

WAR TRADE BOARD

Washington.

November 29, 1918.

Dr. Hans Sulzer,
 Minister of Switzerland,
 Legation of Switzerland,
 Washington, D.C.

My dear Dr. Sulzer,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 16th and 22nd of November, which I assure you are receiving careful and considerate attention. You will aid us materially in reaching a decision on the matters involved if you will be so good as to furnish us with further information on the following points :

1. Is it certain that increased shipments of breadstuff grains are a necessary prerequisite to an increase in the bread ration in Switzerland? On page 3 of your Memorandum of November 16th you say : "Furthermore, an increase in the bread allowance is out of the question until an adequate supply for three or four months is secured. Only if imports increase in the required proportion can we make use of this year's crop to reserve such a stock". I note, however, that on page 4 of the same Memorandum you indicate that the available supplies (as of September 21) would last till February 25th, 1919, with an average 350 gram ration beginning January 1st, 1919 (the 260 -gram ~~ration~~ consumption meanwhile continuing). Does this not afford the necessary reserve for three months (November 25, 1918 - February 25, 1919) ?

The Bureau of Research of the War Trade Board has calculated that with an average 300 gram ration from December 1, as suggested in your letter of November 22, the supplies (257,860 tons) of September 21 as stated in your Memorandum of November 16 (deducting consumption, September 21 to December 1, on the basis of an average 260 gram daily consumption for 4,000,000 people, and ignoring importations September 21 to December 1) would last till May 2, 1919, without any further importation.

257.860



-2-

2) I find a considerable disparity between the statement on page 4 of your Memorandum of November 16 concerning the supplies of food in Switzerland, as of September 31, and the data procured by the Bureau of Research.

(1) In your Memorandum the "inland crop" which I interpret to mean the domestic crop, is stated to have covered 113,000 hectares, and to have aggregated 170,000 tons. The area given (113,000 hectares) is approximately that devoted in 1918 to wheat and rye alone (111,000 hectares), as reported by the International Institute of Agriculture, but the estimated combined yield of wheat and rye is, as reported by the same authority, 240,000 metric tons. The area devoted to the three bread cereals (wheat, rye and barley) was 120,000 hectares, according to the International Institute, and the combined yield 254,000 tons. If oats and **corn** are added, the "inland crop" is reported to have covered 158,000 hectares, and to have totaled 338,900 metric tons.

(2) A yield of 1.5 tons per hectare is given in your Memorandum for the unitemized "inland crop". Statistics of the International Institute of Agriculture extending back to 1907 give the lowest average yield per hectare for wheat as ~~2.1~~ 2.1 tons, and indicate that in 1918 the average yield was 2.35 tons per hectare. The 1918 yield for both rye and barley appears from its data to have been 1.6; that for oats 2.15; and for corn 3.03. In no case is the yield as low as that given in your Memorandum, and for wheat it is 57 per cent higher.

3) While the potato crop in 1918 in Switzerland was slightly less than that of 1917, is it not true that it was greater than the average crop of recent pre-war years? Though the present potato ration in Switzerland is only 250 grams a day, the Swiss in this particular are better off than the people of various other countries, for in Germany the potato ration is 207 grams; in Austria 65 grams; in Hungary 143; and in Norway 143.

On page 3 of your Memorandum of November 16 you say with reference to potatoes: "In order to compensate this serious deficit, it is of the utmost necessity that we receive a monthly allotment of 12,000 tons of corn". On page 4 of the same Memorandum, in setting forth the available supplies in Switzerland, you deduct from the "total supplies" the "28,080 tons necessary to balance in some measure deficiency in this year's potato supply". Do not these proposals, taken together, provide double compensation?

-3-

4. I note from your statement of November 22 concerning the shipment of grain to Switzerland between September 1 and November 22 that 35,070 tons (presumably metric tons) went forward. The time involved was approximately 12 weeks, giving average shipments of 2,922 tons per week.

In your Memorandum of November 16, it is stated that on September 21 there were in Swiss warehouses 35,600 tons presumably of bread cereals, and that 52,260 tons were in transit or stored at French ports. The production in Switzerland in 1918 of wheat, rye, and barley, minus requirements for seed, is calculated by the Bureau of Research at 231,740 metric tons. The sum of these supplies gave Switzerland a stock of cereals amounting to 319,600 tons. Since September 21 nine weeks have passed, bringing, presumably, 2,922 tons of grain each week, or a total of 26,298 tons. Altogether, Switzerland therefore would appear to have a bread cereal supply of 345,898 tons, available for consumption.

On the basis of a present average per capita ~~of~~ daily consumption of bread in Switzerland of 260 grams (your Memorandum of November 16, p.3), and assuming that Switzerland adopt a 300 gram ration on December 1, 1918, instead of on January 1, 1919, it would appear that the grain supplies now on hand or in transit (to November 22) would suffice for 298 days, or until July 15, 1919.

I am, my dear Mr. Sulzer,

Very truly yours,

sig. Vance C. McCormick,

Chairman.

Sum