

Four smaller nations bent on neutrality—to some it may mean profit, to others it is the sole hope of ultimate survival.

Among the Neutrals

I. NEUTRALITY IN THE LOW LANDS

From the *Times*, London Independent Conservative Daily

HOLLAND returned before the present emergency to her old policy of neutrality. When she joined the League of Nations she abandoned this policy, well aware of the sacrifice she was making. During the Manchurian struggle she was fully prepared to fulfill the obligations which action by the League might impose upon her although, because of the geographical position of her colonies in the East, she was the most exposed of the minor members of the League. After the Ethiopian conflict, however, she knew that the carrying out of the sanctions article of the League Covenant by the minor States brought risks and offered no reliable guarantee of safety. It was at this juncture that she returned to her old policy.

Holland's neutrality differs from that of Switzerland. Swiss neutrality is internationally guaranteed; Holland has always declined such a guarantee. The Swiss conception of neutrality implies that, should Switzerland be invaded in time of general

war, she would without hesitation join the side of the enemies of the violator of her neutrality; Holland, even if her territory should be violated, desires to be free to act in her own way and according to her own interpretation of affairs.

But every party can rest assured that she will resist to the utmost any attempt to use her territory as a basis of military activity—after her rearmament during the last years she may well entertain a reasonable hope of being capable of such a resistance, and at the moment she is fully mobilized. *[Recent construction has fortified the entire length of the frontier with Germany with a trench and casemate system artfully camouflaged among farms. Every frontier bridge can be dynamited by the throw of a single master switch. The forts around the chief cities have been strengthened as have the country's anti-aircraft defenses. The Zuider Zee, by flood control, can inundate much of the frontier region in a few hours.]*—THE EDITORS] Nor would Holland neces-

sarily remain averse to receiving assistance. In the case of a persistent attack by the violator of her neutrality she certainly would be obliged to accept it. But she refuses to give any Power the right automatically to help her.

Holland's neutrality also differs from that of Belgium. The latter had foreign entanglements which became too dangerous after 1936. She had a technical military agreement with France, which in no way bore the character of an alliance, although in Germany it aroused suspicions that it did. She was a signatory of the Treaty of Locarno which, once Germany had withdrawn from it, looked like a unilateral treaty. Great Britain and France absolved Belgium from her obligations, still, however, guaranteeing her integrity.

Then Belgium needed Germany's recognition of her neutrality so that the latter could not do what she had done in 1914, and use the doubt as to Belgium's neutrality as an excuse for an invasion. Germany recognized Belgian neutrality and promised that under no circumstances would she attack her, unless others employed Belgian territory as a basis upon which to prepare an attack on Germany. It is clear that such an exception, whether it be made in good faith or not, could at any time be used as a pretext for invasion. But Belgium accepted it because she required Germany's recognition of her as a country without anti-German obligations.

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Holland needed no guarantee from Germany, as she had never given Germany any occasion to doubt Dutch

neutrality. When Hitler, during the course of a Reichstag speech, offered Holland a treaty guaranteeing her integrity, she made it quite clear that she was not willing to accept it. She could not afford to make her integrity the subject of negotiations, as this must remain beyond all discussion and doubt. A very precarious state of affairs would be evolved should such a treaty be denounced. Here Holland has set an example for Sweden, Norway and Finland.

Great Britain has always shown a ready understanding of the policy of independence by which Holland has refused all negotiations with other Powers. At no time has the British Government attempted to induce Holland to collaborate against a third Power; neither have they ever tried to make Holland accept an offer of help in advance and in anticipation of a possible attack. This is as valid for the Far East as for Europe.

Neither are there any military agreements between Holland and Belgium. Certain Belgian groups have repeatedly pressed for such an agreement in the past. Ever since Belgium began to realize the wisdom of a policy of neutrality based upon the greatest possible independence for the minor States, she has appreciated the Dutch point of view. Well-informed circles on the Belgian side are of the opinion that it is best for both nations to maintain military independence of each other. This opinion is based upon an important political, as well as an important military, consideration.

The political consideration is that, if ever Belgium should again be the victim of an invasion, Holland ought to be able to remain unembroiled. It is to nobody's interest—and certainly

not that of the Belgians—that Holland should expose herself to the same fate, unless this proved to be inevitable.

It is also quite possible that an enemy of Britain might attack Holland, attempting, at the same time, to keep Belgium out of it, thereby placing a neutral buffer State between Britain's ally France and the invaded Holland. This is a possibility which no Belgian Government may neglect.

The military consideration is that

Holland and Belgium both have a totally different system of defense, which makes coöperation extremely difficult. Belgium has a short eastern frontier, defended by fortifications. She is able to defend herself on the outer line. Holland possesses a very long eastern frontier with relatively few fortifications. Her defense can always fall back upon the great rivers, and, farther, to the inundation-line, which lies well inland.

II. THE SIMPLE SWISS

By EMIL LUDWIG

Translated from the *Neue Tage-Buch*, Paris German Émigré Weekly

THE National Exposition in Zurich which I visited on the opening day of war moved me more deeply than any other Swiss event during the past thirty years I have been paying visits to this country. It closed the following day: mobilization was announced, confirming the very theme of the exposition.

Never have I seen a people so easily and so calmly express confidence in themselves. Instead of boasting of her rôle in world affairs, as all great Powers do and must do, Switzerland stresses her smallness. She does this with such tact that all the major countries could learn from her. There is even a slight undercurrent of humor in the show.

At the entrance to the first hall there stood a huge terrestrial globe, gleaming white. A tiny speck was marked in red. It represented Switzerland and the inscription read 'Switzerland, an inland country, without colonies, poor in raw materials, without access to the sea, with 4,200,000 in-

habitants, covers one-twelfth of the earth's surface, with every fifth Swiss living abroad.' Instead of complaining querulously to the world about that which Nature or her neighbors withhold from her, she simply stated what she lacks and what she produces. She did this at an exposition designed solely for the Swiss and which did not beg for flattery from foreign tongues. To these first brief words the entire display gave back the silent answer, 'Look at what we have achieved nevertheless!'

There was a colorful, stylized map of the Gotthard mountain range entitled '*Helvetia Mater Fluviorum*. Switzerland, Europe's continental divide, sends her waters to all the oceans. Our languages open all horizons, as do our rivers. The Gotthard is the crucible of four languages, four cultures, the sacred mountain of our Fatherland. The guardian of the Alpine passes, Switzerland watches her liberty.'

This was the great idea, born of