

The Swiss Army.

The true facts of the situation: February 1950.

Memorandum by Field-Marshal Montgomery.

1. The final paragraph of Part I of the Cottnell-Hill Report, dated October 1949, reads as follows:

"The Swiss Army, if attacked in the near future by a modern European Power, would suffer such severe casualties as to render it quickly unoperational as a force. The gallantry with which the soldiers would undoubtedly fight would only serve to increase the casualty rate."

2. The whole of the Cottnell-Hill Report bears out what I have always said. The final paragraph quoted above sums up the situation quite clearly.

I consider that at present the Army would not be able to defend successfully the neutrality of Switzerland.

This is a most serious state of affairs. Switzerland is not getting full value for the large sum of money that is spent on the Army.

The matter can be put right, but only if certain measures are put in hand at once.

Measures to be put in hand.

3. The training of the Army is on false lines; the instruction given to officers and men bears not enough relation to modern war.

The Department of the Federal Military Organisation which deals with training seems to have failed and I suggest that it now be re-organised.

To effect a financial saving, I suggest that the post of Corps Colonel, Chief of Training, should be abolished.

The training staff could then be placed under the Chief of Staff of the Army, which is right in principle and is the practice in all modern armies.



The Air Force at present envisaged should be at least halved. The resulting Air Force maintained by Switzerland should be a tactical Air Force, trained to co-operate with the Army in the land battle; it should also produce and train a reserve of pilots.

Conclusion.

9. If war should break out in Western Europe, it is necessary that Switzerland should adopt from the beginning a policy of strict military neutrality.
10. One of the essentials for the successful outcome of the battle in the West is that Switzerland should be not only prepared to defend her neutrality but should also be well able to do so.
11. At present Switzerland could not defend her neutrality successfully in the event of Russian aggression.
12. The reason is that the Army is being trained on false lines.
13. If the Army is to carry out its role in war of holding intact the frontiers of Switzerland, it must be properly trained. The manpower material is first class. Given proper and realistic training, the Army could be made into a good fighting machine and, assisted by an efficient tactical Air Force, could be well able to defend the neutrality of Switzerland.
14. If this object is to be achieved, the measures set out in paragraphs 3 to 8 above must be carried out with the least possible delay.

Montgomery of Alamein.

Field-Marshal.