

Text of a Speech given by  
His Excellency, Alfred Zehnder,  
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series on Europe's Contribution to  
American Civilization

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You have invited me to speak about Switzerland's contribution to American civilization. This is quite a task. I don't intend to give you today a complete study on this subject. You will see later why. Switzerland is not only a small country in the heart of Europe, but it is Europe. And Europe is Switzerland. It is impossible to determine exactly what part in the Swiss contribution is genuine Swiss, and what part is European. That is why I would like to invite you to try with me to discover the great ideas and the facts which ought to allow those of you who are particularly interested to undertake further investigations.

As I told you, Switzerland is a small country in the heart of Europe and situated on the crossroads of three different languages, and the population speaking even four languages. They are German, French, Italian and Romanch. We can make abstraction of the last one, because that language is not more than a remnant of the old vulgar Latin, isolated in the high valleys of the eastern part of Switzerland and not belonging to a particular cultural area. It is today no more than a language for home use.

The three other languages are each in itself part of a larger cultural area. For the purpose of this study let us put aside the regional dialects, especially the German ones, which are for home use only as the Romanch. The larger area of the German language, familiar to the northern and eastern part of Switzerland, is all that part of Europe in which German is the language used by writers, scientists and humanists in their works. What is published there belongs logically and automatically to the Swiss culture in the same language area. What is published in Switzerland in German belongs in the same way to the civilization of the larger part of Europe, where German is the main language.

The larger area of the French language familiar to the Western part of Switzerland is all that part of Europe, where French is predominant. And it is the same thing for the Italian language familiar to the southern part of Switzerland.

Goethe and Schiller (remember his William Tell?), Erasmus, Alexander von Humboldt and Kant belong as well to the Swiss civilization as a Gotthelf, Gottfried Keller, Duerrenmatt, or Swiss Nobel prize winners, who have written their works in German.

Molière, Châteaubriand, Victor Hugo, or Pascal and Rostand are a part of the Swiss civilization just as Madame de Stael, Ramuz and Rousseau or Calvin of the French part of Switzerland belong to the larger area of the French civilization.

Dante, Petrarca, Gallilei and Volta have marked the Swiss civilization just as Francesco Chiesa or Zoppi or the scientists of the Italian part of Switzerland have marked the larger area of the Italian civilization.

Many Ambassadors from other European countries have already spoken before you about the contribution of their countries to American civilization. It was easy for those who represented countries speaking one language and belonging to an existing cultural area. It was more difficult for those who represented countries constituting only a part of a cultural area. But anyway they based their research on a language spoken in one cultural area. For reasons you understand now, this is not possible for me. Let us therefore forget the distinction based on a spoken language.

Swiss civilization is a fully European one, because we speak some of the main European languages, because the country is situated in the very heart of Europe, and because nothing which happens in Europe is alien to Switzerland.

But there exists another way to determine the contribution Switzerland has made to the United States.

Switzerland, historically and politically seen, is a community of people who by their own free will have created a state based on the coexistence of citizens belonging, as you have seen, to three different civilizations and speaking four different languages. And that volition itself has never been and is not a result of one man's idea, but a collective resolution of the community. "Wir wollen sein ein freies Volk von Bruedern" (We will be a free folk of brethren), as Schiller expressed it in his drama, William Tell. The very first federal pact signed between the cantons (states) around the lake of the Vierwaldstaetten (Lake of Lucerne) clearly shows the signs of an early democratic feeling, a sketch of a way of life. Swiss citizens aspired to independence, freedom, people's sovereignty, and democracy. Don't forget that for five or even six centuries Switzerland has been the

only republic among absolute and later constitutional monarchies. This particular situation has formed the character of the Swiss citizens, and one of its most important consequences today is their very strong sense of responsibility and independence of judgment.

Another important factor in the development of the Swiss character was the Reformation. It is not my idea to qualify the Reformation as good or bad, as necessary or dangerous. I only wish to draw your attention to the fact that Calvin and Zwingli with their pronounced sense of independence and responsibility are children of the spirit which I have just tried to explain to you.

And last but not least, the economic conditions in Switzerland worked in the same direction. What can be done in a country which has no sources of energy, no raw materials? Nothing. Only rocks, ice, stone and snow. The result of that was a strong horror of waste, a careful way to make from imported material high quality finished and perfected goods.

And the logical consequence of this situation was the high esteem with which the Swiss citizens consider work in itself. The richest Swiss citizens are not landlords or oil magnates, but people who have worked more, harder and more efficiently than others.

Therefore, we can carry out our investigation on the basis of the essential features of the character of Swiss individuals or groups of people who have immigrated into the United States from Switzerland. And we can carry out our investigation in the direction of the Swiss contribution to American political institutions and the American way of life. I feel that proceeding in this way we are on solid ground.

In the second part of my lecture, I shall try to show you that, in fact, Swiss influence is noticeable on the American way of life wherever Swiss communities in the States have preserved over the generations the essential features of the Swiss national character, or wherever individuals could, with the help of circumstances, impose their kind of thinking and feeling on a new community.

These influences, however, are difficult to distinguish for mainly two reasons, which are:

1. The fact that Switzerland was and is a small country and that the number of her immigrants into the United States during the last two hundred years, as impressive as it may be, has never played a substantial role in forming the American population.

2. The fact that between Switzerland and the United States there exists a basic similarity in their political institutions - both countries are federalistic democracies - which makes it practically impossible to distinguish where the influence was at work. A study of the influence that the great sister democracy has exercised on the old, little democracy would of course be even more interesting than what I can tell you!

## II

Switzerland and the United States share some basic similarities which are deeply rooted in their history. Both countries are federations of sovereign states.

When in 1291 the three original Swiss cantons, Uri, Schwyz and Unterwalden, concluded their first permanent alliance they wanted to preserve their inherited communal rights against new feudal overlords. What developed as a new, separate country started as a movement to conserve local autonomy. For such a group of citizens and communes an agreement among equals is the appropriate form of organization. Later on, other valleys and towns joined the original three cantons. Since 1815, Switzerland has been a Confederation of twenty-five cantons, all of them on a completely equal level. The only central body they had in common was the regular meeting of the delegates from each canton, called the Diet. This time-honored institution proved to be inadequate to deal with the problems of a growing economy; the central power, therefore, had to be strengthened. On the other hand, however, care had to be taken to preserve the sovereignty of the cantons because they, and not the Confederation, are the original constituents of our country. In the Swiss Federal Constitution of 1848 a workable compromise was found on the American example. This outside influence was openly admitted by the proponents of this reform in their speeches and writings.<sup>1)</sup> The equal representation of each canton independent of its size and population is guaranteed in the Council of States which is composed of two members from each canton (one from each of the six half-cantons) making a total of forty-eight members. The Swiss Council of States is basically identical with the American Senate, but it also has its indigenous Swiss roots because it is a modernized version of our medieval Diet. The Swiss people as a whole is represented by the two hundred members of the National Council elected by popular vote on a nation-wide basis. The national Council resembles the American House of Representatives; some of its advocates even had proposed this name for

1) cf. Eduard His, Amerikanische Einflüsse im Schweizerischen Verfassungsrecht, Basel 1920

the new institution.

The analogies between the Swiss development from the Diet to the Federal Assembly composed of the Council of States and of the National Council, with the similar development in the United States from the inefficient Articles of the Confederation of 1777 to the actual Federal Constitution of 1787, are too striking to need further emphasis before an audience of American scholars.

What are the reasons for this basic similarity? Why have state sovereignty and local autonomy been so stubbornly defended in both our countries against a more centralized form of government under which they would become mere agents of the federal power? To keep our political systems workable we have, of course, to be continuously on the alert so as to be able to adapt it to the requirements of our age in which more and more national decisions on vital issues have to be made to meet the challenge of the future. This has been done by our forefathers, according to the needs of their time, and we have to follow in their footsteps. But they also never lost sight of the other aspect of such changes, i.e. of their influence on the original forces active in state and local citizenship which are the very basis of our national strength. Even when centralizing, these qualities can be preserved and even enhanced if federal, state and local powers cooperate as they do quite efficiently under many American and Swiss programs, i.e. in the admirable U.S. Agricultural Extension Service which modernized American agriculture throughout the country and in the highly developed voluntary cooperation between American states and Swiss cantons on a professional level.

In this predilection for the autonomy of the smaller units inside the whole nation the United States and Switzerland are following a trend which is quite contradictory to the concept of the heavily centralized national state so typical of much of Europe's history with its grandeur and disasters. This spirit of autonomy with its reliance on the citizen who acts on his own responsibility, however, also has its roots in European soil. To understand this fully, we only have to go back to a time in which the modern national state was not yet born or only in its infancy and local autonomy flourished everywhere, from the medieval towns with their cathedrals to the communities of mountain farmers in the Alps. In that period the nucleus of Switzerland was created by the alliance of the original three cantons. Centuries have passed since that event and Switzerland has developed from a loose grouping of a few communities into a modern state, but the feeling of continuity from the beginning up to the present time is still alive.

III

A similar development started in New England with the settlements of the Pilgrim Fathers and their successors. In the wilderness of the New World they established a type of communal life very much identical with that still existing in the Swiss alpine valley. The New England town meeting reminds us of the Swiss Landsgemeinde, that time-honored form of direct popular rule still existing in several Swiss cantons. There the Landsgemeinde, i.e. the open-air meeting of the citizens of that canton, is the supreme power which decides by an open majority vote on all cantonal issues. This conception of the state as a community of its free citizens goes back to the early Middle Ages when northern tribes settled in the Alps and established their democratic form of government. There everybody had to bear his share of responsibility for the common good. The same was true in a New England town. Honorary offices therefore abounded in both types of communities. Their catalogue in Alexis de Tocqueville's description of the Communal Powers in New England<sup>1)</sup> looks quite familiar to a Swiss because that list is almost identical to one that could be made of similar offices in a Swiss alpine village. In both cases self-government is carried to its utmost possibilities.

This relationship between communal life in the New World with earlier forms in Europe is so striking that it could not go unnoticed by statesmen and scholars. In 1764, Thomas Jefferson in his "Summary View of the Rights of British America" based his claim for independence of the American colonies on the ancient freedoms and rights the Anglo-Saxons enjoyed before their suppression under the feudal system. Other scholars broadened this idea by including a comparison with the ancient Greeks and Swiss. In 1881, the English historian, Edward Augustus Freeman, wrote in his "Introduction to American Institutional History": "A New England town-meeting is essentially the same thing as the Athenian Ekklesia, the Swiss Landsgemeinde, the English folk-moot. What in Switzerland is a survival was in New England rather a revival. Rhode Island is as essentially ancient as Uri itself."

Or to put it in other words: The spirit of self-government which characterizes American life is a European heritage. Its development in new surroundings was a rebirth because in Europe itself it had declined under the impact of

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1) cf. De la Démocratie en Amérique, 1835, 1ère partie, Chapitre 5.

powerful nationalistic trends detrimental to individual independence. In such places as Switzerland, however, old freedoms and liberties were better preserved, thanks to the stubborn adherence of its citizens to their traditional way of life. This makes an historic comparison between Swiss and American political institutions particularly rewarding for a new understanding of one important aspect of the European contribution to American civilization, i.e. its impact on law and government.<sup>1)</sup> Among the Swiss scholars who have exercised an influence I would like to mention:

Burlamaqui of Geneva, who inspired in Jefferson the idea of the "pursuit of happiness" which is inserted in the Declaration of Independence. Ralph Barton Perry writes in his book "Puritanism and Democracy": "You can't refute the fact that Burlamaqui has been read and quoted by important Americans of that time and that he has influenced some of the authors of the Constitution."

Emmerich de Vattel from Neuchâtel, of whom the Encyclopaedia Britannica says: "In spite of its logical weaknesses, Vattel's treatise exercised great influence over the development of international law, especially in the United States, where it was quoted not only by secretaries of state but also by federal judges in cases involving international law. His wealth of illustrations came to serve as precedents, and his liberal humanitarian principles were readily adaptable to the policy of a democratic state. The principles of liberty and equality that he had absorbed in his native country fitted well into the ideals of the Declaration of Independence. Particularly his defense of neutrality and his detailed rules upon commerce between neutrals and belligerents proved to be of service to U.S. statesmen."

The influence of Jean Jacques Rousseau in the political field is today considered less important than it previously was. It is known today that most of Jefferson's ideas were formed before he could read Rousseau's works. However, the United States was already prepared to accept his ideas of equality. The biographer of Albert Gallatin remarks: "The one-time disciple of Rousseau had great faith in the rights and capacities of the common citizen - the mechanic, the small tradesman, and, especially, the farmer; he shared the concern of all frontiersmen about protection of their

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1) Hans Rudolf Guggisberg, Das europäische Mittelalter im amerikanischen Geschichtsdanken des 19. und des frühen 20. Jahrhunderts, Basel 1964.

homes against Indian raids, the unfavorable balance of trade with the merchants of the East, the need for better transportation to and within the West."

Furthermore, Rousseau's influence was of capital importance in the educational field, both through his "Emile", which has been characterized as "the charter of childhood", and through his disciple the great educator Heinrich Pestalozzi, who was the inspiration of a lasting educational movement in this country and whose influence could probably be discerned even in American modern education.\*

And, of course there is, in the religious field, the paramount importance of Jean Calvin's influence who admittedly was not Swiss by birth but is nevertheless closely associated with Geneva, where he lived his whole mature life.

#### IV

The personal contributions of Swiss emigrants and their descendants to American civilization have been displayed in the work "Prominent Americans of Swiss Origin", a compilation of biographies published in 1932 by the Swiss American Historical Society. Its authors are Americans of Swiss descent, loyal to their new country, but, at the same time, also proud of their Swiss ancestry. Among the great men whose careers they describe with legitimate but somewhat naive pride are pioneers like the adventurous General John A. Sutter (1803-1880), the hero of California, theologians like Father Martin Kuendig (1805-1879), the "Hero of the Cholera Epidemic in Detroit" and Michael Schlatter (1716-1790), the "Father of the Reformed Church in America", soldiers like Admiral Edward W. Eberle (1864-1929), outstanding as an educator at the Naval Academy, statesmen like Albert Gallatin (1761-1849), the financial wizard and U.S. Secretary of the Treasury from the old and sophisticated city of Geneva, several physicians who played a role in the rapid development of the medical profession in the United States, successful businessmen like the coke and steel king, Henry Clay Frick (1849-1919), the founder of the Frick Gallery in New York, and such scientists as Jean Louis Rodolphe Agassiz (1807-1873), the Harvard geologist and founder of the National Academy of Sciences from Neuchâtel, and Ferdinand Rudolph Hassler (1770-1843), the father of the Coast and

\*) Will S. Monroe: History of the Pestalozzian Movement in the United States. (Syracuse, 1907)



### Geodetic Survey from Aarau.

All these men and many others had the chance to develop fully their talents in a new society which urgently needed their services. From their Swiss backgrounds they brought to the new country a capacity for hard work. Among themselves they are as different as the various parts of Switzerland to which their families belonged. The urban Harvard professor Agassiz from an old Swiss city, and the militant General Sutter from the Basel countryside were quite dissimilar in character and style of life, but both had in common the fact that they were pioneers in their field, Agassiz in natural science and Sutter as one of the first prominent settlers in an undeveloped part of America. It is doubtful whether they would have attained the same prominence in the old small country where personal opportunities were more limited and where sometimes, as in the case of Agassiz, political changes made it difficult for certain citizens to be generally accepted by their contemporaries. Agassiz belonged to that group in Neuchâtel which remained loyal to the King of Prussia who, by inheritance, was the Prince of that canton until, under Swiss pressure, he abdicated in favor of a democratic government. The new country that accepted Agassiz and honors him as one of its greatest scientists has been a democracy from its very beginnings as a new nation. Emigration made of the royalist Agassiz a loyal citizen of a democratic republic, i.e. of the same form of government which had hindered his career in his home town. These are the paradoxes of emigration which is a complex process equal to a rebirth for a second life. To understand it better we have to look at it from a more general point of view.

### V

Looking back at Swiss and European emigration to the United States as a whole we have to admit that among the very best elements were such dissenters as the Mennonites who, because of their conflicts with the official church authorities, had to look for new homes abroad where they hoped to live freely according to their religious principles. Their most tenacious group, the Amish, called after its Swiss founder, Jacob Ammann, has kept up to this day in America a style of life formed in the European seventeenth century.

But they are only one group among the so-called "Pennsylvania Dutch" whose backbone are the Mennonites who arrived in the religiously tolerant state of Pennsylvania around 1700. Many of them were of Swiss background. 1)

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1) cf. Oscar Kuhn, The German and Swiss Settlements in Colonial Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 1945.

Swiss family names still abound in such regions as Lancaster where they first settled. Their old furniture, pottery and folk art are very similar to those in the Swiss canton of Berne which had expelled many of its best farmers because of their Mennonite faith in adult baptism condemned as un-orthodox by the Bernese state church. Today such denominational differences have lost their politically disruptive force. We are able now to see behind the façade and to recognize the essential contribution of the "Pennsylvania Dutch" to our civilization in their moral qualities. Theirs is a tradition of hard work, honesty and reliability. Their style of life has remained modest and unassuming in a world of abundance, and their families keep together over the centuries.

Sometimes the roots of a family tree can be traced back to the Middle Ages as in the case of President Herbert Hoover's ancestry.<sup>1)</sup> The original Swiss spelling of Hoover is Huber. This family name was first given to a Swiss farmer with the Christian name of Burchard and born about 1185. His descendant Jonas Huber emigrated to the Palatinate in 1699 for economic reasons, and his son Andreas joined the Mennonites in Philadelphia in 1738. In the old Swiss home village the Hubers still play an important role. They and their distant American relatives have been separated for centuries but share a family tradition symbolizing the common background of European and American civilization.

## VI

European emigration to the United States in the nineteenth century became a mass phenomenon. Rapid industrialization made outdated working methods obsolete and created poverty. One easy method of getting rid of the poor was to send them abroad by simply paying them a one-way ticket to America. Sometimes this was done in a rather crude manner. In other cases emigration was well subsidized and carefully organized by the home communities. Switzerland offers examples of both methods.

In his excellently documented study on "The United States and Switzerland in the 19th Century" (The Hague, 1963), Dr. Heinz K. Meier, Swiss professor of history at Old Dominion College in Norfolk, Virginia, gives the following account of the situation toward the end of the 1870's - a period of heavy strikes and social unrest (p. 112):

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1) c.f. the first chapter in "Prominent Americans of Swiss Origin.

"Cases of assisted emigration were more numerous than ever before. Poor families with numerous progeny, pardoned criminals, people from insane asylums, deformed paupers, and prostitutes were among the emigrants sent abroad by the authorities of their native communities. Statistics showed that in 1870 authorities paid an average of \$ 19.80 per person requiring relief, for the destitute within Switzerland. The average cost of assisting persons to emigrate during the same year was \$33.68 per head. The American Chargé d'Affaires (in Switzerland), transmitting this data (to his government), asked, 'Who would not make an additional outlay of \$13.88 to avoid paying \$19.80 per annum during a lifetime? Is it to be wondered at that local authorities who have the administration of the poor funds should indulge in so advantageous an investment for the benefit of the taxpayers whose interest they are supposed to represent?' "

Switzerland and the United States being continuously on very friendly terms, such matters were discussed with that bluntness typical of intimate family quarrels among close relatives, and it is therefore not easy to distinguish what was pointed out for the sake of an argument, from the actual facts. Besides, the same difficulties arose with other countries, but it was not always so easy to speak about them so openly. In any case, it would be less than honest to overlook them.

Fortunately, the Swiss history of emigration also offers other examples of which we can be genuinely proud, the more so because they are based on that very spirit of communal self-government which is America's and Switzerland's common heritage.

In the alpine canton of Glarus, located in a deep valley surrounded by gigantic mountains, resourceful and inventive citizens had overcome the handicap of such a location by creating a powerful textile industry which, ably assisted by shrewd merchants and tradesmen, exported its products, particularly its colorful calico-prints, all over the world. Around 1840, machine-loom replaced hand-loom at such a fast pace that many hand-weavers lost their jobs. Lacking other skills, they remained unemployed because they were not able to adapt themselves quickly enough to new working methods. Emigration to America appeared to the more active among them as the only constructive way to get out of their difficulties. In 1845, about two hundred of them emigrated to Wisconsin where they founded the township of New Glarus which up to this day has kept its character as a colony of Swiss immigrants. Family names are Swiss. The Swiss dialect is spoken. Milk and cheese are of Swiss quality. Farms are well kept and prosperous. Everything is as neat and clean as in a Pennsylvania Dutch or Swiss village. Each year on Labor Day the New Glarner produce an open-air performance of Schiller's William Tell drama

commemorating the founding of Switzerland. They are Americans proud of their Swiss ancestry whose civic spirit they have preserved and developed in new surroundings.

This development from a difficult start to a stable and flourishing community has been thoroughly investigated and described by the Swiss scholar Dr. Dieter Brunnschweiler, now Professor of Geography at Michigan State University, in his doctoral thesis, "New Glarus (Wisconsin), Gruendung, Entwicklung und heutiger Zustand einer Schweizerkolonie im amerikanischen Mittelwesten", Zuerich 1954.

The basis for this successful experiment in emigration has been laid already before its start by the first settlers themselves. Even in their destitution as unemployed workers and subsistence farmers they still had kept their pride as members of the old democracy of Glarus in which everything is decided by all the citizens in common at the Landsgemeinde. As citizens of their village community they had their share in its common ground and property, the "Allmend". Leaving the country they asked for their part to be paid to them in a lump sum as an indemnity for a right they had to give up by emigrating. They were successful in convincing the village meetings and the cantonal Landsgemeinde of the justification of their claims. So, they were able to begin a new existence in America with some capital. It was administered by a Cantonal Emigration Association consisting of the canton and its village communities which even sent at its own expense two outstanding citizens with business experience to the United States to look for an appropriate location for a new settlement. They chose a fertile valley in Wisconsin for New Glarus, bought the land for the colonists and assisted them in their establishment there. Every emigrant held an equal lot. The new village was run as a cooperative enterprise of the settlers. It has developed since on more individualistic lines, but never lost its identity. Things did not run quite smoothly at the beginning because the Glarner institutions could not all be transplanted to the different conditions on the Mid-western frontier. Even some squabbles between old and new Glarus could not be avoided, but this does not by any means obscure the basic achievements of the New Glarus experiment in emigration. Here, Swiss community spirit was at once transplanted to America, the new settlers did not arrive as poor destitutes, but as members of a freely formed group and neither in the old nor in the new country could any form of exploitation of the weak and feeble impair the founding of the new settlement. This particular case of New Glarus may serve as an example for similar settlements like New Berne in North Carolina, Vevey in Indiana or Geneva in New York

## VII

Swiss emigration to the United States in the XXth century has a somewhat different aspect. Its professional qualification is obvious. The typical newcomer from Switzerland nowadays is either a corporation executive or staff member, often in a firm with Swiss connections, or a scientist and scholar or a technician or skilled craftsman working his way up to a higher position. They are leaders or potential leaders in the economic and cultural life of this country. We should be happy if more of them would find their way back to Switzerland because we also could use their services.<sup>1)</sup> In any case, however, many of these scientists will stay here where they have found the fulfillment of their professional career and the high esteem of their chiefs and colleagues. The much smaller group of Swiss scholars in the humanities connected with American colleges and universities on a temporary or permanent basis contributes, with such studies as those by Dr. Hans K. Meier on "The United States and Switzerland in the 19th Century" of 1963 and by Dr. Hans Rudolf Guggisberg on "Das europaeische Mittelalter im amerikanischen Geschichtsdenken des 19. und des fruehen 20. Jahrhunderts" of 1964 (both already mentioned above) to a better mutual understanding of our common cultural heritage.

The Bibliography prepared by the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek in Berne this year, entitled "Switzerland and the United States of America, Relations of Switzerland with the United States, Swiss Emigration" (550 titles) will serve as a valuable instrument for further research on these subjects. A limited number of copies is available to scholars at the Embassy of Switzerland, 2900 Cathedral Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20008.

## VIII

The Swiss historian Jacob Burckhardt (1818-1897) in one of his lectures, edited in 1943 by the American scholar James Hastings Nichols in an English translation entitled "Force and Freedom, Reflections on History", has made the following statement:

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1) cf. Dr. Hans J. Halbheer, "Die Abwanderung schweizerischer Ingenieure und Wissenschaftler nach Nordamerika, \* Eindruecke von einer Informationreise", in the Neue Zuercher Zeitung of January 24 and 25, 1964.

"The small State exists that there may be a spot on earth where the largest possible proportion of the inhabitants are citizens in the fullest sense of the word; for the small State possesses nothing but real, actual freedom, an ideal possession which fully balances the huge advantages of the big State, even its power."

This praise of the small State, made around 1870, has not lost its actuality for us. We strive to keep up to that ideal of individual responsibility of each citizen. It has served us well in our relationship with your great country which is guided by the same spirit of citizenship.

When the United States and the Swiss Confederation concluded their still valid Convention of Friendship of 1850 they were - in the words of its preamble - equally animated by the desire to preserve and to draw more closely the bonds of friendship which so happily exist between the two Republics".

## IX

In the first part of the lecture I tried to analyze the situation, in the second part to describe the relations in which we are interested, and now I will try to come to some conclusions.

Despite the fact that common roots of our ways of life make it difficult to discern Swiss influence in the United States, I feel that the description which I gave you permits the following conclusions:

1. Switzerland has made a contribution to the U.S. through the Swiss political thinkers and by pioneering with the institutions of the popular referendum and initiative.

2. By her special vocation in the field of education, Switzerland has made a contribution to the educational system in the U.S.A.

3. Through the reform of Calvin, Switzerland strengthened the puritan concept of life even in the United States.

As I turn to our practical contributions I find the example in this country of many hard-working, honest and reliable Swiss settlers, whose style of life remained modest and unassuming even in prosperity. There is also the invaluable and probably under-estimated contribution of Albert Gallatin, who fought so hard to implant in this country a tradition of simplicity and economy in the Government, although it would probably be exaggerated to blame or praise him for the switching off of the lights at the White House. And, finally, there are all the

contributions of our scientists like Agassiz, or engineers (like the great bridge builder, Ammann), or settlers like General John A. Sutter.

Switzerland became indebted to the United States when in 1848 it borrowed the bicameral provision of the United States Federal Constitution. But this great unforgettable debt of public law was partially repaid when many American States, with the Swiss prototype in mind, adopted the people's initiative and referendum.

Looking back at this picture, I think that Switzerland is entitled to be proud of her contribution to your great civilization. But let me repeat here at the end of this speech that what strikes me most is not the differences between Switzerland and the United States, it is their affinities. We not only share the same democratic way of life but we belong to the same civilization, we share the same ideals, the same scale of values, and we strive for the same world of peace and universal friendship.

I hope that this lecture, through its references to our mutual history and its known and unknown heroes and to some recent scholarly works in this field will further contribute to that goal.

Thank you.

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