions were not those of a man who felt his sole support to be a foreign government. While he protested the detail and the fundamental of French policy on the one hand, he sought to marshal the Helvetic republic not only against the Austrian menace, but also so that it could assert its independence of France. He was plotting a coup against what he saw as the obstructionists in the Helvetic legislature when the French withdrew their support for him, and he retired from public life in the Republic.

Laharpe was in a totally untenable position during the later months of his period as a Helvetic Director. He could not get the French to agree to a change of the Helvetic constitution, and at the same time they would not support his attempts to bring the legislature into line. He could have resigned immediately, but interestingly enough, he chose to stage a coup, which presumed that he anticipated some support for his measures. He apparently wished to popularize the revolution, and to introduce stern financial measures and

stricter military levies, and yet we do not know where he intended to find the demagogues to arouse his societies, or the Swiss troops which would have been necessary to enforce his will.

There is also the indication from Pichon, that Laharpe's coup, had it occurred, would have removed many Germans from positions of responsibility under the Republic. When we consider Laharpe's own complaint to France, that the persons and property of the former governing classes of Switzerland were being protected during the revolution, while they were excluded from office, and his description of French policy in Switzerland, Laharpe begins to emerge not so much as a democrat, but as a Vaudois patriot.

Laharpe clearly was the symbol of the emancipation of Vaud or, looked at in another way, of the emasculation of Berne. Indeed, in this light, he would appear to be the only real example of continuing identity of interest between French policy and the local Swiss situation as to means, object and purpose. When Laharpe is looked upon not so much as a Swiss, but as a Vaudois, he appears to provide the link between France and the Swiss situation which could explain the internal politics of the Swiss revolution to 1800, and at the same time the nature of resistance to French policy which was not strictly "fédéraliste" except by association.

The ostensible object of the French invasion of Switzerland was the liberation of Vaud from Berne. While Vaud, as a result of the invasion, did achieve cantonal status, this did not really give the Vaudois any increased discretion, since they were still governed by an authority beyond their immediate control. They substituted rule by the Bernese for rule by a centralized Swiss régime, as a result of which transfer of control, the Vaudois enjoyed no greater local autonomy. It would appear, in this context, contradictory for Laharpe to be first concerned with the liberation of the French-speaking minority in Vaud, and yet at the same time to be one of the foremost proponents of the unitary constitution in Switzerland. Immediately to surrender their newly found autonomy to a central government which operated under the forms of majority rule would seem to be directly against the interests of the Vaudois, as a minority in the Swiss Confederation, unless the idea was that they should enjoy a disproportionate influence in that government. Although there is no evidence to show that this process was begun intentionally, by the time Laharpe was the animus of the Helvetic Directory, this was what had occurred. It would appear that the Helvetic Revolution inadvertently became an attempt by Laharpe to place the Vaudois in the predominant position inside Switzerland which their former masters, the Bernese, had previously enjoyed. There are

we are forced to concentrate on the period before January 1800, and to discount Ochs, qua democrat. We are left with Frederic Cesar Laharpe. It presumably takes more than a few cries of "Vive Laharpe" as he passed through Payerne after his resignation from the Helvetic Directory, or reports of Vaudois in Paris intriguing against the new government established after his fall,³ to make Laharpe into the Vaudois national hero. If he was a democrat, however, it could clearly only be within the confines of Vaud, for to allow even representative democracy to control the Helvetic Republic would have signalled the end of the short-lived Vaudois dominance of Swiss affairs. When Laharpe first went to Jean Debry in 1797, he was talking about the creation of a small republic from French-speaking Switzerland which would be separated from the rest of the Confederation and allied to France. How much had his ideas changed in the intervening period?

The answer to this question would only have been clear had he in fact staged a coup in the winter of 1799 - 1800. As things stand, we have no idea of what he would have done next, had he purged the Helvetic legislature, or for that matter, specifically whom he would have purged. Where would he have founded his popular societies? In what areas would

³Monnard, XVII, pp. 34 and 89.

he have recruited his troops, replenished his finances, found his support? In short, had Laharpe had his coup, upon whom would he have called for aid? And indeed we may further ask: Who would have responded to his call?

APPENDIX

A NOTE ON RAPACITY

French rapacity is undeniable, although its ultimate political significance may be debated. At the same time the original suggestion that the French sought only to recompense their costs incurred in the "liberation" of Switzerland never appears to have been seriously believed. Although Laharpe suggested in the fall of 1797 that Bernese treasure could be used to finance an invasion of Switzerland, and Sorel believed that the money was predestined to the support of the army of England, Ochs said he was under the impression from the beginning that Bonaparte was interested in this mainly to finance his Egyptian expedition.¹

Whatever the rationale, however, there is "...no doubt Switzerland was thoroughly plundered."² Not including the "contributions" originally set at sixteen millions,³ and not including the maintenance of the French armies in transit to Italy, against both of which the French were holding hostages,⁴ the French gathered up almost all they could carry in the Swiss cantons. The losses to individual cities were

¹Ochs, II, 421 D.

²Phipps, Armies, V. p. 71.

³Proclamation of Lecarlier, 19 germinal VI (8 April, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 128, Dunant, 48; Lecarlier to Directory, 20 floréal VI (9 May, 1798) AF III 86, v. 366, 30 Dunant, 151.

⁴Rapinat to Directory, 10 prairial VI (29 May, 1798) AeS. v. 466, 293, Dunant, 125.

calculated by the Bernese financier Gottlieb Abraham von Jenner to have been Zürich, 882, 456 livres; Lucerne, 300,000; Fribourg, 283,297 (where the inhabitants claimed that they had in addition suffered personal losses running to 600,000 livres from pillage⁵); Solothurn, 520,782 (where on 9 May 1798, the Helvetic Directory protested to Paris that the French agent Rouhière was putting the stores in the arsenal to public auction⁶); and from Berne some 6,500,000. The Bernese treasure had been audited on 19 February 1798 and contained at that moment 7,896, 118 livres, and it was estimated that some 1,120,000 of these had been spent on the war. The treasury was left bare after the French on 11 - 12 March 1798 used eleven four-horse wagons to remove the treasure. In Lucerne even the funds of the hospital and the orphanage were seized.⁷ Ney estimated that the French had ultimately managed to remove some 44,440,000 francs from Switzerland.⁸

In addition, the French carted off three Bears from the caves of Berne, one of which was still alive in Paris in 1823.⁹ Berne, Solothurn and Fribourg lost 130 cannon and 60,000 rifles to the French when their arsenals were emptied,¹⁰

⁵AeS. v. 466, 185, Dunant, 73.

⁶AeS. v. 466, 208, 214, 215, Dunant, 87, 90 and 91.

⁷AeS. v. 466, 219 Dunant, 94; Dändliker, III, p. 366.

⁸Guillon, p. 362.

⁹Phipps, V, p. 71.

¹⁰Guillon, pp. 466 - 67.

although only 20 canon had in fact been lost on the battlefield.¹¹ These were never returned to the Swiss.¹²

The French relieved the Bernese of a collection of captured flags, which were ultimately returned to the Swiss as a sign of improved relations on 15 brumaire XII (5 November, 1802).¹³ Guillon also produced an unpublished letter from Brune, dated 27 March, 1798 from the Archives de la guerre, Armée d'Helvétie, which suggested that the army commissioners in Switzerland lay hands on "...une grande quantité de manuscrits [à Arrau] fort curieux, entre autres une chronique de Froissart, plusieurs classiques grecs et latins, et une collection peut-être unique des vieux auteurs de romans français."¹⁴

Whether or not, as Godechot says, the value of the Swiss treasure was exaggerated by popular rumour,¹⁵ it represented a major loss to Switzerland. One might well appreciate the truth of Talleyrand's statement that the initial part of the Swiss operation had been planned in close concert with the French Minister of Finance.¹⁶

¹¹Mengaud to Directory, 16 ventôse VI (6 March, 1798) AFIII85, v. 351, 71 Dunant, 131.

¹²Decision of Consuls, 25 germinal VI (14 April, 1801), notified by Talleyrand to Reinhard, AeS. v. 474, 176 Dunant, 1211.

¹³Bertrand, Lettres inédites de Talleyrand à Napoléon 50.

¹⁴Guillon, p. 363.

¹⁵Godechot, Grande Nation, pp. 562 - 563.

¹⁶Talleyrand to Directory, n.d. AeS. v. 467, 8, Dunant, 167.

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Finally there are several valuable biographical studies which span the period of the Helvetic Republic and should be read by the student of its history. The most important of these is A. Boehtlingk, Fredéric César Laharpe, O. Forel (trans.) Neuchatel: a la Baconniere, 1969, or in the original, Friedrich Caesar Laharpe: der Erzieher und Berater Alexanders I von Russland, des Sagers über Napoleon I und Anbahner der modernen Schweiz, Berne and Leipzig: Bircher, 1925 (2 volumes, with notes), although the section on the Helvetic Republic is less emphasized than contacts between Laharpe and Alexander I. Of less intrinsic importance to the Helvetic Republic, but useful for a general understanding of the period are: E. Burkhard, Kanzler Abraham Friedrich von Mutach, 1765 - 1831: Vierzig Jahre bernische Geschichte, Berne: Haupt, 1923; Edmond Pictet; C. Pictet de Rochement, 1755 - 1824, Geneva: Georg, 1892; Bernard Mallet, Mallet du Pan and the French Revolution, London: Longmans, 1902; and Pierre Morren, La Vie lausannoise au XVIII siècle d'après Jean Henri Polier de Vernaud, Geneva: Fides, 1969.

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