THE WORAPLBERG QUESTION 1918 - 1922:

THE FAILURE OF THE MOVEMENT FOR UNION TO SWITZERLAND

by

Harlan Kurtz Cohen,

Darwin College.

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University of Cambridge.

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The following study was undertaken under the supervision of Professor F. H. Hinsley, Professor of International Relations in the Faculty of History of the University of Cambridge. Work has been done on the questions of the future of other Austrian Länder - Tirol, Carinthia, Burgenland - after World War I, but the Vorarlberg question and its international implications remains little known. This work attempts to fill that gap.

There have been two previous dissertations written on the question. One, by Elfriede Auguste Zuderell was submitted to the University of Innsbruck in 1946. Few documentary sources were then available. This dissertation is based on research from secondary sources and newspapers, and it does not answer the questions of why the various governments acted or did not act as they did. The other dissertation, by Daniel Witzig, was submitted to the University of Basel and was published in 1974. It is written from a Swiss point of view and it analyses the question from an internal Swiss point of view. I have aimed to present the international aspects of the question. To do so, I have studied Foreign Office documents at the Public Record Office in London. These shed light on British and Allied attitudes towards the question. From the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library in London I have obtained copies of German Government documents on Vorarlberg and Tirol, captured by the Allies at the end of the Second World War and brought to London, where they were photocopied. At the Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv in Bern I have seen Swiss Government documents on the question. I have also seen papers of the Swiss Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" deposited there. At the Haus-, Hof- und
Staatsarchiv in Vienna I have examined Austrian Government documents. In the Vorarlberger Landesarchiv in Bregenz I have examined further documents on the question, especially the stenographic reports of the meetings of the Vorarlberg provisional Land Assembly and of the Landtag and various propaganda pamphlets. In order to see the record of the events themselves, and to ascertain public opinion in the various countries, I have read through Swiss, Vorarlberg, Austrian, French, Italian, British, American and German newspapers of the period. In the Vorarlberg Landesarchiv I read through copies of the semi-official Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung, the Christian Social Vorarlberger Volksblatt, the Social Democratic Vorarlberger Wacht and the Pan-German Vorarlberger Tagblatt for the period (1918-1922, except for the Tagblatt, which began publication in January 1919). From amongst the Swiss newspapers I chose the leading Neue Zürcher Zeitung and the two leading St. Gallen journals, the Freisinnig St. Galler Tagblatt and the Catholic Conservative Ostschweiz. I also read through the Bund, from Bern, which was considered to be semi-official, and the Basler Nachrichten, a leading newspaper in that border region. I chose to read through the Thurgauer Zeitung because it was the leading opponent of the union in the German part of Switzerland. In French Switzerland I read through two newspapers for the period, the pro-union Journal de Genève and the anti-union Gazette de Lausanne. From Austria, France, Italy, Britain, the United States and Germany, I chose leading newspapers, the Neue Freie Presse, published in Vienna, Le Temps from Paris, Il Corriere della Sera from Milan, The Times, The New York Times and the Berlin journal Vossische Zeitung. The latter was available for 1918 only.

I wish to thank the staff of all of the archives and libraries (the libraries of the Universities of Cambridge and Innsbruck, and
of Columbia University, the British (Museum) Library, the Swiss National Library in Bern, the New York Public Library and the Vadiana Library in St. Gallen) who have assisted me in finding the relevant documents, newspapers and books. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor F. H. Hinsley, my supervisor, for his help and advice through the years and for reading and commenting on the manuscript. I would like to thank all of my friends in Switzerland for answering my many questions and for their kind hospitality. Finally and especially, I would like to thank my parents for their support and encouragement, without which this dissertation could not have been written.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration. No part of this dissertation has been submitted for any other degree, diploma or qualification at any other university, nor is any similar dissertation or part thereof so submitted.

This dissertation, excluding notes and bibliography, contains approximately 78,000 words.

Harley X. Cohen
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<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAAA</td>
<td>Auswärtiges Amt, Abteilung A, Berlin</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Der Bund, Bern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BN</td>
<td>Basler Nachrichten, Basel</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Il Corriere della Sera, Milano</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ender</td>
<td>Ender, Otto - Vorarlbergs Schweizer-Anschluß-Bewegung</td>
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<tr>
<td>FO</td>
<td>Foreign Office, London</td>
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<td>FOL</td>
<td>Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>GL</td>
<td>Gazette de Lausanne</td>
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<tr>
<td>HHSA</td>
<td>Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv, Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHSA/VA</td>
<td>Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv/Verwaltungsarchiv, Vienna</td>
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<tr>
<td>JG</td>
<td>Journal de Genève, Geneva</td>
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<tr>
<td>LT</td>
<td>Le Temps, Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFP</td>
<td>Neue Freie Presse, Vienna</td>
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<tr>
<td>NPA</td>
<td>Neue Politische Akten, Deutschösterreichisches Staatsamt des Außenes, Deutschösterreichisches Präsidium, Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NZZ</td>
<td>Neue Zürcher Zeitung, Zürich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OS</td>
<td>Die Ostschweiz, St. Gallen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Präs</td>
<td>Deutschösterreichisches Präsidium, Vienna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRO</td>
<td>Public Record Office, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>SBA</td>
<td>Schweizerisches Bundesarchiv, Bern</td>
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<tr>
<td>SGT</td>
<td>St. Galler Tagblatt, St. Gallen</td>
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<td>St. A.</td>
<td>Deutschösterreichisches Staatsamt des Außenes, Vienna</td>
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<td>St. K.</td>
<td>Deutschösterreichisches Staatskanzlei, Vienna</td>
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<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>The Times, London</td>
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<tr>
<td>TZ</td>
<td>Thurgauer Zeitung, Frauenfeld (canton Thurgau)</td>
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<tr>
<td>VLA</td>
<td>Vorarlberger Landesarchiv, Bregenz</td>
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<tr>
<td>VLZ</td>
<td>Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung, Bregenz</td>
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<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>Vorarlberger Tagblatt, Dornbirn</td>
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<tr>
<td>VV</td>
<td>Vorarlberger Volksblatt, Bregenz</td>
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<td>VW</td>
<td>Vorarlberger Wacht, Dornbirn</td>
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<tr>
<td>VZ</td>
<td>Vossische Zeitung, Berlin</td>
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INTRODUCTION

In the autumn of 1918 the Habsburg Monarchy collapsed. This amorphous collection of kingdoms and provinces (Länder)\(^1\) had been united over seven centuries by the Habsburgs. The Länder had been acquired at various times. Each Land had its own rights and privileges. They had originally owed nothing to each other; they were only united by their common monarch. Over the course of the years, ties had been established among groups of Länder and among them all.

In 1867 the basic structure of the Monarchy, which was to survive with little modification until 1918, had come into being. In that year the great compromise, or Ausgleich, was established between the political powers of the Monarchy (the Monarch Franz Joseph and his advisers) on the one hand, and the political powers (mainly the upper nobility) of Hungary on the other. The rights, laws and traditions of the Kingdom of Hungary were guaranteed. Thus, the Monarchy was divided into two basic units, the Kingdom of Hungary and "the Kingdoms and Lands represented in the Reichsrat" (more commonly referred to as Austria, or, for the sake of convenience, CisLeithania\(^2\)). From 1867 these two states were

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1. Land (in German) means land, country, province, realm, state. I use it in German to refer to one province of the Habsburg Monarchy, or to one political unit or country, including to Vorarlberg. The plural is Länder.

2. The River Leitha was the boundary for a short, but important, distance between Hungary and Austria. Therefore Hungary was Trans-Leithania and Austria was Cis-Leithania. As Hungary could properly be called "Hungary", the term Trans-Leithania is generally not used; whereas the name "Austria" had no legal significance, and thus the remainder of the Monarchy is sometimes referred to as Cis-Leithania.
separate entities. One was a citizen of one or the other, but not a common citizen of the two. Taxes were collected by the different Ministries of Finance of Austria and of Hungary. One did not pay tax to a common institution. Each state maintained its own tobacco monopoly, its own police system, its own educational system, et cetera. A customs union, renewable every ten years, was established between Austria and Hungary. The two countries used a common currency and shared a common central bank; however, both of these could be suppressed at the request of either country.

Within each of the two states, there were further historic divisions. In Austria the particular importance of these divisions is observable in the legal title of the state, "the Kingdoms and Lands represented in the Reichsrat". Austria consisted of the so-called Hereditary Lands (Erbländer); the Lands of the Bohemian Crown; Galicia and some other areas formerly belonging to the Kingdom of Poland (the city of Krakow, the County of Ausschitz and Zator, et cetera); Bukovina; and Dalmatia. The Erbländer was a convenient name for the original collection of duchies and counties of the Habsburgs in the Danube region. This area included the Archduchies of Lower and Upper Austria, the Duchies of Styria, Carinthia and Carniola, the Princely County of Tirol, the Counties of Istria, Gorizia-Gradisca and Vorarlberg, and the City of Trieste. These Länder were independent from each other, but were united by the Pragmatic Sanction; they all owed allegiance to the Emperor. The

3. There is some confusion about this point. For instance, A. J. P. Taylor in his book The Habsburg Monarchy 1809-1919, wrote that the Hungarian citizen was still served by the same bureaucracy as the Austrian citizen (p. 86). However, this was not so.

4. "die im Reichsrat vertretenen Königreiche und Länder"
Lands of the Bohemian Crown were the Kingdom of Bohemia, the Margravate of Moravia and the Duchy of Silesia. Similarly they were united to the other Länder of the Monarchy by the Pragmatic Sanction. The Länder of Austria were in fact tied quite closely together by a common government, with a common legislature, the Reichsrat. In addition, each Land maintained a Land government with its own legislature, the Landtag. The government of Galicia was more independent of the central government than were the governments of the other Austrian Länder. It enjoyed a fair amount of autonomy and the government of this Land was left in the hands of the local Polish nobility.

* * *

The original inhabitants of what was to become Vorarlberg probably settled in the region about 3000-2000 B.C.. The Alpine lands were left unsettled by man long after surrounding areas had been occupied. These first inhabitants were called Rhaeter (Räter) by the Greeks and Romans. Little is known about these people. Apparently the Rhaeter consisted of several different tribes speaking different languages or dialects. It is likely that they were of Illyrian origin, from the east and the south, around Venice and Dalmatia. Starting in the Fifth Century B.C. Celtic tribes pressed into the Inner Alps from the south and the north, settling in the region.

   Jaszi, Oscar - The Dissolution of the Habsburg Monarchy - p. 33.

   P. of Liechtenstein - Fürstentum Liechtenstein - p. 10.
   Ilg, Karl - Landes... und Volkskunde...Vorarlbergs - vol. 2, pp. 25, 151-152.
This lightly-inhabited area was easily placed under Roman rule. Vorarlberg, most of Tirol, Graubünden and southern Bavaria belonged to the Roman province of Rhaetia. The Romans encouraged economic development in the area. They built new roads, introduced viticulture, encouraged cattle breeding, exported wood and grain. They established a strong military post at Brigantium (the future Bregenz) on the Bodensee. Roman soldiers and civilians came and settled in the region around the Bodensee. They mixed with the native population and blended into a new people - the Rhaetoromans. The original inhabitants, the Rhaeters, ceased to exist as a separate group. Their only legacies are some of the place names and archaeological sites in the region. After the decline of the Roman Empire and its withdrawal from the area, the Rhaetoromans remained behind and kept alive a Latin dialect.

In 496 the Alemannians, a German tribe, were defeated by Chlodwig (Clovis, the Merovingian king). They asked Theoderich, the East Gothic king, for assistance and he granted them an area in which to settle and live - the present-day Vorarlberg and eastern Switzerland. Thus Germans of the Alemannic Stamm came to settle in the region. They intermingled and lived with the Rhaetoromans, who already lived in the area. A German dialect supplanted in importance the Latin dialect spoken in the area. In Vorarlberg the Latin dialect

7. The eastern-most canton of Switzerland; Grisons in French, Grigioni in Italian.
8. Also known as the Lake of Constance.
10. Stamm is a difficult word to translate into English. It is perhaps best translated by "tribe". The German speaking peoples are considered to belong to a number of different Stämme, being one reason for the different regional accents in German. I shall not use the English word "tribe" to translate Stamm, because it does not have the same connotations. Hence I will use Stamm (adjective: stämmlich) even in the English body of the text.
completely died out in recent centuries. In Switzerland it still survives in the form of Romansch and in South Tirol it survives as Ladino. 11

Charlemagne spread his realm over the area. Argengau, the area around Bregenz, was administered for him by Count Ulrich, a brother-in-law. Gau Rätien, the area around Feldkirch, was administered by Count Hunfried. When the latter's family died out in 926 most of what is now Vorarlberg passed over to the Counts of neighbouring Rheingau and Argengau, the descendants of Count Ulrich. They established their seat at Bregenz and from 1043 called themselves the Counts of Bregenz. 12

In the middle of the Twelfth Century the male line of the Counts of Bregenz died out. A son-in-law of the last Count inherited the possessions of the old family. He took the name of Montfort. After his death in 1182, the land was divided between his two sons. One took the name of Werdenberg and inherited the Walgau, the Klostertal, Sonnenberg, Bludenz and Montafon. The other kept the name of Montfort and inherited the Counties of Bregenz and Feldkirch. 13


Vorarlberg's ties to lands to the east (present-day Republic of Austria) were only slowly established in the late Middle Ages and Renaissance. Previously the whole area west of the Arlberg was divided into many small Grafschaften (Counties) or Herrschaften. The Vorarlberg area had ties to the west and north, but not to the east, because the high Arlberg Mountains intervened. Feldkirch was an important stop on a trade route from Italy to Germany. In Carolingian times the area was divided amongst the Bishoprics of Chur, Konstanz and Augsburg. Politically the area was part of Alemannia or Swabia until the Emperor Otto obtained control of Italy, when he changed the Kreis (Circle) boundaries to include what is now Tirol and Vorarlberg in Germany.

Meanwhile, the Habsburgs had established themselves to the east, in the Danube basin. In 1282 they were established in the Duchies of Austria and Styria. In the next century, they also acquired Carinthia and Carniola, Tirol, Istria and Trieste. In 1375 they acquired their first bit of what was to become Land Vorarlberg. Leopold III bought the County of Feldkirch, including the Bregenzerwald, for fl. 30,000\textsuperscript{15} in that year.\textsuperscript{16} The Habsburgs were

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14. The former is now in Switzerland, the latter two are in Germany. Christianity was introduced into the area by St. Columba and his followers St. Gallus and St. Magnus about 600 A.D. Menghin - pp. 155, 161.

15. fl. is the abbreviation for gulden, the widely-used currency in the Holy Roman Empire at the time. The abbreviation comes from the older name of this unit, the florint, named after the city of Florence where it was first minted. The name gulden and its abbreviation fl. have survived in the Netherlands, where it is the current monetary unit.

16. Before the sale was confirmed, the last Count of Montfort granted the citizens of Feldkirch extensive rights. These were incorporated in the Freiheitsbrief of 1376, which the Habsburgs recognised.
interested in acquiring and re-establishing the old Duchy of Swabia. They already had possessions in present-day northern Switzerland, where the original family castle, Habichtsburg (Hawk Castle), was, and in Upper Alsace. They wished to extend their territories in southwest Germany and to acquire the upper Danube, the upper Neckar and the Schwarzwald. Therefore they tried to establish themselves in a wide corridor along the upper Rhine, to connect their new possessions in the East (Austria) with their older possessions and the area in which they wished to expand in the West. The attempt to expand in southwest Germany (Swabia) failed, and the attempt to establish the Rhine corridor was also unsuccessful, because of the loss of the Zürichgau, the Aargau and the Thurgau to the Swiss Confederation. Nevertheless, they continued their policy of trying to establish a bridge between their possessions in the East and those in the West by acquiring strategic points along the route, including in what is today Vorarlberg. After Leopold’s death in battle at Sempach against the Swiss in 1386, his sons acquired the town of Bludenz and the Montafon valley. Leopold left four sons, Wilhelm, Leopold, Ernst and Friedrich. Since they were all under age, their uncle Duke Albrecht III acted as regent. He died in 1395 and Leopold’s second son, also a Leopold, took over the government of Tirol.17

Soon thereafter the Appenzellers revolted against their lord, the Prince-Abbot of St. Gallen, who in turn called on the Habsburgs for help. Leopold’s youngest brother, Friedrich, led the Habsburg

forces against the Appenzellers, who defeated the Habsburg forces and entered Vorarlberg, where most of the population, under the leadership of the City of Feldkirch, joined them in the attack on the Habsburgs. Together they compelled the pro-Habsburg inhabitants of the Bregenzerwald to join them.18

In 1406 the oldest brother, Wilhelm, died. The administration of the land was divided amongst the other three. Friedrich obtained charge of Tirol and the Vorlande, including all of the Habsburg possessions west of the Arlberg. He continued the war against the Appenzellers, who were defeated on 13 January 1408 near Bregenz. By the Peace of Konstanz, the Habsburg possessions in the Vorarlberg area were restored to them.19

The Appenzeller War (1403-1408) was one of a series of wars for independence from feudal lords by the Swiss peasants. The Vorarlbergers joined them in this attempt. At the time there were no major differences between those living east of the Rhine (present-day Vorarlberg) and those living west of it (present-day Switzerland). Customs, duties and life style were similar throughout the region, which was divided into many small counties, each with its own count. The present boundaries of Vorarlberg, Liechtenstein, St. Gallen, Graubünden and other cantons were not yet fixed.

However, Vorarlberg, as a Land, although not exactly within its present-day borders, had existed, at least since Medieval times, perhaps having its origin in the establishment of the County of

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Bregenz (Grafschaft von Bregenz) by Charlemagne. Some Vorarlberg historians claim that a local consciousness tied the inhabitants of the Vorarlberg region together even in pre-Roman times. I do not believe that there is any evidence to support this claim. Vorarlberg writers claim, with justice, that strong local patriotism has long existed in Vorarlberg, which was separated from neighbouring areas by its unique constitution, incorporating extensive freedoms for the common people, made possible by the lack of strong local lords.20

In 1451 Sigismund of Tirol received half of the town of Bregenz from Elizabeth of Hochberg. The other half was acquired in 1523 by the Archduke Ferdinand, brother of the Emperor Charles V. With the latter acquisition, the Habsburgs came to own most of Vorarlberg.21

Vorarlberg did not escape the fighting of the Thirty Years War. The Landesfürsten (Princes) of Tirol had enjoyed "rights of sovereignty" (Hoheitsrechte) over Unterengadin and Prättigau in Graubünden (just south of Vorarlberg) since 1470. At the beginning of the conflict, Austrian and Spanish troops, accompanied by Capuchians from Vorarlberg, whose mission it was to convert the Protestants, entered this area. The troops behaved badly and in April 1622 a general uprising occurred, in which soldiers and Capuchians were killed. The Vorarlberger Landwehr was called up to quell the uprising, but it was defeated near Maienfeld in Graubünden. The Graubündners then entered the Vorarlberg area and approached Bludenz, where they were forced back by Vorarlberg and Imperial troops. A

Ilg - vol. 2, p. 151.
Schreiber, Georg - Deutschland und Österreich - pp. 68, 74.

Menghin - p. 227.
peace was made at Lindau in September, but, nonetheless, fighting continued. In 1632 Swedish troops appeared in the area around the Bodensee. They besieged Konstanz and threatened strongly-fortified Bregenz before being forced out of the region in 1634. Hunger and plague followed. In 1646 Swedish troops returned. Late in the year they threatened Bregenz again, taking it on 4 January 1647. They plundered the city and then pressed on, passing through the Bregenzerwald and into the Lechtal. The people fled before them. Not until May 1647 did they withdraw from Bregenz. 22

* * *

Vorarlberg had an old established legislative assembly, called the Landstände (the Estates of the Land). It incorporated democratic features unusual for its time, and in its rights, privileges and composition it was unique in the Habsburg lands. For many centuries most peasants, especially in the higher areas, were free. The land was owned mainly by those who tilled it. The Lords of Montfort wished to suppress the people's freedoms, but they did not have the power or the strength to do so. Rather, more and more people became free, until by the Sixteenth Century most of the land was free, the exception being in the County of Bregenz, north of the Bregenzerach, where the peasantry did not obtain its freedom until 1713. 23

Political life centred on the community. In early Roman times the peasantry lived in communities and held the land communally. The peasants cooperated closely with each other. The importance of the community as a structure in the political life of the Land has existed into modern times. Bilgeri, in his essay "Vorarlberger Demokratie vor


1861" in the book *Landstände und Landtag in Vorarlberg*, maintains that this existence of the Gerichte, some of which had boundaries identical to Gemeinden, and some of which included several Gemeinden, was as significant for the political development of Vorarlberg into a democracy, as was freedom of person and property. Another of the advantages enjoyed by the people of Vorarlberg was the extent to which they controlled the judiciary. The judges, known as Ammänner, were chosen by the people with the assistance of the officials of the lord. All but the greatest crimes were tried in these people's courts. Vorarlberg, at its greatest extent, had twenty-four Gerichte (three urban Gerichte and twenty-one country ones). The Gerichte were the first level of defence against encroachments by the lord on the freedom of the people. In the Landstände, which consisted of members from all of the Gerichte of the Land, the rights and privileges of the people were also defended. 25

24. "Gemeinde" means "community". The plural is "Gemeinden". "Gericht" is a court of law, and by extension, a judicial district. The plural is "Gerichte".


"Ohne die Freiheiten der Person und des Besitzes und ohne die freien Gemeinde wäre die politische Entwicklung unseres Landes zu Demokratie nicht möglich gewesen. Mindestens ebenso wichtig war aber die Existenz und Verfassung der Gerichte, die teils mit den Gemeinden identisch waren, teils sich über diesen einzelnen Gemeinden aufbauten und auch die gemeindelosen Berggebiete umfaßten." (p. 13).

"Durch den Besitz so hoher und so vieler Rechte war Vorarlberg ein Sonderfall, der den Zweifel der römische Juristen, aber auch die Anfechtung durch die staatliche Gewalt herausfordern mußte. Die Vorarlberger haben sich erfolgreich zur Wehr gesetzt, und zwar nicht nur einzeln, sondern auch miteinander in ihrer politischen Gemeinschaft, den Vorarlberger Landständen." (p. 14).

In the Vorarlberg Landstände, only peasants and burghers (city dwellers) were represented. The twenty-four Gerichte were represented in one chamber; separate Estates for city and country areas, nobles and clerics, did not exist. Except in Switzerland, there were no similar institutions in Central Europe. In neighbouring Tirol, the peasants were represented as a Fourth Estate, which was in itself unusual, but in Vorarlberg there existed no special position for the local nobility, who were almost non-existent, or the clergy.\footnote{26}

The first documentary record of a meeting of the Estates in Vorarlberg dates from 1504; however, they probably existed well over a century before that date. Originally they must have been called into being because the lord of the land needed money and troops. Their major concern was the defence of the land. At first Feldkirch was the political leader of the other Vorarlberg Gerichte. Only it could call certain types of meetings, the Zusammenkünfte, which were held at Feldkirch. Later they occasionally met at Bregenz, until in 1646 it was decided that these meetings should be held alternately in Feldkirch and in Bregenz. Each Gericht had to send a representative. Failure to do so without good reason could lead to the punishment of the Gericht involved. Delegations of several members were usually sent, especially from the larger Gerichte, but each Gericht only had one vote. A majority decision was usually acceptable, but in some important matters a unanimous vote was necessary. Decisions were made about policy towards the government; representations to

\footnote{26. Bilgeri - pp. 15, 22-23.}

officials, the Emperor and foreign governments; taxes; defence and other matters of common interest.  

At certain times the Stände of Vorarlberg met as a Landtag. It was this assembly which dealt with the requests or demands of the Landesfürst (Prince of the Land). The Landesfürst needed the approval of the Landtag to raise troops or money. A Landtag could only be called by the Landesfürst, who only did so when he wanted something from it. At first the Landtage met only in Feldkirch; however after 1523 they sometimes assembled in Bregenz. After 1573 they generally assembled alternately in Feldkirch or Bregenz.

A continual and important task of the Stände was the protection and preservation to the unity of the Land. The Stände acted to redeem parts of the Land which were pawned by the Landesfürst when he needed money. For instance, in 1586 the Stände raised fl. 50,000 to buy back the Counties of Bregenz, Feldkirch and Hohenegg, which had been mortgaged to the Count of Emser. In 1655 Dornbirn was mortgaged to the Count of Emser. The Landstände sent a remonstrance to government officials in Innsbruck about the dangers of such actions. Dornbirn raised the fl. 8,000 necessary to pay the debt, and received enlarged freedoms as well. In 1702 there was a proposed plan to mortgage parts of the Land to clerical princes. The Stände agreed to pay the enormous sum of fl. 200,000 to avoid this threatened dismemberment of their land. In return the Habsburg Emperor, as Landesfürst, promised in writing never to alienate Vorarlberg from the rest of his possessions again. The Landstände

also concerned themselves with foreign affairs when these affected the security of the Land. This was an important and unusual incursion into what was usually considered to be the private preserve of the lord of the land. 29

The Landstände asserted Vorarlberg's individuality. They resisted attempts at amalgamation with Tirol or with Vorderösterreich, the Habsburg possessions in southwest Germany. They wished to remain on good terms with the states of the Swiss Confederation. Towards the end of the Seventeenth Century, the Stände asked the landesfürstliche government (the Habsburg government) for the right to hold special negotiations when necessary with Graubünden, Switzerland and the Prince-Abbot of St. Gallen, because good relations with these states were very important to Vorarlberg. In earlier times this had been allowed, but it is not known how Vienna answered this request. In 1703 the Stände, under the direction of the Vienna government, negotiated with the Cantons of Zürich and of Bern and with the Prince-Abbot of St. Gallen for a protective alliance. These negotiations came to nought because the Stände refused to provision and billet the number of men to be supplied (one thousand or more). 30

Vorarlberg, through its Landstände, also participated in the occasional meetings of the representatives of the different Länder of the Monarchy, called Ausschusslandtage (Committee Landtags), which were called to accept new taxes and demands for services and divide the contributions to be made amongst themselves. They were called from the Fifteenth Century only until the beginning of the Thirty Years War, when their use was abandoned. 31

Another important - and one of the most important - functions of the Landstände was to protect the liberties of the people and to strive to develop and extend these liberties. The Landstände continuously pressed for the abolition of serfdom (Leibeigenschaft) where it still existed in Vorarlberg. They also pressed for the suppression of other feudal dues and for the extension of the election of Amänner to those Gerichte which lacked this privilege. They resisted attempts by the government to weaken the rights and freedoms (Freiheiten) of the people. They continuously obtained the reconfirmation of their rights and freedoms, a reflection of their distrust of the landesfürstliche government. They pressed for the taxation of all estates, the nobility and the clergy, as well as the ordinary city or country dweller. They also strove to obtain greater judicial power and to be freed from outside control - Vorarlberg's courts were under the jurisdiction of the Swabian Landgericht - in these matters. Besides dealing with these political issues, the Landstände concerned themselves with such practical matters as the protection of forests, regulation of cattle markets and the roads. Trade was important to Vorarlberg and the Landstände pressed for the lowering of tolls. 32

The Vorarlberg Constitution came under increasing attack from the Government at Vienna as the desire for centralisation and rationalisation of government grew. From the time of Charles VI (1711-1740) the government continually tried to incorporate Vorarlberg into the system of the central administration. Even under Joseph I (1705-1711) attempts had been made to limit Vorarlberg's rights and

privileges. These attempts to abolish the old loose governing bonds between Vorarlberg and Vienna and replace them with strong ones were the result of changes in thinking and in political circumstances. The defeat of the Turks at Vienna in 1683 ushered in an era of great expansion for the Habsburgs. In the enlarged domains, a more efficient form of administration and government was needed. The Eighteenth Century saw the growth of new ideas. Respect for tradition declined; there was a desire amongst the men of the established order for changes which would sweep away many of the medieval practices which governed community, administration and life, especially when such changes would benefit the State and increase its power. For the Eighteenth Century was also a century of struggle and war for the Habsburgs. At the beginning of it, they found themselves fighting both the Turks and the French; in the middle of it, they fought both the French and the Prussians and the end of it saw them fighting the French again.

Charles VI, Holy Roman Emperor and Landesfürst of Vorarlberg, did not have a son. He only had daughters and it became clear that one of them would someday inherit the throne from him. The Habsburg family was not tied to the Salic Law; neither had a woman ever been head of State before. One of Charles' great difficulties was that much of the Habsburg's prestige derived from the fact that for many years they had held the office of Holy Roman Emperor; in fact, they had come to regard it almost as a family possession. Yet, a woman could not succeed to it. To insure the unity of his dominions and the succession of his oldest daughter, Maria Theresa, Charles secured the acceptance by each of his lands of a document called the

Pragmatic Sanction, and the recognition of this document and doctrine by the other European states. This document provided for the unity of his dominions under the reign of his legitimate heir, who was and remained his oldest daughter, Maria Theresa. The Pragmatic Sanction specified that its validity was to last as long as the head of State remained a legitimate Habsburg of the Roman Catholic faith. Using promises and threats, the Länder of the Monarchy and the states of Europe were persuaded to accept and recognise the validity of this document. It took Charles and his ministers much time and energy to achieve this. In 1722 at Feldkirch, the Vorarlberg Landstände voluntarily accepted the Pragmatic Sanction. This act was very significant for Vorarlberg's claim of independence two centuries later, when the Monarchy collapsed.

During the reign of Charles VI a Direktorium, an administrative office for all of Vorarlberg, was set up at Bregenz. It soon became apparent that this office was to have jurisdiction over all of the other governmental bodies in the Land. In 1723, just one year after they had accepted the Pragmatic Sanction, an attempt was made to divide the representatives of the Landstände and to turn them into officials. However this failed and the death of Charles VI in 1740 granted Vorarlberg a respite from these attempts. The government was too busy pursuing a foreign war, which threatened the very unity of the Monarchy, to risk encouraging quarrels at home. In October 1744, a French army even threatened Bregenz, the first time in almost a hundred years that there had been any fighting in the Land.¹³⁴

The re-establishment of peace enabled the government to begin again its attempts at administrative reform and centralisation. In

1751 all of Vorarlberg was placed under a unified administration centred at Bregenz and Vorarlberg was established as a Land within the Monarchy, basically within its present borders. In 1765 the County of Hohenems was acquired. Only the small Counties of Blumenegg and St. Gerold, in the Grosse Walsertal, which were acquired in 1804, were still completely sovereign and outside of Habsburg control. Maria Theresa made improvements in the roads and in the educational system of the area, she affirmed the old constitution, but she restricted the freedoms of the Land by a series of little reforms. However the representatives of the Land protested at these innovations and only some of them were put into operation. In the middle of the 1760's new reforms were introduced and during the exclusive reign of Joseph II (1780-1790) these reforms became far-reaching.

From 1752 to 1782 Vorarlberg was included in the Austria province of Vorderösterreich, a collection of all Habsburg territories west of the Arlberg (therefore encompassing Vorarlberg and the family's possessions in southwest Germany). In 1754 a new administrative system of Kreise (Circles) was introduced into most of the Monarchy. They were intended to be uniform in size, set-up and administration, to counteract the divisive effects of the many Länder, each with its own traditions and history. Vorderösterreich, and therefore Vorarlberg, were not included in the Kreis organisation. However, in 1785-1786 Joseph II decided to introduce the Kreis system even into those Länder where Maria Theresa had not done so because of their special constitutions or conditions. These Länder included Vorarlberg, Hungary, the Austrian Netherlands and Bukovina. It was introduced into Vorarlberg by a Court Decree (Hofdekret) on 16 March 1786, and the old Oberamt at Bregenz was transformed into a Kreisamt (Kreis office). This led to much protest. For the first time, practically all of Vorarlberg was under the rule of one single
political authority. Bilgeri wrote that these administrative reforms turned the representatives of the people into mere officials and caused general hatred of the regime. There was lack of cooperation in Vorarlberg with the government, and when Joseph, at the end of his reign, withdrew many of his reforms, there was great joy in the Land.

Under Leopold II (1790-1792) and Franz II (1792-1837) it was hoped that more of Joseph's reforms would be withdrawn and that the old constitution would be re-established in full; however, this was not to be the case. The 1790's was a decade of war and in 1796 it reached Vorarlberg itself when the French invaded. On 8 August they were driven back; however, the following night the city of Bregenz surrendered to them. The government-appointed Kreis leader, Indermauer, fled, along with other officials, leaving the Land defenceless. The Vorarlbergers believed that they had been betrayed and they attacked and killed those officials, including Indermauer, who had gone to Bludenz. The local representatives organised a defence force, to fight the French. When Vorarlberg was freed, there were demands for the reinstitution in full of the old, democratic constitution. No agreement was possible with the government in Vienna and in 1799 a French army attacked in the Vorarlberg region again, but was successfully repulsed by the local forces. In 1804 the Emperor Franz planned to separate Vorarlberg from Tirol and rejoin it to Vorderösterreich, but the war of 1805 intervened, resulting in defeat for the Habsburgs at Austerlitz on 5 December of that year and loss of Vorarlberg and Tirol to Bavaria.

Landesrat (Denkschrift) - p. 17.
36. Bilgeri - p. 73.
37. Bilgeri - pp. 74-75.
The absorption of Vorarlberg into the Kingdom of Bavaria heralded the end of the old constitution of the Land. By the Peace of Pressburg of 26 December 1805, Tirol and Vorarlberg were ceded to Bavaria, which took over civil administration in February 1806. At first there were few changes, but in 1808 a new constitution was brought into being in Bavaria, cancelling all older constitutions. The new constitution was based on the French model; Kreise were established to act as administrative provinces (départements), and, as in France, they were named after rivers, in an attempt to break down old loyalties. The old Gerichte were ignored, and Vorarlberg was divided into seven Landgerichte, all of which were included in the Illerkreis (named after the River Iller), whose centre was in Kempten, a city in present-day south Bavaria. The people were not happy with these changes. Many of them, in both Tirol and Vorarlberg, who had been free from military service outside of their own Länder, were pressed into the Bavarian army. When Austria invaded Tirol, a revolt, led by Andreas Hofer, broke out. Successful at first, the insurgents were soon defeated when the Bavarians and their French ally sent reinforcements. Later, with Napoleon's downfall and the settlement of 1814, Tirol and Vorarlberg, except for the northern edge (the district of Weiler) which belongs to Bavaria to this day, were returned to the Habsburg Monarchy and the old administrative system was re-established. However, the old ständisch constitution was gone forever, and was not reinstated. On 19 May 1816 an Imperial decree reintroduced the Stände into Vorarlberg, but they did not exercise power and they met only occasionally. The demand for constitutional and liberal reforms remained dormant in the Habsburg Monarchy, where political life slumbered in the pre-March days, as the period from
1815 to 1848 is called in Austria.\(^{38}\)

The March Revolution of 1848, mild though it was, shook the Monarchy. As Metternich departed from the Hofburg, the great Imperial palace in Vienna, via a back door, it seemed as if a new era of justice, liberty and goodwill was about to dawn. The Emperor, the not very intelligent Ferdinand, promised the people a constitution, the establishment of Stände for the individual Länder, freedom of the press, speech and other important rights. The new era was greeted with great enthusiasm in Vorarlberg.\(^{39}\)

There were two main political factions in Vorarlberg, both anti-Absolutist. One was allied with contemporary democratic movements in the Monarchy and in Germany, the other was based primarily on local traditions. A meeting of the Stände took place on 18 April 1848 at Feldkirch; however, it was disrupted by town-dwellers and workers, demanding representation. New elections were held, resulting in little change, and the new Landtag, with government approval, met at Bregenz on 22 and 23 May and 5, 6 and 7 June to discuss the establishment of a new ständisch organisation and also the security of the State. It was decided that one representative should be chosen by every three thousand inhabitants and that new districts should be established. Each city was to have a representative and only farmers and burghers (Bauern und Bürger) were to be eligible to stand for election, following the old custom of the Land. Feldkirch and Bregenz were to

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Troger - pp. 52, 56-57, 59-60.
Ilg - vol. 2, p. 105.
Landesrat (Denkschrift) - p. 18.

alternate as meeting places. The Landtag, as the new legislature was to be called, should meet four weeks in each year and could be called together by the government, the president of the Landtag (elected from and by its own members) or at the request of two-thirds of the members. This constitution was very similar to the old one of the Land; but the electoral districts were henceforth to be equal. This plan was short-lived. According to the Kremsier Constitution of early 1849, Vorarlberg was to have a unified Landtag with Tirol, despite the opposition to this suggestion by the two Vorarlberg representatives in the constitutional assembly. This constitution was never put into operation. With the return of absolutism and the defeat of the revolution in 1849, and in the spirit of the March (Stadion) Constitution, Franz Joseph ordered the establishment of a new Kreis system, which was designed to give local authorities greater autonomy. Vorarlberg was to be a Kreis of its own; while Tirol was divided into three Kreise, without alienating the unity of Land Tirol. This Kreis system came into effect on 1 January 1850 in Tirol and Vorarlberg. A new joint Landtag was established for the two Länder, consisting of eighty-four representatives, eleven from Vorarlberg and seventy-three from Tirol. Of the eleven Vorarlberg representatives, six were chosen by the Landesgemeinden (country communities), two by the cities and three by the highest taxpayers. This system was contrary to the old Vorarlberg constitution. However, it, too, proved to be short-lived and as of 30 November 1854 the Kreis governments were replaced by Kreis authorities in Tirol and Vorarlberg, in line with the now centralising policies of the Imperial government. With the Austrian defeat of 1859 came a new turn in the spirit of government and as of 31 August 1860 the Kreis authorities followed the Kreis governments into dissolution.  

40. Bilgeri - pp. 81-84.  
   Troger - pp. 64-66.
In a memorandum of 27 November 1859 to the Statthalter, the highest government official for Tirol and Vorarlberg, two Vorarlberg representatives, Wohlwend and Ratz, pressed for an independent (from Tirol) administration and a separate representative in the Reichsrat, the central Imperial legislature, for Vorarlberg because of the natural geographic separation of Vorarlberg from Tirol, because of the differences between the old Stände and rights of the two Länder and because of their dissimilar economies. A new argument was introduced as well. The Vorarlbergers claimed to have a separate ethnic identity ("eigene Volksbewußtsein") from the Tiroleans because of the old stämmlich difference between them (Alemannians) and the Tiroleans (Bajuvarians). On 5 March 1860 the Reichsrat was enlarged and Vorarlberg was granted a representative of its own in this central institution. On 20 October 1860 a new constitution, the October Diploma, which recognised the historical-political individuality of the Länder, was issued. It re-established the old Stände in the Länder and granted them wide powers. Vorarlberg's historically developed special position was recognised in the Landesordnung of 14 November for Tirol, which established the old Stände there. Vorarlberg itself was to have a twenty member Landtag, based on the principle of representation of the people of each Stand, divided by community and amount of taxes paid. The nobility and the clergy were excluded, according to the old constitution. Each of the three cities was to have its own representative. As in the rest of Austria, the chief executive of the Land government was to be named by the Emperor, but the running of the government was to be the responsibility of a Landesausschuss chosen from the Landtag. The October Diploma represented the wishes of the conservatives, who desired a return to the older constitutions which confirmed the
rights of the individual Ländere. However this ministry soon gave way (13 December) to the liberal one of Schmerling, the liberals being supporters of centralism. Therefore in February 1861 a patent, the February Patent, was issued to "clarify" the October Diploma. In fact, it was quite contrary in spirit and meaning to the latter and was the basis of the establishing of Landtage with little power, mainly representing the higher taxpayers. Vorarlberg received some autonomy and rights; however they were insignificant compared to those the Land enjoyed before the centralising measures of Joseph II had been put into effect. Nevertheless, the establishment of a separate Landtag for Vorarlberg was the first step in a long process which secured Vorarlberg greater autonomy and political rights, which were to culminate, after the military collapse of the Monarchy, in the declaration of independence of 3 November 1918. 41

The first meeting of the new Landtag occurred on 6 April 1861 at Bregenz. It consisted of twenty members, nineteen elected for six year terms and the twentieth chosen by virtue of his position as General Vicar of Feldkirch for Vorarlberg of the Prince-Bishop of Brixen. Each of the cities (Bregenz, Feldkirch and Bludenz), the market of Dornbirn and the Chamber of Commerce and Trade in Feldkirch returned an elected representative. The other fourteen were elected by the rural Gemeinden. To vote in the elections, which were not secret until 1866, one had to pay a minimum of £1.5 42 in direct taxes a year. The representatives of the cities were elected directly, while those of the rural communities were elected indirectly through delegates. Vorarlberg was the only Austrian Land not to have a special electoral class of nobles and large estate

42. approximately 9s. or $2.20.
Vögel, in his essay "Hundert Jahre Vorarlberger Landtag 1861-1961" in the book *Landstände und Landtage in Vorarlberg*, wrote that the political maturity of the Vorarlbergers was pointed out and comparisons were constantly being made between Vorarlberg's constitution and that of republican Switzerland. In 1876 the Landtag wished to reform its electoral laws, but the changes were not sanctioned by the Emperor. However reforms did come. In 1883 it was decided to give Dornbirn two representatives because of its large population and taxpaying abilities. This was done in 1884 and the Landtag was increased to twenty-one members. In 1893 the Landtag tried once again to reform its electoral laws. The minimum age at which males could vote was to be set at twenty-four and the minimum direct taxes necessary to qualify was to be lowered to fl. 2. The Emperor refused to sanction this law because of the low level of taxation which would have been necessary to qualify for the vote. In 1898 the Landtag did manage to have the amount lowered to fl. 4. In 1902 three members were added, elected by a general electoral class not dependent on taxes paid, thus increasing the Landtag membership to twenty-four. In 1905 the Landtag proposed that universal suffrage and a system of proportional voting by secret ballot be introduced, with the legal requirement that those eligible must vote, unless they had a reasonable excuse for not doing so. Permission to set up such a system was refused by the central government. In 1908 a new attempt was made to reform the Landtag electoral laws. Since universal, equal and secret suffrage (for males over the age of twenty-four) had been

   Bergmann - p. 25.

44. approximately 3s. 6d. or $.88.

45. Fl. 4 = 8K. When the Monarchy adopted the gold standard in 1892, the new currency of Kronen (Crowns) and Heller was introduced to replace the old one of Gulden and Kreuzer. 1 Gulden = 2 Kronen and 1 Kreuzer = 2 Heller.
   Fl. 4 = 8K. and was worth approximately 7s. or $1.76.
introduced in the Austrian part of the Monarchy in 1907, this attempt was partially successful and in 1909 five mixed (by amount of taxes paid) electoral classes for all voters in the areas involved were introduced. The requirement that all those eligible must vote was established. The mixed electoral classes (gemischte Wählerklassen) were instituted for the districts which included Bregenz and Feldkirch, each with two representatives and Bludenz with one. Men paying no taxes, as well as independent, taxpaying women were now eligible, and indeed required, to vote. For its time and for the Monarchy, this change, which increased the Landtag's size to twenty-six members, was very progressive. Direct voting was also established in elections for the rural district councils. 46

The Vorarlbergers and their Landtag were continuously concerned with obtaining greater autonomy for their Land. They found the connection with Tirol - with which they shared a common Statthalterei and a common Statthalter at Innsbruck - particularly irksome. 47 After 1867 and the Ausgleich with Hungary, whereby that Kingdom became fully independent from Austria and only shared a common Crown, Foreign Ministry and Army (and a Finance Ministry to support these institutions from grants from Austria and Hungary), Vorarlberg wished even more for greater autonomy. The Landtag addressed the Emperor on 13 October 1871 and requested that the Austrian part of the Monarchy be turned into a Federal State and that Vorarlberg be allowed to enjoy the same rights and independence as the Kingdom of Hungary "in


47. Bilgeri - p. 108.
consideration of its [Vorarlberg's] thousand year old Right of State". 48

In 1907 there was again a strong movement in Vorarlberg to have the Land separated from the Statthalterei in Innsbruck to enable it to have its own independent Land government. The standing committee of the Landtag was commissioned by the Landtag to press the Imperial Government to allow Vorarlberg to be an independent Crownland with its own Land government, based on the law of the Land, which had its origins in the geographical, historic, ethnographic and economic individuality of Vorarlberg. 49 In 1913 the Landtag took up the theme again. On 30 September 1913 the Landtag declared that a Land with its own Landtag should also have its own political authorities. They claimed that the officials of the Statthalterei in Innsbruck did not know Vorarlberg or its people. With the representatives of the central government in Innsbruck, time-consuming and costly delays occurred in communications between Vorarlberg and the central authorities. However nothing came of this appeal either, and it was only with the collapse of the Monarchy in 1918 that the way was open for Vorarlberg to pursue a more dynamic policy of independence and autonomy. 50

Both Vorarlberg and Tirol had a special, more independent relationship to the rest of Austria in military matters. This derived from the fact that according to the ancient rights and privileges of

each Land, troops raised in each could not be sent out of that Land, except with the consent of their Stände. The Landtage from 1861 onward discussed questions of defence of the Land. Tirol and Vorarlberg were not included in the general Austrian army, the Landwehr. Instead, they had their own militias, which were directed by a committee called the Landesverteidigungsoberverhöhrde which consisted of the Statthalter, the Landeshauptmann of Tirol, two representatives from the Tirol Landtag and one from the Vorarlberg Landtag. Later Vorarlberg managed to have its Landeshauptmann included in this committee. The militia consisted of three parts, the Landesschützen, the Landsturm and the Schiessstanden. It is true that both the Landesschützen and the Landsturm were integrated into the general Austrian military system and in wartime could be called up into the standing army, but they were to be used for the defence of Tirol and Vorarlberg and could only be deployed outside of the borders of these Länder if they were not in immediate danger.

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In August 1914, the First World War broke out. At the beginning, the people of all the involved countries greeted the war with enthusiasm. The people of the Monarchy were no exception. A

51. It should be noted that after the 1867 Ausgleich, Austria and Hungary maintained a common army of the realm. The Hungarians had wanted to have a separate military establishment when Hungary became a completely separate country in 1867, but Franz Joseph would not agree. The Hungarians gave way and consented to a common military establishment as well as a common Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as their part of the compromise. Nevertheless, each part of the Monarchy was allowed to organise a separate army under its own command for defensive and ceremonial purposes. The separate Hungarian army was called the Honved and the Hungarian leaders continuously, and with some success, tried to build it up at the expense of the common army. The Austrian equivalent was the Landwehr. The Austrians followed the Hungarian lead and tried not to let the Landwehr fall too far behind the Hungarian Honved, although the Austrians were not particularly zealous about this. They really favoured a strong joint military force and probably would have preferred to spend much of the money which went to the Landwehr on other things.

52. The Landeshauptmann was, and is, the head of the government of a Land, elected by the Landtag. (pl. Landeshauspteute)

53. Bilgeri - pp. 119-121.
war of brief duration was expected. Instead the war dragged on for
four years, taking millions of lives. As it continued, the people
became disillusioned with it. Loss of life affected many families.
Economic hardships increased. In the Monarchy, members of several of
the national minorities became increasingly disenchanted with the
status of their nations. Some, like the Italians, had not been loyal
to the Monarchy even before the war. Others, Poles, Serbs, Croats,
Slovenes, Romanians, Ruthenians (Ukrainians), and probably most
fatefully, Czechs, began to express doubts about remaining under
Habsburg rule. In the pre-war period some opposition to the Habsburgs
and the State had been expressed, but those who expressed it were a tiny
minority. The Czechs, Slovenes, Croats, Romanians, Poles and Ruthenians
were not happy with the contemporary state of affairs, but most of them
only desired reform and greater autonomy within the Monarchy. It was
only with the World War that the radical solution of complete
independence was contemplated. As the war continued, this radical idea
attracted more and more adherents. Slowly the old bonds and traditions
began to loosen and dissolve.

On the 21st of November 1916 the old Emperor Franz Joseph finally
died. With him went the end of an era. One more bond, holding the
pieces together, was lost. The new Emperor, Karl, did not have the
tradition and authority which the old Emperor commanded. Karl
desperately wanted peace for his people; he really cared for them. Yet
peace, despite attempts on his part, was not to come for another two
years. By that time, it was too late to save the Monarchy. In 1917
the old Russian Monarchy collapsed. This event loosened the hold of
all monarchs and encouraged republicans. The collapse of Russia, and
the weakening and approaching defeat of the German and Ottoman Empires
in 1918, freed the smaller nations within the Monarchy from fear of
strong neighbours. One reason why the disgruntled Czechs, Romanians,
Poles, Ruthenians and Croats had not wished for independence in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century was their fear of Germany, Russia and Turkey if the Habsburg Monarchy should cease to exist. While many disliked the regime, they feared even more what might replace it. As Palacký, the early Czech leader, said in 1848, "Indeed, if Austria had not existed for so long, we would have been obliged, in the interests of Europe and even humanity, to make every endeavour to create an Austria as soon as possible." 54

With the outbreak of World War I, parliamentary activities in Austria had come to a halt. Neither the Reichsrat nor the Landtage met and elections were not held. However in 1917, the new and more liberal Emperor Karl called the Reichsrat back into session. Members elected in the election of 1911 returned to take their seats.

The years of hardship and war weariness were creating revolutionary social conditions. In 1916 it was becoming increasingly apparent that post-war Austria would be established on a different basis from pre-war Austria. By 1917 large numbers of Czech soldiers were deserting. A Czech army was formed to fight against the Habsburg Monarchy (although, in fact, it fought the Bolsheviks in Russia instead). Meanwhile Thomas Masaryk was presenting the Czech cause to President Wilson and other belligerent leaders. Wilson's Fourteen Points of 8 January 1918 included a demand for autonomous development for the peoples of the Monarchy.

In May 1918 a "Congress of Oppressed Nations" was held in Rome. A short time thereafter the French Government recognised the Czechoslovak National Council as "the future basis of an independent government

quoted in May, Arthur J. - The Habsburg Monarchy 1967-1914, p. 25 as "If the Austrian Monarchy did not exist, it would be necessary to create it quickly, in the interest of Europe and of humanity." Macartney - pp. 352-352. "Truly, if it were not that Austria had long existed, it would be necessary, in the interest of Europe, in the interest of humanity itself, to create her." Taylor, A. J. P. - p. 67.
and the trustee of Czechoslovak interests". Soon thereafter came British recognition, followed by that of the United States on 3 September.\textsuperscript{55}

Then the Central Powers began to collapse. On 24 September 1918 Bulgaria asked the Allies for an armistice. It was signed on 29 September. It provided for the demobilisation of the Bulgarian army and the departure of all German, Austrian and Hungarian troops, diplomats and civilians within four weeks. In secret clauses the Allies were granted the right of passage across Bulgarian territory and the use of Bulgarian railways, telephones, ports and other facilities. With the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk and the collapse on the Bulgarian front, many demoralised soldiers returned to the Monarchy. Many came with a revolutionary spirit to which the general public was receptive. On 28 September a treaty of alliance was signed by the French and the Czechs in Paris and the Czech National Council in Paris was granted full recognition. On 4 October the Emperor Karl asked President Wilson for an armistice based on his statements of 8 January 1918 (the Fourteen Points), 4 July 1918 (the Four Points) and 27 September 1918.\textsuperscript{56}

But it was too late. The Empire was already dissolving. On 6 October 1918 South Slavs, meeting at Zagreb, proclaimed the union of all Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in one independent state. On 29 October, the Sabor (the Croatian Diet) in Zagreb declared Croatia-Slavonia with Dalmatia and Fiume an independent state and a part of


\textsuperscript{56} Strong, David F. - Austria - p. 85.
the "national and sovereign State of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes". A similar proclamation was issued by the Carniolan Landtag in Ljubljana on 31 October and another was issued in Sarajevo on 1 November. On 7 October the Polish Regency Council in Warsaw proclaimed the establishment of a new independent Polish state made up of the Polish areas of the Russian, German and Austrian Empires. Later in the month they set up a "liquidation committee" to wind up affairs of State between the Monarchy and the new Polish state. On 12 October a Romanian National Council was established. On 14 October Eduard Beneš announced in Paris the formation of the first Czechoslovak government. This government was recognised the next day by France. On 18 October Masaryk, speaking for the Provisional Czechoslovak Government in Washington, D.C., proclaimed the independence of Czechoslovakia. This was proclaimed in Prague itself on 28 October. On 19 October Ukrainian (Ruthenian) representatives met at Lwow (Lemberg) and established the Ukrainian National Council to look after their interests. They declared full independence on 1 November. On 16 October the Minister-President of Hungary, Dr. Wekerle, declared in the Parliament at Budapest that, henceforth, Hungary would be tied to Austria solely by personal union under the sovereign. This was followed on 1 November by a declaration of complete independence by Count Karolyi, the new Minister-President of Hungary. Wilson had refused Karl's request for an armistice based on the Fourteen Points, saying that the conditions on which they were established no longer existed. He said that it was now up to the individual nations of the Monarchy to decide their own futures. 57

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While leaders of the other nationalities in Austria were making preparations since late summer 1918 for the collapse of the Monarchy, the Germans in the Monarchy were caught unprepared for its demise in October and November 1918. The Germans in Austria much more closely identified themselves with the State and its workings than did the non-Germans. It was not conceivable to most of them that the Monarchy could or would cease to exist. The German Social Democrats were the first Germans of the Monarchy to realise some possible consequences of its defeat. They called for the establishment of national states, whether federated or not. The other German parties were slower to realise that unavoidable changes were coming. However, by 4 October 1918 the leadership committee of the Union of German National parties unanimously decided to accept the Social Democratic programme of national states as the basis for further negotiations with the other nationalities. On 9 October the leadership of the Christian Social Party also decided to accept this programme. The Social Democrats then proposed that a German-Austrian state be proclaimed and a provisional national assembly for German-Austria, consisting of the German members of the Reichsrat, be established. The middle class parties were not yet ready to take this revolutionary step. They still believed that the Habsburg Monarchy could be reconstituted by constitutional means. Events were soon to prove them wrong. The leaders of the other nationalities, especially the Czechs, no longer cared to follow constitutional form to establish their national states. By October 1918 they no longer wished to do so within the realm of the old Monarchy, even if their national states were to be fully self-governing within the reconstituted Monarchy. 58

Meanwhile, the Emperor and his government stood by, watching the centuries-old Empire break up. They tried to direct the revolutionary forces along legal lines, in an attempt to save the existence and the unity, however weak, of the Monarchy. On 12 October 1918 Karl invited thirty-two Reichsrat representatives, from all of the different Austrian nations to come to a meeting at Baden to negotiate the establishing of a Ministry of the Peoples and the reorganisation of the state. The Czechs and the South Slavs refused to attend. The Emperor and his government decided to act alone and on 16 October 1918 Karl signed an Imperial Manifesto, which would have changed Austria into a federal state of self-governing nations. The Minister-President of his Austrian Government, Freiherr von Hussarek, announced a meeting for the 16th to discuss the Manifesto with representatives of the nations; however, the Czechs refused to attend. The South Slav leader Dr. Korošec met with Hussarek but rejected the Manifesto. Representatives of all the other nations, including the Germans, followed suit. The Manifesto was also rejected by the individual Länder, whose unity would have been disrupted by the implementation of the plan. The Manifesto, which was published on 17 October in the Wiener Zeitung, the official gazette of the Monarchy, provided for the establishment of national councils of the Reichsrat members of the different nationalities as a first step towards the establishment of the individual national states. This smoothed the way for the establishment of provisional national assemblies and provisional national governments. The Manifesto came too late to save the Monarchy. The Czechoslovak state had already been recognised; the re-establishment of Poland was already decided; by the Treaty of London of 1915 the Kingdom of Italy was to acquire Trieste and its surrounding area and south Tirol all the way to the Brenner pass;
Romania was to have Bukovina and Transylvania. The Manifesto recognised the integrity of the Kingdom of Hungary, which was an independent country. Yet the Slavs and the Romanians could hardly have been expected to settle for anything less than full self-government for all Slavs and all Romanians in both parts of the Monarchy. This was impossible to grant without the consent of the political leaders of Hungary, who were unwilling to hear of such suggestions, which would both diminish the power of the Magyars and injure the ancient fabric and constitution of the Hungarian State. The political leaders of Hungary, who were Magyars, refused to recognise that the other nationalities within Hungary, who formed a slight majority, could have any separate political rights or, indeed, could make any real claims on the Hungarian State. Nevertheless, F. F. G. Kleinwaechter, in his book Von Schönbrunn bis St. Germain, credited the Manifesto with one great accomplishment. He wrote that it allowed for the bloodless dissolution of the Monarchy and provided a legal basis for the establishment of the national councils. 59

Because of the way contemporary events were moving, the representatives of the middle class German-Austria parties finally realised that it was time to consider seriously the establishment of a German-Austrian State in order to protect the interests of the Germans in the Austrian part of the Monarchy. This they wished to do in a legal and orderly manner. 60 On 17 October 1918 representatives

Kleinwaechter - pp. 62-64, 68, 70-71, 75; the text of the Manifesto is printed on pp. 308-309.

60. Kreissler - p. 31.
of all of the German parties in the Reichsrat agreed to meet the
following Monday, 21 October in the Lower Austrian Landhaus, the
building in Vienna in which the Landtag for the Land of Lower Austria
met. This they did at 5 p.m. on 21 October. Reichsrat representatives
from all of the German electoral districts gathered in the chamber of
the Landhaus and constituted themselves the Provisorische
Nationalversammlung Deutschösterreichs - the Provisional German-Austrian National
Assembly. Dr. Waldner, as temporary leader of the house, declared
that he, together with representatives of all of the German parties,
had called this meeting of all representatives of all German Reichsrat
constituencies in order to establish the right of the Germans of
Austria to self-determination in an independent state and to prepare
the way for a constituent national assembly. He added that the new
national states would have to divide the burdens and the rights of
the old state and provide for the provisioning of their peoples.
Three presidents, one from each party, and other parliamentary
officials were chosen. The Social Democratic president was Karl
Seitz, the Christian Social president was Jodok Fink (from Vorarlberg)
and the German Nationalists were represented by Franz Dinghofer in the
presidency. Seitz then took over as leader of the house. He said
that the assembly could not fully represent the German people in
Austria, since its members were elected to another legislative body
in different conditions in 1911; however, as it was the only body of
German delegates in Austria elected by universal suffrage, it had
the right and the duty to express the will of the German people in
Austria in preparation for the election of a constituent assembly,
whose duty it would be to build the new constitutional and
administrative organisation. The Provisional National Assembly made
it very clear that it believed itself to represent all Germans in
Austria, wherever they might live. This was a response to Czech claims to the whole of the historic Kingdom of Bohemia, including the large, compact, purely German areas along the edges of Bohemia and Moravia. The position of the Provisional German-Austrian National Assembly can best be summed up by the resolution put forward by the representative and secretary of the Assembly Hummer and unanimously accepted by the assembly. It read:

The German people in Austria have decided to determine their future system of State themselves, to form an independent German-Austria state, and to regulate its relations with the other nations through free agreement with them. The German-Austrian state claims territorial control over the whole of German-settled areas, including also the Sudetenland. Any annexation of territories, which are inhabited by German farmers, workers and burghers by other nations will be opposed by the German-Austrian state. Access to the Adriatic Sea for the German people will be secured by agreement with the other nations. The German people in Austria will elect a Constituent National Assembly. The Constituent National Assembly, elected by universal and equal suffrage, will establish the constitution of the German-Austria state. Until the Constituent National Assembly meets, the Reichsrat representatives of the German constituencies have the obligation to represent the German people in Austria. Therefore the whole of the German representatives of the Austrian Reichsrat constitute the Provisional National Assembly for Austria. The Provisional National Assembly claims the right, until the Constituent National Assembly meets, to represent the German people in Austria at the peace negotiations, to take part in negotiations with the other nations about the transfer of administration to the new nation states and about the establishment of new relationships among the nations, and to exercise the powers of lawmaking and the execution of them. The Provisional National Assembly will fix the election laws, on the basis of which the Constituent National Assembly should be elected and it will prepare the organisation of inner administration of the German-Austria state. The Provisional National Assembly will struggle with special attention to combat the great economic distress of the German people in Austria, who as a consequence, are threatened by the ceasure of importations of foodstuffs, and it will lead necessary negotiations to this end...

Kreissler - pp. 31, 309.
Hellbling, Ernst - Österreichische Verfassungs- und Verwaltungsgeschichte - p. 401.

Hummer's resolution can be seen in Kleinwaechter - pp. 77-80.
At this meeting, the Social Democrats mooted the possibility of the establishment of a democratic republic; the representatives of the other parties favoured the maintainance of a constitutional monarchy. Most of the speakers favoured the creation of a federation of nation-states out of the old Monarchy. Dr. Viktor Adler, a leading Social Democrat, said that if close relations with the new neighbouring states were impossible to establish, then the only possible (economic) alternative for the new Austrian state would be union with the German Reich. 62 This was a crucial problem for the new state. Many of its political leaders and many of its citizens did not believe it possible for the state to survive without union - at least economic union - with the neighbouring German state. With the collapse of the Monarchy, many of the people in the new state thought of themselves as being homeless; they looked to Germany as their natural home. It was not until the oppression of the Nazi regime in Austria and the defeat and collapse of this regime, that the desire for union - Anschluss - to Germany was extinguished and a new Austrian state consciousness came into being among the German-Austrian people. 63

The Imperial Austrian Government did not disappear immediately; nor did the common Austro-Hungarian Government. Therefore, for several weeks there were three established governments in Vienna. They were all almost powerless to influence the events; nonetheless, officials of the three governments corresponded politely together.


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63. Molden, Otto - Der Ruf des Gewissens.
Wiskemann, Elizabeth - Europe of the Dictators - p. 17.
The last important act of the common Austro-Hungarian Government was to obtain an end to the fighting. On 27 October Count Andrassy, the last common Minister for Foreign Affairs, requested an armistice. This was arranged and the Habsburg armed forces ceased fighting on 3 November 1918. Meanwhile, the last Minister-President of the Austrian Government, the pacifist Professor Heinrich Lammasch, was appointed to that post (on 27 October). He presided over the final stages of the dissolution of the state and helped to ease the end.

On 30 October the Provisional German-Austrian National Assembly unanimously decided to take over full powers of State. They were to be exercised by a twenty member German-Austrian Council of State (Deutschösterreichischer Staatsrat), which included the three presidents of the National Assembly. The ministries became State Offices (Staatsämter) and were directed by State Secretaries (Staatssekretäre). The new State Chancellor (Staatskanzler) presided over meetings of the government. Dr. Karl Renner was chosen to be the first Chancellor. Another leading Social Democrat, Dr. Viktor Adler, became the first State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.64

Other branches of government also removed themselves from the scene peacefully. The lower house, the Abgeordnetenhaus, of the Reichsrat was scheduled to meet on 30 October. When it met, the members realised the pointlessness of debating motions concerning a state almost no longer in existence. The sitting lasted only two minutes and all business was postponed until the next meeting, to be held on 12 November 1918 at 11 a.m. This meeting came to order at 11.10 a.m. on 12 November. Dr. Gross, the President of the Abgeordnetenhaus made a speech in which he said the following:

64. Kreissler - pp. 31-33.
The debates, which we have heard here in this House since the beginning of last month, were already a prelude to the fall of Austria. But then I and many others believed with me, that this House still had important, meaningful tasks to do. I was of the opinion that it would be the task of this House, to realise the division of the old Imperial state in a peaceful way and by legal measures, which would be necessary to accomplish this division by constitutional means. However, meanwhile events have hurried along and we must deal with the fact that Austria has disintegrated. The House no longer has any tasks to fulfill. In its place, the various national assemblies have come into being, particularly the Provisional German National Assembly, which has already partly taken over from this House. The most proper thing to do would perhaps be to dissolve ourselves. The Austrian Constitution, which is still valid for us, has no provision for this. Therefore nothing more remains for us to do but to end the sittings of the House. Therefore I permit myself to put forward the proposal that the High House would like to resolve to end today's sitting without setting a date for the next session. Does anyone wish to speak? (No one answers.) It is not the case. I ask those Gentlemen who agree with this proposal to rise. (Done.) The proposal is accepted, therefore I close this sitting.

And that is how the lower house of the Reichsrat came to an end at 11.20 a.m. on 12 November. By acting in this manner, the members of this house smoothed the way for the setting up of the new governments of the new states. They could not have avoided the coming changes; but they could have adjourned, leaving unanswered many constitutional questions which could have caused difficulty later.65

The members of the upper house of the Reichsrat, the Herrenhaus, or House of Lords, were not so quick to grasp the realities of the situation as the elected members of the lower house were. The lords did not recognise that the Monarchy was collapsing around them. The last sitting of the Herrenhaus took place on 30 October 1918 between 5.05 and 5.10 p.m. It was held to discuss the new ministry of Professor Lammasch, who could not attend. Therefore the house adjourned, agreeing to call the next meeting by written message. Since the state disappeared, this was never done. Thus both houses of the Reichsrat came to an end.66

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The Emperor was somewhat harder to eliminate. He held on tenaciously to what he believed to be his right. His family had been rulers of some of these territories for over six hundred years. He believed it to be his duty to protect the rights and territories of his family, rights and territories built up through fortune, marriage and adversity by many generations of Habsburgs. It is probable that he could not conceive of a world, or at least of a Europe, without the Habsburgs. He was a compassionate monarch; he saw the suffering of his peoples and he wanted to ease their plight. He came to the throne at the death of his great-uncle, Franz Joseph, who died on 21 November 1916, after sixty-eight years on the throne. The young, new Emperor Karl found himself to be head of a Monarchy lost in war. He desperately wanted peace, and hoped to secure it by secret negotiations through his brother-in-law Prince Sixtus, through the Spanish government and perhaps with the help of others. However he did not have the ability to translate his desires into success. Partly this was because he himself was not very strong, but largely it was because political conditions made peace impossible while time still existed to save the Monarchy. The obstructions of the Hungarians were too great, the territorial demands of the Italians too ravenous, the power of the Germans too overwhelming for Karl to be able to extricate himself and his state from the war in time. The Imperial Manifesto of 16 October 1918 was too late and too narrow to satisfy the Slavs of the Monarchy. Had such a plan been adopted and instituted even two years earlier, it would have satisfied the Slavs and the Allied and Associated Powers, and the Monarchy probably would have survived as a loose federation under the Habsburg Crown. 67 But this was not possible and by October 1918

67. Brook-Shepherd, Gordon - The Last Habsburg.
Lorenz, Rheinhold - Kaiser Karl und der Untergang der Donaumonarchie.
republicanism was rampant within the Empire. By November even the middle class German-Austrian parties, carried along by the tide of events, found themselves more and more inclined towards a republic. The Emperor would not abdicate. On 9 November Wilhelm abdicated in Germany. Soon something would have to be done to solve the Imperial problem in Vienna. In his last important task as Austrian Minister-President, Professor Lammasch composed the following declaration, which the Emperor, despite initial opposition, was prevailed upon to sign:

Since coming to the throne I have tried unceasingly to lead my peoples out of the horrors of war, for the outbreak of which I bear no guilt.

I have not hesitated to reinstitute constitutional life and I have opened the way for autonomous development to the people.

Now as ever, filled with unchangeable love for all of my peoples, I do not wish to set up a barrier to their free development by My Person.

In advance I recognize the decision of German-Austria as to its future form of State.

The people have taken over the government through their representatives. I renounce all participation in the business of State.

At the same time, I relieve My Austrian Government of office. The people of German-Austria would like to create and strengthen the new order in concord and conciliation. The happiness of my peoples was from the beginning the object of My deepest wishes.

Only inner peace can heal the wounds of this war.

Vienna, 11 November 1918.

(signed) Karl (signed) Lammasch.

Thus ended both the Imperial Austrian Government and the rule of the Habsburgs in Austria. This document was not an abdication in the true sense; it was a statement of withdrawal from affairs of State. In it, Karl said that he recognised in advance whatever form of State German-Austria was to choose. Yet this was legally ambiguous and, although a republic was declared the next day, this form of monarchic
withdrawal was to cause difficulties for the new state. On 13 November Karl signed a similar proclamation for Hungary. 68

The next day, 12 November 1918, the Provisional German-Austrian National Assembly met to consider a law on the form of State and Government, the "Gesetz über die Staats- und Regierungsform von Deutsch-Österreich". The law, which consisted of eleven articles, had been presented to the Staatsrat for consideration the day before by Dr. Renner. Article One declared German-Austria to be a democratic republic. ("Deutsch-Österreich ist eine demokratische Republik.") Article Two declared German-Austria to be a part of the German Republic. (Deutsch-Österreich ist ein Bestandteil der Deutschen Republik.") Three Christian Social members of the Staatsrat opposed the use of the term "republic," but only one of them, and the only member of the Staatsrat to do so, Wilhelm Miklas, 69 opposed Article Two, proclaiming the Anschluss of German-Austria to Germany. In the National Assembly meeting of 12 November, some doubts were expressed about the law by some of the Christian Social members; however, it was passed. The rights of the Emperor were transferred to the Staatsrat, all Imperial and noble privileges were abolished and Crown property and estates were forfeited to the State. The oath to the Emperor of officials, officers and soldiers was declared to be void and the Ministries of the Imperial Austrian Government were dissolved. A Constituent National Assembly was to be elected in January 1919 by

68. Lorenz - pp. 554-555.
   Strong - p. 114.
   Macartney - p. 833.
   Kreissler - pp. 33-34.

69. Miklas was later President of the Republic, at the time of Hitler's invasion and seizure of Austria.
universal, direct, secret ballot for all citizens, both male and female and by a system of proportional voting. New Community Councils were to be elected along the same lines. The State Chancellor, Dr. Renner, announced the proclamation of the Republic to a crowd of several hundred thousand people waiting outside of the Parliament Building in the Ringstrasse. The crowd received the news with great enthusiasm and waved red flags and banners.70

The elections for the Constituent National Assembly were postponed until 16 February 1919 to coincide with elections taking place on that day in Germany to choose a national assembly. The new assembly was composed of seventy-two Social Democrats, sixty-nine Christian Socials, twenty-six representatives of German nationalist groups, who soon combined into a Great-German Union (Grossdeutsche Vereinigung); and three representatives of splinter groups, a Czech, a Zionist and a middle class democrat. Occupied areas of German settlement in Bohemia and Moravia, as well as German areas in occupied southern Tirol, southern Styria and southern Carinthia, were not permitted to return representatives by the occupying powers. On 15 March 1919 the Constituent National Assembly, which had replaced the Provisional National Assembly, elected a coalition government, of Social Democrats and Christian Socials. The Grossdeutsche Vereinigung was not represented in the government although Dr. Renner had invited them to join it. Dr. Renner was State Chancellor, Jodok Fink (a Christian Social from Vorarlberg) became Vice-Chancellor, Otto Bauer (a Social Democrat) remained State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, a position which he obtained on the death of Viktor Adler on

70. Kreissler - pp. 34, 55-56, 310.
Lorenz - p. 558.
11 November 1918. The Constituent National Assembly acted as the parliament for German-Austria and also wrote the new constitution. It continued to sit until 1 October 1920.71

* * *

In Vorarlberg, too, revolutionary events were taking place. After more than four years suspension, members of the Landtag decided to meet to prepare for the future. Accordingly, on 3 November 1918 a group of thirty men met at Bregenz and formed themselves into a Provisorische Landesversammlung - a Provisional Land Assembly. The thirty members consisted of nineteen Christian Socials, six German liberals (Deutschfreisinnige) and five Social Democrats, in proportion to the last Reichsrat vote in 1911. They elected a president, Dr. Otto Ender, and two vice-presidents, Franz Natter and Fritz Preiss. The assembly passed a resolution establishing Vorarlberg as an independent Land within the area of the German-Austrian state. The resolution also established a Landesrat (Land Council) to administer the newly independent Land, now no longer under the control or administration of the central authorities. This Landesrat was to be the government of Vorarlberg. The resolution read:

The Vorarlberg Land Assembly declares itself to be the law-giving body for the Land Vorarlberg. Its members were chosen by the political parties and represent the Land in place of the former Landtag, until a new election for representatives is set. The Vorarlberg Land Assembly conducts the administration of the Land through an elected Landesrat, chosen from amongst its members. As in other Crownlands, the leadership of the political and the autonomous administration was united in one person; with it [the Landesrat] the Land Vorarlberg

Stadler, Karl - Austria - p. 82.
has given itself that independence for which it has long unanimously strived. Vorarlberg no longer forms a common administrative area with Tirol, but declares itself an individual, independent Land within the area of the German-Austrian state, on the basis of the right of self-determination. Therefore, the Landesrat takes the place of the previous Land Committee and, moreover, takes over those affairs which until now had been the responsibility of the Imperial Statthalterei. The Vorarlberg Land Assembly considers its most pressing task to be the orderly and peaceful leadership of the Vorarlberg people, in this time of deepest economic distress and quickest political developments, into a better era of peace. It especially wishes to exercise all necessary powers to ensure the provisioning of our people.72


Vorarlberg had declared itself selbständig. This word can mean either autonomous or independent. Whereas the Land Assembly probably thought only of independence in the sense of autonomy, this ambiguity later allowed the supporters of the movement for self-determination for Vorarlberg, including the Land Government, to interpret the declaration of 3 November 1918 as one for full independence.
CHAPTER 2

THE MOVEMENT BEGINS,

OPINIONS IN VORARLBERG

We believe that we should point out, in order that it be remembered here, that Vorarlberg does not belong to Austria either geographically or ethnographically. It is cut off from Austria by mountains; on the other hand, it lies open to Switzerland. Its rivers do not belong to the system of the Danube, but flow into the Bodensee and the Rhine, as do those of eastern and central Switzerland. In complete contrast to the rest of the population of Austria, its [Vorarlberg's] population belongs to the Alemannic Stamm, but also partly consists of Walser and of Alemannised Rhaetoromanens. We find the same to be true in neighbouring parts of Switzerland. The same dialect as in Switzerland is spoken in Vorarlberg.

Democratic feeling was always more strongly developed in Land Vorarlberg than in Inner Austria, and this feeling is founded in a predisposition to it by the people, but was in any case nourished by the influence of adjacent Switzerland, with which Vorarlberg is bound by active ties and many economic connections.

It is therefore easily understandable that in the autumn of 1918 a strong movement by the people came about to demand the right of self-determination for the people of Vorarlberg and to demand negotiations with Switzerland about the entry of the Land into the Confederation.¹

With these words begins a memorial from the Vorarlberger Landesrat to the League of Nations. These opening words give some reasons why a majority of Vorarlbergers had come to support union to Switzerland. These paragraphs appeal for justice for Vorarlberg. Vorarlberg appealed for recognition by the League of its right to self-determination. Although much emphasis was put on the right to self-determination at the time, this supposedly basic right was

¹ Landesrat (Denkschrift) - pp. 1-2.

Walser are people whose ancestors came originally from Canton Wallis (Valais) in Switzerland. In the Fourteenth Century their ancestors emigrated to parts of Graubünden, Vorarlberg and Tirol.
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often denied or ignored by the victors of the First World War. Within Europe the examples of German South Tirol, Fiume, Narburg, German Bohemia, German Moravia and the Åland Islands come to mind. In Asia and Africa the peoples were denied the right to determine their own governments, states and allegiances. Not all of the participants supported the principle even at the Paris Peace Conference or in the League, where the principle was supposedly official policy. Even members of President Wilson's own staff, including Robert Lansing, opposed the unquestioned application of the principle. Wilson himself did not adhere to the principle fully; he was prepared to see German South Tirol become a part of Italy against the known wishes of its inhabitants.2

Nevertheless, the principle that people had a right to determine their own futures was an accepted idea. Wilson had said that provinces were not to be bartered like goods. There was, and is,

   p. 66 "Enough evidence has been adduced to suggest that the British and American delegations were anxious to confine self-determination to Europe, while the French and Italian delegations would have preferred to confine it to Utopia."

   p. 104 "It is an evil thing to permit the principle of "self-determination" to continue to have the apparent sanction of the nations when it has been in fact thoroughly discredited and will always be cast aside whenever it comes in conflict with national safety, with historic political rights, or with national economic interests affecting the prosperity of a nation."
confusion and disagreement over who or what may claim the right to self-determination. Is it a right limited only to nations, and if so, how is a nation defined? Can this right be applied to minorities within an existing territory? No obvious answers were or are available to these questions. Some would maintain that only nations historically developed or linguistically united can claim the right to determine their own futures. Others would say that this right is universal to all compact bodies of like-minded people, whether they live in one state, one province or one district, town or village.

The views of the participants at the Paris Peace Conference were ambiguous. The Italians demanded the right of self-determination for the Italian minorities in Austria and in Hungary, splitting existing Länder, where necessary, and assuming that the people involved would welcome this solution. It was decided to separate the Kreise of Eupen and Malmedy from Germany and give them to Belgium. In North Schleswig a plebiscite was held and a new Danish-German frontier was established, based on the results of the plebiscite on a commune by commune basis. Similarly, when a plebiscite was held in Upper Silesia in 1922, it was done along local community lines. The plebiscite in Carinthia was zonal. In some areas the plebiscites were organised on an all or nothing basis. Some areas were wholly separated by the Peace Conference for the purpose of holding a plebiscite. For instance, in the Saar, Memel, Marienwerder and Allenstein the majority decision was to be valid for the whole region, whatever the outcome on a local basis. Many of these areas were smaller than Vorarlberg. Some were artificial creations, established for the purpose of having a plebiscite. It was not unnatural for Vorarlberg to demand the right to determine its own future. It was larger than some of the areas given the right to do so. It was a historic unity. Simply because they spoke German, the Vorarlbergers
did not regard themselves as a self-evident part of the new Republic of German-Austria. The old world had fallen away, the Empire was no more, provinces and peoples were going their own ways. The Vorarlbergers, therefore, could see no reason why they should not decide their future for themselves, as other peoples were doing. The resolution of 3 November 1918 of the Provisional Land Assembly had declared Vorarlberg independent within the area of the German-Austrian state. But it was not immediately obvious that the German-Austrian state would survive. Besides, since the Land Assembly was of a provisional nature only, some people asserted that its decisions could be only provisional. To the east, Tirol had declared itself a part of the German-Austrian state, but it also examined the idea of establishing itself as a small independent neutral Alpine republic. Many in Tirol came out early and strongly for union with Germany, either within the German-Austria state, or without it. The Vorarlbergers had to consider the possibilities; they might be completely cut off from German-Austria. Union to Switzerland was an obvious answer.

Many Vorarlbergers opposed union with the rest of German-Austria. The reasons for this may be examined in light of the Memorial from the Landesrat to the League of Nations. The people of Vorarlberg had long looked upon their Land as a separate political, social and cultural entity. They were conscious of the rights and traditions of the Land, whose character they wished to see preserved. Besides feelings of kinship, there were economic reasons behind the movement to join Switzerland. The Swiss economy had suffered during

3. Die Einheit Deutschtirols: Denkschrift des akademischen Senats der Universität Innsbruck. Mit einer Sprachenkarte. (Innsbruck, 1918)
the war; nevertheless it was much stronger than the economies of
defeated Germany or ruined Austria. Switzerland had a stable
currency and a stable government. The short general strike in
November 1918 in Switzerland had failed and the country continued to
be a haven of peace and order, in sharp contrast to Germany and
eastern Europe, where the threat of social revolution was believed
to be great. The conservative, Catholic population looked with fear
at Vienna, a city they had long distrusted and now believed to be in
the hands of socialists, revolutionaries and Jews. In Switzerland
they saw a way to preserve their way of life. Switzerland was a
federal state; in it Vorarlberg could enjoy the autonomy it had long
desired. The Vorarlbergers felt akin to Switzerland because of
similarities of dialect, history and political development and close
economic ties. The St. Galler embroidery industry depended on
Vorarlberg labour. The partially-worked materials were sent into
Vorarlberg, where the more delicate work was done, before being
returned to St. Gallen for finishing and marketing, since labour was
cheaper in Vorarlberg. Some fifteen to twenty thousand Vorarlbergers
were so employed before the war. Even then Vorarlberg was referred
to jokingly as the twenty-third canton of the Swiss Confederation,
because of its similarities with Switzerland. Some writers claim
that long before the collapse of the Habsburg Monarchy, one could
hear the opinion voiced in Vorarlberg that it would be a good thing
if Vorarlberg could join Switzerland. Schmid-Gartmann, in his book

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4. Koenig, Fritz - Die Verhandlungen über die internationale
Rheinregulierung im st. gallisch-vorarlbergischen Rheintal
von den Anfängen bis zum schweizerisch-österreichischen
Staatsvertrag von 1892 - p. 19.

Hoor, Ernst - Österreich 1918-1938: Staat ohne Nation, Republik
ohne Republikaner - p. 95.
Vor Fünfzig Jahren: Die Vorarlberger Frage von 1919, repeats this

...As the ultimatum was handed over to Serbia on 28 July 1914, the leading circles of Austria-Hungary knew that only a victory could save the Monarchy, a defeat would inevitably bring about its dissolution; and it is asserted that, in Bregenz on that evening, one could hear all over, without contradiction, that only one thing could be hoped from the war, and that would be the abolition of the Rhine frontier....

* * *

Soon after the declaration of 3 November 1918 and even before the withdrawal of the Emperor from the affairs of state on 11 November, rumours of a possible union of Vorarlberg with Switzerland were circulating. On 7 November the Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung, the semi-official Land newspaper, wrote that there were reports in Swiss newspapers about a petition being circulated in Vorarlberg demanding union with Switzerland. A similar report appeared in the Christian Social newspaper, the Vorarlberger Volksblatt, on 9 November.

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Minute by ?Z. Y., 22 November 1918
PRO FO 371 W/193195/184632/43
"Even before the war, there was a strong party in favour of ultimate union with Switzerland. I heard the question discussed in Zürich in 1911 and 1912 and the Swiss seemed favourable to the idea."

6. VLZ 7 November 1918 Nr. 257 p. 2.
VW 8 November 1918 Nr. 45 p. 1.
VV 9 November 1918 Nr. 258 p. 2.
VLZ 19 November 1918 Nr. 267 p. 2.
VLZ 22 November 1918 Nr. 270 p. 2.
VV 23 November 1918 Nr. 270 p. 2.
On 23 November 1918 the first important event in the movement for union to Switzerland occurred. That evening an assembly was held in Lustenau to discuss and organise the movement. This assembly was called by a committee called the Werbeausschuss, literally the propaganda committee. Over thirteen hundred people were reported to have been present. The main speaker and organiser was a Lustenau teacher, Ferdinand Riedmann, who spoke on "Why Vorarlberg must seek union with Switzerland". Another speaker discussed the question of union and its importance for Vorarlberg's embroidery industry. Others spoke against the movement, saying it was too early to consider it.

The Landes-Zeitung reported, however, that the general consensus at the meeting was favourable to the idea of union to Switzerland. The Christian Social Volksblatt also reported the meeting and counselled patience. It warned that the possibility of union was not only dependent on the wishes of Vorarlberg, but that it was also dependent on the wishes of Switzerland and the Allied powers. It explained that the feelings of the Vorarlberg people towards Switzerland were understandable for several reasons, but most especially because of their dislike for Vienna and the new state of German-Austria. The Christian Socials disliked the new socialist governments in Vienna, both the national and the municipal ones, a dislike which only reinforced the deeply rooted distrust of the distant capital amongst the largely agrarian population of Vorarlberg. The Christian Social newspaper warned, however, that no hasty decisions should be made and that the situation should be regarded from economic, cultural, social and legal points of view, as well as from the emotional one.

7. VLZ 25 November 1918 Nr. 272 p. 2.
VV 24 November 1918 Nr. 271 p. 3.
On 21 November in an article in the Volksblatt it was reported that the population all over Vorarlberg supported the movement for union to Switzerland. The Landesrat should adopt a position on the question and give the people a chance to speak out on the matter. The question should not be left to the negative attitudes of some large capitalists; it should be decided according to the welfare and the wishes of the whole population. However, the editor of the newspaper himself did not support this point of view. He wrote that the Landesrat should not adopt any position on the question for the moment. The Land Assembly had decided that Vorarlberg was an independent Land within German-Austria and therefore had made the decision for the Landesrat. But it was true that this decision could only be seen as provisional until a plebiscite were taken, or until a Land Assembly, elected in a general election, were to decide. The editor noted that the people strongly opposed the central administration in Vienna and were more conscious than ever of their stämmlich ties with the Swiss people. The people should consider cultural and economic aspects of the question and so come to a well-reasoned, convinced and proper decision on the question. Open discussions should be held to discuss the matter. On 22 November 1918 in an article in the Volksblatt it was noted that the peace negotiations could take a long time. Meanwhile a way should be found for the Land to preserve its complete freedom, while entering into a customs union with a larger state, since such a union was economically necessary. The economic aspects of any possible union were then discussed. A customs union with Switzerland would be beneficial for agricultural exports, especially of cheese. Food would be cheaper within Switzerland. Although the textile industry benefited from the Austro-Hungarian customs area, this would probably no longer be the case, since Czechoslovakia and Hungary were likely to establish customs barriers against German-Austrian exports. A customs union with
Germany would not be favourable because that country would be burdened with war debts.\(^8\)

This became an important point in the question. Those favouring union with Switzerland pointed to its prosperous financial condition. They were accused by their opponents of hoping to avoid war debts and reparations by the union. The Allies wanted reparations; hence, this question interested them. The Vorarlberg supporters of the movement for union to Switzerland noted the economic advantages, while trying to give the impression that they were not moved by economics, that the movement was an idealistic one of a small, democratic, liberty-loving, peaceful people wishing to safeguard their traditions by joining with the stämmlich-related Swiss, who, similarly, were democratic, liberty-loving and peaceful. Their opponents countered by saying that Vorarlberg would not escape its war debts in this manner and that its economy would suffer within Switzerland because of that country's limited internal market. Especially for the benefit of public opinion in Switzerland and in the Allied countries, they accused those for union to Switzerland of being interested in material benefits only, while ignoring idealistic questions. There was some truth in this charge. The economic benefits to be accrued by joining Switzerland were not negligible and those for this union clearly realised them. Nevertheless, most supporters were moved by idealistic and stämmlich reasons as well as economic ones. Vorarlberg's history and constitution provide genuine bases for claims of similarity, based on ethnic ties and democratic ideals. Naturally supporters of union to Switzerland emphasised the idealistic over the materialistic reasons for wanting the union.

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8. VV 21 November 1918 Nr. 268 p. 3.  
VV 22 November 1918 Nr. 269 p. 1.  
VV 27 November 1918 Nr. 273 p. 2.
There were other, less idealistic, reasons. Some supporters of the union looked back nostalgically to the days of the Vorarlberg Bauernrepublik (Farmers' Republic). Rural ways were praised and urban and industrial ones condemned. Vienna, Jews and revolution were all condemned together, as if they went together naturally. Without the Emperor, the Vorarlbergers could now return to the old Bauernrepublik days; the people could be free, as their ancestors had been. This love of Land, this xenophobic outlook ("Vorarlberg for the Vorarlbergers!") these anti-monarchical and anti-Semitic attitudes ("Hands off our dear little Land, damned Jew!") were obviously contrary to a modern concept of democratic, liberty-loving, peaceful people. Such sentiments were not endorsed by the responsible leaders in the Land Government itself of the movement for union to Switzerland; but they were encouraged by some of the popular leaders. Many of those who supported union with Switzerland accepted these slogans. They thought of themselves as simple, upright people who were being cheated by the distant cosmopolitan capital, now run by revolutionaries and Jews. The popular leaders of the movement for union to Switzerland told them that Switzerland allowed neither nobles nor Jews to exercise any power. In Vorarlberg anti-noble attitudes are very old, having erupted into a full scale attack on the local nobility during the Appenzeller War (1403-1408) when their castles were destroyed and they were chased from the Land. The anti-Semitic attitudes are less understandable. Since there were practically no Jews in Vorarlberg anyway, it seems odd that Jews were chosen as scapegoats. Anti-Semitism with a political motive had become important in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. Such ideas percolated into Vorarlberg where religiously oriented anti-Semitism had long existed. The Vorarlbergers, mainly country people, were distrustful of outsiders and new ways. They
wanted to return to the "good old days", when outsiders were easily excluded. 9

The Social Democrats, a fairly small minority who received support from the working class population of the industrialised areas of the Rhine plain and the cities, particularly Dornbirn and Bregenz, came to be strongly opposed to the movement for union to Switzerland. In Switzerland they saw a strong capitalist system. Austria and Germany, however, were now under socialist rule. At first, however, the attitude of the Social Democrats had been ambivalent. Before their collapse, Austria, Hungary and Germany had been, at best, only semi-democracies. Individual liberties were established, but not on a wholly secure basis. By contrast, the situation in Switzerland was enviable. The Confederation harboured many foreign radicals and socialists. Hence, it is not surprising that some Social Democrats were interested in a possible union with Switzerland at first, but soon became more interested in German-Austria and Germany, where socialists had actually come to power. That this power was to be short-lived could not be foreseen. On 8 November 1918, the first article on the question of the future of Vorarlberg appeared in the Vorarlberger Wacht, the Social Democratic newspaper. It was entitled "Voices for a new Swiss Canton of Vorarlberg?" and it said that the new state of German-Austria was economically unviable and would have to join with the larger economic unity of Germany. However, that did not mean that some areas did not have special economic interests.

VV 28 November 1918 Nr. 274 p. 1.
VV 30 November 1918 Nr. 276 p. 2.
VV 1 December 1918 Nr. 277 p. 3.

Pirker - p. 9.
Pulzer, Peter G. J. - The Rise of Political Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria.
Because of its close economic ties with Switzerland, Vorarlberg was one such area. Both agriculture, especially cheese production, and industry would benefit from such a union. This article noted the stämmlich relationship of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, but warned that it was uncertain whether Switzerland would be willing to accept Vorarlberg, or whether the Peace Conference would allow such a union.  

On 1 December 1918 the Wacht published an article with another outlook. This one called for union of the whole German-Austrian Republic, including Vorarlberg, to the German Republic. In another article in the same issue, it was stated that opinion in Vorarlberg was divided on the question of union to Switzerland. Most people had adopted a wait and see attitude, the proper thing to do, according to the writer. He warned that Switzerland was a multi-national state, as Austria had been. Switzerland was a democracy, but the Confederation had become quite capitalistic, whereas the new Austria was a republic which could become even more democratic than Switzerland. Vorarlberg's embroidery and tourist industries would flourish within Switzerland; but Switzerland was an importer of foodstuffs and raw materials. Union to the great German Republic as an autonomous federal state might be more in the interests of the people. The writer concluded that the Vorarlbergers should wait and observe developments in Switzerland and in Germany.

On Saturday, 30 November 1918, the Werbeausschuss held another large meeting in a hall at the Schweizerhof Inn in Bregenz. Representatives from communities all over Vorarlberg took part.

10. VW 8 November 1918 Nr. 45 p. 1.
11. VW 1 December 1918 Nr. 49 pp. 1-4.
Ferdinand Riedmann from Lustenau again gave the main speech. He discussed the choices open to Vorarlberg. The Land could remain independent, it could join German-Austria and hence, Germany (since it was assumed that German-Austria would soon join Germany as a federal state) or it could join Switzerland. The report of Riedmann’s speech in the Landes-Zeitung continued:

...The speaker denied that Vorarlberg could remain independent, because of the smallness of the Land amongst larger states. The question of the embroidery industry, the question of Rhine traffic, et cetera, demand union with a larger state, because Vorarlberg can not solve such problems alone, in these it can not stand alone. No one can receive with joy the idea of union to German-Austria, and therefore Germany, because of the present reigning Jewish rule in them. This would be to the detriment of the middle and working classes. Vienna does not know us and we would continuously have to do much for it and for Inner Austria; we could not do anything which would benefit us for decades (such as the regulation of the Rhine). Conditions in Germany are still so unclear that no one can know what will come out of this chaos. We would be regarded as outsiders in Austria, as in Germany, and should therefore have the will to put an end to this situation. The way to a secure future is therefore only in union to Switzerland. The speaker then portrayed the good qualities of the Swiss with their practical sense for all questions of life, whose institutions are models for many states, the Constitution, which the Swiss people gave themselves, the tax system, by which burdens are justly shared, and the fact that in Switzerland indirect taxes, which hurt the general well-being and are burdensome here in Vorarlberg, are held to a minimum, the school system, the judicious use of the tax monies, the establishment of the militia system and finally he came to speak of the economic advantages which such a union would bring to Vorarlberg. The embroidery industry would grow with competition, the union would be an improvement for all classes, because the Swiss enjoy a good reputation in the whole world, Switzerland could create work opportunities, et cetera. Mr. Riedmann then discussed the question of whether Switzerland wants us. The Swiss demand to know the will of the Vorarlberg people and an early plebiscite in Switzerland would result in a favourable result for the union. Even the French Swiss newspapers are already writing that the Swiss are waiting for us. If it goes according to legality, the Peace Conference can only be for this movement. We come not as beggars to Switzerland, for Vorarlberg is rich in waterpower, forests and tourist industry and has the favourable breakwater harbour of Bregenz for building up of Rhine traffic and a good financial basis, et cetera, all things which make the union seem favourable for Switzerland as well. Therefore we only want to belong to the Confederation as equal partners, like all of the other cantonal peoples,12

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12. VLZ 2 December 1918 Nr. 278 p. 2.
The Pan-Germans began to make their views known. Union to Germany was seen as the only alternative to union to Switzerland since German-Austria lacked the will and the ability to survive as an independent state. The Pan-Germans argued that a union with Switzerland would separate Vorarlberg from its traditional markets for cheese and butter (German-Austria) and for its cattle (the Allgäu in Bavaria). None of these products were needed in Switzerland. Union to Switzerland would be harmful for industry and commerce as well as for agriculture. The embroidery and textile industries would do better within Germany, where they would have much larger markets. Only within the great German economic unit would Vorarlberg's economy be able to flourish. Switzerland, with a population of under four million people, was too small to be of use to Vorarlberg, whereas Germany, with a population of over seventy million, had a much larger internal market and had access to the sea. Germany had coal and iron and normally produced large amounts of grain and other foodstuffs, which Switzerland did not. Vorarlberg should join Germany on national (völkisch) grounds. The Swiss Germans were attacked for not admitting that they too were a part of the German people. The Pan-Germans alleged that the Swiss were against admitting Vorarlberg into the Confederation and that all circles within Vorarlberg were unanimous in their decisive and well-grounded opposition to joining Switzerland. Therefore the Werbeausschuss had no case; and it was not necessary to worry about them. 13

13. VLZ 3 December 1918 Nr. 279 pp. 1-2.
   VLZ 6 December 1918 Nr. 282 pp. 1-2.
   VLZ 11 December 1918 Nr. 286 pp. 2-3.
   VLZ 30 December 1918 Nr. 300 p. 2.
These arguments were shallow. The majority of Vorarlbergers were soon to prove that they were indeed for joining Switzerland. Switzerland's internal market was small, but its products were highly regarded. Those for union to Switzerland pointed out that if the union did occur, Vorarlberg's products would then be Swiss products and would find outside markets.

In the Allgäu district of Bavaria interest was expressed in a union of Vorarlberg to Bavaria. On 10 December 1918 representatives of the towns in western Allgäu met at Röthenbach to discuss the matter. Their position was that the border between Vorarlberg and the Allgäu was arbitrary and had existed for little more than one hundred years (since the return of Vorarlberg to Habsburg rule in 1814). They said that there were no historic, economic or national (völkisch) reasons for the border being where it was, that the people of western Allgäu and of Vorarlberg were similar by Stamm and type. Western Allgäu lacked a hinterland, which Vorarlberg could provide. Vorarlberg was important to the Allgäu as a source of electricity. Business would improve if the customs posts were moved. The Allgäuer representatives maintained that the union would provide Vorarlberg with economic advantages as well. Without the customs barriers, Vorarlberg could sell a lot of its wood in Bavaria and the rest of Germany. Exports of cattle and cheese, unneeded in Switzerland, and of fruit and brandy from Vorarlberg to Bavaria and the rest of Germany would grow. The Vorarlberg embroidery, textile and tourist industries would do better. Germany had more grain and potatoes and better and cheaper beer to export to Vorarlberg than Switzerland had. Germany would recover from the war and be strong again, whereas Switzerland would suffer from its division into three language groups and because of the many foreign exiles who lived in the Confederation. The Allgäuer delegates believed that the current
enthusiasm in Vorarlberg for Switzerland was because provisions were coming from that country. This enthusiasm would be of temporary duration only. The Allgäuer delegates decided to establish a committee to push for the union of Vorarlberg to Bavaria, and therefore, to Germany. 14

On 12 December 1918 the Vorarlberg Christian Social Party published its programme. The Christian Socials called for a democratic republic with universal suffrage for all citizens over twenty-one years of age. There should be no class or party dictatorships. They were opposed to the "unholy and corrupt influence of the Jewish spirit in all cultural, economic and political areas". They supported Church education and the security of Christian marriage and family. They were for a progressive income tax, work for all, help for war invalids, widows and orphans and protection of property. They declared that they were opposed to centralism, militarism and immorality. But they avoided the question of Vorarlberg's projected union to another state. Their programme stated that the party wished for union of Vorarlberg to the state which could best fulfil their programme. 15

In the Rhine delta villages of Höchst, Fussach and Gaissau the movement for union to Switzerland was especially strong. A meeting attended by about one thousand people was held in Höchst to discuss

   VLZ 19 December 1918 Nr. 293 pp. 1-2.
   VV 31 December 1918 Nr. 300 p. 2.

15. VV 12 December 1918 Nr. 286 p. 1.
    VV 18 December 1918 Nr. 291 p. 1.
the question of union to Switzerland. The alleged ill-treatment of the delta area during the war by the Austrian authorities (when frontier controls were established between the delta and the rest of Vorarlberg and Austria) was discussed. At the meeting it was decided to demand a "border correction" which would place the Rhine Delta within Switzerland. A nine member committee consisting of three representatives from each village was established to press for this change. These and other Vorarlberg villages along the Rhine had always been in close contact with neighbouring Switzerland. Villagers frequently had relatives or land on the other side of the border and many Vorarlbergers crossed into Switzerland daily to work in that country. In December 1918, the three Rhine delta communities sent a petition to the St. Galler Government asking that the Swiss border be moved to the new Rhine, thereby including their villages in the District of Unter-Rheintal in the Canton of St. Gallen. Over ninety-five per cent of the voters in the three communities had signed the petition.

* * *

16. In 1892 a treaty was signed between Austria and Switzerland on the regulation of the Rhine where it forms the border between Vorarlberg and St. Gallen. The Rhine regulation was carried out to prevent or mitigate flooding in the Rhine valley. To straighten the course of the river, two new channels were dug, around the Swiss village of Diepoldsau and around the Vorarlberg villages of Höchst, Fussach and Gaissau. Diepoldsau then lay on the Swiss side of the old Rhine, but on the Austrian side of the new Rhine. Höchst, Fussach and Gaissau, which were on the Austrian side of the old Rhine, were on the Swiss side of the new Rhine.

VLZ 30 December 1918 Nr. 300 p. 2.
VT 1 January 1919 Nr. 1, p. 3.
VV 25 December 1918 Nr. 297 p. 3.
VV 28 December 1918 Nr. 298 p. 3.
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VLZ 30 December 1918 Nr. 300 p. 2.
VT 1 January 1919 Nr. 1, p. 3.
VV 25 December 1918 Nr. 297 p. 3.
VV 28 December 1918 Nr. 298 p. 3.
The "Los-von-Wien" ("Away from Vienna") movement was not peculiar to Vorarlberg. In the other Austrian Länder similar movements existed. The anti-Vienna feeling was strong in the Austrian countryside, where the conservative farmers and the provincial bourgeoisie feared the cosmopolitan capital, which they regarded as a centre of Jewish influence, centralism and corruption - moral, political and economic. Even in the days of the Monarchy, there was much dislike in the countryside for Vienna. Now several Länder expressed this dislike by trying to break away from Vienna and join Germany, or Switzerland in the case of Vorarlberg. This was logical, as the people in the Länder saw themselves as Tiroleans or Salzburgers or Carinthians or Styrians and also as Germans, by culture at least. Without the Emperor and the Monarchy, there was no longer any reason why they should look to Vienna, which they did not like anyway, for leadership. In Tirol, besides the movement for union with Germany, there also existed a movement for an independent Tirol, perhaps united with Vorarlberg and Salzburg in an independent Alpine state centred on Tirol. This movement was partly a reflection of Tirolean particularism, but it was also an attempt to save German South Tirol from incorporation into Italy. There were many Tiroleans who believed that by establishing a small, independent, neutral Alpine state on the basis of the right of self-determination, the Allies would no longer have any reason for separating the German-speaking communities south of the Brenner from the rest of Tirol. Nor would they do so. The loss of this area south of the Brenner would mean the loss of two hundred thousand German speakers, the loss of the important German-speaking cities of Bozen, Brixen, and Meran and the loss of Castle Tirol, the old centre of Land Tirol. The important fruit and wine growing areas of Tirol would be lost, on whose southern Alpine slopes Tirol also depended for much of
its tourist industry. The unity of the Land would be disrupted. East Tirol, around Lienz, would be completely cut off from North Tirol, the Inn Valley.

Some Tiroleans claimed that Land Tirol had regained its full sovereignty through the withdrawal of the Emperor from affairs of State. They maintained that the Länder had only been united by personal union under the sovereign. With him gone, the union was dissolved. Therefore, the present German-Austrian government could only be regarded as a liquidation government. They said that the Tirolean provisional National Council was the true government of Tirol and that until a Tirolean Constituent Land Assembly had been elected, no decision could be made on Tirol's future form of state or government or its union with any of its neighbours (German-Austria, Germany or even Italy). 18

In the new year, 1919, the Pan-Germans in Vorarlberg started their campaign in earnest against union to Switzerland. These German nationalists hoped for the union of all of the German-speaking parts of the old Monarchy into the German Reich. In Vorarlberg their support came from the large industrialists and from some of the middle class intellectuals in the towns. The most important and


VLZ 26 November 1918 Nr. 273 p. 1.

A few extreme Tirolean particularists suggested union to Italy, believing that to be the only way to save the unity of Land Tirol.
influential of the Pan-Germans were large industrialists like Julius Römberg, Hans Nägele and Albert Ritter. Hence, this movement was able to obtain large sums of money. Money also came from supporters across the border in Germany, and also from secret subsidies from the German government. The Pan-Germans in Vorarlberg were organised into a local chapter of the Schwabenkapitel, a Pan-German organisation founded in Ulm in Württemberg whose aim was the establishment in southwest Germany of a new united state of Swabia. In 1919 the Pan-Germans started their own daily newspaper in Vorarlberg, the Vorarlberger Tagblatt, which specialised in chauvinistic, vitriolic attacks on the Allies, especially France, and on its opponents in Vorarlberg, clerics and those for union to Switzerland. It also tried to incite racial anti-Semitism and called for the expulsion of Jews from the Austrian Länder and Vienna. By the late 1930's, it had fully developed into the National Socialist newspaper of Vorarlberg. In the Tagblatt open letters from Hans Nägele to Ferdinand Riedmann, the leader of the Werbeausschuss for union to Switzerland, were published. Nägele asserted that Vorarlberg's history was a part of German history, whereas Swiss history was "anti-German"; that the French and Italian languages were favoured in Switzerland over German and that the Swiss were a mixed people ruled by a Swiss French government. On 8 January the Tagblatt published the programme of the German nationalist party in Vorarlberg. It called for a democratic republic encompassing all German areas. It supported universal direct suffrage, the secret ballot and proportional representation. It supported the protection of property and protection of the "little man", and opposed class and party dictatorships and opposed noble titles, militarism, censorship and "Jewish influence in all areas of government, economy, culture and education", with legal measures to be taken "against the Jewish
danger". 19

The Landes-Zeitung also sometimes published Pan-German articles in which Switzerland was depicted as a foreign, multi-lingual state, permeated with "foreigners of all kinds and also Jews", a country with faults. The Pan-Germans wrote that the Werbeausschuss descriptions of Switzerland were inaccurate. Vorarlberg should be friendly with Switzerland and thankful to it for its help in difficult times (Switzerland had sent food to Vorarlberg after the armistice), but the Vorarlbergers should remain true to their "new state" and their own German people. A "people's government" of "men of the people" should be established. Vorarlberg should join Germany, either as a part of German-Austria or directly. Germany was a model state, where living was cheaper and better than in Switzerland or Austria. The Christian religion was respected in Germany, where Catholics and Protestants lived peacefully together. Germany, like all countries, had had a war party, but the Germans had had enough of war and military rule and wanted peace now. But a good military was still necessary to maintain internal order and to keep the respect of foreigners. Albert Ritter, another of the Schwabenkapitel group, wrote in the Landes-Zeitung that Switzerland was poorly administered and was collapsing; its democratic system did not work well and it suffered from nationality problems (the division of the country into three (or four) language groups). Ritter

19. VT 3 January 1919 Nr. 2 p. 3.
    VT 8 January 1919 Nr. 5 p. 5.
    VT 19 January 1919 Nr. 15 p. 2.
    VT 27 April 1919 Nr. 96 pp. 2-3.

20. VLZ 13 January 1919 Nr. 9 p. 2.
    VLZ 18 January 1919 Nr. 14 p. 2.
alleged that the Swiss Germans were second class citizens, who, although they were in a majority, did not enjoy much political power. Ritter charged that Switzerland had lost its independence during the war by accepting Entente economic controls. He concluded that it would be silly for Vorarlberg to join Switzerland, which suffered from the same nationality problems as the now defunct Habsburg Monarchy had, and that it would be much better and glorious to join

...the union of blood brothers with all of the other Stämme of the free German people in the new building of a great Fatherland with pride, in which the Germans will be their own masters and do things in their own way. All gains of our terrible sacrifice would be lost, if we were to separate ourselves from the onward development of our great people, who, despite any opposition, will develop great strength in freedom.21

Those for union to Switzerland did not remain inactive. They continued their press campaign, refuting Pan-German charges and making counter-charges. They denied that union to Germany would be economically better for Vorarlberg than union to Switzerland. They argued that Switzerland was richer and economically stronger than Germany and that Germany and German-Austria, having lost the war, would be burdened for many years with war debts and reparations. One could not speak of rich German sources of coal and iron since Germany had lost Alsace and might lose Silesia and the Rhineland as well. Britain and France would seize German raw materials for their own use and would hinder German competition. They denied that one could speak of a German customs area since the future borders of the country were not even yet known. They charged that it would be better not to be in a country which had large grain lords, such as in Germany, in whose interests it was to favour the internal producer and keep grain prices up. Vorarlberg's close

21. VLZ 13 January 1919 Nr. 9 p. 2.
historic, economic, geographic, political and stämmlich ties with Switzerland were reiterated. 22

There were also those who urged caution and patience. A decision on Vorarlberg's future should not be taken quickly or lightly. There existed many uncertainties and many difficulties to be considered. 23

In March 1919, events forced the parties to take clearer positions on the issue. The Peace Conference was meeting in Paris and might decide the question without the Vorarlbergers unless they acted soon. Finally, many Christian Socials, members of the majority party in Vorarlberg, began to speak cautiously in support of union to Switzerland. They urged that negotiations be started with the Confederation to see on what terms Vorarlberg might be admitted.

On 1 March the Werbeausschuss handed a petition to Dr. Otto Ender, the Vorarlberg Landeshauptmann. It had been signed by seventy per cent of the eligible voters in Vorarlberg and asked the Landesrat to note the wish of the people for union to Switzerland. In its meeting on 7 March, the Landesrat did just that. The Werbeausschuss asked that the Landesrat take up the matter officially and adopt appropriate measures to take account of the will of the people. The Werbeausschuss said that it believed that the question of Vorarlberg's future must be settled before the conclusion of a preliminary peace between Austria and the Allied and Associated Powers. Therefore a plebiscite on Vorarlberg's future should be held soon to allow the Swiss Federal Government to adopt a position on the question and begin

22. VLZ 2 January 1919 Nr. 1 p. 1.
VW 12 January 1919 Nr. 9 pp. 3-4.

23. VLZ 11 January 1919 Nr. 8 p. 1.
VLZ 17 January 1919 Nr. 13 p. 2.
negotiations. Dr. Ender discussed the question and put forward the following proposals, which were unanimously accepted by the Landesrat:

A) The Vorarlberg Landesrat declines to transmit to the Swiss Government in Bern the result of the petition of the Werbeausschuss for the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, because it can only make official use of officially sponsored plebiscites.

B) The Landesrat puts the question of union before the provisional Land Assembly and proposes that it resolve:

1. The declaration of 3 November 1918, in which Land Vorarlberg declared its independence within the area of German-Austria, is of provisional character, as is the Land Assembly itself.
2. The newly elected Landtag will decide the definitive future union of the Land to a larger state. If the Landtag decides for a state other than German-Austria, or if the provisional Land Assembly should have to make the decision, then the decision must be confirmed by a plebiscite.
3. The Land Assembly elects from its members a five member negotiating committee, which, through contacts with the governments in Vienna, Bern and Munich will endeavour to learn the conditions under which Vorarlberg could join these states. The enquiries should be pursued especially along political, cultural and economic lines.
4. The Landesrat must appoint a committee of investigation to examine the economic consequences of the various possible unions for the people as a whole and for the individual professions.24

At the tenth session of the Land Assembly on 27 February 1919, six representatives had brought to the attention of the house a letter in the Tiroler Anzeiger of 21 February 1919, in which a plebiscite in Vorarlberg was discussed. The writer of the letter asserted that the question was being discussed at the Peace Conference in Paris. The six representatives wished to know if the Land Government had any further information on the matter and also what its position was.

At the fourteenth session on 15 March 1919, Dr. Ender, the Landeshauptmann, replied. He said that the Landesrat (the Land Government) had not taken any position on the question of union.

VLZ 1 March 1919 Nr. 50 p. 3.
VLZ 4 March 1919 Nr. 52 p. 3.
VLZ 8 March 1919 Nr. 56 p. 2.
previously, because no party in the Landesrat or in the Land Assembly
had made any suggestions on the question and he could see no need to
act prematurely. As far as he knew, the matter had not been discussed
in Paris. Dr. Ender then went through a history of the movement for
union to Switzerland, giving the views of both those who supported it
and those who opposed it. Then he presented the proposals of the Landes-
rat, decided at its meeting of 7 March. The proposals were unanimously
accepted. The third one was altered to authorise contacts with
governments in German-Austria, Switzerland and Germany. The original
version authorised contacts with the governments in Vienna, Bern and
Munich. The change was made to allow for contacts with other
governments within German-Austria and Germany. An additional proposal
was accepted as a concession to the large industrialists, who favoured
union with Germany on economic and national grounds. The additional
proposal read:

5. If the negotiations are proceeding successfully with a
foreign state, the Landesrat would be empowered to appoint to
the five member negotiation committee specialists from the
circles of industrialists and other professional groups.25

Meanwhile the Tagblatt continued its series of articles hostile
to Switzerland and the idea of union to Switzerland. All manner of
charges were made against Switzerland and the proposed union of
Vorarlberg to it. Such a union would be a treasonous act against
Germandom. The Vorarlbergers would become servants in their own land
to the French- and English-minded Swiss. The Tagblatt alleged that

25. Stenographische Sitzungsberichte der provisorischen Vorarlberger
Landesversammlung zu Bregenz - 10. Sitzung am 27. February
1919, 14. Sitzung am 15. März 1919,
the numbers and strength of the Romance Swiss were increasing, encouraged by the Swiss authorities, since Swiss German parents along the language border in Switzerland were sending their children to French Swiss schools. The Tagblatt charged that in Switzerland French was considered to be a more distinguished language than German. Switzerland favoured France. Bolshevism was strong in Switzerland. Vorarlberg would not be welcome in Switzerland. Vorarlberg would suffer economically if the union to Switzerland were to take place. The Verband der Industriellen von Vorarlberg (the Union of Industrialists of Vorarlberg) published a letter in which they asserted that union to Switzerland would be bad for Vorarlberg. Switzerland would not provide a large enough market for Vorarlberg's products and Swiss competition would be too strong for Vorarlberg's producers, who would suffer as a result. What Vorarlberg had (industry, cattle, milk products), Switzerland also had, and what Vorarlberg needed and lacked (grain), Switzerland also lacked. Therefore the only remaining reason for supporting union to Switzerland was one of ideology, and even that was ephemeral. The Verband asserted that during the early part of the war, the idea of a union of all Germans within Germany had been popular, but with Germany's defeat, the idea had lost favour. Nevertheless, when conditions in Germany became normal again, the Vorarlbergers would change their minds once again and wish to be a part of Germany. The new canton of Vorarlberg would then want to be part of Germany. Hence it would constitute a foreign body within Switzerland. Therefore, for political as well as economic reasons, and with full sympathy for Switzerland, the Verband der Industriellen von Vorarlberg could not
approve of a union of the Land to Switzerland, 26

    VT 9 March 1919 Nr. 57 p. 1.
    VT 13 March 1919 Nr. 60 p. 2.
    VT 14 March 1919 Nr. 61 p. 1.
    VT 25 March 1919 Nr. 69 p. 1.
    VT 29 March 1919 Nr. 72 p. 1.
    VT 2 April 1919 Nr. 75 p. 2.
    VT 23 April 1919 Nr. 92 p. 1.

The Verband der Industriellen von Vorarlberg sent their letter (of 7 March 1919) to the Swiss Government.
SBA 2001 (H) 2 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 11.
CHAPTER 3

SWISS ATTITUDES

Switzerland had remained neutral during the Great War, but having been completely surrounded by belligerent states, it could hardly have remained unaffected. The war, with the Central Powers on one side, and France and Italy on the other, caused a division between the German and Romance language groups in Switzerland unmatched before or since. The people of Switzerland looked with interest and concern at the events taking place across their borders; French and Italian-speaking Swiss generally sympathising with the French and Italian war aims and German-speaking Swiss sympathising with those of the Central Powers. The Vorarlberg question proved to be a complex one for Switzerland. It was a further source of internal dissension and of international disagreement. It involved an increase in Swiss territory, the first possible change in the country's borders in over one hundred years. It could possibly cause the involvement of neutral Switzerland in the Peace Conference and therefore in the establishment of the post-war international settlement. It meant possible changes in the religious and ethnic balance of the country.

Naturally, the newspapers in north-eastern Switzerland closely followed the events taking place across the border. The St. Galler Tagblatt, the Freisinnig (radical) newspaper published in St. Gallen, as early as 2 November 1918 reported that petitions were being drawn up in Vorarlberg calling for the reformation of that Land into a canton in the Swiss Confederation. On 4 November it reported that the dissolution of Austria was already of concern in Vorarlberg, where
the old wish of union to Switzerland was being voiced. The *St. Galler Tagblatt* wrote that history, blood, trade and communications had formed strong links across the Rhine and if Vorarlberg really wished for union, then Switzerland would have to study the question.\(^1\)

Other Swiss newspapers generally advised caution in the question. One major exception was the *Thurgauer Zeitung*, published in Frauenfeld, canton Thurgau. Its early, consistent and continual opposition to any attempt at union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland represented a significant segment of public opinion in the country. The *Thurgauer Zeitung* reported that opinion in Vorarlberg was by no means unanimous for union to Switzerland. It alleged that the Roman Catholic clergy in that country would prefer a union with Bavaria and that the agricultural population would follow their lead. It very emphatically stated that Switzerland's attitude must be negative, that Switzerland must avoid any increase in territory to avoid demands for compensation by its neighbours, specifically to avoid demands by Italy to annex Ticino. "Vorarlberg is not worth Ticino to us."\(^2\)

Some Swiss feared that any increase in Swiss territory, and any changes in its borders, would lead to demands by Italy for Ticino and by France for some French-speaking parts of Switzerland, as a means of correcting and simplifying their borders.

More typical, however, of early Swiss reaction to the idea of Vorarlberg joining the Confederation, was a cautious wait and see attitude. In November and December of 1918, conditions in central

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1. SGT 2 November 1918 Morgenblatt Nr. 258 3b.
   SGT 4 November 1918 Abendblatt Nr. 259 3a.

The Freisinnige (radicals) were, and are, a party of the establishment.

2. TZ 4 November 1918 1. Blatt Nr. 259 2d.
   TZ 6 November 1918 Nr. 261 2a.
Europe were too uncertain to enable governments to make long-term plans. Indeed, the continued existence of many governments in the area was uncertain. Hence the counsel of caution was the wisest attitude to take, for perhaps the new state of German-Austria would survive and perhaps it would not. It was impossible to predict the outcome of the peace negotiations. Switzerland would obviously be interested only if an overwhelming majority of Vorarlbergers were for the union. Since Switzerland respected the right of peoples to determine their own future, it could hardly be otherwise. However, Switzerland itself was not interested in territorial aggrandisement, hence it should not itself become involved in the question. 3 Die Ostschweiz, a Catholic Conservative newspaper from St. Gallen, recommended that Switzerland wait to see what would happen in Vorarlberg, but rejected the idea that a negative attitude towards the accruement of Vorarlberg to the Confederation should be adopted. It rejected the fears of the Thurgauer Zeitung of demands for compensation by Italy and France if Switzerland gained territory. It alleged that it would be against the interests of the Entente to decrease and weaken the Romance elements within Switzerland. Therefore Switzerland need not concern itself with such fears. The Ostschweiz maintained that it was unlikely that there would be an increase in Swiss territory in the near future, but it could see no point in Switzerland's making itself unreachable in case neighbouring territories should want to join it. It alleged that inaction in the preceding century had caused Switzerland to miss the opportunities of annexing the Veltlin (an area now in Italy bordering canton  

NZZ 4 November 1918 2. Abendblatt Nr. 1472 1c.  
NZZ 8 November 1918 1. Abendblatt Nr. 1496 2a.  
NZZ 27 January 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 130 1b.  
JG 6 November 1918 2ème édition No. 308 6d.  
JG 7 November 1918 No. 309 1a.  
SGT 5 November 1918 Abendblatt Nr. 260 1a.
Graubünden) and the city of Konstanz (bordering canton Thurgau), which would have rounded out Swiss borders. Such errors should not be repeated. It claimed that the character and disposition of the Vorarlberger were known and esteemed, that the Vorarlberg people were related to the Swiss; therefore, if they freely and of their own will wanted to join Switzerland, then there was no reason why Switzerland should automatically refuse to accept them. The Ostschweiz became a strong supporter of the movement for union of Vorarlberg. As a Catholic Conservative newspaper in eastern Switzerland, it is not surprising that it felt a bond with the mainly Catholic conservative Land across the Upper Rhine. If Vorarlberg were part of Switzerland, their political party would be numerically strengthened. It would increase the Catholic vote in the Federal Councils of Parliament, the Nationalrat and the Ständerat. Also involved was the article in the Swiss Constitution which forbade Jesuits from coming into the country. The ban dated from the first Constitution of 1848 and was included because many people believed that the Jesuits had encouraged the Sonderbund movement in 1846, which had led to a short civil war in Switzerland in that year. Vorarlberg had a famous Jesuit school, the Stella Matutina, in Feldkirch. If Vorarlberg were to join Switzerland, they would have to leave, unless this exceptional article of the Constitution were amended. The Swiss Catholics hoped that the acceptance of Vorarlberg would bring about an amendment to eliminate this article.

4. OS. 5 November 1918 Abendblatt Nr. 256 la.
5. The Nationalrat is elected according to the size of the population in each canton. In the Ständerat, each canton, no matter how large or small, has two members. This system was based on the U.S. system of representation for the people and for the states in the House of Representatives and in the Senate.
6. This article was dropped in a plebiscite making the constitutional change on 20 May 1973.
The Ostschweiz believed that there could be no question of union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland unless the Vorarlberg people on their own and by an overwhelming majority were for such a union. Only with such a majority could the Swiss, especially the Romance speakers, come to be interested in the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. It concluded that the question was not merely a Vorarlberg-Swiss one, but one which must be settled at the Peace Conference, without causing ill feeling or involving Switzerland in external dangers. However, this did not seem likely. Bavaria had no more claim to Vorarlberg than Switzerland did and it had so many internal problems, that it could not become involved in external affairs. German-Austria must be satisfied with the idea because it had itself supported the right of self-determination for the individual peoples of the former Monarchy. Vorarlberg would want to fight for this principle at the Peace Conference. The main question was, therefore, whether the victorious Entente would agree to allow Vorarlberg to secede from German-Austria to join Switzerland. The Entente countries would have nothing to fear from the enlargement by 140,000 people of neutral Switzerland. The Vorarlbergers, like the Swiss, did not want to become involved in the affairs of the great powers and had no interest in aggressive policies. The Ostschweiz asserted that the increment of 140,000 people, who were democratically minded, would in the shortest time adopt the Swiss way of thought and in a generation would think as Swiss-nationally as citizens in other parts of Switzerland annexed in the early Nineteenth Century. The Ostschweiz issue of 31 January 1919 carried a report that the Vorarlberger Werbeausschuss was collecting signatures in Vorarlberg from those supporting union to Switzerland. It was alleged that eighty per cent of those eligible to sign the petition would do so. To this the Ostschweiz commented that it was
pleased to note how much sympathy there was in Vorarlberg for the Swiss and that the friendly feelings between the Stamm-related peoples was also felt on the Swiss side of the Rhine. Naturally, however, Switzerland would not involve itself in the free exercise of the right of self-determination of the Vorarlberg people. However, from the Swiss point of view, Vorarlberg's joining Germany through Bavaria or through German-Austria would be unfortunate. Besides regretting the loss for civilisation which the collapse of an independent state, especially one so old and "glorious" as German-Austria, would mean, Swiss Germans must wish that no all-encompassing German racial state be formed (excluding only German Switzerland and German Bohemia). Such an enormous German racial state would reduce the German elements outside of it to unimportance. (The Bund also warned its readers of this danger from an enlarged Germany to Switzerland.) Also, from political and economic points of view, Swiss people must oppose the idea of a colossal Germany. Switzerland would lose a sympathetic and friendly neighbour to the east. For a small country like Switzerland, negotiations with an overly powerful neighbour were not always the most agreeable. A unitary, uniform racial state would not honour the value of German culture; the independence of the different members and Stämme better conformed to German individuality. An independent German-Austria would be honourable and just, and would be a reassuring factor for the viability of small states, in which the German spirit and German character had an important contemporary role.7

7. OS 27 December 1918 Abendblatt Nr. 296 1d.
OS 28 December 1918 Abendblatt Nr. 297 1d.
OS 10 May 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 109 1b.
OS 31 January 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 26 1b.
B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 1a.
Others continued to counsel caution well into the year 1919. It was pointed out that the matter was one for Vorarlberg alone, until Switzerland was officially approached. The Neue Zürcher Zeitung reprinted part of an article from the Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung of 3 February reminding its readers that the signature collection in Vorarlberg was completely unofficial and legally meaningless. The Neue Zürcher Zeitung commented (on 7 February) that in democratic republics, the collection of signatures on petitions was long regarded as a legal and controllable way of putting certain matters before Parliament and of preparing the people for a vote. Petitions and Initiatives are important rights in Switzerland, and therefore the petition in Vorarlberg was a legitimate means to move the authorities to put the whole question of union before the Vorarlberg people. However, it would only become a matter for Switzerland if an overwhelming majority were for the union. Then Switzerland should take the opportunity to examine the question and to state its position. Switzerland did not seek annexations. Vorarlberg must not be allowed to be influenced in its decisions from Switzerland. It would be wished that the question be decided democratically. In a later article (of 10 March) it wrote that the course the movement should take would be a plebiscite clearly showing the movement to be truly one of the people (eine Volksbewegung), with Switzerland taking no part in this phase. If it were shown to be a Volksbewegung, then it must be determined that all parts of the Confederation were agreeable to the acceptance of a new canton. If this be the case, then the agreement of the Peace Conference, including of the smaller states, must be obtained. Only then should the new territory be accepted into the Confederation as
There were numerous good reasons for accepting Vorarlberg into the Confederation. Did it not wish to join of its own free will? Was this not then in the spirit of the times, that peoples could decide their own futures? Switzerland need not feel obligated to accept the Land, but it need not reject it out of hand simply to avoid the charge that it had acted out of its own self-interest. The partisans of the union in Switzerland were quick and emphatic to point out the economic, political and military advantages for Switzerland of the union. They also warned of the dangers in pursuing a passive policy. Some were moved by fear of an enlarged Germany bordering Switzerland from Basel to the Engadine. Others wished for an increase in Swiss territory and power. They hoped to round out Switzerland's sometimes irregular borders on all sides. Certainly the fear of encirclement, both economic and military, by an enlarged Germany was a leading factor in convincing many Swiss - both German and Romance - of the need to accept Vorarlberg. Economic advantages also played an important part. Vorarlberg was rich in water power and forests; its acquisition could be important for the further development of Swiss transit routes, an important service industry in a country with few natural resources. Vorarlberg had industry, embroidery being the most significant.

8. SGT 27 January 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 23 1a.
SGT 31 January 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 26 3a.
B 8 February 1919 Nr. 58 1a.
NZZ 7 February 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 192 1c.
NZZ 5 March 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 332 1a.
NZZ 10 March 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 359 1a.
NZZ 22 April 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 592 1d.
JG 18 April 1919 3ème édition No. 107 1b.
Many argued that Vorarlberg was part of Switzerland geographically. The Land was cut off from Austria by the high Arlberg Mountains, crossed only by a road passable in summer and by the ten kilometre long railway tunnel, opened in 1884 to form the first direct all-weather connection between Vorarlberg and the rest of Austria. It was open to Switzerland along its western border. The Rhine did not form a barrier. Rather, the plain on both sides allowed for easy communication. The people were similar on both sides of the river. They were stämmlich-related and spoke a similar dialect. The Vorarlbergers were said to be hard-working and frugal. They would be easy to assimilate and would make good Swiss. The Rhine valley had been a political union in the early Middle Ages. It had been divided only for dynastic reasons. Nevertheless, the unity of the valley remained in the consciousness of the people. Those in favour of the union denied that the Vorarlbergers were monarchists, a charge levelled by the opponents of the union. They asserted that the Vorarlbergers were a democratic people, interested in protecting their freedoms.9

Many Swiss feared encirclement, with an extension of the border with Germany from Konstanz to the Engadin in Graubünden, which the union of Vorarlberg to Germany would bring. They feared that a longer border with Germany would enable that country to exercise military,

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9. SGT 4 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 53 1a.
SGT 2 April 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 78 1c.
OS 7 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 64 1b.
OS 26 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 72 1a.
OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 1a.
OS 9 May 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 108 1a.
B 13 May 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 201 1c.
NZZ 13 April 1919 2. Blatt Nr. 545 1a.
JG 30 January 1919 No. 29 1c.
JG 24 May 1919 2ème édition No. 142 1d.
NZZ 24 June 1919 2. Morgenblatt Nr. 938 1a.
BN 26 March 1919 Nr. 143 Beilage 1a.

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political, cultural and economic pressure on Switzerland, particularly on the eastern part of the country. If Vorarlberg were part of Switzerland, the common border with Germany would be longer, especially if Tirol joined Germany; however, then the border would run along the crest of the Arlberg mountains, which formed a natural barrier to German penetration, the argument ran. Comparisons were drawn with the union of Savoy to France, which allegedly weakened the Swiss position at the western extreme of the country. Eastern Switzerland would be similarly weakened by an extension of German power in the east.¹⁰

That Vorarlberg would not be a costly addition to Switzerland was often asserted by those favouring the union. They emphasised Vorarlberg's riches in waterpower (for hydroelectricity) and forests (for wood). Vorarlberg's agricultural produce (milk products, fruit and cattle stock) was an important source of income, which, with better management and development, could be increased. Much of the produce was sold in markets in St. Gallen. Many Swiss farmers had land in the rich Rhine plain on the Vorarlberg side of the river. Accepting Vorarlberg and removing the Rhine frontier would enable them to exploit more easily their land on the right bank. If Vorarlberg were to join Germany, it was alleged that that country would stop the export of agricultural produce to St. Gallen. Vorarlberg also had important

¹⁰. OS 11 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 59 la.
OS 17 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 64 lb.
OS 21 March 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 68 la.
OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 la.
B 28 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 133 la.
B 13 May 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 201 lc.
NZZ 13 April 1919 2. Blatt Nr. 545 la.
NZZ 22 April 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 592 ld.
JG 30 January 1919 No. 29 1c.
JG 17 May 1919 3ème édition No. 135 la.
BN 26 March 1919 Nr. 143 Beilage 1a.
BN 8 May 1919 Nr. 211 Beilage 2a.
industries, which were closely tied to those in eastern Switzerland. Of particular importance, of course, was embroidery. The Vorarlberg workers received the materials from St. Gallen. They then did the more difficult detailed work, before returning the fabric to St. Gallen for finishing and marketing. Since wages were lower in Vorarlberg, the St. Gallen manufacturers had a source of cheap labour across the Rhine. If Vorarlberg were in Germany it was feared that St. Gallen would be robbed of this cheap source of labour, since enterprising Germans could supply the materials and arrange to market the completed fabrics through Germany. This would be a sharp blow to the St. Gallen embroidery industry. There were, of course, those who realised that if Vorarlberg joined Switzerland, wages would go up there, which would be unfavourable to the embroidery industry; nevertheless, the overriding concern was to keep Germany out. There were other industries of importance in Vorarlberg, largely textile and spinning industries. Much of the industry in the Land was controlled by Swiss; Germany was regarded as a threat to this favourable situation. The hotel and tourist industry was also important, with Bregenz and the Bregenzerwald being beautiful excursion points for St. Gallen and eastern Switzerland. In the south of the Land, the Rätikon and Silvretta mountains would also form popular excursion areas, if Vorarlberg were part of Switzerland. Also economically valuable were the railway lines in Vorarlberg. Swiss control over them would prevent a realignment of the main European north-south and west-east axes. It was feared that Germany would favour a new north-south route via Lindau, Bregenz, Feldkirch and the Arlberg, thence over a railway over the Brenner into Italy, thus avoiding the old north-south route through Switzerland via Basel, the Gotthard and Chiasso to Italy. Similarly, Germany would set railway rates to
favour an all-German west-east route via Strasbourg, Lindau, Bregenz, Feldkirch and the Arlberg to Vienna and the Balkans, (or via Strasbourg, Munich and Salzburg) to the detriment of the old route via Basel, Zürich, Buchs/SG, Feldkirch and the Arlberg. This would mean a loss of profitable transit fees for Switzerland, which were important to the country, poor in natural resources and dependent on service industries and exports. The transit traffic had a special historic significance to the Swiss; it was because of the trade route through the Alps, that the Swiss Confederation came into existence in 1291. Also, with the acceptance of Vorarlberg, Switzerland would obtain direct rail links to Germany via Bregenz and to Tirol over the Arlberg. The union would place in Swiss hands the harbour at Bregenz, at the eastern extremity of the Bodensee, which would give Switzerland greater control over the lake and enable it to further develop shipping on the lake to its benefit. Switzerland would have control over both sides of the Rhine above the Bodensee, making the task of regulating the Rhine and maintaining the Rhine bridges easier; thus the people of the Rhine valley could be better protected from flooding. The Rhine had been regulated and rechannelled with the agreement of the now defunct Monarchy, but river regulation work is a continuous task. In the past, disputes with the Monarchy about what should be done and who should pay had caused delay in necessary work, resulting in destructive but avoidable flooding, much to the annoyance of the local population.  

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Those opposed to the union of Vorarlberg also argued economically. They alleged that Vorarlberg was poor and burdened with debt, which Switzerland would have to accept. They argued that Vorarlberg would have a large war debt to pay off. Some warned that Switzerland would have to give a favourable rate of exchange for the now devalued Krone in Vorarlberg. A writer in the Gazette de Lausanne even suggested that the union would cost Switzerland 1,500 million francs (£60 million or approx. $300 million). Money would also have to be spent for new schools, roads and river and stream control in Vorarlberg. The Thurgauer Zeitung, one of the main opponents of the union, alleged that most of the Vorarlbergers expected food and money from Switzerland, but many of them did not want to work for it. Many soldiers had forgotten how to work regularly. They were further corrupted by unemployment support and by family aid grants, which made them lazy. Many workers had acquired the idea that the State should support them because of their long war service. The Thurgauer Zeitung asserted that Switzerland would have to take over and pay this unemployment insurance. It would also have to support two thousand invalids in Vorarlberg. It would have to exchange the Krone for the Swiss franc at the rate of K. 1,00 = sFr 0,80, although the rate of exchange was then about K. 1,00 = sFr 0,20. It would also have to accept Vorarlberg's war debt.12

11. Contd.

Letter from the Kaufmännische Directorium St. Gallen to the Swiss Bundesrat 26 March 1919 SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 30.

Koenig, Fritz - Die Verhandlungen über die internationale Rheinregulierung im st. gallisch-vorarlbergischen Rheintal von den Anfängen bis zum schweizerisch-österreichischen Staatsvertrag von 1892.

12. TZ 7 March 1919 Nr. 56 la.
TZ 10 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 58 1a.
TZ 22 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 69 1c.
B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 1a.
GL 14 May 1919 1ère édition No. 131 1e.
GL 16 May 1919 1ère édition No. 133 2d.
Partisans for the union were sure that the Vorarlberg war debt question could be settled. René Payot, writing in the Journal de Genève, examined the financial question, and found that it would not be an insurmountable difficulty. Before 1910, Land Vorarlberg had no debt. In that year a debt was contracted to pay for river and stream regulation. Payot estimated Vorarlberg's debt in 1919 to be 64 million Kronen, which according to the nominal rate of exchange would be 13 million francs. The canton of Geneva had a debt in 1918 of 65 million francs, five times that of Vorarlberg's, although the populations were about equal. Payot alleged that Vorarlberg's war debt would be a maximum of 427 million Kronen (85.5 million francs). He thought it likely that the Allies would give Vorarlberg a favourable settlement if it were to join Switzerland. The union would be the only solution for which France could wish, since it would be the only solution to assure Switzerland a good border with Germany, enabling it to better confront the ever-present danger of invasion from that country. He agreed that a good rate of exchange would have to be given for Kronen in Vorarlberg. At Kr 1,00 = sFr 0.80, this would cost Switzerland 40 million francs. With the war and other debts included, Payot estimated the total cost to Switzerland to be 140 million francs (£5.6 million or $28 million); quite a difference from the estimate in the Gazette de Lausanne! Also to be considered were invalid pensions. In February 1919 1714 such pensions were being paid in Vorarlberg, with the monthly payments varying between 50 Kronen and 80 Kronen for each invalid. However it was possible that the Austrian government would continue to pay them. There were also the civil servants in Vorarlberg to be paid. This cost 550,000 Kronen. Then Payot listed the wealth of Vorarlberg, viz. industry, forests, waterpower, and agriculture (fruit, milk products and cattle breeding). He wrote that the farmers were prospering and when industry, which had
been paralysed by the war, started up again, it could be hoped that Vorarlberg would rapidly recover its equilibrium. A correspondent in the Basler Nachrichten noted that, except for the war debt, Vorarlberg's liabilities were small. These it could cover itself. Within the Confederation it would not burden the rest of Switzerland. Rudolf Gelpke, a member of the Nationalrat from Basel, writing in the same journal, concluded that any financial burden would be of minimal importance compared to the long-term political and economic benefits the union would have for both Vorarlberg and Switzerland. A writer in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung assented that Switzerland would be accepting a financial burden by accepting Vorarlberg, since it would have to help the Land in road building, river regulation, et cetera. However that should not necessarily be a reason for rejecting Vorarlberg. It was not just a question of money; there was an idealistic side too. The Swiss people must decide whether they wanted to pay to help a valiant people to free themselves from old bonds in order to join a state which would allow them a freer development. Would the acceptance of a new people be a source of strife amongst the Swiss, would the new people be willing to subordinate themselves to the will of the general public? Each reader had to answer these questions for himself. 13

Those opposing the union alleged that the Vorarlbergers were a foreign people, who did not understand the Swiss way of life. They

13. SGT 4 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 53 1a.
OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 1a.
JG 20 May 1919 3ème édition No. 138 2a.—
BN 26 March 1919 Nr. 143 Beilage 1a.
BN 11 May 1919 Nr. 217 Beilage 1a.
were monarchists and clericalists. They did not understand Swiss republican ways. The clergy were said to be against the union and the agrarian population would follow them. Switzerland already had a large foreign population, which was difficult enough to assimilate. The Gazette de Lausanne alleged that it would be very difficult to assimilate another 150,000 new inhabitants from and in Vorarlberg. The only ties were geographical. That there were Rhaetoromanish and Walser descendants in Vorarlberg was not a valid reason to support the union of the Land to Switzerland. Opponents also warned that there was a large Pan-German bloc in Vorarlberg. They would become German irredentists, continuously longing to join Germany, even after union to Switzerland had become a fact. Such a bloc would be an unwelcome addition to Swiss politics, especially since they might carry along discontented Swiss Germans with them. The Thurgauer Zeitung even brought up the Bolshevik bogey. It warned that returning soldiers from Russia were encouraging ideas implanted in many Vorarlbergers' minds by socialist agitators that the takeover of property would allow all to live pleasantly and without care. Those for the union replied that the Pan-Germans were few in number and that many of them were war invalids, who feared for their pensions, or Austrian officials resident in Vorarlberg, who feared for their jobs if Vorarlberg were to join Switzerland. In case of union, many of them would leave Vorarlberg. The mass of the people were for the union.

14. TZ 4 November 1918 1. Blatt Nr. 259 1d.
TZ 7 March 1919 Nr. 56 1a.
TZ 10 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 58 1a.
NZZ 11 April 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 541 1a.
GL 14 May 1919 1ère édition No. 131 1e.
GL 24 May 1919 1ère édition No. 141 1a.
Internal politics played an important role in the Vorarlberg question. It affected attitudes on the exceptional religious article of the Constitution forbidding Jesuits in the country. This question reflected the division in the country between Catholics and Protestants, the former for the lifting of the ban, the latter generally against. The Thurgauer Zeitung reflected Freisinnig (radical) thinking. It was opposed to the Catholic Conservative clerical political party. The Ostschweiz was a Catholic Conservative newspaper. It attacked the Thurgauer Zeitung, alleging that that newspaper was opposed to the union for political and church reasons. However, the St. Galler Tagblatt, another Freisinnig newspaper, also alleged that the Thurgauer Zeitung did not understand the question. Here local issues come into play. The St. Galler Tagblatt reflected local business interests in St. Gallen, which would have gained by the union. The Bund, also Freisinnig, insisted that the Jesuit question, whether one was for or against the lifting of the ban on them, was of secondary importance only. That those for the union emphasised Vorarlberg's democratic traditions need not be repeated.15

The Thurgauer Zeitung alleged that the movement for the union was centred in the city of St. Gallen. It said that St. Gallen had become a metropolis, which wanted a larger market area around it. It wanted Vorarlberg as a new province. It alleged that propaganda for the union derived from the eastern Swiss embroidery industry, which

15. SGT 4 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 53 la.
SGT 2 April 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 78 lc.
OS 10 March 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 58 lb.
OS 11 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 59 la.
OS 17 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 64 lb.
B 28 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr.133 la.
JG 17 May 1919 3ème édition No. 135 1a.

Letter from the Kaufmännische Directorium St. Gallen to the Swiss Bundesrat 26 March 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 30.
supported the union for economic reasons, and from the Catholic Conservative party which was for it for political reasons. The embroidery industry was said to support the union to protect its market in Germany and Austria and to keep wages in eastern Switzerland down by using the competitive power of the Vorarlberg workers, who would work for less money. The *Thurgauer Zeitung* wrote that Switzerland need not fear the loss of the lucrative Paris-Balkan railway traffic if Vorarlberg were to join Germany, since the Swiss route would still be shorter than alternative routes through southern Germany. However, the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would certainly affect the prosperity of the St. Galler Rhein valley. Bodensee traffic would land at Bregenz and then travel south through the Vorarlberger Rhein valley, avoiding the St. Galler Rhein valley. Those for the union accepted that the Vorarlberger Rhein valley would gain traffic, but said that it would strengthen the Swiss position on the Bodensee. The border railway stations of St. Margrethen and Buchs in the St. Galler Rhein valley would also lose their importance by the union. This was undeniable. Whereas St. Gallen generally supported the union, there was considerable opposition to it both in St. Margrethen and in Buchs. The two St. Gallen newspapers were for the union for various reasons. The Catholic Conservative *Ostschweiz* was obviously sympathetic to like thinking people across the border, and it is undeniable that enthusiasts in Vorarlberg were propelled because Switzerland was a conservative orderly society, which contrasted with the socialist-run new Republic of German-Austria. The *St. Galler Tagblatt*, the Freisinnig organ in St. Gallen, represented business interests in the city and the canton, who did stand to benefit from the union because their area of activity would be enlarged.16

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16. TZ 7 March 1919 Nr. 56 la.  
TZ 10 March 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 58 la.  
The major argument against the accession of the new canton was the compensation question. Many Swiss feared that with the addition of new territory to the Confederation, the old borders, which were guaranteed at the Congress of Vienna, would come under question. They feared that Italy and France would use the excuse of the border change in the east to demand "compensation" from Switzerland elsewhere. Italy had demanded that all Italian speaking people in Austria and in Hungary be included in the Kingdom of Italy, even where this meant the annexation of many Slavs as well. It also demanded the Brenner as its "natural" border, although this meant the annexation of some two hundred thousand Germanophone Tiroleans. Therefore, the fear arose that Italy would claim the Italian speaking canton of Ticino, bringing the border up to the "natural" frontier of the Gotthard. It might also claim the Italian speaking valleys of Graubünden (Poschiavo (Puschlav), Bregaglia (Bergell) and Mesolcina (Misox)). Some also feared that France would make "compensation" claims, either on Geneva or on the Porrentruy (Pruntrut) district of the Berner Jura. These fears were fed by articles in Italian and French newspapers; although such compensation claims were never made by any of the governments concerned. All Swiss agreed that there could be no question of compensation or of an exchange of Swiss territory, which was inviolate. An article which caused much concern was one in the Echo de Paris by General Maitrot, who suggested the incorporation of Porrentruy into France for strategic reasons. This district reaches north towards the important garrison town of Belfort. Switzerland would get Vorarlberg.

Letter from the Kaufmännische Directorium St. Gallen to the Swiss Bundesrat 26 March 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 30.

Letter from the Verkehrs-Verein St. Margrethen to the Swiss Bundesrat 28 August 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 289.

Letters from the Aktionkomitee für die Bekämpfung des Vorarlberger Anschlusses, Buchs, to the Swiss Bundesrat 17 and 23 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 476 and 576b.
and the city of Konstanz as compensation for the loss of Porrentruy. All groups in Switzerland, including those for the union of Vorarlberg, attacked this suggestion. The St. Galler Tagblatt, for instance, wrote that:

...in the case that the French Government comes out now or later with a suggestion like or similar to that developed by General Maitrot, the Vorarlberg question will automatically lose any substance for us, since we have always taken the standpoint that Switzerland can discuss the Vorarlberg question only with the clear and certain precondition of the absolute inalienability of its territory. This condition, which cannot be forfeited under any circumstances, completely eliminates any idea of territorial exchange....

It continued that it regarded the article as the opinion of one person only. The Thurgauer Zeitung, which regularly brought up the compensation question, especially with regard to Ticino, and as early as 4 November 1918, used Maitrot's article as a means to attack the St. Galler Tagblatt. In an article published on 19 April 1919, the Thurgauer Zeitung suggested that Switzerland could consider the question only if the Vorarlbergers were unanimously for the union and the question were one purely between Switzerland and Vorarlberg, with guarantees that the Peace Conference would not discuss the matter at all. The Thurgauer Zeitung continued that General Maitrot's article showed that these conditions were impossible, hence the Thurgauer Zeitung had been right all along. Now at least, Swiss people had had their eyes opened to the question of territorial compensations. It announced that it was pleased to see that even the St. Galler Tagblatt agreed that "only with the clear and certain precondition of the absolute inalienability of its territory...could Switzerland discuss the Vorarlberg question." It was a good thing that even in St. Gallen the danger of the compensation question had been recognised. The Thurgauer Zeitung warned that some in Italy demanded the whole of Ticino and Graubünden, for which Switzerland would not only receive
Vorarlberg, but also parts of Tirol as compensation. The Neue Zürcher Zeitung in reporting Maitrot's article asserted that the Vorarlberg question was one of self-determination. Swiss territory was neutral and none of it could be given up for national or strategic reasons. There could be no question of territorial exchange, and if the Vorarlberg question came to that, it could no longer exist as a question for Switzerland. 17

Those who supported the union of Vorarlberg rejected the compensation fears as illusory. They said that such a thing was ridiculous and impossible. It was a question of self-determination for the Vorarlbergers. The Ticinese did not want to join Italy, therefore Vorarlberg and Ticino could not be compared. The Italian government had never linked the Vorarlberg question with any changes on the southern border. The St. Galler Tagblatt asserted that any connection between the two was a "discovery" of anti-union circles within Switzerland. A writer in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung wrote that possible Italian demands for Ticino or French demands for Geneva or parts thereof as compensation for the union of Vorarlberg were a "fairy tale". The writer pointed out that these could not easily be taken from Switzerland and that the Great Powers, but especially Britain,

17. SGT 15 April 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 89 1a.
TZ 4 November 1918 1. Blatt Nr. 259 1d.
TZ 6 November 1918 Nr. 261 2a.
TZ 7 March 1919 Nr. 56 1a.
TZ 19 April 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 92 1c.
B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 1a.
NZZ 14 April 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 555 1a.
NZZ 24 April 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 604 1a.
JG 9 March 1919 3ème édition No. 67 4a.
GL 20 April 1919 No. 108 1a.
GL 14 May 1919 1ère édition No. 131 1d.

wished for a strong Switzerland, in control of the southern side of the Alps to keep the main north-south passes out of the hands of any power. The Journal de Genève wrote that these compensation questions were not serious and were not taken as such by anyone in Paris, Rome, London or Washington, that all respected the unity of Swiss territory; therefore, one should not worry about such compensation demands in newspapers by publicists or insufficiently informed army officers. 18

The union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would have added another German canton to the majority of sixteen predominantly German-speaking cantons. It would have also increased the majority of Germanophones by 140,000. Some, probably a majority of, Francophones feared that these increases would further increase Germanophone influence in Federal affairs. Particularly the Gazette de Lausanne warned that this would be the case. This journal was hostile to Germany and suspicious of Germanophone Switzerland. The Journal de Genève and Geneva generally were much less concerned with this question. Geneva was not as much touched by anti-Germanophone feeling as canton Vaud, partly because it had never been under Germanophone rule (until the Napoleonic Era, Vaud had belonged to Bern) and partly because it was almost completely surrounded by France. Therefore Geneva felt it necessary to more strongly emphasise its Swiss ties. The still strong Calvinist elements in Geneva disliked and distrusted France. Geneva was much more aware of border questions. The occupation by France of Savoy to the east, and of the Pays de Gex to the northeast, which were established by the Congress of

18. SGT 4 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 53 la.
   SGT 10 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 58 la.
   JG 18 April 1919 3ème édition No. 107 lb.
Vienna as neutral zones in a customs union with Geneva, caused many Genevans to support a more active border policy. They better understood St. Gallen's interest in securing Vorarlberg within the Swiss customs union, or at least in keeping Germany out. The Bund, the Freisinnig newspaper of the Swiss capital, emphasised the need for obtaining French and Italian Swiss approval before the addition of a new Germanophone canton could occur.¹⁹

Partisans for the union replied that Germanophone Switzerland would not be against an increase in Francophone Switzerland. A writer in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung observed that the increase in Germanophones and in Roman Catholics would be relatively small when compared to the numbers of each group in Switzerland and would not upset the equilibrium. Nationalrat Gelpke asserted that Vorarlberg's union would increase the Swiss population only by four per cent; therefore, it would have little effect on its character. Switzerland's population would soon increase by that amount anyway, without any additional territory being added. The Vorarlbergers and Liechtensteiners could not be considered foreign, since they were of the same race and style of life as the Swiss, unlike the foreign unwanted Jews, who, even when naturalised, seldom assimilated. A university professor at Fribourg wrote in the Ostschweiz that the question of the language and religious balance could not rightly be used to

¹⁹.  GL 20 April 1919 No. 108 1a.
 GL 14 May 1919 1ère édition No. 131 1a.
 GL 24 May 1919 1ère édition No. 141 1a.
 B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 1a.
 B 13 May 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 201 1c.
oppose the union because the increase in voters would not be important enough to justify Switzerland’s giving up the economic and political advantages to be gained by the union. He added that German Switzerland would not oppose an increase in French Switzerland, which he wrote could not be fully excluded as a possibility. He appealed for the people to consider what would be best for the country as a whole and reminded his readers of the loss of the Veltlin and of Savoy. A suggestion from some supporters of the union of Vorarlberg was that the French-speaking Berner Jura, where a movement for independence from canton Bern was gaining in strength, could be admitted as a new

20. OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 la.
NZZ 13 April 1919 2. Blatt Nr. 545 la.
BN 9 May 1919 Nr. 213 Beilage 1d.
BN 9 May 1919 Nr. 213 Beilage 1d
The Bodensee-East Watch
by R. Gelpke

...In 3½-4 years the population growth in our country equals the number of inhabitants of Vorarlberg. And concerning foreignisation [Überfremdung] of Switzerland, in the first decade of this century the number of foreigners [in Switzerland] grew by 181,872, 14,000 more than the combined population of Vorarlberg and Liechtenstein. Therefore of a structural change of the Swiss people there can be no talk. On the contrary, the 168,000 Vorarlbergers and Liechtensteiners are not a foreign body in the sense of race or way of life. On the other hand, one can speak of a foreign, unwanted element of the many thousands of doubtful commercial livelihood, cut off and collecting together in Switzerland from Russia, Germany, Galicia, Poland, Hungary, Romania, etc. [i.e. Jews], who, even when nationalised, seldom assimilate amongst our people. How much more refreshing and quickening to the heart blows the wind from Vorarlberg, where a proud, Stamm-related, simple, Christian, solid people reaches out to us. The healthy sentiment tells us that here are people of our kind, simple and honest;...

The Veltlin is a valley running parallel to the southern border of Graubünden. It, along with neighbouring Chiavenna and Bormio, had been a subject territory of Graubünden, until it was lost in 1798. Savoy, south of Lake Geneva, was placed under the aegis of Swiss neutrality, but within the Kingdom of France, by the Congress of Vienna. In 1860-1861, France took full sovereignty over the zone. There were those in Switzerland who regarded this as a lost opportunity as well.
Francophone canton to balance the addition of a new Germanophone one, Vorarlberg. It was also suggested that Vorarlberg could become a "zugewandter Ort" for a probationary period, it could become part of Switzerland without having the rights of a canton for a while. In this way, it could make the transition towards Swiss laws and customs, before it was accepted as a full member with a vote.

Alternatively, Vorarlberg could be taken into the Swiss customs union, without becoming a member of the Confederation (which was what was to happen to the Principality of Liechtenstein).

Each side appealed to patriotism and idealism to support its cause. The Gazette de Lausanne, from the first an opponent of the union, charged that the Vorarlbergers were for the union for practical economic reasons; it would be better for the Vorarlberg embroidery and cotton industries, for the sale of its cheese and condensed milk. These were not acceptable reasons. If the Vorarlbergers longed for the Swiss democratic ideal, it would be a different matter. However they did not. Therefore it was the duty of French Switzerland to oppose the union because of its loyalty to the true Swiss ideals, to Swiss territorial integrity and to Swiss federalism. Only through federalism could multilingual Switzerland exist. The Thurgauer Zeitung warned that Switzerland should not become involved in the question, in order not to compromise its integrity and its neutrality.

21. SGT 4 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 53 la. OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 la. B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 la.

22. OS 21 January 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 17 ld. OS 29 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 75 la.
The Bund noted that Switzerland would have to obtain international recognition of neutrality for Vorarlberg, if Vorarlberg were to become part of Switzerland, a task which would prove difficult.23

Those for the union asserted that it was a question of self-determination for the Vorarlbergers. It was not a question of expansionism or annexation by Switzerland. Switzerland should not feel that it must ignore the question of union because of its neutral status. That would be a false interpretation of neutrality. That the Vorarlbergers wanted to join Switzerland without having been encouraged by Switzerland, had a moral importance for Switzerland. Its union to Switzerland would also encourage for discussion the Jesuit question and the exceptional religious article in the Constitution excluding them from the country. Since women had the right to vote in Vorarlberg, the union would encourage a discussion of that question in Switzerland. There was also the matter of strengthening federalism within Switzerland, which the addition of a new canton would cause, according to the Bund (but not according to the Gazette de Lausanne). Patriotic calls were made. The new addition would rejuvenate and strengthen the Confederation. It would show that Switzerland was still flexible and active. René Payot, the special correspondent of the Journal de Genève, pointed out that the union would be easy. Vorarlberg's needs and sources of income (exports of cheese, butter and cattle stock) were the same as those of Switzerland.

23. GL 15 May 1919 1ère édition No. 132 6c.
   GL 24 May 1919 1ère édition No. 141 1d.
   JC 30 January 1919 No. 29 1c.
   B 9 March 1919 Nr. 103 1a.

Therefore, Switzerland would not need to modify its economic policies to take account of special Vorarlberg interests. The two peoples were also related by customs and history, making the union easy. Nationalrat Gelpke, in an appeal in the *Basler Nachrichten*, called for action:

...So it is time for the Swiss people to awaken and in public rallies, as well as in the press, to take a position on the Vorarlberg question. If opinion is consolidated, the Bundesrat will certainly not neglect to take a stand on a question of true importance to us. But the sovereign is the people, and from the people must come the idea of union, which will take root in the country with irresistible might, as soon as the fog is lifted from the Pfändber and the sunbeams from the East Watch [Ostwacht] on the Bodensee illuminate the western horizon.24

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B 13 May 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 201 1c.
NZZ 13 April 1919 2. Blatt Nr. 545 1a.
OS 11 March 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 59 1a.
OS 9 May 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 108 1a.
NZZ 24 April 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 592 1d.
NZZ 24 June 1919 2. Morgenblatt Nr. 938 1a.
JG 24 May 1919 2ème édition No. 142 1c.
BN 8 May 1919 Nr. 211 Beilage 2a.
BN 11 May 1919 Nr. 217 Beilage 1a.

The Pfändber is a mountain in Vorarlberg which overlooks Bregenz, the Bodensee, Switzerland and Germany. The quotation is from the article of 11 May 1919.
...The position of Land Vorarlberg has now indeed, because of the collapse of the Austrian Monarchy, and also of Austrian finances, come to the stage that it must be understandable why the Vorarlberg people wish to learn further details about the question of union in order that they might express themselves through a plebiscite. That cannot occur, without Switzerland giving its views. Because of the principle of non-interference and unconditional recognition of the right of self-determination, and also for internal and external reasons, Switzerland refrains from giving its opinion in the early stages of the matter. In our opinion, a way out of this situation is for Vorarlberg to establish its opinion about the union through a non-binding official plebiscite, with the certainty that any eventual agreement about the union must again be put before the people in another plebiscite. Through this authorisation for the Vorarlberg authorities to discuss the question with Switzerland, Switzerland could also legitimately take up the matter....

With these words, in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung on 9 April 1919, the question moved towards a more decisive phase, towards an official plebiscite. At the Sixteenth Meeting of the Vorarlberg Land Assembly on 25 April 1919, the Landeshauptmann Dr. Ender spoke about Vorarlberg's future. He told the Land Assembly of the Swiss Bundesrat's reply to Vorarlberg's request to send a delegation to Switzerland to discuss a possible union. The Bundesrat had replied that it greatly regretted that it could not receive such a delegation. No reason was given.

Dr. Ender then read from the Neue Zürcher Zeitung article of 9 April and said that he had learned that this article was of official nature and that the Swiss Bundesrat shared the views expressed in the

1. The Bundesrat, or Federal Council, is the Government of Switzerland.
article. Therefore they could not be ignored. Switzerland did not want to interfere in the affairs of other states, nor did it wish to give the appearance of doing so. Dr. Ender also mentioned, as a reason for the Swiss government's reluctance to involve itself in the Vorarlberg question, its desire to exclude all possibility of demands by France and Italy for French or Italian parts of Switzerland; hence the Swiss insistence on the inalienability of Swiss territory. However, the article in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung announced that Switzerland respected the right of self-determination and if a people over the border showed by a plebiscite that they wished to join the Confederation, then the government of that territory would be authorised to negotiate with the Bundesrat and the Bundesrat could, therefore, legitimately negotiate with that government. To get over the difficulty, Vorarlberg should hold an official plebiscite. The Werbeausschuss also recommended this step as a way out of the stalemate. Dr. Ender alleged that it was because of idealistic reasons - Stamm relationship and respect for the Swiss Constitution, institutions and history - that the people of Vorarlberg looked to the Swiss Confederation. However, the practical financial and economic questions would also have to be considered. Therefore, the plebiscite should only authorise the Landesrat to enter into negotiations with the Bundesrat and another definitive plebiscite should be held after the conditions of entry were known in order to decide whether Vorarlberg should join Switzerland or not. Dr. Ender thought it appropriate that the government in Vienna be informed and its agreement obtained. He did not think a plebiscite about joining another state, such as the German state of Württemberg, appropriate, because discussion of the matter was not as advanced as the question of a possible union to Switzerland. Furthermore, there was no responsible government there
which one could negotiate. He therefore put forward the following question to be put to a vote by the Vorarlberg people:

Does the Vorarlberg people wish the Landesrat to make known to the Swiss Federal Government that it is the aim of the Vorarlberg people to join the Swiss Confederation, and does it wish for the Landesrat to enter into negotiations with the Federal Government?

Dr. Karrer, speaking for the German nationalist party, the deutschfreiheitliche Volkspartei, opposed the motion. He denied that it could be said that the article in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung was official. He alleged a connection between it and the Werbeausschuss in Vorarlberg. The Committee of Five to negotiate with governments in German-Austria, in Switzerland and in Germany, as established by the Land Assembly decision of 15 March had not yet begun its task. The committee to examine the economic consequences of the various possibilities had not been established, as provided for by a decision of the same session. Dr. Karrer complained that the proposed plebiscite would purposelessly restrict Vorarlberg's freedom of action and would contradict the spirit of the earlier decisions, which had left completely open the decision as to what state to join. He said that in view of the impending decisions in Paris on the peace treaties with Germany and with German-Austria, the decisions about Vorarlberg's future should be postponed to await the results from Paris. He called for unity with the German people.

Dr. Ender spoke against his views, saying that the article in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung was published before the Werbeausschuss had

2. This party, the deutschfreiheitliche Volkspartei, was also known as the deutschfreisinnige (Volks)partei.

3. see chapter 2.
put forward its programme of 15 April calling for a plebiscite. That
the Committee of Five had not yet begun to operate, was unavoidable.
It could not negotiate with Switzerland because the Bundesrat had
refused to receive it. Conditions in Bavaria and Württemberg made it
impossible to negotiate there. Dr. Ender said that it was necessary
to have the plebiscite before the matter had been decided at Paris.
The elections for the new Landtag to replace the provisional Land
Assembly were to take place on 27 April and it might be weeks before
it met. Therefore, Dr. Ender wanted the Land Assembly to approve the
use of a plebiscite in order to allow the Vorarlberg people to express
their will before the Peace Conference at Paris decided Vorarlberg's future
for it. Dr. Ender asserted that those people opposed to union to
Switzerland could express themselves as easily as those supporting the
union. He stated that the Government had done nothing to encourage
the movement for union to Switzerland. It was purely a private move-
ment. Those against the union could organise their own activities.
Since they had the support of industry, they had access to more capital
support than those for union to Switzerland.

Herr Rauscher, speaking for the Social Democrats in the Land
Assembly, supported the proposition for a plebiscite and called for a
non-partisan, idealistic approach to the question of Vorarlberg's
future. He wished that attempts be made to negotiate with Germany
as well. The house then voted approval of the proposals of the
Landesrat. 4

4. NZZ 5 March 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 332 la.
   NZZ 9 April 1919 2. Mittagblatt Nr. 526 la.
   Stenographische Sitzungsberichte der Vorarlberger Landesversammlung
   NZZ 26 April 1919 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 613 2b.
   NZZ 27 April 1919 1. Sonntagsausgabe, 1. Blatt Nr. 615 2d.
   OS 26 April 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 97 2a.
Elections for the new Landtag took place as scheduled on 27 April, the Christian Socials winning a large majority of the seats (22 out of 30), as expected. The Social Democrats won 5 seats, the Deutschfreiheitliche (Pan-Germans) 2 seats and the Independent Farmers' Unionists (Unabhängige Bauernbündler Partei) 1 seat.

By telegram, the Schwabenkapitel immediately informed the German-Austrian Government in Vienna of the decision to hold a plebiscite. It reported that the important interested circles in Vorarlberg were opposed to it, however the people had been misinformed in the matter. It asked the Government in Vienna to intervene to oblige the Landtag to give an unbiased report on the matter.

Dr. Ender sent a letter, dated 27 April 1919, to the Government giving the background to the question of union to Switzerland and explaining the reason for the proposed plebiscite. He wrote that the people wanted a plebiscite, and the Landesrat believed it would be best to meet this demand in order to quiet the people. He thought it doubtful that a majority of the Swiss would be willing to accept Vorarlberg. What would be best would be a German-Austrian constitution with the widest possible autonomy guaranteed to the Länder. He included copies of the decision of the provisional Land Assembly of 15 March and of 25 April 1919 on the matter and also a copy of the article in the Neue Zürcher Zeitung of 9 April 1919 (No. 526). He seems to have played a double game. He was a supporter of union to Switzerland, and later worked for it. Yet he was using the possible union as a weapon with which to gain the widest possible autonomy for Vorarlberg within German-Austria.

5. In their telegram, the Schwabenkapitel had erroneously referred to the decision of 25 April as having been made by the Landtag. However this body was not elected until the following Sunday, 27 April. The decision had been made by the provisional Land Assembly, the provisorische Landesversammlung.

6. The Landesrat is the Government of Land Vorarlberg. see Chapter 2.
The German-Austrian Government reacted to the telegram from the Schwabenkapitel by informing the Land Government of Vorarlberg that, according to newspaper reports, it had learnt that the Vorarlberg Landtag was going to organise a plebiscite on the question of opening negotiations with Switzerland. If there be any truth to this, the German-Austrian Government wished to observe that the results of such a plebiscite could only be used for informational purposes and would have to be put to the German-Austrian National Assembly, as the competent authority in the matter. Such negotiations with Switzerland would involve a change in the borders of the German-Austrian state, and would therefore involve a State Treaty, which would have to be agreed by the German-Austrian Government, with the concurrence of the National Assembly and with the ratification of the President of that body. Aside from international considerations, those constitutional prerequisites made it seem out of the question that Switzerland would enter into negotiations with the Vorarlberg Government. The German-Austrian Government would like to know what decision had been made about a plebiscite.

7. The German-Austrian Government repeated the error made by the Schwabenkapitel by referring to the Landtag, instead of to the Land Assembly (Landesversammlung).

8. The provisional legislature for German-Austria, formed in November 1918.

9. Letter from Dr. Ender to the German-Austrian Government informing them of the decision to hold a plebiscite. HHSA/VA St. K. 909/2.


Memorandum from the German-Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs expressing the view that, according to the constitution, German-Austrian territory can only be given up by a decision of the German-Austrian National Assembly with the ratification of the President of that body. Therefore the Swiss Government could not enter into negotiations with the Vorarlberg Land Government. Undated, late April, early May 1919. HHSA/VA St. K. 909/3.
Dr. Ender went to Bern on 3 May, where he met with Felix Calonder, the Swiss Federal Councillor in charge of Foreign Affairs. On 4 May he reported to the Landesrat that Calonder had assured him that if an official plebiscite had a positive outcome, Switzerland would discuss the question of union without either side being bound by the negotiations, the final decision resting with the people in plebiscites. Calonder assured Dr. Ender that in case of union, Vorarlberg would form its own canton, and would not be divided between the cantons of St. Gallen and Graubünden. According to a report in the Vorarlberger Landes-Zeitung on 5 May, the Government in Vienna had decided to allow Vorarlberg to send a representative to Paris as a member of its delegation. The next day, the Landesrat decided to hold the plebiscite the following Sunday, 11 May. At a meeting organised by the Werbeausschuss in the Zentral-Saal in Bregenz on 6 May, Dr. Ender declared that it was important for Vorarlberg to send a representative to the Peace Conference at Paris in order to allow Vorarlberg to have a say in its future. To do this, it was necessary to know the people's will; hence, the plebiscite. The Landesrat had considered holding the plebiscite on 18 May, but 11 May was chosen because of the impending despatch of the German-Austrian delegation to St. Germain. Also the Landesrat wished to avoid holding the plebiscite on 18 May, since Local Community Council (Gemeinderat) elections were to take place on that day, and it would avoid confusion by not holding two elections on one day. An earlier polling day would also allow for less agitation in the matter.

Speakers for and against the union spoke. Riedmann and Pirker emphasised Vorarlberg's ties to Switzerland. Pirker maintained that the Swiss Germans were not hostile to Germany and that Swiss literature was tied to that of Germany. Neubner dismissed the idea that
the Government had called for an early plebiscite to deny the opposition time to organise. He said that they had had plenty of opportunity to do so. Julius Rhomberg and Dr. Karrer, the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, spoke against the union. Dr. Karrer emphasised the economic advantages to be gained by a union to Germany. The Bolshevik danger was greater in Switzerland than in Germany. Switzerland was dependent on the Entente. It was as centralised as Germany. He denied that the lack of a land connection to Swabia was important if Vorarlberg wished to join that German state. He ended with a Pan-German appeal.

The Pan-German Vorarlberger Tagblatt alleged that only a minority at the meeting supported the pro-Swiss union group. It used the few days between the announcement of the plebiscite on 6 May, and the plebiscite itself on 11 May to attack Switzerland. It wrote that the Entente-dictated peace would lead to another war, in which Switzerland would also be involved. Switzerland was Francophile and Germanophobic. It supported the giving of Alsace to France. It was developing into a centre of League of Nations militarism. Italy, which was annexing South Tirol, was a leader of the League of Nations. With Swiss entry into the League, it would be supporting this annexation. If Vorarlberg were to join Switzerland, Vorarlberg would therefore be supporting the robbing of South Tirol. Vorarlberg would be used as a bulwark to defend France from Germany. It would become a battleground in a future war. Switzerland was a multi-national state, with all the

10. VLZ 5 May 1919 Nr. 101 p. 1
    VLZ 6 May 1919 Nr. 102 p. 2
    VLZ 7 May 1919 Nr. 103 pp. 1,4.
    VLZ 8 May 1919 Nr. 104 p. 1.
    Stenographische Sitzungsberichte des Vorarlberger Landtages
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disadvantages that entailed. The Swiss French supported the union to obtain a better border and more advantageous rail links for their country. The union to Switzerland would be economically harmful. Prices were higher in Switzerland than in Vorarlberg or Germany, and the rate of exchange for the Swiss franc was bad. There was industrial unrest in Switzerland. Switzerland was a capitalistic bourgeois republic. The workers were not interested in the union. The Tagblatt alleged that the Social Democratic Vorarlberger Wacht opposed the union. The Tagblatt wrote that the Swiss did not want Vorarlberg. It was not worth Ticino to them. Switzerland did not need Vorarlberg's exports (cattle, milk, cheese, fruit) and it could not supply Vorarlberg with needed grain, animal fodder and potatoes. The union would be disadvantageous for Vorarlberg's agriculture. Vorarlberg's embroidery, tourist and other industries would also suffer with Switzerland. Tobacco was grown in Germany and the tobacco trade was not a state monopoly there. Germany was alleged to be the richest country in the world, even without Alsace and Lorraine. The loss of its colonies would not be important, since only 1.2% of its foreign trade was with them. Switzerland, on the other hand, was as poor as Vorarlberg. The Vorarlberger Tagblatt tried to frighten the Vorarlbergers from voting for union to Switzerland. It alleged that Land Vorarlberg would be divided between the cantons of St. Gallen and Graubünden in case the union actually took place. It would not form a new canton Vorarlberg. Its ancient political unity would be

11. This was untrue. The Vorarlberger Wacht reported the Landesrat decision to hold a plebiscite without comment. It paid little attention to the plebiscite and to the question of Vorarlberg's future union, and concentrated instead on urging the electorate to vote for the Social Democrats in the Local Community Council elections on 18 May, the Sunday after the plebiscite.
broken. It was alleged that the provisional plebiscite would be used by the Paris Peace Conference as a pretext to decide Vorarlberg's future without consulting it. The Tagblatt asserted that a strong majority for the union would cause Switzerland to make fewer concessions to Vorarlberg in the conditions of entry.\(^{12}\) It was alleged that the Swiss food aid was given with ulterior motives in mind.\(^{13}\) To this the Landesrat protested and replied that such a charge was ungrateful - that Switzerland had supplied both Vorarlberg and Tirol with basic foodstuffs at cost as a neighbourly act. It did not stand to gain from this. The movement for union had started in Vorarlberg and not in Switzerland. Switzerland had taken in and cared for many children from Vorarlberg and the rest of Austria. The Tagblatt charged further that the economic ruin which would befall Vorarlberg in case of union to Switzerland would force a large part of the Vorarlberg people to emigrate and Vorarlberg property would fall into foreign hands.

If you vote Yes on 11 May, then you are already completely sold out.

He who loves his homeland; on Sunday votes NO.\(^{14}\)

\(^{12}\) Previously the Tagblatt had said that Switzerland did not want Vorarlberg. Now it was contradicting itself.

\(^{13}\) Immediately after the collapse of the Monarchy in November 1918, Switzerland, with the approval of the Allies, had sent food into Vorarlberg and Tirol, to relieve the acute shortages of food in these Länder.

\(^{14}\) VT 7 May 1919 Nr. 103 p. 1.
VT 8 May 1919 Nr. 104 p. 2.
VT 9 May 1919 Nr. 105 pp. 1, 3.
VT 10 May 1919 Nr. 106 pp. 1-3, 5.
WW 7 May 1919 Nr. 104 pp. 1-3.
WW 8 May 1919 Nr. 105 p. 1.
WW 9 May 1919 Nr. 106 p. 2.
Ender - pp. 20-23.
In the plebiscite on Sunday, 11 May 1919, the Vorarlberger Tagblatt's call was unheeded. Over eighty per cent (48,302) voted yes, that they wanted the Vorarlberger Landesrat to open negotiations with the Swiss Federal Government with the aim of entering the Confederation. There were 11,552 No-votes. In most of the country districts, large majorities were obtained for the opening of negotiations. In the cities and industrial communities of the Rhein valley, the opposition was stronger; nevertheless, except in Bludenz, it remained in the minority. The rural population voted overwhelmingly for union to Switzerland. They believed that their interests would be best secured by such a union. Clearly they wished to escape the socialist rule of Vienna. They did not want any requisitioning of foodstuffs. Switzerland was a peaceful haven in an area of storm, change and dissolution. The confederal structure of Switzerland offered the greatest autonomy possible to the Vorarlbergers. The rural areas, which have always had a controlling majority in the Land government of Vorarlberg, would have run the canton-state of Vorarlberg with their own interests in mind. The farmers over the border in Switzerland enjoyed much more power than did those in Vorarlberg. In the rural cantons, they were politically independent of the interests of the large capitalists. A popularist appeal against capitalism was an important factor in the voting, especially in the conservative, unindustrialised Montafon. The ethnic ties of the Alemannien, Germanised Rhaetoromanen and Walser were also important in the vote. The people of the Montafon, with its Romansch names, felt a certain kinship with the (Grau)Bündners, many of whom were Romansch. The Grosse Walsertal (Gemeinden Fontanella, Sonntag, Blons, Raggal, St. Gerold and Thüringerberg) voted with a huge majority for the opening of negotiations with Switzerland. Other valleys where the Walser (from
canton Wallis/Valais) had settled (Brand and Bürrerberg, the Silberthal and Laterns) registered large majorities for the union. Even the Kleine Walsertal (Gemeinde Mittelberg), which is completely cut off by mountains from the rest of Vorarlberg and opens into Bavaria, and whose only road out is through that country, voted with a three to one majority for negotiations with Switzerland. In the industrialised areas of the Rhein valley the majorities for the proposed union to Switzerland were smaller. Nevertheless, a majority of the industrial workers and embroiderers still voted for the union. The Social Democratic party paid little attention to the plebiscite and did not advise its members to vote one way or the other. Only the employees of the German-Austrian State, the railwaymen, the bureaucrats, tax collectors, pensioners and such, and the German nationalists (the industrialists and that part of the middle classes which believed in the Pan-German movement) voted overwhelmingly against the opening of negotiations with Switzerland. Yet they were few in number compared to the vast majority of farmers, craftsmen, clerks and industrial workers.

The plebiscite brought the question to the attention of the general public in Europe and in America. British, American, French,

15. Because of its geographical situation, the Kleine Walsertal had been in a monetary and customs union with Germany since 1891.

16. Only in the communities of Bludenz (1148 No to 1085 Yes), Bolgenach (164 No to 18 Yes) and Hittisau (260 No to 135 Yes) were No-majorities obtained. In all of the other one hundred communities in Vorarlberg a majority of the voters had voted yes.

Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the Swiss Bundesrat informing it of the results of the plebiscite of 11 May 1919, 13 May 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 138.

Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the German-Austrian Government informing it of the results of the plebiscite of 11 May 1919, 21 May 1919.
HHSa/VA St. K. 909/4.

Italian and German, as well as Austrian and Swiss newspapers reported it. The Neue Freie Presse of Vienna reported (12 May) that neither France nor Italy were likely to approve of Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland, since they did not wish to see the German element in Switzerland strengthened. It reported the allegation that they would only give their approval if Neuchâtel were to be joined to France and Ticino to Italy. In an article in the morning edition of 13 May, the Neue Freie Presse expressed its regret at how casually a productive and beautiful Land was ready to detach itself from German-Austria and how little the centuries of common history, suffering and joy of the Land with Austria meant to the Vorarlberg people. It regretted the loss of the beautiful valleys and mountains of Vorarlberg, of its industrious cities and villages with their embroidery and spinning factories. Its greatest lament was that only a desire to flee German-Austria drove the majority in Vorarlberg towards Switzerland. Every part of German-Austria was important, even the smallest. If a small Land were lost from the new Republic, other larger Länder might also follow it out of the German-Austrian Union.

...Are we so large and is German-Austria so overflowing with riches, industry, land and people, that it can without further ado, do without an old Crownland, even if it is only the smallest, that it will without opposition allow important routes to the north and the coast of the Bodensee, with the shipping on it, fall to Switzerland. Nothing has been decided yet, we still hope that Vorarlberg can be held. But no one can refute the idea that the word flight can have a corrupting importance and that everything must be done to stop it at the source, to be rid of it and to keep it from spreading. The Entente must make it possible for German-Austria to have a viable structure and existence. If this does not happen, this state will fall into the hands of the enemy and disappear.

In an article on 14 May, the Neue Freie Presse reported that agitation on the question was at a peak. It reported that the Christian Socials and agricultural and tourist interests were for the union to Switzerland, whereas the German nationalists, the Deutschfreiheitliche
Party, and the Social Democrats opposed the union. They believed that union to Switzerland would harm Vorarlberg industry, whereas union to Germany would be beneficial for it, since Vorarlberg would gain a "Hinterland" in Germany which it would lack in Switzerland. Vorarlberg's cattle breeding industry would be unable to compete in Switzerland. The newspaper alleged that the reason why an overwhelming majority of the Vorarlbergers were for the union to Switzerland was because those opposed to it had just started to collect materials to show how harmful it would be. 17

A similar charge was levelled by the Vorarlberger Tagblatt. It wrote that the plebiscite was completely unnecessary and was only held so quickly in order to prevent those opposed to the union to Switzerland from gaining time to organise. It noted that some 62,000 Vorarlbergers had voted in the Landtag elections. In the plebiscite, according to it, only some 50,000 voted, and of those, 40,000 voted yes and 10,000 voted no. Therefore, only 40,000 voters were for the motion. More than one third of the voters (22,000) wanted to have nothing to do with it. It alleged that the clerical press, which supported the union, itself admitted that the plebiscite meant little. A Yes-vote would only be a vote for opening negotiations with Switzerland. A No-vote, according to the clerical press, would be for remaining with German-Austria. This was not so, it continued. Vorarlberg had had enough of Viennese Jewish administration. It did not want a Danubian state with the Czechs and others. The No-voters wanted union with Swabia and Germany. In the Tagblatt it was asserted that the Vorarlbergers would become "black subjects" of Switzerland,

17. NYT 27 April 1919 p. 3c Vorarlberg Plebiscite on Union.
NYT 13 May 1919 p. 1b Vorarlberg Citizens, by 4 to 1, Vote to Join Switzerland.
T 13 May 1919 p. 11b Vorarlberg's Vote.
Party, and the Social Democrats opposed the union. They believed that union to Switzerland would harm Vorarlberg industry, whereas union to Germany would be beneficial for it, since Vorarlberg would gain a "Hinterland" in Germany which it would lack in Switzerland. Vorarlberg's cattle breeding industry would be unable to compete in Switzerland. The newspaper alleged that the reason why an overwhelming majority of the Vorarlbergers were for the union to Switzerland was because those opposed to it had just started to collect materials to show how harmful it would be.\(^{17}\)

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just as "Belgium rules the black Congolese".  

The plebiscite received widespread attention in Switzerland where it was generally believed that some action must now be taken on the question. The Neue Zürcher Zeitung (4 June 1919) wrote that the vote was one by the Vorarlberg people not influenced from the outside, neither from Austria nor from Switzerland. Four-fifths voted for the union. To ignore such a vote would be a rejection of the right of self-determination. The Thurgauer Zeitung emphasised the importance of the fifth who voted no. In Bludenz a majority had voted no, and the other three cities of Bregenz, Feldkirch and Dornbirn all had strong No-votes. The Thurgauer Zeitung alleged that those who voted no were against the union for political reasons, whereas those who voted yes had not been moved by political considerations. Even if Vorarlberg became part of Switzerland, the No-voters would still be opposed to the union and would remain an anti-Swiss protest party. If the peace conditions were acceptable, many more Vorarlbergers would turn against the union. The Gazette de Lausanne, another strong

17. Contd.

CS 10 May 1919 p. 2 Imminente plebiscito nel Vorarlberg per l'unione alla Svizzera.
CS 13 May 1919 p. 4 Il Vorarlberg opta per la Svizzera.
CS 15 May 1919 p. 5 Il programma di Renner a Parigi: La ques­
tione del Vorarlberg.
NFP 11 May 1919 Morgenblatt p. 5 Die morgige Volksabstimmung in Vorarlberg.
NFP 12 May 1919 Nachmittagblatt p. 2 Vorarlberg für Anschluß-
verhandlungen mit der Schweiz: 80 Prozent bei der Volksabstimmung für die Einleitung von Verhandlungen, Die Vorarlberger Frage und die Entente.
NFP 13 May 1919 Morgenblatt pp. 2-3 Der drohende Verlust Vorarl-
bergs: Vier Fünftel des Landes für die Schweiz.
NFP 14 May 1919 Morgenblatt pp. 5-6 Die Zukunft Vorarlbergs, Der Verlauf der Volksabstimmung.
NFP 17 May 1919 Morgenblatt p. 5 Das Endergebnis der Volksabstimmung in Vorarlberg.

opponent of the union, alleged that the voting in Vorarlberg had been conducted irregularly.19

* * *

On 13 May 1919 the German-Austrian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference travelled to St. Germain, arriving the next day. Dr. Ender went with them to advise on matters concerning Vorarlberg. Since the draft treaty was not finished, the German-Austrian delegates waited almost three weeks at St. Germain. Only the seven leaders of the delegation were authorised to make statements and present demands and to take part in negotiations with representatives of other states. The others in the delegation were only to advise the leaders of it. They were forbidden to make independent statements or present demands or to take part in negotiations without the permission and approval of the seven leading members. In its instructions to the members of the delegation, the German-Austrian Government emphasised that the representatives of the Länder were not to conduct their own politics. Only as a unit could German-Austria successfully lead negotiations. If it seemed likely that a Land were to become independent of German-Austria, then it must leave the German-Austrian delegation and negotiate on its own. The Länder could negotiate separately, but not as

19. SGT 10 May 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 109 lb.
SGT 12 May 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 110 lb.
JG 13 May 1919 3me édition No. 131 3a.
GL 13 May 1919 1ère édition No. 130 4e.
GL 14 May 1919 1ère édition No. 131 4e.
B 13 May 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 201 1c.
NZZ 12 May 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 701 2d.
NZZ 15 May 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 720 1b.
NZZ 4 June 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 829 1a.
OS 12 May 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 110 1b.
TZ 17 May 1919 2. Blatt Nr. 115 1a.
members of the German-Austrian delegation. This, however, they never had the opportunity to do. Dr. Ender later wrote that the representatives of the Länder could do nothing without going through the political commission consisting of Dr. Renner, the Chancellor of the Republic; Dr. Grütler of the Christian Social Party or Dr. Schönbauer of the Pan-German Union (Großdeutsche Vereinigung); and in the last instance through Dr. Renner himself. Therefore, on 17 May, Dr. Ender handed a statement to Dr. Renner about the decision of the Vorarlberger Land Assembly of 25 April and about the plebiscite of 11 May, and asked to know how the leadership of the delegation were going to make the Vorarlberg question a subject of negotiation at the Peace Conference. On 22 May, Dr. Ender spoke before a meeting of the delegation about the history of Vorarlberg and of the historic, geographic, ethnographic, linguistic and economic relationships of Vorarlberg. He spoke about the movement for union to Switzerland and of the activities of the Schwabenkapitel. He concluded with the demand that a way be left open at St. Germain for Vorarlberg to be able to decide if it wished to join German-Austria, Switzerland or a German state. He asked Dr. Renner how he intended to bring up the question at the Peace Conference. Dr. Renner did not reply to Dr. Ender's question, but spoke instead of the advantages offered to Vorarlberg by German-Austria and of the importance of Vorarlberg to German-Austria. On 30 May, Dr. Ender had an audience with Dr. Renner at which he asked once again how Dr. Renner intended to bring up the question of Vorarlberg's future at the Peace Conference. Dr. Renner replied that the German-Austrian Government could not bring it up at the Peace Conference, where the Government was doing all it could to save each piece of endangered German-Austrian land. The Vorarlberg question would weaken the Government's position. It could be dealt with later
between German-Austria and Switzerland. Dr. Ender's objections were ignored; therefore, he asked to be allowed to leave St. Germain since there was no point in his staying any longer at the expense of the State. It would be deceptive to his fellow Vorarlbergers, who believed it possible for him to represent their interests at St. Germain. Dr. Renner gave him permission to leave, provided that he return to St. Germain at once if the Allies or Switzerland raised the question of Vorarlberg's future, or if it came up at the Peace Conference in any other way. Dr. Ender left for Vorarlberg the same evening. 20

The draft of the Peace Treaty was presented to the German-Austrians on 2 June. In Part two, article one (Article 27), it provided that Austria's border with Switzerland and Liechtenstein remain unchanged. Dr. Ender wrote in his memoir that this did not mean that Vorarlberg's wishes had been rejected, since they had not even been placed before the Allied powers. On 4 June Dr. Renner met with the President of the German-Austrian National Assembly, Seitz, the Vice-Chancellor Jodok Fink and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Otto Bauer in Feldkirch. Dr. Ender used the opportunity to speak with Dr. Renner, who approved a trip to Bern by Dr. Ender in order that he might learn the Swiss point of view on the Vorarlberg question.

Almond, Nina and Lutz, Ralph Haswell (eds.) - the Treaty of St. Germain: A Documentary History... pp. 38-64.
Instructions from the German-Austrian Government to members of the German-Austrian delegation to St. Germain.
Stenographische Sitzungsberichte des Vorarlberger Landtages 1. Sitzung am 17, Juni 1919 pp. 8-17.
and to explain the Vorarlberg point of view to the Swiss Bundesrat.

On 10 June, Dr. Ender met with the Swiss Federal Councillor Calonder in Bern. Dr. Ender explained to Calonder that he had had no opportunity to bring up the Vorarlberg question at the Peace Conference. The Swiss Government wanted recognition from the German Austrian Government of Vorarlberg's right to self-determination. Dr. Ender told Calonder of his plan, which was to invite the German-Austrian Government to recognise this right. Dr. Ender did not believe that German-Austria could deny this right, since it needed it to support its case for territory in Bohemia, Carinthia and South Tirol. Charles Lardy, a minister in the Swiss Political Department, believed that Dr. Ender would be ready to break immediately with German-Austria if Switzerland were to guarantee that it would accept Vorarlberg and were to promise that it would protect Vorarlberg until such time as the definitive union took place. However, since Switzerland could do no such thing, as Dr. Ender well knew, Dr. Ender wished to maintain a correct relationship with German-Austria for the moment.

At a meeting of the Vorarlberg Landesrat on 14 June it was decided to petition the German-Austrian Government for recognition of Vorarlberg's right to self-determination and to have it secure the recognition of this right by the Allied and Associated Powers. If this were not done soon, Dr. Ender warned in the Landtag meeting on 17 June, Vorarlberg would not find it easy to determine its own future. Once the Peace Conference had decided the future borders, they would not be easily changed. Therefore, every effort should be made to bring the Vorarlberg question to the attention of the Allies immediately. A letter containing these points was sent to the German-Austrian Government. The Vorarlberg Government asked for quick action so as not to prejudice the question at the Peace Conference. It asked
what steps the German-Austrian Government was considering with the Allies and whether it had been in communication with the Swiss Federal Government. Dr. Ender reported to the Landtag that, whilst in Bern to speak officially with Calonder, he had spoken unofficially with the Federal President Ador and with Federal Councillor Motta. They recognised the difficulties the possible union presented. However, they did not think such a union impossible and they were seriously interested in the question. Calonder said that it was much more important that the Vorarlbergers want to join Switzerland because of their democratic traditions and admiration for the institutions of the Swiss state, than for any economic reasons.

Dr. Ender then spoke to the Landtag about the draft treaty of St. Germain. It would rob the new German-Austrian Republic of the German areas of Bohemia and Moravia, of the German South Tirol and of German areas in Carinthia and Styria. The new Republic would be unable to exist by itself without union to another state, either to a Danubian Confederation or to Germany. German-Austria was a state heavily in debt. In order to feed itself, it must fall further in debt. It was defenceless against its creditors. For German-Austria to survive, it must have the necessary land and people, credits and deliveries of raw materials to enable the people to work. However, the future would be one of hardship and poverty, gradually improving with good leadership and administration. First, however, German-Austria must be allowed to live. This the current peace treaty draft would not do.
21. Vorarlberg should join the protest against the unfair treaty.

* * *

The draft Treaty of St. Germain ignored completely the will of the Vorarlbergers to determine their future by themselves; the principle of self-determination was not applied in this case. The supporters of the union to Switzerland within Vorarlberg were angered, but hopeful that the final draft of the treaty might be amended to allow them to join a state other than German-Austria. Dr. Ender maintained that the question of Vorarlberg's future had not been decided by the Peace Conference or the draft Treaty of 2 June. Since the question had not even been brought before the Peace Conference, no decision on it could have been made. Therefore the question remained open. Many believed that a solution could be found by negotiation between German-Austria and Switzerland; changes would be admissible with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations.


Letter from the Vorarlberger Landesrat to the German-Austrian Government 14 (?) June 1919.

HHISA/VA St. K. 909/5 (seen also HHISA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-5091/2).

Notes of conversations between Dr. Ender and Calonder and between Dr. Ender and Charles Lardy, the Political Department 10 June 1919.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 154.

Extract from Calonder's speech in the Nationalrat on 28 June 1919 in which he spoke of his meeting with Dr. Ender on 10 June.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 182.

Telegram in cypher from Lord Acton, Bern, to the Foreign Office 19 June 1919.

PRO FO 608 71/1/1/13147 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/91723/58017/43).

Telegram in cypher from Lord Acton, Bern, to the Foreign Office 22 June 1919.

PRO FO 608 71/1/1/13372 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/92361/58017/43).

SGT 13 June 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 136 2c.

SGT 21 June 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 143 3a.

NZZ 21 June 1919 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 923 2b.

NZZ 24 June 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 1106 1a.

JG 22 June 1919 1/2 édition No. 170 4b.

NZZ 2 July 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 990 1a.

BN 2 July 1919 2. Beilage Nr. 297 1a.

SGT 30 June 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 150 2a.

JG 30 June 1919 No. 178 3b.

GL 1 July 1919 1ère édition No. 179 2d.

VLZ 1 July 1919 Nr. 147 3.

In Switzerland, supporters of the union regarded the lack of provision for Vorarlberg's will to be an open denial of self-determination. With this went a certain relief that German-Austria must, by Article 88 of the Treaty of Versailles, survive as a state independent of Germany; thus removing the danger of Vorarlberg as a part of Germany. However, others warned that the union of German-Austria to Germany could not be stopped. Vorarlberg would not become part of Germany immediately, but might in ten or twenty years time. Some Swiss thought it an insult to Switzerland that its opinion had not been consulted on a matter directly relating to it. It illustrated Allied disregard for the small states. Such action would affect the vote in Switzerland on whether to join the League of Nations or not, they alleged. René Payot, writing in the Journal de Genève (15 June 1919), believed that the Vorarlberg question had not been decided by the Treaty of St. Germain. The Allies had not been informed of the results of the plebiscite. Hence the question remained open. It would be difficult to have the plebiscite results recognised at St. Germain, but Vorarlberg should press for such recognition. Switzerland could not help. Since its acceptance by Switzerland was not assured, Vorarlberg could not break completely with German-Austria. Payot suggested that Dr. Ender have the Landtag agree at its meeting in two days time to demand that German-Austria recognise Vorarlberg's right of self-determination and to inform the Allies of the will of the people. This is exactly what the Landtag did two days later; an indication of how closely the Swiss supporters of the union were working with supporters for union to Switzerland and Government
in Vorarlberg. Payot wrote that German-Austria, which was claiming certain provinces by the right of self-determination, could hardly refuse to accede to the wishes of the Vorarlbergers. The Swiss were thankful for the confidence the Vorarlbergers had shown in their country by the vote. The Thurgauer Zeitung, always anxious to attack its opposition, wrote that the Allies obviously wanted Vorarlberg to stay with German-Austria, contrary to what the Journal de Genève, which was "more papal than the Pope and more French than the Entente" believed.

In a report to the Foreign Office, Lord Acton, Counsellor at the British Embassy in Bern, wrote that he had learnt that the Swiss

23. SGT 2 June 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 127 2a.
SGT 4 June 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 129 2d.
SGT 5 June 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 130 1b.
B 4 June 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 233
NZZ 4 June 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 829 1a.
NZZ 24 June 1919 2. Morgenblatt Nr. 938 1a.
JG 3 June 1919 2me édition No. 152 1a.
JG 15 June 1919 3me édition No. 163 1a.
TZ 3 June 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 128.

With one stroke of the pen the diplomats in Versailles have prevented the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland; by the decree of force of a few statesmen the fundamental wish of an overwhelming majority of a whole people shall be ignored. Thereby, the responsible politicians of the world have missed the best opportunity to apply a classic example of the right of self-determination of peoples, which they theoretically champion. Practically never has a people so spontaneously and so decisively pledged itself to an idea, as the Vorarlbergers have done in their plebiscite on the union, which is labelled as worthless with a disdainful gesture, but without real justification, because it is inconvenient....
Government were critical of the Peace Treaty with Austria, especially in regard to the question of German South Tirol. The Swiss Government opposed the annexation of this area to Italy. The annexation would result in a longer border between Switzerland and Italy, which the Swiss Government did not want. The Swiss Government thought that the Peace Treaty would encourage the claims of the "new nationalities" and, therefore, could lead to future wars. Hence, the Swiss Government were reconsidering the question of Swiss membership in the League of Nations. Calonder, who was Romansch, and the Swiss German Federal Councillors regretted the way in which the Vorarlberg question had been handled at the Peace Conference. The Swiss Government had not been consulted on the question by the Conference. Lord Acton reported that this regret was not shared by the French Swiss Federal Councillors, who opposed the union, mainly on the grounds that it would upset the religious (sic) balance within Switzerland.

In another despatch, Lord Acton reported the reaction of the Swiss press to the Peace Treaty with Austria. He reported that the whole of the Swiss press condemned the terms of the Peace. The Swiss press thought that the conditions, especially the territorial ones, were extremely harsh and immoral. Lord Acton wrote that the Swiss press thought that Austria's frontiers had been drawn as unfavourably as possible and unless they were partially modified, Austria would be unable to exist as an independent state and would have to seek union with Germany. He wrote that the press considered the terms to be based on hate and force in order to satisfy imperialistic demands, citing German South Tirol as an example of such imperialism. He reported that the Swiss press regarded the decision that Vorarlberg would have to remain with Austria as a denial of the right of self-determination. The Swiss were hurt that they had not been consulted
on the question, he added.  

The New York Times, in a leading article on 18 June, noted that the vast majority in Vorarlberg wanted to join Switzerland, but commented:

Already the German-speaking population is sufficiently preponderant in Switzerland to cause some anxiety, the vast majority of German-Swiss are loyal Swiss, but through the minority Germany was able to conduct a widespread propaganda and to build up an organization for the furthering of her foreign trade; many Swiss feel that to add even a hundred thousand more Germans to the republic just now would be inconvenient. And if the Vorarlberg is admitted it is far from impossible that Tyrol will try to come in, too. The principles of nationality and self-determination were never more highly esteemed than today, but it will be hard to strike a moral balance between a Vorarlberg which self-determines to join Switzerland and a Switzerland which self-determines to keep it out.  

The New York Times exposes Allied suspicions held of the neutral countries, and of the position of Germans and Swiss-Germans within Switzerland. Its remark about Tirol shows it was ill-informed, except for one community, Taufers, there was never a movement in Tirol to join Switzerland. Whether or not Switzerland would have wished to accept Vorarlberg, was not obvious.

* * *

The German-Austrian Government replied in a letter of 26 June to the letter sent to it by the Vorarlberg Government earlier in the month. In its letter, the German-Austrian Government said that the question of Vorarlberg's future should be left for later, since it

24. Telegram from Lord Acton, Bern, to the Foreign Office 5 June 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/12245.
Despatch from Lord Acton, Bern, to the Foreign Office 12 June 1919. PRO FO 608 70/2/1/13736 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/89873/75183/43).

25. NYT 18 June 1919 p. 16c.
would only complicate and delay the already complex negotiations at St. Germain, whose conclusion was urgent for the welfare of the German-Austrian people. The question of Vorarlberg's future could be settled afterwards by mutual agreement of Vorarlberg, German-Austria, Switzerland and Germany. The League of Nations would make no difficulties to any mutual agreement of the governments concerned. The German-Austrian Government wished to know with what conditions, especially financial ones relating to a takeover of its share of the Austrian debt, the Landesrat expected Vorarlberg to leave the state. It reminded the Landesrat that any decision to secede must be approved by the German-Austrian National Assembly.

In the Landtag meeting of 8/9 July, Dr. Ender discussed the Austrian reply. He denied that the agreement of the German-Austrian National Assembly was needed in order for Vorarlberg to join a state other than German-Austria. On 15 March the provisional Land Assembly of Vorarlberg had unanimously decided that Vorarlberg's union to German-Austria was provisional and the Landtag which was to be elected on 27 April would make the final decision on the question of Vorarlberg's future. On 12 March Vorarlberg's representatives in the German-Austrian National Assembly had declared that Vorarlberg was only provisionally a part of German-Austria. Through their Landtag, the people of Vorarlberg would decide their future. Vorarlberg had reacquired its full sovereignty through the collapse of the Monarchy and the dissolution of the Pragmatic Sanction. It was not too late for the Peace Conference in Paris to consider the question. Switzerland did not require that all conditions of Vorarlberg's separation from German-Austria be known in advance. It was ready to negotiate with Vorarlberg as soon as the German-Austrian Government recognised Vorarlberg's right to self-determination. Dr. Ender noted that the
German-Austrian Government had never said that Vorarlberg must remain with German-Austria. It had recognised Vorarlberg's right to self-determination in so far as it had raised no objection to the plebiscite of 11 May and by taking a representative from Vorarlberg (Dr. Ender) along with it to the Peace Conference in St. Germain. However, Switzerland's request for an explicit recognition of this right was correct. The recognition by the Allies of Vorarlberg's right to self-determination should also be obtained. German-Austria preferred that the question be left until later to be settled, so as not to complicate the already complex negotiations at St. Germain. But it would be difficult to have border changes, not now settled, recognised later. The League of Nations would have to approve any future border changes. This the League would not want to do, since it would wish that all border questions had been settled previously. Hence the Landesrat was bringing up the matter again in order to protect the will of the Vorarlberg people. The Landesrat was not insisting on union to Switzerland. It merely wanted the German-Austrian Government to recognise Vorarlberg's right to decide later on a definite union to German-Austria, a south German state or Switzerland. Dr. Ender concluded that the Vorarlberg people could turn directly to the Peace Conference. The Land Government had hesitated to do so, since it was in a provisional union with German-Austria and therefore recognised state organisations, such as the German-Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs, whose duty it was to represent Vorarlberg in relations with foreign states. Vorarlberg did not wish to be disloyal, hence it was waiting for the German-Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs to act for it. However, if it continued to refuse to represent Vorarlberg's wishes, Vorarlberg might have to act directly. To avoid the necessity of this far-reaching step, Dr. Ender proposed
that the Vorarlberg Government turn once again to the German-Austrian Government to request that it recognise Vorarlberg's right of self-determination. The Landesrat had prepared a letter to be sent to the German-Austrian Government to this effect. A letter to the Swiss Government explaining the situation had also been prepared. Dr. Ender wished to obtain the approval of the Landtag for the letter. After much discussion, this was obtained. Furthermore, the Landesrat was authorised to "protect and to further the rights of the people in the sense of the decisions of the provisional Land Assembly of 3 November 1918, 15 March 1919 and 25 April 1919 and of the plebiscite of 11 May 1919." The Social Democrats and the German nationalists (the Deutschfreiheitlichen) opposed these motions, but the Christian Socials voted to approve them with a majority of twenty-one to seven.

The German-Austrian Government ignored this appeal. It did nothing. It had decided that to say anything positive might compromise German-Austria's position with regard to the Vorarlberg question.

26. Letter from the German-Austrian Government to the Vorarlberg Landesrat 26 June 1919.
   HHS/A VA St. K. 909/5.
Ender - pp. 29-35.
Stenographische Sitzungsberichte des Vorarlberger Landtages
Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the German-Austrian Government 12 July 1919.
HHS/A VA St. K. 909/9.
Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the Swiss Bundesrat 12 July 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 208.
Memorandum from the German-Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs expressing the view that, according to the constitution, German-Austrian territory can only be given up by a decision of the German-Austrian National Assembly with the ratification of the President of that body.
HHS/A VA St. K. 909/3.
in the future. But to deny the right of self-determination altogether would cause great difficulties with the Vorarlberg Government and would lead to violent attacks on German-Austria in the Swiss press. To press for a decision on the question, assemblies were held in thirty-four towns and villages in Vorarlberg on Sunday, 10 August 1919. The next day, over one hundred representatives chosen by these assemblies appeared in Bregenz to ask the Land Government to act to protect Vorarlberg’s right to determine its own future. In the assemblies, an appeal to the Swiss people for support of Vorarlberg’s rights was approved. The Vorarlberg Government replied that it had done all it had been authorised to do by the Landtag, that it would continue to follow the decisions of the Landtag and try to realise them, but that it could not go further than had been authorised by the Landtag. Any further action must be up to those who supported union to Switzerland. This was an indirect invitation for the Werbeausschuss to send two delegates, Messrs. Neubner and Pirker, to Bern in an attempt to go to Paris to appeal directly to the Peace Conference for the recognition of Vorarlberg’s right of self-determination. The Vorarlberg Land Government would then be able to say that the actions of Neubner and Pirker were completely private, and could, therefore, deny all responsibility for them.

27. Telegram in cypher from Dr. Otto Bauer, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Vienna, to Dr. Karl Renner, Chancellor of German-Austria, at St. Germain 19 July 1919. HHSA NPA Präsidium (Faszikal 4) 2079/Präs/1919.

Despatch from Sir H. Rumbold, British Minister in Bern, to the Foreign Office 14 August 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/117458/58017/43).
28. Contd.

Letter from the Vorarlberg Land Government to the Swiss Bundesrat, 15 August 1919, including the appeals from the assemblies to the Vorarlberg Land Government and to the Swiss people.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/21l P21/2 Nr. 248.

The Germans were sceptical that the assemblies had been spontaneous; they believed that Dr. Ender had had a hand in organising them. Certainly the assemblies had been organised by the Werbeausschuss, with which Dr. Ender was in close contact, unofficially. The German Consul in Bregenz, Padel, wrote that Dr. Ender held the Vorarlberg people in the palm of his hand.
Letter from Padel, German Consul in Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 10 August 1919.
FOL K1075/K276249 (AAAA C1989/A22376).

Letter from Moltke, Prussian Minister in Stuttgart, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 13 August 1919.
FOL K1075/K276255 (AAAA C1989/A22377).

In fairness, it should be noted that Dr. Ender did not act in the question of Vorarlberg's future union until petitioned to do so by a large majority of the Vorarlberg people, and more especially only after the plebiscite of 11 May 1919. Even then, in public at least, in his role as Landeshauptmann he presented both sides of the question.

Lardy, a Minister in the Swiss Political Department in Bern, asked the Agence Télégraphique Suisse, a news service, to send out reports of the assemblies which took place in Vorarlberg on 10 August 1919. He wanted the assemblies to have wide coverage.
Political Department Memorandum 10 August 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/21l P21/2 Nr. 232.

NZZ 11 August 1919 1. Abendblatt Nr. 1204 2a.
NZZ 14 August 1919 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 1218 2b.
SGT 11 August 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 186 1b.
SGT 12 August 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 187 1c.
SGT 13 August 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 188 1b.
OS 12 August 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 186 1a.
JG 12 August 1919 2me édition No. 221 8d.
JG 13 August 1919 2me édition No. 222 8d.
JG 15 August 1919 2me édition No. 224 1c.
CL 16/17 August 1919 édition du soir No. 222 2c.
VV 8 August 1919 Nr. 180 1.
VLZ 8 August 1919 Nr. 180 3.
VLZ 11 August 1919 Nr. 182 1.

In a letter in the Austrian archives, dated 25 August 1919, from the German-Austrian Government to the Vorarlberg Landesrat, the German-Austrian Government began to withdraw its previous assurances. It wrote that the League of Nations might allow negotiations on a possible union between Vorarlberg and Switzerland or a South German state to take place. However, that was merely the opinion of the German-Austrian Government, not an assurance that permission for such negotiations would be granted.

Contd. on p. 131.
by the League. The German-Austrian Government wrote that without exact details from the Vorarlberg Landesrat, on under what conditions it proposed to secede from German-Austria, the German-Austrian Government could not give its approval to Vorarlberg's attempts to negotiate a change of its status. The German-Austrian Government had to consider the welfare of the state as a whole, and of the other Länder.

It is unclear if this letter was ever sent. It seems most unlikely that it was, since I have found no other reference to it, and since the question was shortly to be settled to Austria's satisfaction. On 2 September the Treaty of Peace, which included Vorarlberg within the borders of the Republic of Austria, was presented to the Austrian Delegation at St. Germain. It was signed on 10 September. It is, of course, possible that the letter was suppressed and destroyed by those members of the Vorarlberg Land Government who supported the movement for union to Switzerland. However, this is very doubtful. Had the German-Austrian Government actually sent the letter, they most probably would have made sure that its contents were made known.

Letter from the German-Austrian Government to the Vorarlberg Landesrat 25 August 1919.

HHSA/VA St. K. 909/12.
CHAPTER 5

VORARLBERG AT THE PEACE CONFERENCE

In view of the probable union of German Austria with Germany the question of Vorarlberg is one of considerable importance to Switzerland. Economically as well as ethnographically there are very close ties between Vorarlberg and Eastern Switzerland. It is doubtful however whether the Swiss people as a whole would view favourably an addition of 130,000 German Catholics to the Confederation and the consequent strengthening of the German element in Switzerland. Another strong objection hitherto has been the fear lest such an extension of Swiss territory might raise the question of compensations which Italy might demand (e.g. the Ticino).

Until recently the Swiss Govt were opposed to the idea. But some weeks ago the Swiss M. F. A. [Minister of Foreign Affairs] informed the French repVE that his Govt had changed their view chiefly because they greatly feared the prolongation of the frontier with Germany which would ensue should German Austria be united with Germany.

This change of view was very sudden, as the Federal Council had only a few days before declined to receive delegates from the Vorarlberg local government who had come to Berne. Those delegates have now stated that as an alternative to joining the Swiss Confederation they would wish for incorporation in Würtemberg or Bavaria. Until a proper plebiscite has been taken it is not possible to say how far these views represent the wishes of the population. But the Swiss Govt appear to think a plebiscite might show a desire for incorporation in the Swiss Confederation; and, if it does so result, the Swiss Govt will probably, after consulting the Peace Conference, accept the decision, unless in the meantime there is a prospect of an independent German Austria. There is no doubt that they view with anxiety the union with Germany and the consequent extension of the embrace of the German frontier.

So far as the Allies are concerned there can presumably be no objection to an entry of Vorarlberg into the Swiss Confederation.

A. Akers Douglas
25/4/19

So ended a memorandum on the question of Vorarlberg's future by A. Akers Douglas of the Foreign Office. Indeed, neither the British nor the Americans were opposed to the idea of Vorarlberg joining

PRO FO 608 71/1/1/8583.
Switzerland. On the contrary, members of both the British Foreign Office and the American State Department thought it would be advantageous to the European settlement. Sir Eyre Crowe did not think that any country would object to Vorarlberg's joining Switzerland if it were decided by plebiscite. Reasons given for supporting the union included the desire to decrease the number of German-Austrians in case all of German-Austria were to join Germany, the wish to protect Switzerland from encirclement by Germany, the closer economic ties of Vorarlberg to Switzerland than to Austria, and the desire "to introduce a conservative element into Swiss politics where Socialist agitators are actively carrying on propaganda". Major Lawrence Martin, who travelled to Vorarlberg, Vienna and Switzerland, drew up a long report of what he found. He believed that, in view of the desire of seventy per cent of the people of Vorarlberg to join Switzerland, and a statement made to the Americans by the Swiss Political Department that "they would feel obliged to take the responsibility of Vorarlberg and Liechtenstein if the Great Powers desired them to do so", the United States Commission at the Peace Conference should use its influence to cause the Great Powers to support the incorporation of Vorarlberg into the Swiss Confederation as a separate canton (with Liechtenstein being incorporated into this canton).2 Certain changes should

2. The Foreign Office also viewed the question of Liechtenstein with that of Vorarlberg. Since it lay between Vorarlberg and Switzerland, it was generally agreed that if Vorarlberg joined Switzerland, Liechtenstein would have to, too. So wrote Harold Nicolson, although he later reconsidered the question. But W. Hunt noted that Liechtenstein was "at the present moment" an independent state, and would have to be so dealt with in the Treaty with Austria. Headlam Morley also recognised that Liechtenstein was an "independent, neutral and friendly state".

Minute by H. Nicolson 27 May 1919.
PRO FO 608 52/2/1/11052.
Minute by W. Hunt 28 or 29 May 1919.
PRO FO 608 52/2/1/11052.
Memorandum by J. W. Headlam Morley 21 July 1919.
PRO FO 608 52/2/1/15858.
Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 1 July 1919.
PRO FO 608 60/2/2/13932.

Contd. on p. 134.
be made in Vorarlberg's borders to make them more rational on the east and the north. From an economic and commercial point of view, the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland was desirable. The effect of Vorarlberg's entry into the Confederation on the Swiss ethnic, religious and political balances was not so important, although some proviso should be made to allow the Jesuits to stay at their college, the Stella Matutina, in Feldkirch. The economic advantages of the union included the easier provisioning of Vorarlberg through Switzerland, the desirability of maintaining the good working relationship between Vorarlberg and Switzerland in the embroidery and other industries (cotton spinning and weaving) and the belief that Switzerland would be more likely than Austria to develop hydroelectric power in Vorarlberg to the advantage of the local railways and cotton factories. 3 In the British Foreign Office it was thought by some that the question of Vorarlberg's attachment to Switzerland was not wholly

2. Contd.
   Minute by H. Nicolson 1 July 1919.
   PRO FO 608 60/2/2/13932.

   Minute by J. W. Headlam Morley 7 July 1919.
   PRO FO 608 60/2/2/13932.

   Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe 25 July 1919.
   PRO FO 608 52/2/1/15858.

   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/8583.

   Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe 14 April 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/7082.

   Minute by J. W. Headlam Morley 23 July 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/16020.

   Minute by ? Z. Y. 23 November 1918.
   PRO FO 371 W/193195/184632/43.

   Minute by A. W. G. Randall 28 November 1918.
   PRO FO 371 W/193195/184632/43.

   Memorandum by A. C. Coolidge 10 March 1919.
   Paris Peace Conference 185.212/5.
   Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919:

   Report from Major Lawrence Martin to A. C. Coolidge 17 April 1919.
   Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States 1919:

   Minute by A. Duff Cooper 30 December 1918.
   PRO FO 371 W/209339/209339/43.
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capital of a now defunct mixed Empire. Nothing could be hoped from this past connection. The major strength of the idea of a neutral and independent Tirol was the belief amongst many German Tiroleans that this was the only way in which German South Tirol could be saved. To many Tiroleans the unity of the Land, at least of the German parts, was the most important consideration in Tirol's future. Some would even have preferred a Tirolean state under the Crown of Sardinia than any disruption of the unity of Tirol. However, the strongest political current in Tirol was for union with Bavaria to the north. The Tirolese are Bajuwaren, of the same Stamm as the Bavarians.

If Tirol joined Germany, clearly Vorarlberg would have no choice but to follow suit or to join Switzerland; hence, the keen interest in Switzerland in Tirol's future. There were other reasons for this interest: Tirol controlled a major pass south over the Alps - the Brenner - and Tirol was threatened by Italian expansionism, which was also an inherent threat to Switzerland (in case Italy were to press for its "natural" frontiers on all fronts). The Swiss Government did not wish to see Tirol united with Germany or with Italy. It did not want its borders with any of the Great Powers to be lengthened, which would have been the case if Tirol joined either of those countries. It would prefer that Tirol remain with an independent German-Austria or be neutralised. It was realised that the union of South Tirol to Italy would leave North Tirol in a difficult position; in order to survive economically it would probably have to join Bavaria. The

5. By the Treaty of London (1915) between Britain and France and Italy, Italy was promised Tirol up to the Brenner, including all of the Italian-speaking areas of Tirol and some German and Ladino-speaking areas as well (including the German-speaking cities of Bozen/Bolzano, Meran/Merano and Brixen/Bressanone).
British thought that the Italians would like a common frontier with Germany and it was rumoured that Italy was encouraging the movement for the union of North Tirol with German South Tirol under the Crown of Sardinia. A. W. G. Randall, writing on 1 January 1919, remarked that general European interests would be best served by the establishment of a neutral independent state of Tirol and Vorarlberg, controlling the Brenner Pass and the Arlberg Railway, although British interests would be little affected by whichever boundaries were established in the region. Professor Coolidge wrote to the American Commission to Negotiate Peace that if only the thin strip along the River Inn in North Tirol were left, "it would be only natural that it should desire union with territory to the north." In such a case, he

6. Despatch from Lord Acton, Bern, 21 April 1919. PRO FO 371 W/63779/123/3 (seen also PRO FO 608 41/2/1/8219).
Despatch from Lord Acton, Bern, 30 April 1919. PRO FO 608 41/2/2/9029.
Telegram from Lord Acton, Bern, 8 May 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/9841 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/71141/58017/43).
Report from Col. Cunninghame, Vienna 15 July 1919. PRO FO 608 41/2/2/15744.

Various German Foreign Office documents confirm that Italy was active in Tirol, and did encourage this idea.
Report from Dr. Ernst Berger "Die Politische Lage in Tirol im April 1919" to the German Embassy in Vienna. FOL K1160/K295727-K295765 (AAAA G1994/A14296).
A report on these activities was filed by F. O. Lindley, the British High Commissioner in Vienna on 9 December 1919. A. W. A. Leeper of the Foreign Office (Political Intelligence Department) affirmed that Italy wished for a common frontier with Germany.
Telegram from F. O. Lindley, Vienna 9 December 1919. PRO FO 608 41/2/2/21113.
Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 11 December 1919. PRO FO 608 41/2/2/21113.
assumed that:

...Vorarlberg may be encouraged to join itself to Switzerland.... If Austria were to continue as an independent state, Vorarlberg might remain part of it as it has in the past. But if the frontier of Germany is to be brought down to the Brenner Pass it is desirable that this boundary should not extend to the northern edge of the Canton of the Grisons and that the eastern frontier of Switzerland should be strengthened....

The British and the Americans were generally sympathetic to Switzerland. They were interested in what the Swiss thought of the work of the Peace Conference. They were more concerned with applying the principles of self-determination of peoples in deciding the future borders of Europe than were their Allies, who cared little, if at all, for this newly accepted principle. When Calonder, the Federal Councillor in charge of the Political Department for 1919, expressed Swiss anxiety on the question of German-Austrian union with Germany, Sir Eyre Crowe wrote in a minute (20 February 1919) that:

Switzerland refused to take part in the war. It must therefore accept position that it can have no say in the peace settlement.

J. W. Headlam Morley rejected this thesis (18 March 1919):

I do not understand Sir Eyre Crowe's minute, the words "Switzerland has refused to take part in the war" seem to suggest that this was a voluntary act on her part, but surely her position as a neutralised State deprived her of any volition on the matter and she simply did her duty by remaining neutral.

The point for us to consider is not merely what the Swiss want, but what is for the general interests of Europe. I presume that it is agreed that the maintenance of Switzerland as a neutral State comprising three nationalities is desirable, and if so, it is surely necessary to give serious consideration to warnings which may come from Switzerland that certain changes contemplated in the map of Europe would in their opinion seriously compromise their future.

7. Minute by A. W. G. Randall 1 January 1919. PRO FO 371 W/209339/209339/43.

In December 1918 Calonder, then President of the Confederation, spoke with Sir Horace Rumbold, the British Minister in Bern, about movements in Vorarlberg and parts of Tirol for incorporation into Switzerland. Calonder continued that the Swiss Federal Government was taking no action in the matter, and it would not do so unless and until the Allies told the Swiss Government that it would be a matter of European interest if Switzerland took over the areas in question. Then the Swiss Government would examine the matter. The Foreign Office replied by telling Rumbold that if the subject were mentioned again, he should reply that all territorial questions must be settled at the Peace Conference, where they would be decided, as far as possible, according to the principles of self-determination.

In April, Lord Acton, a Counsellor at the British Embassy in Bern, reported that Calonder had told the French Ambassador that the Swiss Government was no longer opposed to the incorporation of Vorarlberg into the Confederation. The reason for this change in attitude was the Swiss fear of a longer border with Germany. This fear was more important than the objection to admitting a new German, Catholic canton. It was to be expected that the Bundesrat would now decide to accept Vorarlberg and submit the question to the Peace Conference for ratification if a plebiscite showed that the people of Vorarlberg supported this solution. A few days later Lord Acton reported that Calonder had informed him that the Swiss Government would consult the Peace Conference first, before deciding whether to admit Vorarlberg to the Confederation or not. Calonder said that

personally he would prefer an independent German-Austria, including Vorarlberg. However, it would be better to accept Vorarlberg than to allow it to join Germany. Also, Tirol should be neutralised to form a buffer for Switzerland and to prevent the formation of a common German-Italian frontier. Later in April Lord Acton reported that two representatives from the Tirolean National Assembly, Msgr. Haidegger and Baron Sternbach, were visiting Switzerland. They opposed the separation of Vorarlberg from German-Austria or from an independent Tirol. Vorarlberg was important to German-Austria and to Tirol in order to maintain contact via the Bodensee with the Rhine. Headlam Morley, too, believed that the Vorarlberg question was tied to that of Tirol and that no separate decisions on the two should be made.10

*   *   *

At a meeting of Foreign Ministers on 8 May 1919 at the Quai d'Orsay, the question of Vorarlberg came up. Balfour asked if Vorarlberg were to be Austrian or Swiss. If it were allowed to separate from Austria, how would the Peace Conference prevent other parts of Austria from seceding as well? Baron Sonnino, the Italian Foreign Minister, replied that as far as he was concerned, Vorarlberg was part of Austria. He had no knowledge of its being independent,

and to recognise it as such would only encourage other parts of Austria to seek their independence, which would result in endless confusion. Lansing thought that these questions would have to be considered as they arose. Populations should not be allowed to secede in order to avoid paying taxes. Balfour thought that there should be a clause in the Treaty with Austria to cover such cases. A plebiscite was to be held in Vorarlberg, and the Peace Conference was doing nothing to stop it. Pichon said that the French Government had been informed several times by the Swiss Government that they would not welcome Vorarlberg unless a large majority in Vorarlberg practically forced them to reconsider the question. Pichon expressed the view that since the question had not yet arisen, it was not necessary for the Council to deal with it. The Council then went on to other matters. 11

Calonder told Lord Acton a few days later that he did not believe that the Peace Conference would intervene in the Vorarlberg question, which, like that of the free zones around Geneva, would be left to the parties concerned to settle amongst themselves. If Switzerland and Vorarlberg decided for the union, Calonder continued, he did not think that Italy would put forward any territorial claims as compensation for the enlargement of Switzerland. Calonder

11. Secretary's Notes of a Meeting of Foreign Ministers held in M. Pichon's Room at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris, on Thursday, May 8th 1919 at 4 p.m.
Paris Peace Conference 180.03201/12.
Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 15 May 1919 referring to the above meeting.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/9956.
mentioned to Lord Acton that advantages of the union would be that Vorarlberg would form a conservative counterbalance to Bolshevik elements in Switzerland, and would also secure for Switzerland control over the main railway to the east. Lord Acton reported in late May that it had been announced that negotiations between the Swiss and the Vorarlberg Governments would be started as soon as the Bundesrat was notified officially of the result of the referendum in Vorarlberg. Calonder had informed the French envoy in Bern that the Federal Government would drop the plan if there were strong opposition to the union in French Switzerland. He also told him that a major difficulty in the negotiations would be the possible assumption by Switzerland of Vorarlberg's share of the Austro-Hungarian war debt.12

On 28 June, Calonder made a statement in the Nationalrat, the Lower House of the Swiss Parliament, in which he stated that he had received Dr. Ender, who spoke with him about the strong desire of the Vorarlberg people to join the Confederation. Calonder informed Dr. Ender that if a strong majority in Vorarlberg were for the union, the Bundesrat would be prepared to consider it. Later, Calonder learnt officially that over eighty per cent of the Vorarlberg people had voted in favour of the Land becoming a part of the Confederation.

The Bundesrat would only discuss the question, however, if both the Peace Conference and the Austrian Government recognised Vorarlberg's right to self-determination. The Swiss Government would not want to become involved in the question before its international situation

12. Telegram in cypher from Lord Acton, Bern 14 May 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/10499 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/73629/58017/43).
   Telegram from Lord Acton, Bern 29 May 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/11828 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/83436/58017/43).
had been settled. Switzerland would never agree to allowing the union to become a basis for any exchanges or compensations by Switzerland. Calonder emphasised that the question was primarily a political one, and not an economic one, for the Swiss, who had to decide if the Confederation was capable of assimilating Vorarlberg. Switzerland could only consider the union if the Vorarlbergers were in favour of it for idealistic, and not materialistic, reasons. A week later, Lord Acton reported that Calonder had informed the French envoy in Bern that Switzerland would take no further interest in the question unless German-Austria recognised Vorarlberg's right to self-determination.13

* * *

The draft treaty handed over to the Austrian delegation at St. Germain-en-Laye on 2 June 1919 provided that the border with Switzerland and Liechtenstein would remain unchanged. This was assumed to mean that Vorarlberg would have to remain a part of Austria. It was this premise which caused Calonder to speak as he had. Nevertheless, it was an assumption only, and one which some members of the British Delegation doubted was correct. Both A. Akers Douglas and J. W. Headlam Morley questioned the premise. On 23 July, Headlam Morley wrote a long memorandum on the subject. He wrote that the article requiring Germany to respect Austria's independence, which was to be inalienable except with the consent of the Council of the League of Nations, (article 80 of the Treaty of Versailles) could be interpreted to block Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. The Vorarlbergers wished to join Switzerland, and the Swiss were ready

13. Despatch from Lord Acton, Bern 3 July 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/14596 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/99165/58017/43). Telegram in cypher from Lord Acton, Bern 5 July 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/14523 (seen also PRO FO W/98724/58017/43). Extract from Calonder's speech in the Nationalrat 28 June 1919. SBA 200Q1 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 182.
to discuss the union; however, they awaited the decision of the Peace Conference and the approval of the Austrian Government. A final and definite decision should be made on the Vorarlberg question. There were no reasons for the Allies to oppose the union, whereas there were reasons to support it. If Austria were eventually to join Germany, it would be far better to have Vorarlberg as a part of Switzerland. The Swiss were right to be apprehensive about the possibility of being bordered by Germany on the east as well as on the north. Headlam Morley thought that if the union of Austria to Germany were to occur, it would seem to establish the principle that all German speaking territories should be united in one state, a principle which was dangerous to Switzerland. Even if Austria were not to join Germany, the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would still have its advantages. The west of Austria had a very inconvenient shape. With South Tirol removed, it was long and thin. With such borders, it was unlikely, according to Headlam Morley, that changes would not take place in the frontiers. The union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would help to correct this situation. However, Headlam Morley did think that at the current stage (having presented the draft treaty to the Austrians), Austria should be consulted before the Peace Conference gave its assent to the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, if this were the will of the peoples concerned.

It was decided by the British to try to bring the Vorarlberg question up for discussion. H. Norman, a British delegate, wrote that he had tried to have the question put on the agenda of the Supreme Council. However, the French were opposed to considering it. Hence, it would be best for Balfour to propose a resolution to be put to a Council meeting so that Clemenceau could not simply refuse to discuss it. Norman asked Headlam Morley if he would prepare such a resolution, which Headlam Morley did. It read:
That the Central Committee on territorial questions in Europe be instructed to consider the question of Liechtenstein and of Vorarlberg, and the desirability of acceding to the requests which have been made that Vorarlberg should be permitted to join the Swiss Federation, and that the Committee be also instructed to consider the question whether it is desirable to insert in the Treaty with Austria a clause to the effect that the international status of Austria and the frontiers as defined in the Treaty shall not be altered without the consent whether of the Five Principal Allied and Associated Powers or of the League of Nations.

The resolution was passed by the Council on 19 August. 14

At their meeting of 23 August, the Central Territorial Committee of the Peace Conference discussed the Vorarlberg question. Present were A. C. Coolidge for the United States, A. W. A. Leeper for the British Empire, Aubert and then Laroche for France, Count Vannutelli Rey for Italy and S. Kato for Japan. Leeper began by referring to a telegram from representatives of Vorarlberg. What should the Conference do? Could it impose this change in the border of Austria?

14. Minute by A. Akers Douglas 12 June 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/12245.
Minute by Harold Nicolson 13 June 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/12245.
Minute by Harold Nicolson 15 June 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/12622.
Minute by J. W. Headlam Morley 8 July 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/14523.
Memorandum by J. W. Headlam Morley 23 July 1919.
Minute by C. J. B. Hurst 25 July 1919.
Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe 26 July 1919.
Minutes by H. Norman 18 August and 19 August 1919.
Resolution for Submission to the Supreme Council 19 August 1919. all PRO FO 608 71/1/1/16020.

Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers, held in M. Pichon's Room at the Quai d'Orsay, Paris on Tuesday, August 19, 1919 at 3.30 p.m.
Paris Peace Conference 763.72119/6571.
How could it oppose this demand of the people? The union seemed to be justifiable from ethnic, geographic and economic points of view. If it were hindered, Vorarlberg might turn towards Germany. Count Vannutelli Rey observed that Switzerland was not unanimous in desiring the union. While the imperialists, the Germanophiles, the Catholics and the militarists desired it, the financial circles, the industrialists, the Protestants and, in general, the inhabitants of the Suisse romande (French-speaking Switzerland) were, on the contrary, opposed to it. The union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would be inconvenient since it would increase the German element and cantons in Switzerland. Aubert, the French delegate, thought it a delicate question. How could the Conference reconcile its protective attitude towards Austria, which it was trying to help towards an independent existence, with a policy which favoured the detachment of Vorarlberg, without even knowing exactly what the Swiss wishes on the matter were? The French delegation was not disposed to impose this sacrifice on Austria. Kato, for Japan, had no objection to allowing the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland if that was the will of the populations involved; nevertheless, he feared that such a step would worsen the conditions of peace to be imposed on Austria. Professor Coolidge cited Major Martin's report on Vorarlberg. Coolidge believed that the main reason for Vorarlberg's wish to join Switzerland was one of self-interest. But from a geographic point of view, Vorarlberg was a part of Switzerland. Its closest relations were with Switzerland. Many of the countrypeople worked for the industries of Appenzell and St. Gallen, although it was true that in the Bregenz district, the people had business connections with Germany. Herein lay the danger. The union of Vorarlberg to Germany would be all the more unfortunate, since it would extend Germany's territory along the right bank of the
Rhine. However, it was recalled that under Article 80 of the Treaty of Versailles, Germany had undertaken not to do anything which would cause it to gain Austrian territories. Coolidge believed it would be wise if the Conference did not take the initiative; Switzerland did not believe that it should. Laroche observed that the Swiss attitude was cautious. The Swiss population was far from being unanimous on the question. The Bundesrat did not wish to take the initiative in requesting the union. It would rather have its hand forced. If, later, the Allies reproached the Confederation for being too German, Switzerland could reply that it was the Allies who had strengthened the German element in Switzerland through the addition of Vorarlberg. After further discussion, it was decided that the Conference should not appear to be exercising any pressure whatsoever in favour of the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, that the Conference should in the last analysis submit the question to the League of Nations for solution and that the Conference should not make any decision seriously damaging to the territory which it had recognised as belonging to Austria. The Commission decided to submit the following resolution to the Conference:

In view of demonstrations by inhabitants of Vorarlberg in favour of a union of their territory to Switzerland, the Republic of Austria, in case Switzerland itself should formally declare that it would accept such a union, consents to recognize the decision of the Council of the Society of Nations, before which the question would be brought.

The delegates decided that there was no need to make a special recommendation for Liechtenstein. If Vorarlberg were to join Switzerland, Liechtenstein, which had claimed neutrality during the war in order to be protected now, would find itself doubly protected by the fact that it would become an enclave within a neutral country. If its inhabitants also wished to become Swiss, and if Switzerland
were to accept them, it would be a matter for the League of Nations to settle. 15

The resolution of the Central Territorial Committee was discussed at the meeting of the Supreme Council on 29 August. Berthelot (France), started the discussion by explaining that the people of Vorarlberg had expressed a desire to join the Swiss Confederation. The Austrian delegation had protested. The Swiss Bundesrat had not adopted any resolution in favour of the union. The Bundesrat hesitated, he said, because the addition of Vorarlberg would upset the present balance between the German and the French cantons. Therefore the Conference only had an appeal from Vorarlberg. It could take no decision until it had received a proposal from the Swiss Government. Balfour agreed that it was a matter which could not be settled without the Swiss. The only question which the Council had to decide was whether a way should be left open for Switzerland to invite Vorarlberg to join.

Balfour thought it might be better to leave the question for the moment. 16

15. Resolution of the Central Territorial Committee concerning Vorarlberg 23 August 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18258.
Minute by H. Norman 29 August 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18258.
Record of a meeting of the Central Territorial Committee of the Peace Conference at Paris.
Procès-verbal No. 22 Séance du 23 août 1919.
PRO FO Confidential/General/177/5.

16. In July, Sir Eyre Crowe had written that Balfour did not wish to deal with the Vorarlberg question in the Treaty with Austria. However, he was against putting anything into the Treaty which might preclude the entry of Vorarlberg into the Swiss Confederation later, if such a change should then appear to be desirable.
Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe 25 July 1919.
PRO FO 608 52/2/1/15858.
Berthelot then read out the proposal of the Central Territorial Committee. Balfour asked if the petition received from Vorarlberg represented the majority of the population. Laroche said that it did; two unofficial plebiscites had resulted in a ratio of four to one for the union with Switzerland. The second had been even more decisive than the first. Tittoni (Italy) said that he would suggest reference to a regular plebiscite. Clemenceau said that he would prefer to take no action at all. The matter had not been brought up officially. To be considered was the balance between the French and the German elements in Switzerland. From an international point of view, the Swiss Government was satisfactory, but this might cease to be the case if the German element were increased. Laroche said that it was for this reason that the Central Territorial Committee had recommended that a formal declaration by Switzerland should be obtained. Clemenceau observed that so far Switzerland had asked for nothing. Balfour was also opposed to strengthening the German majority in Switzerland. Pichon observed that a financial question was involved as well. Switzerland would only be willing to accept Vorarlberg if the area were relieved of its share of the Austrian debt. The hope of escape from this debt was one of the important reasons why the plebiscites had had the results they did. Tardieu mentioned a political reason for not inserting anything into the Treaty regarding Vorarlberg. The Conference was trying to meet the Austrians as far as possible. The Austrian delegation would be greatly offended by any article which tended to deprive it of Vorarlberg. The question could be handled later by the League of Nations. Therefore, it was decided to take no
action on the subject of the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. 17

The desire of the Vorarlberg people, alluded to by Berthelot, was incorporated in a series of telegrams from Messrs. Gustav Neubner and Paul Pirker, who had established themselves in the Hotel Bären in Bern. It was to a telegram from them that Leeper had referred at the meeting of the Central Territorial Committee on 23 August. As a result of the assemblies of 10 August 1919, Neubner and Pirker, leading proponents of the union to Switzerland in Vorarlberg, had set themselves up without official sanction as representatives of Vorarlberg. They were sent by the Werbeausschuss. Dr. Ender knew of the plan to send them. He supported it secretly; but in public he denied any connection with Neubner and Pirker in their action of appealing to the Peace Conference. He maintained that their activities were of a private nature. The Land Government was not authorised by the Landtag to appeal directly to the Peace Conference. 18 Although they had no legal status, their views represented those of a majority of the Vorarlbergers. In their telegram they described the history of the movement, the plebiscite of 11 May and the Vorarlbergers' geographic, racial and historic ties to Switzerland, and their common

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love of liberty. The Government of Austria\footnote{19} was trying to deprive Vorarlberg of the right of self-determination, which it proclaimed continually for itself. The Austrian Government had refused to permit Dr. Ender, delegate for Vorarlberg, to put Vorarlberg's case before the Peace Conference. Neubner and Pirker asked for visas\footnote{20} to be able to travel to Paris to expose the Vorarlberg claim to the Conference.

...On 3 November 1918 Vorarlberg, making use of its regained sovereignty, proclaimed itself independent; on 11 May through an official plebiscite and with an overwhelming majority, it charged its government to negotiate with Switzerland to obtain admission to the Swiss Confederation to which the people of Vorarlberg feel closely bound by geography, race, history and a common love of liberty. Unfortunately the delegate of

\footnote{19. The Peace Conference had decided to recognise the Republic of German-Austria as the Republic of Austria. This was done because the Allies chose to decide that the new Republic was the actual and legal successor to the old Austrian Empire. The British view, argued especially by Headlam Morley, that German-Austria should be regarded as a new state was not accepted. The other delegates, including President Wilson, had disagreed. The German-Austrian Delegation protested, but to no avail. Although both titles are used earlier, it was only on 21 October 1919 that the German-Austrian National Assembly voted to change the name of the Republic from German-Austria to Austria. This law was promulgated on 31 October 1919. The Peace Conference used the name "Republic of Austria" throughout. Almond and Lutz - pp. 50, 248-253.}

\footnote{20. Neubner and Pirker had close contacts with Charles Lardy, a Minister in the Political Department. The Political Department sent a letter to the French Embassy in Bern recommending that visas be granted to Neubner and Pirker to allow them to go to Paris to present Vorarlberg's case for self-determination to the Peace Conference. Lardy also gave them introductions to Lord Acton and to P. A. Stovall, British and American envoys in Bern. In the files of the Political Department are appeals to King George V and to President Wilson asking that a clause be included in the Treaty of Peace with Austria reserving to Vorarlberg the right to appeal to the League of Nations for recognition of its right to self-determination. These appeals were not sent. They were obviously prepared for Neubner and Pirker to send. Memorandum from Lardy to Federal Councillor Müller, 16 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 252. Letter from the Political Department to the French Embassy in Bern, 16 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 254. Letters from Lardy to Lord Acton and to P. A. Stovall, 18 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 256. Appeal prepared to be sent to King George V. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 330. Appeal prepared to be sent to President Wilson. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 331.}
Vorarlberg, Dr. Ender, who went to St. Germain on the invitation of Austria, was forbidden by the head of the Austrian Delegation from bringing before the Conference the legitimate claims and the unshakeable will of his constituents. The Government of Austria, by acting in this way, has not only repudiated the right of the people and all of the principles which it invokes unceasingly for itself;... We solemnly protest against a process which deprives Vorarlberg of any regular means of making its voice heard,... the people of Vorarlberg again affirmed with force on Sunday 10 August in numerous public assemblies which unanimously reiterated the will of the country to separate from Austria in order to join Switzerland, which we regard as our true homeland.... The undersigned proclaim themselves convinced that the Allies, having destroyed the power of the Habsburgs in order to give liberty to the peoples of the Double Monarchy and to assure their right of self-determination, will not refuse to listen to the official delegates of a mountain people who aspire to be free, not to avoid the consequences of a war which was decided upon without their consent but because of a traditional and henceforth inflexible love of independence....

Their telegram was not answered and they were not given visas to travel to Paris. In a later telegram (26 August) they asked that the following passage be included in the Treaty of Peace with Austria:

...The contracting parties recognize the independence of Vorarlberg in the sense of the resolutions of the Landtag and concede the right to Vorarlberg to make use of the principle of self-determination at its pleasure with the reservation that an external convention will regulate the relations of Vorarlberg vis-a-vis the Austrian Republic....21

21. Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, 17 August 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18412.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, August 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18641.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, 26 August 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18641.

The following copies of telegrams from Neubner and Pirker to various members of the Peace Conference are in the files of the Political Department in the Swiss Federal Archives:
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 186.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, 17 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 253.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to the U.S., U.K., and Italian delegations at Paris containing a copy of the telegram of 17 August to Clemenceau.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 258.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, 26 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 279.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, 1 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 312.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Dutasta, Secretary General of the Paris Peace Conference, 19 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 259.
Telegram from Neubner and Pirker to Dutasta, 21 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 264.
The Austrian Delegation at St. Germain in a Note Verbale of 26 August protested:

According to recent reports in the press, the Messrs. Neubner and Pirker - pretending to act in the name of the Vorarlberg people - have addressed to the President of the Peace Conference a telegram on the subject of the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland.

The German-Austrian Delegation begs the Secretariat General of the Peace Conference to bring to the attention of His Excellency Mr. Clemenceau that the German-Austrian Government has just been informed of earnest protests against the proceedings of Messrs. Neubner and Pirker, protests which assert that the above-mentioned persons are not even natives of the country [Vorarlberg], that they are not at all in touch with the aspirations and the true will of the people and that they can not boast any right to truly represent Vorarlberg, or to address, in its name, the Great Powers.22

That the Austrian Government received such protests was true.23

22. Note Verbale from the German-Austrian Delegation at St. Germain-en-Laye 26 August 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18412 (seen also PRO FO W/123254/58017/43).

23. Telegram from Drs. Albert Ritter and Anton Zumtobel and Julius Rhomberg to Dr. Renner, saying that Neubner and Pirker are not Vorarlbergers by birth, nor can they speak for Vorarlberg. Their action - appealing to Clemenceau - was treasonous, (Volksverrat), 22 August 1919. HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-5945/2 (seen also in HHSA/VA St. K. 909/17, also in HHSA NPA Präsidium 2378/Präš).

Letter from the Schwabenkapitel to the German-Austrian Government protesting against the sending (which is labelled as treasonous (volksverräterisch)) of the telegrams to Clemenceau by Neubner and Pirker, 4 September 1919. HHSA/VA St. K. 909/18.

Despatch from Padel, German Consul in Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, 21 August 1919, reporting that Neubner and Pirker are not Vorarlbergers by birth and denying that they can represent Vorarlberg. Padel wrote that they were acting under instructions from Dr. Ender. FOL K1075/K276272 (AAAA C1989/A22946).

Schwabenkapitel press attacks on Neubner and Pirker:

VLZ 23 August 1919 Nr. 192 3.
VT 24 August 1919 Nr. 193 1.
VT 26 August 1919 Nr. 194 1.
VT 29 August 1919 Nr. 197 1.
VT 30 August 1919 Nr. 198 1.
VT 31 August 1919 Nr. 199 1.
VW 18 September 1919 Nr. 213 1.
VW 5 October 1919 Nr. 218 1.
That Messrs. Neubner and Pirker were not natives of Vorarlberg was true, but that they were out of touch with the will of the Vorarlberg people was not true. The plebiscite of 11 May clearly showed the true will of the Vorarlberg people.

Vorarlberg was not the only possible area of expansion for Switzerland. The Swiss borders are very irregular. In the Nineteenth Century there had been serious proposals for expansion. Now, after war had shaken Central Europe, there came other proposals. Vorarlberg was the largest and most seriously examined area of expansion, but there was consideration given to absorbing some border communities in Baden which had expressed an interest in union to Switzerland. This would have rationalised the northern Swiss border, especially around Schaffhausen. Also considered, but rejected, was a proposal for the annexation of the City of Constance, on the Swiss side of the Bodensee, and of Taufers, a community in the Tirolean Münstertal, which was, in

1. In the Nineteenth Century there had been proposals for the absorption of Chablais and Faucigny, south of Lake Geneva. These areas of Savoy were established as neutral zones under Swiss guarantee by the Congress of Vienna. In 1860-1861, when France was preparing to annex Savoy, some Swiss demanded that Swiss rights in these territories be recognised. The Swiss Government was divided and weak. It did nothing. Other territories "lost" in the Nineteenth Century were the Valtellina (Veltlin), Bormio and Chiavenna, south of Graubunden. They had been subject territories of Graubünden's until 1798, when they were included in the new Cisalpine Republic by Napoleon. They were not returned to Graubünden or Switzerland in 1815.

2. VLZ 18 December 1918 Nr. 292 2.
VLZ 1 February 1919 Nr. 26 1-2.

3. It should be noted that there were two political bodies in South Tirol (Alto Adige) called Taufers. One was a judicial district (Gerichtsbezirk) in the district (Bezirks-Hauptmannschaft) of Bruneck (Brunico), north of that city and northeast of Brixen (Bressanone). It was composed of a collection of villages in the Valle di Tures and its Italian name is Campo Tures. The other Taufers was a commune and village (Ortsgemeinde and Ortschaft) in the Münstertal (Müstair) valley, just over the border from the Contd. on p. 156
fact, annexed to Italy. In March 1919 the Political Department (the Swiss Foreign Office) submitted a report on the various questions to the Bundesrat. Taufers had handed a petition to the Government of Graubünden asking for admission to the "Swiss Republic".

3. Contd.

Swiss village of Müstair. It was in the judicial district (Gerichtsbezirk) of Glurns (Glorenza) in the district (Bezirks-Hauptmannschaft) of Meran (Merano). Its Italian name is Tubre. It was this entity which had appealed for union to Switzerland. It should not be confused with the other, much larger Taufers, which is not near the Swiss border. Both are now in the Italian province of Alto Adige.

4. The Swiss Government consists of a seven member cabinet, called the Bundesrat (Federal Council). Its members are elected every four years by the Bundesversammlung (Federal Assembly, the Parliament). Each of the seven Bundesräte (Federal Councillors) heads one of the Federal departments, the Political Department (Foreign Affairs), the Military Department, the Finance Department, the Justice and Police Department, the Public Economy Department, the Interior Department and the Posts and Railways (now Transport and Power) Department. One of the seven Federal Councillors is elected to be the Federal President for the year. Often, but not always, the Federal Councillors changed departments at the end of the year. Today this changing of departments is much less frequent than it was fifty years ago. The Cabinet is a collegiate body. Its members make decisions jointly, for which they are all responsible. Nevertheless, it is a heterogeneous body, consisting of representatives of the different major parties from the various linguistic, religious and regional groups. In the post-World War I period, the Bundesrat was predominantly composed of Freisinnige (radical) members with a minority from the Catholic Conservative Group.

The Swiss Parliament is called the Bundesversammlung or Federal Assembly. It consists of two houses. The Ständerat, or Council of States, has forty-four members, two from each canton, which are considered to be states or republics in their own right. The Nationalrat, or National Council, has two hundred members. It represents the people. The system is based on that of the United States of America. The two houses are equal. They meet jointly to elect the Federal Councillors, the Federal President and Vice-President, the Federal Chancellor, the Federal Court (Supreme Court), and the Federal General of the Army (only in times of crisis).

5. The commune Taufers, like every commune, would have had to belong to some canton. In this case, the canton in question was Graubünden. In this canton there was the important consideration of trying to maintain the religious and linguistic balances within the canton. Graubünden recognises three languages - German, Romansch and Italian - and two religions - the Protestant and the Catholic. Taufers was wholly German and Catholic.
Communal authorities of Taufers declared that union to Switzerland was the unanimous wish of the population. The Graubünden Government had taken no position on the question. According to newspaper reports, the Protestant areas of Graubünden were against the addition of the new commune but the Catholic areas were for it. In the view of the Political Department, there were no ethnic or geographic reasons for opposing the incorporation of Taufers into Graubünden, and therefore into Switzerland. The religious question was no longer important. However, Italy was claiming the territory by right of conquest. In some Italian newspapers there were even suggestions that the border be adjusted to give Italy some Swiss communities in the Munstertal (Val Müstair). Taufers was not important and would bring no advantages whatsoever to Switzerland. The Political Department did not think it advisable to bring up for discussion Switzerland's borders with Italy. It would be best to avoid the issue and any ensuing difficulties with Italy.

The Political Department reported that the City of Constance had been offered to Switzerland by the "Entente". The Political Department recommended that the Swiss Government disregard the offer. Constance was thoroughly German. It was a centre of German Bolshevik propaganda. The population of Constance itself had no desire to join Switzerland, nor did anyone in Switzerland wish it to join. Germany would want the city back if Switzerland accepted it. Although Constance would be a beneficial addition from geographic and military points of view, the Political Department advised that its union was not desirable.

The report of the Political Department then considered the various enclaves and semi-enclaves at Schaffhausen. The Government of Schaffhausen wished for the incorporation of the German enclaves of Verenahof and Büisingen, both in the State of Baden. It was absurd to have such small enclaves in the middle of Swiss territory. They
were economically tied to Switzerland. Verenahof depended on a neigh-
bouing Schaffhausen commune for church and school activities. The
villages of Altenburg, Jenstetten and Lottstetten were larger and more
significant. They formed a semi-enclave and made it difficult and
expensive to control the border. In 1917 Swiss customs officials had
suggested coming to an arrangement with the German State of Baden on
customs matters. The area was agricultural and Catholic. Its union
to Schaffhausen could have an effect on the politics of that canton,
which was on the verge of going over to socialism. The conservative
members the area would elect could make the difference. Nevertheless,
the socialist President of the City of Schaffhausen was strongly for
the union. Earlier attempts to incorporate the communes had failed,
in 1839 for instance because Baden envisioned an exchange, which
Switzerland was unwilling to accept. The three communes had made
various appeals for annexation, to the Government of Schaffhausen and
also to the Bundesrat. Ninety-six per cent of the people of the three
communes were for the union. They were not for the union to avoid
taxes, nor did they claim the right of self-determination for themselves.
Rather, they said that their position as a semi-enclave was untenable.
The Government of Schaffhausen was for the union. So were Swiss
customs. Schaffhausen was willing to cede a forest exclave to Baden in
exchange for the area. For customs reasons, the union was strongly
desirable; since the area was not a complete enclave it was difficult
to halt smuggling, especially since a Swiss railway line crossed the
area. The semi-enclave of Gailingen also wished for union with
Switzerland. Its union would make communication easier between
Schaffhausen and Stein am Rhein, a city in the canton separated from
the rest of the canton by the semi-enclave. A part of the semi-
enclave of Wiechs in the north would be useful to have for communications
reasons. However there was the difficulty of getting the Government of Baden to agree to these changes. The Political Department reported that there was a real desire for annexation in all of the enclaves and semi-enclaves, but that the populations concerned were not actively agitating for their annexation because of fears of German reprisals and in case Switzerland should not support the annexations. The communes involved should make their wishes known as soon as possible to the Conference at Paris and the Baden authorities should be induced to agree, possibly with monetary or territorial compensations. But in conclusion, the Political Department recommended that Switzerland do nothing unless the Government of Baden agreed to go along with the border rectifications.

The Political Department reserved the right to report later on the border in the Basel area, on which it still lacked information. It recommended that no changes be mooted in Swiss borders with France or Italy.

The Swiss Government was divided on the Vorarlberg question. The Foreign Minister for 1919 was Felix Calonder, who was Romansch, from Graubünden. He was a strong supporter of the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, as was Charles Lardy, a minister in the Political Department. The other Federal Councillors were neutral or opposed to the admission of Vorarlberg. Thus, while the Political Department was working for the union, the Bundesrat itself hesitated, indecisive, slow to do anything in the question. The Political Department, cautious at first, was soon recommending an active policy of pursuit on a Bundesrat that was willing only to adopt weak, uncontroversial measures.

Concerning Vorarlberg, the Political Department reported that it belonged ethnographically and geographically to Switzerland. Its rivers ran towards Switzerland. Much of its industry depended on the
embroidery industry of eastern Switzerland. Vorarlberg had been neglected by Austria; it would develop more fully within Switzerland. The Swiss Government had not yet received a petition for union from Vorarlberg. However a plebiscite in the form of a petition had been organised by a committee in Vorarlberg. Seventy per cent of the Vorarlberg voters had signed the petition in favour of union with Switzerland. The opposition to the union seemed to come from industrialists, especially those in the textile industry, who feared competition from Swiss firms and who would have to pay their workers more if Vorarlberg were part of Switzerland. According to information of the Swiss General Staff, the workers and farmers were for annexation to Switzerland, although the towns and the important merchants opposed it. The Political Department reported that in Switzerland public opinion was becoming more and more favourable to the idea of annexing Vorarlberg. The report then discussed the railway lines in Vorarlberg, and the advantages to Switzerland of control over them. On the line St. Margrethen-Bregenz-Lindau, the union of Vorarlberg with Switzerland would eliminate one customs border and the changing two times of locomotives and braking systems. The Swiss locomotives could go directly to Lindau, which would speed express service. (The Political Department admitted that Vorarlberg's union to Bavaria would also eliminate this problem.) The railway line of Bregenz-Dornbirn-Feldkirch was only of local interest, but could be important if Switzerland decided to build a railway through the eastern Alps. The line of Buchs-Feldkirch-Arlberg was naturally the most important, since it was a main east-west route. Its possession would strengthen Switzerland's position in questions of traffic and tariffs on east-west routes. The Political Department mentioned the project of a new main line through Austria, Italy and Jugoslavia. Possession of the Arlberg would be
even more important. The passage of the main east-west European railway route through Switzerland (and Austria) was very important to Switzerland and the Political Department regarded the possibility of Vorarlberg falling into German hands as being a danger to the importance of the route.

If Austria remained independent of Germany or if a buffer state comprising Tirol and Vorarlberg were formed, then the Political Department would not see the necessity for the annexation by Switzerland of Vorarlberg. However, if, as it seemed likely, Austria were to join Germany, then the Political Department believed that it would be in Swiss interests to extend the Swiss border as far east as possible. It would be best for Switzerland to control more of the Alpine railway system and to avoid, as far as possible, encirclement by Germany. The annexation of Vorarlberg by Switzerland would help the Swiss position. Another advantage to Switzerland, the Political Department noted, was an increase in the agricultural population which would add a conservative element to Swiss politics. The Political Department believed that the religious question was no longer significant. It did not matter that Vorarlberg's population was Catholic; all of the parties of order would benefit from the union.

While the annexation of Vorarlberg to Switzerland was desirable, the Political Department noted two objections. One was the resulting increase of the German-speaking population in Switzerland. The other concerned the external relations and status of Switzerland. The first objection would be made by Romance Switzerland. The Political Department (Calonder) believed that public opinion in French Switzerland could be directed to support the annexation of Vorarlberg if the press pointed out the double advantages of hindering the encirclement of Switzerland by Germany (and of keeping Germany from obtaining too
strong a hold on the European railway system) and of neutralising the Bolshevik danger to German Switzerland through the addition of another block of conservative Swiss Germans. Germany and Bolshevism represented the two greatest threats to French Switzerland; Calonder and his advisors thought the French Swiss could be moved by these arguments. Calonder did not see that the Vorarlberg question would cause international difficulties for Switzerland. It would be dangerous for Switzerland to profit from the humiliation and defeat of a power by enriching itself at its expense. This would be so in the case of German territory. But Austria-Hungary did not exist anymore. The union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, based on the will of the Vorarlbergers, could not be offensive to any of Switzerland's neighbours, the Political Department wrote. Germany had no right to object. After all, it too was working for the union of Vorarlberg to itself. It had no greater right to Vorarlberg than Switzerland did. Calonder did not think that Vorarlberg would become a source of friction between Switzerland and Germany (7 March 1919). He believed that the Entente would look with favour on the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. France would be pleased to see the German sphere cut. Italy had no interest whatsoever in Vorarlberg and would not demand compensation for an increase in Swiss territory. The Vorarlberg question could be raised at any time. So far, the Political Department had done nothing, except to inform the Swiss legations in Paris, London, Washington and Vienna that Switzerland would look with favour upon the formation of a buffer state of Tirol and Vorarlberg. The Political Department recommended that the Bundesrat make no decision for the moment on Vorarlberg, but wait and see how the international and internal Swiss situations developed.
The report then went on to discuss the separate case of the three Rhine Delta villages in Vorarlberg — Höchst, Gaissau and Fussach. Because of the regulation of the Rhine, they were on the west, or Swiss, side of the river. However, the Swiss village of Diepoldsau was now on the Vorarlberg side. From a geographic point of view, it would be logical to exchange Diepoldsau for the three Rhine Delta villages. However the Political Department did not recommend this solution

...because of the dissolution of Austria, because of the will of the inhabitants of Diepoldsau to remain Swiss, and because of our principle of not sanctioning the cession of even an inch of our territory, we do not envision an exchange, but simply the aggregation to Switzerland of the three Delta villages....

The Delta inhabitants were farmers and embroidery workers who worked in Switzerland, and whose labour was needed. They did not take jobs from Swiss workers. The people of the Delta looked to the Swiss towns of St. Margrethen and Rheineck as their natural centres. The three villages had petitioned the Government of St. Gallen to be allowed to join the canton. Ninety-seven per cent of the population supported the petition. They wished to join St. Gallen no matter what the rest of Vorarlberg did, but they were not trying to avoid their share of the Vorarlberg debt. The Vorarlberg Government was agreeable to the annexation of the three communes by Switzerland and the Government of St. Gallen supported the union. Many St. Gallen communes, corporations and private persons owned land in the Delta and a Swiss agricultural school in Rheineck needed land, which it could not find in Switzerland, but hoped to be able to buy in the Delta if it became Swiss. The soil in the Delta was rich and good. The Delta population was active and hard-working, similar to the Swiss agricultural population. A disadvantage of the union would be the transfer to Switzerland of that part of the Austrian debt for which the villages would be responsible.
However the villages themselves, which were not in debt, had declared that they were ready to pay their share of the Austrian debt themselves. Also, with the union, Switzerland would be obliged to take over the full cost of the Rhine river regulation, in both its old and its new beds. Arrangements existed in the Treaty of 1892 with Austria on the Rhine regulation for such a takeover, but it would cost Switzerland more money. The Political Department had proposed on 9 January that the Bundesrat decide what policy to take on the question of the Delta without awaiting further developments, but the Bundesrat had returned the proposal to the Political Department without discussing it. The population of the Delta remained without direction and was confused. The Political Department now proposed that before envisioning an aggregation of the Delta, the Bundesrat await a categorical declaration by the government concerned (Austria, Vorarlberg) that it would not oppose in any way the union of the three Rhine Delta villages to Switzerland.6

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From this long report one may see how cautious Calonder was at first. It is of interest to note the emphasis placed on various points by the Political Department in private. The railways were a major factor. There was the fear of encirclement by Germany. The Political Department was interested in the economic advantages that would accrue to Switzerland by any extension of its territory. It was keenly aware

6. Report from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 7 March 1919 SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 9b. The report on Taufers, Constance, the enclaves and semi-enclaves around Schaffhausen, Vorarlberg, the Vorarlberg Rhine Delta and other areas bordering Switzerland was signed by Calonder, the head of the Political Department and represented his personal views (as of 7 March 1919) as well as the official views of the Political Department.
of any effect an addition to the population would have on the balance of power in Swiss politics. The parties of order, the Freisinnige (Radicals), the Catholic Conservatives and the Farmers' party (BGB Party) in Switzerland all feared the socialists, who had been involved in a three day general strike in November 1918. The Government, composed of Radicals (Freisinnige) and Catholic Conservatives, both parties of order, wished for additional conservative supporters in the country, especially in the German part, where the general strike had been centred. Although any new population would have been Catholic conservative, the Radicals (Freisinnige) were willing to overlook that difficulty, as long as the population would not strengthen the socialists. The Political Department saw as reasons for opposing any accession of territory the fear that Germany would object to any Swiss gains at its expense and also the wish to accept no extra financial burden whatsoever because of the addition of new territory to Switzerland. Taxes were unpopular in Switzerland and resources were stretched by the war. Because of unrest among Swiss workers, the Government felt that it must use any extra resources to relieve the causes of their discontent. The desire to avoid international complications was also important, although in the case of Vorarlberg, the Political Department argued that none could ensue. But it was not really convinced of this. Although the Italian Government had never suggested that it would demand compensation for an increase in Swiss territory, reports to that effect

7. It should be noted that the Freisinnige (Radicals) were in a dominant position and need not have feared the Catholic Conservative group. In 1919 the Catholic Conservative group won another seat in the Bundesrat, bringing their number in that body up to two. The Freisinnige (Radicals) still retained five of the seven seats.
could not be discounted. The idea was often mooted in the Italian press and it was possible that the Italian Government might later claim that public opinion was forcing it to demand a rectification of its frontier with Switzerland to follow the "natural" boundary. The Bundesrat was waiting for Swiss public opinion to take shape and take the lead. The Government could not ignore the views of French Switzerland on the question, and while that region did fear an extended border with Germany, it was by no means certain that it would prefer a further increase of the German majority in Switzerland to a longer common border with Germany.

The danger that Vorarlberg could be considered a basis of territorial exchange or that "compensation" could be demanded by Italy or France for its union to Switzerland was recognised early in Switzerland. On 6 November 1918 the Swiss Legation in Rome noted reports that Vorarlberg might want to join Switzerland and remarked that "it seemed appropriate that the Entente could make use of Vorarlberg as an offer in a territorial exchange with Switzerland". On 7 November the Political Department telegraphed to the Swiss Legations in Rome, Paris, London, Washington, Berlin, Vienna, The Hague and Madrid that:

The attitude to take relative to the proposed union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland is that the question has not come up. Switzerland does not want any territorial aggrandisement and would not itself consider any such aggrandisement and it would be startled by any such movement supported by a majority of the population concerned based on the right of self-determination.

8. Telegram from the Swiss Legation, Rome, to the Political Department 6 November 1918. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 1.

Later (25 June 1919) the Political Department wrote to the Swiss Legation in Rome that:

...It would be very regrettable if the least suspicion of conflict with Italy were caused by the Vorarlberg question. Whether the union takes place or not, we take the position that it does not interest Italy, as similarly France, England or the United States are not interested, and we must avoid furnishing the pretext for this sort of discussion.

I therefore believe that you should avoid any display of ill-humour. With regard to Vorarlberg we continue to hope that the Conference will recognize its right of self-determination.10

Wagnière, the Swiss minister in Rome wrote back:

...I continue to think, however, that the day that this territory [Vorarlberg] should join the Confederation, the Italian press would raise the question of compensations, even if the Government assures us to the contrary. An argument constantly put forward in Italy is that it would be thanks to Italy and its victory over Austria that our territory could be enlarged. I recognize that this does not constitute a decisive argument against the incorporation of this new canton, but it is a point which we cannot disregard.11

But later the Italian ambassador in Bern assured the Swiss Government that the rumour that Italy would demand compensation in Ticino for the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland was completely false.12

Nevertheless, Wagnière continued to believe that the question of compensation might be raised, whatever assurances the Italian Government gave. The Italian Government followed public opinion, it did not lead it, he wrote.13

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10. Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Rome 25 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B13/211 P21/2 Nr. 177.

11. Letter from Wagnière, the Swiss minister in Rome, to Charles Lardy, the Political Department, Bern, 7 July 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 204.

12. Notes of a meeting of the Swiss Bundesrat 27 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 363.

13. Letter from Wagnière, Swiss minister in Rome to Calonder, 26 December 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 631.
Between 10 and 15 March, Dr. Ender, through the intermediaries of the Swiss Passport Bureau in Feldkirch and Major Stingelin, who was in charge of the Swiss provisioning of Vorarlberg, asked the Bundesrat to receive a delegation from Vorarlberg. The Bundesrat replied through the Swiss Passport Bureau in Feldkirch that the Vorarlberg delegation could not be received because of Calonder's absence from Bern. Some days later Dr. Ulrich Vetsch and Major Stingelin, both confidants of Dr. Ender, were asked by the Political Department to inform the Vorarlberg authorities that it would be preferable if they did not insist on being received, because the Bundesrat could do nothing for Vorarlberg, even after Calonder's return. Despite this, on 25 March the Political Department received a telegram from Dr. Ender asking the Bundesrat to receive a group of five delegates from Vorarlberg. A private letter from Dr. Vetsch to the Political Department explained that Dr. Ender could not call for a vote in favour of union to Switzerland because of the risk of a negative reply by Switzerland. It would place him and Vorarlberg in a ridiculous situation. The Bundesrat decided to respond that it could not receive a delegation from Vorarlberg at the moment.

14. The Committee of Five: see chapter 2.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 22.
Telegram from the Swiss Passport Bureau, Feldkirch, to the Political Department 16 March 1919.
Memorandum from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 17 March 1919.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Passport Bureau, Feldkirch.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 19.
Telegram from Major Stingelin, Basel.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 21.
Telegram from Dr. Ender, Bregenz, to the Political Department 24 March 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 25.
Telegram from the Political Department to Dr. Ender 25 March 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 27.
Memorandum from Charles Lardy, Political Department, to Federal Councillor Motta 25 March 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 28.
The Swiss Government feared the union of Austria to Germany because of the political, economic and military dangers such a union would mean for Switzerland. A union of all Germans in one country would be an attraction to the Swiss German nationalists. Such a group, like its Swiss French and Swiss Italian counterparts, though small, was a threat to the unity of the Confederation. While the Political Department at first gave no encouragement to the movement in Vorarlberg for union with Switzerland, it acted swiftly to try to block the union of Austria to Germany. The Swiss ministers in Paris, London and Washington were instructed to speak against the proposed Austro-German union to representatives of the governments to which they were accredited. Calonder had also spoken against the union in a conversation with Clemenceau. The Swiss Government took the position that there could be no question of Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland so long as there was hope that Austria and Vorarlberg would remain independent of Germany. But the United States and Britain, because of their support for the right of self-determination, were unlikely to support France in its desire to keep Austria and Germany separate. Italy was thought to be encouraging the union of Austria to Germany. Therefore the independence of Austria was by no means ensured. Even if it were independent at first, it was unlikely that it would remain so. Vorarlberg rejected ties with Tirol. There was the risk that even if Austria remained independent, Vorarlberg would prefer union with the German State of Württemberg. The Political Department report of 28 March 1919 concluded that:

...The authorities of Vorarlberg, correctly or incorrectly, want to start now the campaign which will decide their future. If we do not give them any encouragement at all, and if we refuse to receive them unofficially, they could direct their campaign willy nilly in another direction and we could not have it changed again if we wished.
A policy of complete abstention is therefore not possible, because if we abstain from doing anything we take on a responsibility as great as if we acted.16

In a report of 1 April 1919 Minister Charles Lardy reported to Calonder that Germany was instigating moves to encourage Vorarlberg to join it. Dr. Vetsch had reported that Württemberg was encouraging the union, and that approaches to Vorarlberg had intensified after the Bundesrat's refusal to receive a delegation from Vorarlberg. The following day Calonder proposed that:

...The Bundesrat would favourably examine an approach by the Vorarlberg Government for its admission to the Confederation, if this proposal were based on the will of the great majority of the people of Vorarlberg, and if that were the case, the Bundesrat would transmit this desire to the Paris Conference.

Calonder justified the proposal by the explanation that:

...It is not only a question of national territory and frontiers. The financial questions are unimportant in my opinion. It is a matter of stopping Germany from expanding its frontier along the Rhine. We have a great interest in keeping Germany as far as possible from our territory. I have until now always envisioned and wished for a solution by which Austria, including Vorarlberg, would not be joined to Germany. But it is established that Vorarlberg does not wish to be joined to Austria or to Tirol at any price, which causes the dilemma for Vorarlberg of joining either Switzerland or Germany.17

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17. Report from Charles Lardy to Federal Councillor Calonder 1 April 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 33.

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The Bundesrat discussed the matter (2 April 1919). An interpellation from Rudolf Gelpke in the Nationalrat asked what the Bundesrat's position on the question of Vorarlberg's union was. The Bundesrat recognised that opinion in Switzerland was divided. In Ticino it was feared that the question of compensation could come up with Italy. The majority of the Federal Councillors believed that the question could be approached only with extreme reserve. There were political, financial, strategic and economic objections to the union. There could be no question of the acceptance of a new confederate state (canton) against the will of the linguistic minorities. There could be no question of the Swiss Government's taking any action until the Vorarlberg people had clearly and categorically voted for union to Switzerland. Only then could the Bundesrat bring the question before the Peace Conference at Paris and the Nationalrat, the Ständerat and the Swiss people. The Bundesrat decided not to make a definite decision, but to allow the Federal President to receive a delegation from the Vorarlberg Government as a matter of courtesy if such a delegation were in Bern and asked to be received. Furthermore, it was agreed that the Federal President (Gustave Ador for 1919) should try to have Gelpke's interpellation withdrawn. If that were not possible, he should reply that for the moment the Vorarlberg question could not be the object of any declaration by the Bundesrat.18

The Bundesrat was stalling. It did not wish to make any decision on the question. Calonder, the main supporter of the union in the Bundesrat, was absent from the meeting. When he returned to Bern, he warned of the danger of doing nothing, of the danger that would

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18. Secret report to Calonder about the Bundesrat meeting of 2 April 1919 at which he was absent.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 F21/2 Nr. 37.
confront Switzerland if Austria joined Germany. He said that it was certain that if Vorarlberg were not accepted by Switzerland it would join Germany. Calonder believed that any reasons for opposing the union were outweighed by the danger of encirclement by Germany. Federal Councillor Giuseppe Motta, from Ticino, declared that he was not opposed to Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland, if the Vorarlberg people first clearly and unequivocally declared that to be their will and if the union were not opposed by the French and Italian Swiss. He proposed that a committee of men from all parties be established to discuss the question. Federal Councillor Edmund Schüthess declared his complete opposition to any annexations by Switzerland, and particularly to that of Vorarlberg. The Bundesrat was impossibly split on the question.19

Calonder then proposed that the Government at least should study the financial, economic, military, legal, communications and other aspects of the Vorarlberg question and report to the Nationalrat and the Ständerat once the Vorarlberg people had shown through a plebiscite that they wished for union to Switzerland. The Bundesrat agreed that a study should be made. The Financial Department was asked how the question of Vorarlberg's debt would be regulated and for what part of Austria's debt Vorarlberg was likely to be responsible. Would Vorarlberg have to pay any compensation to creditors in Austria? If so, how much? Who would pay, Vorarlberg alone or all of Switzerland? How would the money in Vorarlberg be exchanged for Swiss francs? The Military Department was asked to prepare a report on the consequences

SBA 2001 (H) 3 Bl4/211 P21/2 Nr. 41.
of the union from a military point of view. The Justice and Police Department was asked how the union would be affected by articles in the Swiss Constitution referring to church affairs. It was asked what the legal position of the churches was in Vorarlberg and whether the Vorarlberg church laws could be easily accommodated within the Swiss legal system. 20 The Posts and Railways Department was asked who owned Vorarlberg's railways. What were they worth? What advantages and disadvantages would the union have for the railways? How much would it cost to buy the lines in Vorarlberg from the Austrian State Railways? What other facilities might have to be bought? The Public Economy Department was asked about industry in Vorarlberg. Would the union be beneficial for industry? What would the consequences actually be? What was the importance of Vorarlberg's agricultural products? The Interior Department was asked what the natural resources of Vorarlberg were. How much potential hydro-electric power did Vorarlberg have, and how well was it exploited? 21

20. Here is to be understood the prohibition of Jesuit institutions in Switzerland, and the establishment of state churches by the cantons, which is allowed.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 43.
Letter from the Political Department to the Finance Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 44.
Letter from the Political Department to the Military Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 45.
Letter from the Political Department to the Justice and Police Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 46.
Letter from the Political Department to the Posts and Railways Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B13/211 P21/2 Nr. 47.
Letter from the Political Department to the Public Economy Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 48.
Letter from the Political Department to the Interior Department 17 April 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B13/211 P21/2 Nr. 49.
With the overwhelming support for union to Switzerland in the plebiscite of 11 May 1919, the condition that the Vorarlberg people express themselves unequivocally for the union was fulfilled. The Vorarlberg Government wrote to give official confirmation of the plebiscite result (48,302 yes to 11,552 no). The Vorarlberg Government asked the Swiss Bundesrat to consider the question, as promised. The Political Department maintained that Switzerland did not wish for the union of Vorarlberg, but because of the large majority of Vorarlbergers for the union, it must examine the project. It was a matter of Swiss and European interest to prevent Germany from annexing Vorarlberg.  

Dunant, the Swiss minister in Paris, reported (14 May 1919) that Dutasta, formerly French ambassador in Bern and now Secretary-General of the Peace Conference, had said that if Switzerland wanted Vorarlberg, it must make its wish known soon, because the Austrian delegation would be arriving in St. Germain that night. Dunant asked for instructions. He said that the Swiss Government must make its views known now, because there was very little time before discussion with the Austrians would begin. The Political Department telegraphed back (17 May 1919) that it had not been officially informed of the plebiscite result in Vorarlberg. Therefore, the Bundesrat could take no position on the matter. The Swiss position could only be that:

We hope that the right of self-determination, which has been expressed by the Vorarlberg people, will be recognized unconditionally if the Bundesrat, the Federal Assembly and the Swiss people decide to accept the suggestion for the union. Since the Landeshauptmann of Vorarlberg is currently in Paris, it seems that he will resolve the question.  

22. Letter from Lardy to Charles Bourcart, Swiss Minister in Vienna. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 109.
Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Legations in Tokio, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro, 14 May 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 108.
Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the Swiss Bundesrat containing the results of the plebiscite 13 May 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 138.

23. Letter from Alphonse Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 14 May 1919

Contd. on p. 175.
The Swiss were timid. The Swiss Government was unwilling to take an official stand, it was unwilling to risk anything; therefore it would get nothing. It was reasonable to expect Dr. Ender to put the Vorarlberg question before the Conference at Paris. That he would be unable to do so was not realised beforehand. But as a pre-requisite to leaving a way open for Vorarlberg to join Switzerland, the Paris Peace Conference would first want to know if Switzerland would accept Vorarlberg. They could only learn that if the Swiss told them.

Dunant telegraphed back to Bern on 17 May that the French Foreign Ministry had informed him that the Peace Treaty with Austria was not yet ready, but would be soon, and the Quai d'Orsay²⁴ wanted to know the views of the Bundesrat and whether it might be wise to include in the Treaty a clause which would anticipate Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. Dunant had replied that the question would have to be decided by a vote of the Swiss people, which would take some time; thus, no final decision on the union could be made at the moment. Dunant wanted to know what the Swiss Government thought of a clause which would allow for the possibility of union, without compromising or binding Switzerland. Naturally, this would be acceptable to the Swiss Government. In fact, it was precisely what they wanted. Dunant then made this clear to Pichon and Laroche, who told him that the Quai d'Orsay understood and shared this point of view.²⁵ But no official statement was

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²³ Contd.

SBA 2001(H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 111.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Paris 17 May 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 115, Nr. 117.

²⁴ The Quai d'Orsay is the French Foreign Ministry.

²⁵ Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 17 May 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 116.
Telegram from the Political Department to Dunant, Paris 20 May 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 121.
Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 25 May 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 135.
made by the Swiss and the Peace Conference decided to take no action on the question.

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Dunant reported back to the Political Department that Laroche had told him that Dr. Ender had done nothing to have the Vorarlberg question brought up for discussion at the Peace Conference. The Political Department telegraphed back to ask why no account was taken of the plebiscite in Vorarlberg. Dr. Ender had made his desire for union to Switzerland clear. Dunant should try to speak with him to get information. Dutasta confirmed to Dunant that nothing had been done by the Vorarlberg authorities to have the question brought up at the Peace Conference. The Peace Conference had not been informed officially of the plebiscite results. The Political Department then tried to contact Dr. Ender through Zurburg, a member of the Nationalrat from St. Gallen. 26 Dr. Ender was not willing to break with the Austrian Government.

26. Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 1 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 142.
Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 3 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 143.
Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 3 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 145.
Telegram from the Political Department to Dunant, Paris 3 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 146.
Telegram from Dunant, Paris, to the Political Department 4 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 147.
Notes of a conversation between Minister Charles Lardy and Nationalrat Zurburg 5 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 148.
Notes of a conversation between Minister Charles Lardy and Nationalrat Zurburg 6 June 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 149.
Therefore he could not bring the question up at the Peace Conference. The Swiss Government, which clearly enjoyed sovereignty, was divided and hesitant. The Political Department under Calonder wanted the union, but it had to restrict itself to making enquiries, a line of action hardly likely to further the cause. The Bundesrat would not authorise an active policy. Vorarlberg could have been obtained, had the Swiss Government been willing and able to pursue the union actively; but Vorarlberg was not ready simply to drop into Switzerland. The Swiss Government mirrored the divisions within Switzerland on the question, divisions which prevented it from pursuing such a policy, or any policy on the question.

Dr. Ender came to Bern to consult with the Political Department. Lardy wrote to Calonder that:

...According to information from Mr. Zurburg, Ender did not speak [at the Peace Conference] because the Austrians were always with him and never left him alone. He is coming to ask us for advice and leadership. We should help him, and direct the whole affair from behind the wings. He is no diplomat, but a good administrator. The whole population of Vorarlberg is decided to act directly if Ender does not direct the affair well.

At his meetings with them on 10 June, Dr. Ender told Minister Lardy and Federal Councillor Calonder of his plan, which was to propose that the Vorarlberg Landesrat officially invite Austria to recognise Vorarlberg's right of self-determination. He did not believe that Austria could deny the right, since it needed it to support its case in Bohemia, Carinthia and in German South Tyrol. Two days later, the Political Department finally answered the letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat of 13 May 1919 informing it of the plebiscite result of 11 May. The Political Department wrote that, according to newspaper reports, it was questionable if Vorarlberg's right to self-determination would be recognised. The Political Department asked the Landesrat to make clear Vorarlberg's right to self-determination so that the Bundesrat
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would be able to study the question without delay. This letter was undoubtedly written with Dr. Ender's knowledge. The letter would enable him to demand from the Austrian Government the recognition of Vorarlberg's right to self-determination on the grounds that the Swiss Government required such recognition before it could act. The Political Department had delayed for a month before answering the letter from the Vorarlberg Government. It withdrew the assurance that Caloneder had earlier given Ender that once an overwhelming majority in Vorarlberg had shown itself to be for the union, the study of the question could begin in earnest. That the Austrians would not respond to Dr. Ender's invitation is hardly surprising. Lardy recognised this danger; however, Dr. Ender believed that it would be a long time before the Peace Treaty was signed. Lardy told Ender that the invitation, which he, Lardy, considered to be an ultimatum, to Austria to recognise Vorarlberg's right to self-determination should be made openly and with full publicity so that Austria would be obliged to give a public response.27

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In response to Gelpke's interpellation, Caloneder repeated the Government's position to the Nationalrat on 28 June 1919. The Government had been officially informed of the plebiscite results of 11 May.

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27. Memorandum from Lardy to Caloneder 10 June 1919.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 155.  
Notes of conversations between Dr. Ender and Caloneder and between Dr. Ender and Lardy 10 June 1919.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 154.  
Letter from the Political Department to the Vorarlberg Landeshauptmann Dr. Ender 12 June 1919.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 156.  
Report from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 7 August 1919.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 227.  
But in order for the Bundesrat to study the question, Vorarlberg's right to self-determination must be clearly recognised, both by the Austrian Government and by the Peace Conference at Paris. It was up to the Vorarlberg people to obtain such recognition, to defend their rights and to demonstrate their democratic ideals. Switzerland would only be interested in the union if the Vorarlbergers were motivated by idealistic and republican ideals. Switzerland would have to be strong and vigorous to absorb the new Confederates. Switzerland would refuse to accept Vorarlberg if the basis of that Land's interest in the union was materialistic. Switzerland would also refuse to consider the question if it were to involve Switzerland in international complications. There could be no question of compensations by Switzerland.28

The Political Department tried to get things moving again.

Austria had refused to declare that it recognised Vorarlberg's right of self-determination. In conversations with Redler, a representative of Dr. Ender's, Lardy insisted that it was necessary for Vorarlberg to

BN 2 July 1919 2. Beilage Nr. 297 1a.
TZ 30 June 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 150 1a.
SGT 28 June 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 149 3b.
SGT 30 June 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 150 2a.
JG 30 June 1919 No. 178 3b.
GL 1 July 1919 1ère édition No. 179 2d.
GL 2 July 1919 1ère édition No. 180 1c.
VLZ 1 July 1919 Nr. 147 2.
VW 2 July 1919 Nr. 148 1.

Speech of Federal Councillor Calonder to the Nationalrat 28 June 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 182.
force a decision by some sort of decisive action against Vienna. Calonder recommended a demonstration by the Vorarlberg people. The word "revolution" was brought up, but it was poorly received. The Political Department warned the Bundesrat of the danger of inaction. If Vorarlberg's right to self-determination were recognised in the Peace Treaty, the question would remain open and would be left for Switzerland and Vorarlberg to settle as they wished. International complications would be avoided. But if the question were dropped for the moment only to be brought up again later, it would be much more difficult to have the question resolved to Swiss satisfaction. Vorarlberg was a free Land for the moment, and could join the country of its choice, but in a few weeks, it would be the province of a recognised state. It was extremely dangerous to ignore the question. Instead of simplifying it, it would make it more complicated to solve. If the Bundesrat did not take the necessary steps now to cause the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria to expressly recognise Vorarlberg's right of self-determination, the Bundesrat would find itself in an inextricable situation and would regret not having acted earlier. Therefore the Political Department proposed that the Swiss Legation in Paris be instructed to inform the Allied and Associated Powers that Switzerland believed it important that the Peace Treaty include a clause recognising Vorarlberg's right of self-determination and allowing it to join Switzerland if the Swiss people and government were agreed.

On 27 August, the Political Department instructed the Swiss Legation in Paris to speak unofficially with Dutasta, the Secretary-

29. The assemblies of 10 August 1919 in Vorarlberg were partly a result of these suggestions.

Notes of conversations between Vorarlberg Landeshauptmannstellvertreter Redler and Lardy and Calonder 28 and 30 July 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 220.
force a decision by some sort of decisive action against Vienna. Calonder recommended a demonstration by the Vorarlberg people. The word "revolution" was brought up, but it was poorly received. 29 The Political Department warned the Bundesrat of the danger of inaction. If Vorarlberg's right to self-determination were recognised in the Peace Treaty, the question would remain open and would be left for Switzerland and Vorarlberg to settle as they wished. International complications would be avoided. But if the question were dropped for the moment only to be brought up again later, it would be much more difficult to have the question resolved to Swiss satisfaction. Vorarlberg was a free Land for the moment, and could join the country of its choice, but in a few weeks, it would be the province of a recognised state. It was extremely dangerous to ignore the question. Instead of simplifying it, it would make it more complicated to solve. If the Bundesrat did not take the necessary steps now to cause the Allied and Associated Powers and Austria to expressly recognise Vorarlberg's right of self-determination, the Bundesrat would find itself in an inextricable situation and would regret not having acted earlier. Therefore the Political Department proposed that the Swiss Legation in Paris be instructed to inform the Allied and Associated Powers that Switzerland believed it important that the Peace Treaty include a clause recognising Vorarlberg's right of self-determination and allowing it to join Switzerland if the Swiss people and government were agreed.

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Notes of conversations between Vorarlberg Landeshauptmannstellvertreter Redler and Lardy and Calonder 28 and 30 July 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 220.
General of the Peace Conference, and a friend of Dunant's, the Swiss minister in Paris. Dutasta should be informed that only through a plebiscite of the Swiss people and cantons could the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland be approved. Within Switzerland no official position had been adopted on the question. Dutasta should be informed that the Swiss Government would think it right if the Peace Conference expressly recognised Vorarlberg's right to determine its own future. Dunant replied on 31 August that he had spoken with Dutasta who had said that a proposed clause to that effect had not been accepted because it might have encouraged the Austrian Delegation to refuse to sign the Treaty, because Switzerland had adopted no position on the question and because Vorarlberg could turn to the League of Nations to have its right of self-determination recognised.

On 31 August/1 September the Political Department instructed the Swiss legations in Rome and Paris to speak unofficially with the Italian and French Governments and say that Switzerland would like to see a clause included in the Peace Treaty recognising Vorarlberg's right of self-determination. However it was now too late. The Treaty was to be handed over to the Austrians on 2 September. The clause suggested by the Central Territorial Committee had been rejected. There was some confusion as to who had opposed the inclusion of the proposed clause in the final draft of the Peace Treaty. From press reports, the Swiss Government had learnt that it had been Italy which had opposed the inclusion of the article. Count Sforza, in the Italian Foreign Ministry in Rome, confirmed this. The Swiss were a bit hurt that Italy should think an increase in the German element in Switzerland would "Prussianize" Switzerland. The Swiss Legation in Paris was instructed to inform Tittoni (of the Italian Delegation at the Peace Conference) that the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland
would protect Switzerland from German penetration. That was in Italian and French as well as in Swiss, interests. However Tittoni denied that it had been the Italian Delegation which had opposed the proposal. Through friends in the Peace Conference, the Swiss Legation in Paris saw a copy of the procès-verbal of the meeting of the Supreme Council of 29 August, at which the proposal had been discussed, but not accepted. This made it clear that the main opponent of the proposed clause was not Italy, but France. It also made it clear that had the Swiss Government supported the plan for union, it might have been accepted. The Political Department, in a report of 10 September, blamed the inaction of the Bundesrat for the lamentable state of the Vorarlberg question.

30. Proposal from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 7 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 227.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Paris to the Political Department 26 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 274.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Paris 27 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 284, 286.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Paris to the Political Department 31 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 298.
Letter from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 1 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 313.
Letter from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 3 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P22/2 Nr. 313.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 2 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 314.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Paris to the Political Department 2 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 315.
Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Paris 2 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 317.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 31 August 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 299.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 5 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 332.
Letter from v. Segesser, Chargé d'Affaires at the Swiss Legation in Rome, to the Political Department 6 September 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 337. Contd. on p. 183.
The question was dormant for over a month. Then reports started to come in of food being short in Vorarlberg. If Switzerland did not help the Vorarlbergers, the German state of Württemberg would. It was ready and willing to do so, conscious of the great propaganda value.

Württemberg hoped for the union of Vorarlberg to itself. The Political Department reported that the Austrian Government looked on with approval to these attempts. Austria was weak and on the verge of collapse. The overwhelming majority of Vorarlbergers were still for union with Switzerland, but difficulties of provisioning and German propaganda (supported by Austria) were driving Vorarlberg against its will towards Germany. In order to hinder this process, the Political Department proposed that Switzerland help Vorarlberg to overcome the food shortages. Switzerland would have to sell at prices as low as those of Germany. The Political Department proposed further that Vorarlberg be told unofficially that if it declared independence, Switzerland would continue to provision it and would give it political

30. Contd.

Letter from the Political Department to v. Segesser, at the Swiss Legation in Rome 11 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 346.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Paris to the Political Department 31 August 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 298.
Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 31 August 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 299.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Paris 1 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 307.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Paris 1 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 306.
Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Rome 1 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 308.
Letter from the Swiss Legation in Paris to the Political Department 3 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 328.
Report from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 10 September 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 343.
support. The Bundesrat decided to help to provision Vorarlberg (by
sale, of course, as Württemberg was doing), but not to approve the
other proposal. The Political Department warned once again of the
dangers of inaction. Germany was making propaganda in Vorarlberg and
trying to obtain control of hydroelectric power in the Land. Austria
was near collapse. If Switzerland did not intervene to help, the
Vorarlberg people would have no other choice than to turn to Germany.
Switzerland must be ready to support Vorarlberg politically and with
food shipments when the Austrian collapse came. It was not a question
of immediate union to Switzerland, but of Swiss material, moral and
political protection during the transitional period until the League
of Nations could act. The Political Department wanted the Swiss Govern-
ment to assure Dr. Ender that in case Vorarlberg should gain its
independence, the Swiss Government would offer the necessary material,
moral and political assistance until the situation was resolved. 31

31. Report and proposal from the Political Department to the Bundesrat
21 October 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 384.
Notes of a meeting of the Swiss Bundesrat 22 October 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 381.
Report and proposal from the Political Department to the Bundesrat
5 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 417c.
Notes of a meeting of the Swiss Bundesrat 10 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 437.
Report and proposal from the Political Department to the Bundesrat
10 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 695.
Letter from the Political Department to Dr. Ulrich Vetsch 22 October
1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 385.

Reports on the significance of German food shipments to Vorarlberg:
NZZ 7 November 1919 2. Abendblatt Nr. 1725 1a.
SGT 20 October 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 246 1b.
SGT 7 November 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 262 1a.
JG 24 October 1919 2me édition No. 293 8d.
JG 7 November 1919 2me édition No. 307 3c.
OS 5 November 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 256 1b.
Russell, the British envoy in Bern, wrote that there could be little doubt that the motive behind Germany's promises of food for Vorarlberg was political and that Germany was trying to make up for the lack of effort by the Vienna Government to win over Vorarlberg. The food shipments were meant to keep Vorarlberg from turning to Switzerland for further supplies. The deliberate aim of the German shipments was to win over the Vorarlberg people. Russell wrote that, according to press reports, the Bundesrat was seriously considering the advisability of adopting a more active policy on the Vorarlberg question. A few days later Russell had an interview with Calonder, in which the latter said that the Bundesrat was concerned about Vorarlberg. Calonder believed that there were only two alternatives. Either Vorarlberg would have to be linked, at least commercially, with Switzerland, which was in accord with the expressed will of eighty percent of its population, or it would be compelled to join Germany. Calonder said that he had incontestable proof that Germany was working unceasingly for commercial and political predominance in Vorarlberg. Russell reported that Calonder then led him over to a large map hanging on the wall of an adjoining room, in order to demonstrate with greater earnestness the danger to Switzerland of a possible union of Vorarlberg to Germany, a danger which, Calonder said, could threaten the very existence of the Confederation. Calonder remarked that he knew that the Supreme Council favoured Vorarlberg's remaining part of Austria. While this was desirable from the Austrian point of view, it was no longer feasible and the Great Powers would have to choose eventually if they preferred Vorarlberg to be linked to Switzerland or to Germany. Calonder concluded by expressing his personal desire that the settlement of the Vorarlberg question be left for the League of Nations to decide,
Russell wrote.32

Two interpellations, one by Gelpke in the Nationalrat, the other by Winiger in the Ständerat, forced the Government to make a public declaration. Both men were strong supporters of the union. Both wanted to know what the Government was doing to help the Vorarlbergers. The Political Department insisted that it was time for the Bundesrat to make its position known on the Vorarlberg question. Germany was trying to annex Vorarlberg. Austria was near collapse. The danger of encirclement by Germany was great. If the Bundesrat did nothing, Vorarlberg would certainly turn to Germany. The Bundesrat decided that support for Vorarlberg would be a financial burden for Switzerland. It would cause difficulties with Germany and Austria, and could affect Swiss enterprises in those countries. The League of Nations must act as well. Swiss political support must be limited to acting as counsel for Vorarlberg in the League of Nations. Economic support would be limited to credits for foodstuffs. Finally the Bundesrat agreed that Dr. Ender should be informed that:

Switzerland will intervene in no way in the inner relationship between Vorarlberg and Austria. In case, however, the separation of Vorarlberg from Austria should come about for any reason whatsoever, the Bundesrat would be prepared to support Vorarlberg's attempts to have its right of self-determination recognized; either at the League of Nations or at the Paris Conference.

Furthermore, the Bundesrat is ready to extend economic support to Vorarlberg, namely in the form of credits and shipments of foodstuffs.

PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/147403/58017/43).
Despatch from Russell, Bern 12 November 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/152678/58017/43).
Despatch from Russell, Bern 17 November 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148.
Report of the French Chargé d'Affaires at Bern, forwarded by the Secretariat-General of the Peace Conference.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/20668.
In answer to Winiger's interpellation, Calonder used this
devise as the conclusion to his speech, as he had been authorised
to do by the Bundesrat. The Bundesrat needed the support of the
Federal Assembly in the question. Calonder added remarks of his own,
which had not been approved by his colleagues. He commented:

It is an important interest of Switzerland's to impede the
possible union of Vorarlberg to Germany. Vorarlberg is a deep
wedge in the eastern flank of our country. Previously this Land
was part of Austria, which had neither the strength nor the will
to influence eastern Switzerland from Vorarlberg. But if this
wedge should belong to Germany, it would be a great political
danger for eastern Switzerland. Vorarlberg would be an important
field of activity for German attempts to penetrate Switzerland,
both economically and morally. To say this freely and openly is
not to insult the German people. Rather their great power of
expansion is a sign of their capabilities and hard work and is an
honour to them. But it would undoubtedly be corrupting to us.
Part of eastern Switzerland is in danger of being penetrated by
the German way of thinking and therefore of being denationalised.33

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 438, 692.
Interpellation of Ständerat Joseph Winiger 13 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 442, 692.
Notes of a meeting of the Swiss Bundesrat 14 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 451.
Letter to all Swiss Legations 22 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 499a.
Political Department Memorandum
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 448.
Annual Report on Swiss affairs for 1919 from Theo Russell, Bern
8 March 1920.
PRO FO 371 W/185923/185923/43.
B 23 November 1919 Nr. 497 1a.
NZZ 22 November 1919 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 1811 2a.
SGT 22 November 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 275 1a.
OS 24 November 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 272 1a.
OS 24 November 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 272 1d.
BN 23 November 1919 1. Beilage Nr. 504 1a.
TZ 22 November 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 275 1c.
JG 23 November 1919 2me édition No. 323 4a.
JG 25 November 1919 2me édition No. 325 1d.
GL 22/23 November 1919 No. 320 2e.
VT 26 November 1919 Nr. 270 1.
NFP 7 December 1919 Morgenblatt 1.
Russell remarked in a report to the Foreign Office that Calonder's speech marked the end of the policy of complete disinterestedness on the part of the Bundesrat. To Calonder's speech and Russell's reports, A. W. A. Leeper commented:

All these arguments were considered last July by the Central Territorial Committee and then by the Supreme Council. It was the shyness of the Swiss that killed the subject. [20 November 1919]

It is primarily the purely negative attitude of the Swiss Government which is responsible for the present state of the Vorarlberg question. So long as they continue to maintain this attitude, it is hard to see how the question can arise. [24 November 1919]

The Swiss have at last woken up. [27 November 1919]

Baron Haupt, then Austrian minister in Bern, reported that the Vorarlberg question had come to a new and perhaps decisive phase. The policy of the Bundesrat was now becoming evident. Because of demands in the Swiss press and by the Swiss people for action, the Bundesrat was trying to steer a middle course in the question, a course which would not appear contrary to the dictates of the Paris Peace Conference nor disturb friendly relations with Austria. According to Haupt's interpretation, Swiss policy did not demand immediate union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Its aim was to obtain the recognition of the right of self-determination for the Vorarlberg people. This would allow Vorarlberg to establish itself as an independent state, based on the will of the people, in the certainty that Vorarlberg, because of its economic dependence, would have to rely on aid and support from

34. Despatch from Russell, Bern 25 November 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/156344/58017/43).
   Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 20 November 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148.
   Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 24 November 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/20668.
   Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 27 November 1919. PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148.
Switzerland and would, therefore, be drawn into Switzerland. Baron Haupt commented that this policy had been presented skilfully by Calonder and that the policy of the Bundesrat was correct, at least formally. Haupt recommended that Austria act circumspectly and avoid conflict and press polemics with Switzerland. If Austria were not capable of existing on its own, and had to appeal to the League of Nations for the right to join Germany on the basis of self-determination, it could not now openly deny Vorarlberg's right without prejudicing its own case for self-determination later and, therefore, its possible union with Germany. Haupt thought that Austria could obtain from Switzerland financial compensation for Vorarlberg, which might be more useful for Austria than the possession of Vorarlberg, which was not tied to the new Republic by geography or economy. Haupt thought that with Vorarlberg a part of Switzerland, Swiss policy would be more favourable to Germany and less so to the Entente, another advantage for Austria of allowing the union.

In the Ballhausplatz it was agreed that a press war would be harmful for Austria's image and its currency. Rappaport, an official in the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs, noted that the Swiss Government, despite Calonder's speech, was as passive as it could possibly be in the Vorarlberg question. However, Rappaport was not as indifferent to Vorarlberg's fate as was Baron Haupt. He did not think that Swiss policy would be any more favourable to Germany if Vorarlberg were a part of it. Nor did he think it likely that the League of

35. The Ballhausplatz is the Austrian Foreign Ministry (in 1919 the Austrian Department of State for Foreign Affairs).
Nations would allow Austria's union with Germany if Vorarlberg were allowed to join Switzerland. Whether Austria could hold Vorarlberg depended on domestic political moves and on the views of the Allied Powers. The Austrian Government certainly was not going to give up without a fight. Baron Haupt, already in disfavour, fell further from grace. 36

To Calonder's speech, the Austrian Government protested immediately. An unofficial Austrian communique condemned attempts to place in question Austria's borders. With great territorial and material sacrifices Austria had signed the Treaty of St. Germain. It needed a minimum to survive. In Germany the speech was ill-received, especially the lines on German expansionism. The German Government insisted that it had acted correctly throughout, and had not worked for or against the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland or to Germany. The Italian press tended to repeat the charge advanced in the German press that it was Switzerland which sought to expand its borders. 37

36. Despatch from Baron Haupt, Bern, to Vienna 25 November 1919.
   HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7133/2.
   Minute by Rappaport, of the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs.
   HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7133/2.

37. Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Vienna to the Political Department 23 November 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 500.
   Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Berlin to the Political Department 24 November 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 503.
   Telegram from the Swiss Legation in Berlin to the Political Department 26 November 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 527.
   Letter from the Swiss Legation in Rome to the Political Department 29 November 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 536a.
The German Government used Calonder's speech to its advantage. The German minister in Bern, Adolf Müller, informed his Government immediately of the speech, emphasizing the importance of the portion alleging that eastern Switzerland was in danger of economic and moral penetration by Germany. Müller wrote that the other Federal Councilors had never accepted Calonder's views on the danger of German influence. Now Calonder had been able to make his view the official one. It was painful that Calonder had brought Germany into the debate without good cause and that he had warned of German economic expansion when Germany was so weak. Müller would make his views known in Bern, and he suggested that Alfred von Planta, the Swiss Minister in Berlin should be informed of the painful impression caused in Germany by the speech. The previously correct and humanitarian Switzerland had joined the enemies and slanderers of Germany. Berlin should act as if it were completely uninterested in the Vorarlberg question itself and leave the polemics to the press. Lack of official action on Germany's part would weaken the case of the annexationists in Switzerland. Planta should be warned that anti-German attitudes would not be helpful to future Swiss-German relations, which would not always be based on the present weakness of Germany. Müller also suggested that the German press be encouraged to reject Calonder's unfriendly charges. The German Foreign Office agreed with him. Calonder's charge could not remain unanswered, since there had been no reason to bring Germany into the debate. The Wilhelmstrasse noted that it was to be hoped that the settlement in Central Europe would be consolidated as soon as possible. This was in general European interests. It warned that the questioning of Austria's territorial extent would cause new uncertainties which could also make Switzerland's territory and general

38. The Wilhelmstrasse is the German Foreign Office.
international position a topic of discussion. One could not see the outcome of such a debate. (The Wilhelmstrasse hoped to frighten the Swiss from considering the question of Vorarlberg further.) The German Foreign Office memorandum continued that the territorial enlargement of Switzerland at the expense of Germany or Austria would be harmful to future political and economic relations with Switzerland. The Wilhelmstrasse hoped that no hasty decisions would be made about this group of German people (the Vorarlbergers). If Switzerland wished to adopt as official policy annexationist plans, Germany could not stop it, but it could warn of the danger to future German-Swiss relations and it must protest against attempts by Switzerland to throw suspicion on Germany.

Planta was informed of Germany's views. He was told that Berlin had not expected the Swiss Government to speak of German expansionism in view of Germany's weak position. Such views were to be expected from the Entente, but not from Switzerland. Planta tried to excuse Calonder's speech by referring to Vorarlberg's importance to eastern Switzerland. The German minister replied that the German Government

39. Until the Nazi period, when an Austrian State consciousness finally began to develop, both the Germans and the Austrians considered the Germans of the Habsburg Monarchy to be Germans.

40. Telegram in cypher from Adolf Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 22 November 1919. FOL K1075/K276478 (AAAA C1989/A30319).
Telegram in cypher from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 22 November 1919. FOL K1075/K276482 (AAAA C1989/A30320).
Very secret despatch from Müller, Bern to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 24 November 1919. FOL K1075/K276506 (AAAA C1989/A30766). (seen also FOL K1170/K300817).
had not become involved in the Vorarlberg question. It had not supported the agitation of the Schwabenkapitel in any way. Bern should also stay out of the affair. Planta was informed of the damage that could be done to German-Swiss relations. There had been no reason to bring Germany into the debate.

Müller, the German Minister in Bern, reported to Berlin on the situation in the Swiss capital. He wrote that Calonder had gone further than he had been authorised to by the Bundesrat, which was surprising since Calonder was not particularly courageous. Perhaps he had been encouraged by the strong majority for joining the League of Nations in the Swiss plebiscite on that question. Perhaps he was encouraged by a report in the Bern newspaper Bund that its Berlin representative had been called into the German Foreign Office to be informed of German unhappiness about the agitation in the Bund for the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. The Bund representative had also been asked to work against the union in his newspaper. That had been

41. which was, in fact, patently untrue.

42. Notes of an interview of a German minister with Alfred v. Planta, Swiss Minister in Berlin 28 November 1919.
FOL K1075/K276491 (AAAA C1989/A30320).

Notes of an interview of a German minister with Planta, Swiss Minister in Berlin.
FOL K1075/K276558 (AAAA C1989/A31016).

43. Such an incident did occur. The Wilhelmstrasse thought they could trust the Bund correspondent in Berlin and called him in to ask if he would send despatches back to the Bund which would tend to discourage the Swiss from supporting the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. The plan misfired.

German Foreign Office Memorandum 24 October 1919.
FOL K1075/K276400 (AAAA C1989/A27890).

Letter from Ernst Schürch, Editor of the Bund, to Calonder 29 October 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 405.

Report from the Political Department to the Bundesrat 5 November 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 417c.

Telegram from the German Foreign Office Berlin, to Müller, Bern 3 December 1919.
FOL K1075/K276559 (AAAA C1989/A31063).
portrayed in Switzerland as interference of importance in internal Swiss affairs and could have encouraged Calonder to say what he had. Müller had gone to speak with Swiss ministers to express his astonishment at Calonder's speech. First Müller met with Federal Councillor Schulthess, who immediately declared that Calonder had only been authorised by the Bundesrat to make the declaration that Switzerland would interfere in no way in the inner relationship between Vorarlberg and Austria, but would be ready to help Vorarlberg if it were to become independent. The rest of the speech, including the attack on Germany, was Calonder's own work, which was not supported by a majority in the Bundesrat. Schulthess told Müller that he too was displeased with Calonder's remarks. Schulthess repeated his view, previously told to Müller, that he thought nothing would come of the plans for the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Schulthess said that he would speak out against the union when the Ständerat met next. Besides, from 1 January 1920 Federal Councillor Motta would take over as head of the Political Department. Therefore Calonder's political importance was almost at an end and should not be a cause for further concern. Then Müller spoke with Motta, whose views he already knew from Schulthess. Motta also assured Müller that Calonder's speech reflected his views alone, and that only the conclusion had been approved by the Bundesrat. There had not been time to see the whole speech, which Calonder had written at the last moment. Motta told Müller that he understood the Germans' astonishment at Calonder's remarks. Motta, too, was astonished and had let Calonder know. There had been no reason to accuse Germany of anything. Motta, as a native of Ticino, was not enthusiastic about the union. There were important internal and external reasons for opposing the union and these would necessitate a very careful examination of the question, Motta had said. He also told Müller that the Bundesrat had approved the conclusion of the speech in order to
dampen the agitation in the Radical (Friesische) Party on the question. There was also sympathy for the union in Catholic circles, who hoped for an increase in Catholic numbers and influence in Switzerland.

Motta said that he was convinced that Calonder had had no animosity against Germany in mind. If the speech gave that impression it could perhaps be explained by Calonder's having been overworked. Müller reported that Motta had been very friendly, which was especially important since he would be the Swiss president and the head of the Political Department for the year 1920. Müller had heard also that Calonder had not been attending meetings of the Bundesrat for some days because of "indisposition". Müller had heard that there had been stormy scenes with Calonder over his speech. In a later despatch, Müller reported the positions of the different Federal Councillors on the Vorarlberg question. Of the seven Federal Councillors, Müller listed as opposed to the union Schulthess, Ador, Motta, Decoppet and Scheurer. Only Haab and Calonder were for the union. Schulthess opposed it because he thought it would cost too much. Ador was opposed because he did not want to see the German part of Switzerland enlarged, because he wanted to avoid conflict with Germany and because he feared that Vorarlberg's union would strengthen the Swiss Social Democratic Party, which Ador feared could lead to a desire for the dissolution of the Swiss Confederation (because of growing Swiss Social Democratic interest in Germany). Motta was opposed to the union since he feared it would be disadvantageous to Switzerland and because of possible Italian

44. Very secret despatch from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 24 November 1919.  
FOL K1075/K276506 (AAAA C1989/A30766).  
(see also FOL K1170/K300817).  
Despatch from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 28 November 1919.  
FOL K1075/K276587 (AAAA C1989/A31204).  
(see also FOL K1170/K300831).
claims on Ticino as "compensation". He also thought that the union would bring with it economic and financial problems and would hurt German-Swiss relations, which were important to Motta, who was a Germanophile. Decoppot was opposed, but would be leaving the Bundesrat at the end of 1919; his most likely successor was Musy, of Fribourg, who would probably also oppose the union. The views of Scheurer on the Vorarlberg question were not known, but since he was a sober thinker, he would probably oppose doubtful political enterprises, and therefore the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Haab was for the union, but not strongly and would probably follow Schulthess in the end. That meant that the only strong supporter in the Bundesrat of the union was Calonder. He was Romansch and strongly influenced by certain Entente considerations. However he was isolated in disputes within the Bundesrat. Germany could afford to be relaxed about the Vorarlberg question, unless something unexpected should happen, such as a decision by the Supreme Council to support Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. But that was not likely. Another possible danger was a sudden collapse of Austria, Müller wrote.  

Müller telegraphed to Berlin that the Swiss Government would be thankful if a German minister could put an end to the annexationist campaign in Germany. This would calm public opinion in Switzerland. Müller suggested that the German Government have published in the German press a statement that Germany made no claim to Vorarlberg and

45. Despatch from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 8 December 1919.  
FOL K1075/K276630 (AAAA C1989/A31764). 
(see also FOL K1170/K300867).  
Seidler, the Austrian envoy in Bern, also knew that within the Bundesrat only Calonder supported the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland.  
Despatch from Seidler, Austrian envoy in Bern, to Vienna 8[?] December 1919.  
HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7280/2.
hoped that the Land would remain with Austria, as it should do. If this view were printed in the German press immediately, it could be picked up and reprinted in the Swiss press the next day and could cause some of the support for a more active Swiss policy to fade. Such a report "from circles close to the government" was written and transmitted via the Wolf news agency to the German press.46

Müller complained to Berlin that the new Austrian minister in Bern, Seidler, had been instructed by his government only to discuss the Vorarlberg question if it were brought up by one of the Swiss Federal Councillors. Seidler's instructions were to repeat Austria's telegram of protest. Müller wrote that it would be good if something were done to strengthen the backbones of the leaders in Vienna. The Austrian Government was not using the opportunities offered to it by Calonder's inept speech.47

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46. Telegram in cypher from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 5 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276594 (AAAA C1989/A31266).
   Report drawn up in German Foreign Office, Berlin, and transmitted via Wolf news agency.
   FOL K1075/K276598,K276599 (AAAA C1989/A31266).

47. As a possible explanation for Austria's lack of action, Müller suggested that the Austrians were afraid to protest too strongly in Bern, since Switzerland still had not recognised the Austrian government. Müller reported that he had spoken with several Federal Councillors about recognition for Austria (not really for him to do, but Germany treated Austria as a client state at the time) and he had been assured by Schulthess that the Austrian government would soon receive recognition from Switzerland. One can see how closely Schulthess was willing to keep in touch with Müller. Müller also reported that Renner's plan to occupy Vorarlberg militarily with the help of Italy had come to naught. Italy immediately refused to involve itself in difficulties with Switzerland in order to act as the protector of Austria. From a leak in Italy, the Swiss Bundesrat had learnt of this affair.

Very secret despatch from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 8 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276630 (AAAA C1989/A31764).
   (seen also FOL K1170/K300867).

Telegram from Seidler, Austrian envoy in Bern, to Dr. Renner, Austrian Chancellor 8 December 1919.
   HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7211/2.
The Vorarlberg situation was confused. The Austrian Chancellor Dr. Renner threatened to send troops into Vorarlberg if it declared itself independent. The Social Democrats in Vorarlberg threatened a general strike. The Christian Socials in Vorarlberg preferred to wait to declare independence when conditions allowed for it. The Swiss were unwilling to do anything more than support Vorarlberg if it obtained its independence. They were not willing to send in troops to keep Austrian troops out, nor were they prepared to take over the currency, run the posts and trains, et cetera. They were opposed to any acts of violence on Vorarlberg's part. The Swiss people would not support the union if it were based on violence and revolution and Calonder so warned the Vorarlbergers. The warning was unnecessary since the Vorarlberg Government was unwilling to contemplate the use of force anyway.\footnote{Note from Neubner in Dr. Ender's name 3 December 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 551. Notes of what was said to Neubner by Lardy on Calonder's instructions 5 December 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 557. Letter from the Political Department to Dr. Ulrich Vetsch 22 December 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 625. Letter from Lardy to Dr. Vetsch 22 November 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 497 (seen also SBA F.II.6. Bd. 13). Questions from Neubner to the Swiss Government. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 546. Answers from the Political Department to Neubner 2 December 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 547.}

The Swiss Government issued a communique explaining and toning down Calonder's statement. The new statement, in the form of a press release, announced that:
In view of official declarations of the Austrian Government, the Bundesrat believes it necessary to confirm that it has never done the smallest thing which could be considered an encouragement for Vorarlberg to separate from Austria. Federal Councillor Calonder, head of the Political Department, has clearly stated in his speech before the Ständerat that "Switzerland intervenes in no way in the inner relationship between Vorarlberg and Austria".

From the political standpoint there is no Vorarlberg question for Switzerland for as long as Vorarlberg forms an integral part of Austria. But the question would have another significance and character if Vorarlberg separated from the state to which it belongs in order to join another state. Independent of all political considerations, the Bundesrat is prepared to come to the aid as far as possible of an able small neighbouring people in order to enable it to get over the present difficulties in provisioning. The Bundesrat is also ready, in as far as it may be asked by Vorarlberg, to support Vorarlberg's right of self-determination at the Peace Conference and at the League of Nations. The Bundesrat is however decided to take no steps which would have as their goal the separation of Vorarlberg from the political entity to which it currently belongs.49

49. Press Release proposed by the Political Department and approved by the Bundesrat 5 December 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 557.

Letter from the Political Department to all Swiss Legations 6 December 1919.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 565.

Russell, the British envoy in Bern, commented:

...For Switzerland, the whole matter resolves itself into the following question: Is there really a danger, should Switzerland remain passive, of the Vorarlberg detaching itself from Austria and joining Germany? According to the information available here, such a danger would undoubtedly appear to exist, as the majority of the inhabitants of the Vorarlberg seem to be determined to push through separation from Austria at all costs. It would be of interest to this Legation to learn how far His Majesty's High Commissioner at Vienna is able to confirm this alleged tendency on the part of the Vorarlberg population.

Deapatch from Theo Russell, Bern to Lord Curzon 8 December 1919.
PRO FO 371 W/161825/58017/43 (seen also PRO FO 608 71/1/1/18148).
Annual report on Swiss affairs from Theo Russell, Bern 8 March 1920.
PRO FO 371 W/185923/185923/43.

BN 8 December 1919 Nr. 527 1a.
VLZ 11 December 1919 Nr. 282 2.
LT 8 December 1919 1.
CS 8 December 1919 4.
Müller reported the communiqué of the Bundesrat to his government. Müller noted that it was, in effect, a withdrawal of Calonder's statement. Müller regarded the communiqué as a successful conclusion to the affair and telegraphed back to Berlin that no further action from Berlin was necessary in the Vorarlberg question. Renner should also be informed that any agreement with Italy on Vorarlberg was now unnecessary and could be harmful politically. 50

Seidler, the new Austrian envoy in Bern, also regarded the communiqué as a withdrawal from the position taken by Calonder in his speech of 21 November in the Ständerat. Seidler reported to the Ballhausplatz that there was no need to fear sudden action by Switzerland in the Vorarlberg question. Within the Bundesrat only Calonder supported the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Seidler reported that the Federal Councillors from the Romance cantons were opposed to the union. Without their support, it would be impossible for the Bundesrat to approve the union. 51

Planta, in a conversation with a German minister, explained that Calonder's speech had not been directed against the German Government, but rather against those circles in Germany who were pursuing an active role in the Vorarlberg question and who had worked particularly against Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. Planta declared that the Swiss

50. Telegram from Müller, Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 7 December 1919. FOL K1075/K276607 (AAAA C1989/A31405). (seen also FOL K1170/K300853).
Telegram in cypher from Müller, Bern to the German Foreign Office, Berlin, 7 December 1919. FOL K1075/K276605.
51. Despatch from Seidler, Bern, to Vienna 8 December 1919. HHSN NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7211/2.
Despatch from Seidler, Bern, to Vienna 8[?] December 1919. HHSN NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7280/2.
Despatch from Seidler, Bern, to Vienna 20 December 1919. HHSN NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-6/2/1920.
Government continued to support the right of self-determination of the Vorarlberg people. The German minister thanked Planta for this explanation and stressed again that the German Government respected the right of self-determination of the Vorarlberg people and that the German Government had done nothing to support the agitators of the Schwabenkapitel or similar circles who were working for the union of Vorarlberg to Germany.  

Boucart, the Swiss minister in Vienna, telegraphed back to report that in diplomatic circles there the Bundesrat's communiqué was regarded as not having gone far enough. Allizé, the French representative in Vienna, who had previously been sympathetic to Vorarlberg's union with Switzerland, was now opposed to it, because he saw in it the first violation of the Peace Treaties. Allizé had assured Bourcart that Austria's union to Germany would not be allowed. Renner was to travel that night (9 December 1919) to Paris to meet with the Supreme Council. Renner had declared that he would only discuss credits and provisioning of Austria, but Bourcart was sure that he would also talk about Vorarlberg. At the Quai d'Orsay, the Swiss Minister Dunant was told that as long as the state of Austria existed, French policy was that Vorarlberg must remain part of it. If Austria were to disintegrate, then it would be better if Vorarlberg joined Switzerland than Germany. Laroche had told Dunant that the views expressed in the Swiss communiqué of 6 December were in agreement with the views of the Quai d'Orsay.

52. Despatch from Berlin to Müller, German minister in Bern, 26 December 1919, reporting conversation of 12 December 1919 with Planta, the Swiss minister in Berlin. FOL K1075/K276657 (AAAA C1989/A31113).
Bourcart, from Vienna, wrote afterwards that Lindley, the British Minister in Vienna, had told him that the Vorarlberg question had been settled by the Supreme Council even before Renner had travelled to Paris. Renner had made approaches to the Supreme Council through the Austrian diplomatic representative in Paris. The Allied diplomats in Vienna all opposed the separation of Vorarlberg from Austria because they saw it as the first step in the collapse of Austria and the inevitable union of most of the Austrian Länder to Germany which would surely follow. 53

Calonder realised the defeat of his policy. He had misjudged the forces working against the union. He had hoped to assure the Vorarlbergers of Swiss support in case they suddenly obtained their independence, but he had over-estimated the likelihood of this to happen. He wrote to Bourcart:

53. Telegram from Bourcart, Swiss minister in Vienna, to the Political Department 9 December 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 583.
Telegram from Dunant, Swiss minister in Paris, to the Political Department 13 December 1919.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 606.
Letter from Bourcart, Swiss minister in Vienna, to the Political Department 4 January 1920.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 636.
Telegram in cypher from Riepenhausen, German minister at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 5 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276592 (AAAA C1989/A31261).

Riepenhausen learnt of Allize's disquiet over the events in Vorarlberg and of Allize's communication with Bourcart, the Swiss minister in Vienna, and reported back to Berlin.

Telegram in cypher from Stolberg, German Embassy in Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 11 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276624 (AAAA C1989/A31750).
...Concerning the Vorarlberg question, I am not officially informed of the resolutions of the Paris Conference. It appears that they are of the opinion that no piece of territory apportioned to the Republic of Austria can be separated from it. We must quietly await further developments in this question. It will first be acute for us, as I have said continually, if Vorarlberg should separate from the Austrian Republic. Then there are the unavoidable alternatives: incorporation into the German state or association with economic support of an autonomous Vorarlberg with Switzerland....

54. Letter from Calonder to Bourcart, Swiss minister in Vienna 20 December 1919. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 624.
CHAPTER 7

THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT ACTS

After World War I, the German people (and Government) expected that German-Austria would join Germany as a component state of their new federal republic. They hoped to stop the loss of German lands to Poland (Silesia, Danzig, Allenstein, Marienwerder) Czechoslovakia (German Bohemia and Moravia), Hungary (Burgenland), Jugoslavia (German South Carinthia and South Styria, the areas around Klagenfurt, Villach, Radkersburg and Marburg), Italy (German South Tirol) and Switzerland (Vorarlberg). In the neighbouring Allgäu, and other areas in Bavaria, and in Württemberg, there was particular concern about Vorarlberg. Town councils in southern Bavaria appealed to the Bavarian Government in Munich and to the central German Government in Berlin to act to try to block the movement in Vorarlberg for union to Switzerland and to do all they could to keep Vorarlberg German.¹

When plans for the plebiscite were announced at the end of April 1919, the German Government took notice of the question. The central government in Berlin worked through the Prussian representative in Stuttgart, the capital of Württemberg, to establish relations with circles in or concerned about Vorarlberg. Wilhelm Padel, the German consul in Bregenz, where he was in charge of the German Passport Bureau, reported that the majority of Vorarlbergers were

¹. Letter from the City of Kempten to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 22 March 1919. FOL K1075/K275996 (AAAA C1989/A9712). (seen also FOL K1170/K300589).
Letter from the City of Stählin to the German Foreign Office, Berlin, FOL K1075/K276002 (AAAA C1989/A9712). (seen also FOL K1170/K300590).
Letter from the City of Memmingen to the German Foreign Office, Berlin. FOL K1075/K276003 (AAAA C1989/A10348).
Christian Socials and wished for a union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Those opposed to this projected union were the industrialists, because of economic factors, and the German nationalist party in Vorarlberg (the deutschfreiheitliche Partei) for national reasons. More should be done in Germany to encourage those Vorarlbergers who wanted union with Germany.  

In a German Government report of 5 May 1919 on Vorarlberg, it was recognised that the geographic, economic and social structures of Vorarlberg were like those of Switzerland. Because of these close relationships, and the desire to escape the consequences of the war, the idea of union to Switzerland was popular in Vorarlberg. Some Vorarlbergers wanted union with the German state of Württemberg because they believed that Vorarlberg would enjoy a greater potential for development in Germany than in Switzerland. For Germany the importance of Vorarlberg was clear. Its union would be a major factor in Germany's plans for expansion. The union could be a catalyst for the reorganisation of the borders of the south German states. It would have economic benefits. The report added that

...The importance of the union of Vorarlberg for Germany is obvious. Besides being a compensation for lost territory, the acquisition of this Land with its valuable branches of industry offers to Germany a place where money can be invested. There is also much waterpower which can be developed.

The actual great importance of the union of Vorarlberg to Germany is in the political arena. Although there is a territorial connection through the Valley of the Inn to Switzerland, Vorarlberg is the actual key to Austria's communications to the west. If Germany possessed Vorarlberg, it would put Austria in such a state of dependence that, with time, Austria would have to join Germany. But if Vorarlberg falls to the "world junction" of Switzerland, the possibilities for an independent development of Austria are much greater.

2. Telegram in cypher from the German Foreign Office, Berlin, to Stuttgart 1 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276023 (AAAA C1989/A13223).
Despatch from Padel, German Consul in Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 26 April 1919.
FOL K1075/K276027 (AAAA C1989/A13586).
(seen also FOL K1170/K300610).
This importance of Vorarlberg for Germany, which will not remain unnoticed by our enemies, and the strength of the movement for the union to Switzerland make it seem imperative to begin immediately a strong but cautious (in view of the declaration of independence by Tirol and the forthcoming plebiscite in Vorarlberg) propaganda campaign.

The best way to fight Swiss endeavours would be to skilfully point out the dangers of French and Italian claims which threaten Switzerland if the union of Vorarlberg should come about. At the same time, through leading personalities in Vorarlberg, warnings of a German irredenta in Vorarlberg in case of union of that Land to Switzerland should be made.

The idea of union to Germany should be strongly encouraged in Vorarlberg. Generous help with foodstuffs, pecuniary support to communes and security against too great war burdens as well as cultural guarantees are necessary for success. It would be best for the state of Württemberg and private or communal groups to approach the Vorarlbergers, rather than the German Reich, since Württemberg with its agricultural character could best take over the provisioning of Vorarlberg.

Even if the Entente prevents the union of Austria as a whole to Germany, it is possible that the movement for union of Vorarlberg to Württemberg as a part of a particularistic Greater Swabian movement would not meet the same opposition from the Allies as when Germany itself or its agencies were to take part in the question. That Germany would be financing the whole affair would naturally remain a secret.

The general German interest in a union of Vorarlberg to Württemberg and not to Bavaria is because Bavaria must already take over the security of the whole southeastern border of Germany from the Egerland [the area around Eger and Karlsbad in western Bohemia] along the Czech and Austrian, and perhaps the Italian, borders. There is also the need for a new important border area to be put under the protection of Württemberg, which at the moment has no border areas. Although Württemberg does not touch directly on Vorarlberg, the Bodensee offers a completely adequate connection. Naturally it would be good if the old Vorarlberg district of Weiler (Hoheneck) could go to Württemberg as a connection to Vorarlberg, but Lindau would have to remain Bavaria's port on the Bodensee. For the loss of Weiler (Hoheneck) Bavaria could have, if possible, parts of German Bohemia (Egerland, Böhmerwaldgebiet) or the Franconian (Catholic) district of Mergentheim in the North of Württemberg.

Besides, Prussia will make territorial sacrifices to Württemberg by giving it Hohenzollern. Bavaria could therefore probably be encouraged to give up a small bit of territory as a sacrifice to help Germany to make an important gain.3

One can see the importance Vorarlberg could have on the internal politics and boundaries of southern Germany. Though nominally sovereign, the German states were not independent. In common with most other

federal states, they could not have territory taken from them without their consent. The union of Vorarlberg to Germany posed a major internal problem for Germany. Vorarlberg bordered Bavaria. It was separated from Württemberg by a narrow strip of Bavarian territory. But the Vorarlbergers were Alemannic. They were related to the Swiss Germans and to the people of Württemberg, Baden, Hohenzollern (a Prussian Duchy in the Southwest of Germany), the Bavarian district of Schwaben Neuburg and Alsace, all of whom were also Alemannic. All of these groups were unrelated to the Bavarians and to the Austrians east of the Arlberg, who were of the Bajuwaren Stamm. Therefore the project for union of Vorarlberg to Germany had as its method the union of Vorarlberg to Württemberg and not to Bavaria. The central German Government would work through its agent the Prussian minister in Stuttgart, the capital of Württemberg, and not through the minister in Munich, the capital of Bavaria. The Schwabenkapitel, founded by Dr. Karl Magirus, the rector of the girls' school in Ulm, had as its aim the establishment of a state including all Swabs or Alemannic peoples, except those in Switzerland and in Alsace. It was the major Pan-German organisation in Vorarlberg. In a secret report on Vorarlberg, Count Hans Adolf von Moltke, the Prussian minister in Stuttgart, wrote that the Swabian movement should be encouraged. But it presented difficulties. The Government of Württemberg was restrained from acting. If it encouraged the movement in Vorarlberg, it would also be encouraging the movement in the Bavarian district of Schwaben Neuburg. That would damage Württemberg's relations with Bavaria. Moltke wrote that a greater Württemberg including the German states of Baden and Hohenzollern and Vorarlberg would be as large as, or larger than, Bavaria. This would not be a bad thing. An enlarged Württemberg would be useful as a counterbalance to both Prussia and Bavaria. Württemberg was loyal to
the unity of Germany. The leadership of the south German states would be in more reliable hands in Württemberg than in Bavaria. Moltke suggested that Berlin inform the Government of Württemberg that the union of Vorarlberg to Germany would be a good thing, and that Germany expected that Württemberg, in the interests of the German people, would accept Vorarlberg. Bavaria would be informed of this decision to avoid misunderstandings. The Vorarlberg Government would be informed that the central German Government and the Württemberg Government wished for Vorarlberg to join, and talks could be started in secret, to avoid offending the Austrian Government. Germany should send agents into Vorarlberg and make contacts there to collect information and to conduct propaganda activities. The German Government would establish a fund for this purpose, but it must make sure that the money was used only in Vorarlberg and not in other German states to support the Greater Swabian idea. Moltke commented that:

...For Germany the addition of a land which produces wood, milk and cattle products and textiles can only be advantageous. It would also be regrettable from a national point of view if this completely German area were to be lost to Switzerland....

The German Embassy in Vienna sent an official, Dr. Ernst Otto Berger, to Tirol and Vorarlberg in April 1919 to investigate conditions

FOL K1075/K276038 (AAAA C1989/A13765).
(see also FOL K1170/K300614).
Report from Moltke, Stuttgart, to Berlin 8 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276038 (AAAA C1989/A13980).
Letter from Dr. Karl Magirus, Ulm, head of the Schwabenkapitel, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 5 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276072 (AAAA C1989/A14557).
in those Länder. He went supposedly as a private citizen to study the political and economic situations. That he was a German agent was kept a secret. Dr. Berger reported that Vorarlberg still was not "lost", although the danger was great. If Switzerland did not reject Vorarlberg, then it would be difficult indeed to save Vorarlberg.

Dr. Berger noted the importance of Vorarlberg for Germany. Although it was a small Land, it had waterpower which could be developed into an important source of energy. Vorarlberg exported wood, meat and dairy products, whilst its potato and flour needs could easily be met by Germany. Vorarlberg had important industry, especially embroidery, which could be developed further. But even more important would be the damage done to Germany's position by a union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. The unity of Austria's Anschluss to Germany would be broken, the value of Vienna's declaration for the Anschluss would be lessened. Tirol and other Austrian Länder might follow Vorarlberg's example. The Entente would find a split in the Austrian Anschluss movement, which it could use to its own advantage. Dr. Berger suggested some steps to be taken to discourage Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. Dr. Berger advised that a German representative might be appointed to keep in contact with the various political parties in Vorarlberg to transmit their wishes to the German and Wurttemberg Governments. Contacts between leading personalities in Vorarlberg who were interested in a Greater Swabia and Wurttemberg should be kept up and encouraged. Germany should be prepared to concede as much as possible. Contacts should be made with leading members of the Christian Social Party, and the Vorarlbergers should be assured of favourable replies in matters relating to the economy and the Church. Articles by leading German Catholic politicians describing what Germany had to offer in economic and church affairs should be prepared for
publication in Vorarlberg newspapers. Critical articles on the activities of those for union to Switzerland would also be useful. The German public should be made aware and sympathetic to Vorarlberg's just economic interests. But German and Austrian agents must act cautiously, because as Dr. Berger warned, the Vorarlbergers were very proud of their independence and their right to self-determination. Since the Vorarlbergers rejected all attempts at guardianship, only steps which took account of the feelings, needs and wishes of the Vorarlbergers could be considered.  

* * *

After the plebiscite of 11 May 1919 in Vorarlberg, Dr. Ender told Padel, the German consul in Bregenz, that the plebiscite did not prejudice the question of Vorarlberg's future. It simply authorised the start of negotiations with Switzerland. Padel urged the German Government to have the Austrian Government keep Dr. Ender from bringing up the Vorarlberg question at the Paris Peace Conference (which it did). The German Government also wanted the Austrian Government to prevent Vorarlberg officials from conducting negotiations directly with Switzerland.  

5. Report from Dr. Berger on his travels through Tirol and Vorarlberg in April 1919, with a covering letter from Graf Botho v. Wedel, the German Ambassador at Vienna to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 10 May 1919. FOL K1160/K295725 (AAAA C1994/A14296).

Telegram in cypher from Berlin to the German Ambassador at Vienna 13 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276065 (AAAA C1989/A14268). 
Telegram in cypher from Padel, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 12 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276066 (AAAA C1989/A14392).
Affairs, Dr. Otto Bauer replied that the Austrian Central Government was too weak to dare to try to put pressure on Vorarlberg. But since Vorarlberg must also negotiate with Vienna, the Austrian Government would negotiate very dilatorily and would try to block Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland by emphasising Vorarlberg's financial burdens to Austria.7

The German Government suggested the following moves to its embassy in Bern. The Swiss Government should be told that the movement in Vorarlberg was influenced merely by a desire to escape from higher taxes and economic difficulties. The Swiss Government should also be told that it was surprising that Switzerland should be willing to risk the principle that its territory was inviolate and that it was surprising that Switzerland would participate in the Entente-led robbing of German territory, participation which would naturally be harmful to German-Swiss relations. Reports should be published in the press warning Protestant circles in Switzerland of the threatened change in the religious balance in the Confederation if the strongly clerical Vorarlberg were accepted. The Italian press should be encouraged to report that Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland would hurt the Romance groups in Switzerland and could lead to the questioning of Swiss territorial integrity (i.e. Italian claims on the Italian-speaking parts of Switzerland). The question of a German irredentist movement and its dangers for Switzerland if Vorarlberg were accepted could also be illuminated.8

The German Government used Georg Locher, a South German politician, who knew Dr. Ender and other politicians in Vorarlberg, as an

7. Telegram in cypher from Wedel, German Ambassador at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 16 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276093 (AAAA C1989/A14756).

8. Telegram in cypher from Berlin to the German Embassy in Bern 19 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276107 (AAAA C1989/A14756).
agent. Locher tried to have the Vorarlberg opponents of union to Switzerland organise a public demonstration to discredit the plebiscite. Moltke also asked another South German politician with contacts in Vorarlberg to try to do the same thing. Locher reported that Dr. Ender was not absolutely against the idea of union to Germany. But he believed that Vorarlberg’s economic future would be more secure in Switzerland. Dr. Ender told Locher that he would wait to see what attitude the Entente would take towards Austria’s proposed Anschluss to Germany and to the Vorarlberg question. But negotiations with Switzerland would begin if the Swiss showed an interest in negotiating. Dr. Ender said that the idea of a union of Vorarlberg to a Greater Swabia was in incompetent hands in Vorarlberg. The Pan-German leader, Dr. Ritter, was personally unpopular. Those for a union of Vorarlberg to a Greater Swabia were working with the Deutschfreiheitliche Party, Ender continued. Some influential Christian Socials in Vorarlberg were for union to Württemberg, but since that union had been made into a party matter and belonged to the Deutschfreiheitliche platform, the Christian Socials could not come out openly for Württemberg. Yet without the support of the Christian Socials, who enjoyed an overwhelming majority in Vorarlberg, any project for union to Württemberg must fail. If Baden should join Württemberg, then there would be renewed interest for such a move in Vorarlberg as well, Ender had told Locher. Locher decided that he should found a multi-party action committee to support Vorarlberg’s union to Swabia. Within Vorarlberg there should be a predominantly Christian Social pro-Swabian organisation to replace the deutschfreiheitliche Schwabenkapitel. Only then would Swabian propaganda begin to enjoy success in Vorarlberg. To support these plans, Locher hoped to obtain a grant from the German Government,
which he did. 9

Although Dr. Ender was a convinced supporter of union to Switzerland, where his sympathies lay (his wife was from Appenzell/Innerhoden and he had in-laws there), he tried to keep open the possibility of union to Germany. The Vorarlbergers wanted most of all to separate from the rest of Austria; Switzerland, neutral, ordered and rich, had obvious appeal. But if Vorarlberg could not join Switzerland, then Germany would do. Vorarlberg wanted to remain a separate state, another reason for the interest in union to Switzerland. Dr. Ender, a paternalistic leader, was interested in the possibilities of Vorarlberg's forming a completely separate state within the German federal republic. But if that could not be arranged, he preferred that Vorarlberg unite with Württemberg rather than with Bavaria. The Vorarlbergers had a similar dislike for the Bavarians as they had for the Tiroleans. Dr. Ender kept secret from the Swiss and his Swissophile Vorarlberg friends his friendly contacts with the Germans. He was much more conciliatory to Germany in private, especially amongst his German friends, than he was in public. He wanted to avoid a complete break with Germany. Nevertheless, not all German officials were fooled. Padel, the German consul in Bregenz, labelled Dr. Ender as the greatest opponent to the union of Vorarlberg

Telegram in cypher from Padel, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 12 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276066 (AAAA C1989/A14392).
Note from Minister Erzberger to v. Grünau, German Foreign Office 16 May 1919. FOL K1075/K276098 (AAAA C1989/A14815).
to Germany. But Padel agreed with some of what he said. The
Vorarlberger Tagblatt, the organ of the Schwabenkapitel in Vorarlberg,
was regarded by the German Government officials who knew it as
unreliable. Both Padel and Dr. Berger criticised it for its personal
attacks on Dr. Ender and other leading personalities, and for its
attacks on the Christian Social Party and its strident, shrill,
immoderate tones. Padel was also angered by attacks the Vorarlberger
Tagblatt made on German leaders who were Jewish. Moltke wrote that
the Schwabenkapitel and its leader in Vorarlberg, Dr. Ritter, were
ineffective and incompetent. 10

* * *

The German Government did send an agent into Vorarlberg to
conduct a propaganda campaign. Dr. Berger, who had travelled through
Tirol and Vorarlberg in April, was sent back to Vorarlberg at the
beginning of June for this purpose. Ten thousand Marks (several
hundred Pounds) were put at his disposal to be paid to him out of the
"Austrian Fund" through Padel at Bregenz. Moltke in Stuttgart was
authorised to spend a further ten thousand Marks. 11 But Vorarlberg

10. Letter from Padel, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin
FOL K1075/K276188 (AAAA C1989/A18850).
Letter from Moltke, Stuttgart, to the German Foreign Office,
Berlin 15 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276099 (AAAA C1989/A14369).

11. Letter from the German Foreign Office, Berlin, to Padel, Bregenz
27 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276130 (AAAA C1989/A15718).
German Foreign Office Memorandum 31 May 1919.
FOL K1075/K276138 (AAAA C1989/A15718).
continued to be a cause of concern to Germany. The Austrians were even more passive in the question. If they did nothing to hinder Vorarlberg's attempted union to Switzerland, Germany would have to act more forcefully. The Wilhelmstrasse believed that the central German Government should come to an agreement with Bavaria and Württemberg on Vorarlberg. Since Vorarlberg was not at all interested in union to Bavaria, but might be willing to join Württemberg, Bavaria should be convinced to cede territory to Württemberg to form a land connection between Württemberg and Vorarlberg. Winning Vorarlberg for Germany was more important than small changes in the internal borders of Germany, the German Foreign Office believed. Contacts should be established with leading personalities in Vorarlberg, but since Dr. Ender was for the union to Switzerland, he should be avoided. The Wilhelmstrasse considered trying to manipulate the Vice-Chancellor of Austria, Dr. Jodok Fink, a Christian Social from Vorarlberg, into the leadership of the Christian Social Party in Vorarlberg. Fink was known to be a Pan-German. If he spoke out energetically against union to Switzerland, he might influence the people of Vorarlberg and could also cause the Swiss to lose enthusiasm for the projected union. Whatever was done must be done with care, because if the Entente learnt of the German activities, they might decide to give Vorarlberg to Switzerland. The Wilhelmstrasse memorandum warned that if Germany did nothing, Vorarlberg might soon be united to Switzerland.12

Padel thought that the solution lay in Vienna, since it seemed that the Swiss Government was not willing to negotiate with Vorarlberg.

12. German Foreign Office Memorandum on Vorarlberg 7 July 1919.
FOL K1075/K276200 (AAAA C1989/A19367).
without the consent of the Austrian Government. But Dr. Berger and Moltke were decided that the solution to the Vorarlberg problem lay with Dr. Ender. He must be won over to the German side. Therefore, propaganda activities within Vorarlberg must avoid personal attacks on Dr. Ender or attacks on interests closely connected with him. Both Dr. Berger and Moltke thought that the Schwabenkapitel was of little value to the German cause. Much more useful were the activities of Locher and other South German Catholic politicians to establish contacts with the Christian Socials.

A good opportunity for Germany came when food became short in Vorarlberg in the autumn of 1919. The Vorarlberg Government sent an agent to Germany to buy potatoes. Padel wanted the request for potatoes to be refused, but Moltke saw in Vorarlberg's need a way of influencing Dr. Ender. Padel commented:


...I would like to point out once again that an unfavourable attitude towards Vorarlberg on Germany's part would not fail to have an effect on the great mass of the Vorarlberg people and their leaders, despite their apparent inclination towards Switzerland. Even a temporary refusal to grant Vorarlberg economic advantages...would certainly have a beneficial effect in the Vorarlberg question. If the Vorarlbergers notice that they are not getting cheaper Württemberg potatoes because of the Swiss movement, which they support without reflection because the [Christian Social] Party and the parish priest want it that way, while, because of the fall in the value of the Krone, which is scarcely worth 10 Swiss centimes now, they can no longer pay for imports of Swiss potatoes, they will begin to realize where the policies of the Landeshauptmann [Dr. Ender] and his scare­crows will lead....

The first delegation from Vorarlberg to Württemberg to negotiate for the delivery of foodstuffs was not received because of the telegram sent by Neubner and Pirker to Clemenceau, which the Pan-German nationalists and the Germans regarded as an act of treason. The next delegation, two members of the Vorarlberg Landesrat, Natter and Luger, went to Stuttgart to negotiate with the Württemberg Government about potatoes. This official delegation told the Württembergers that the question of Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland was dying down. Its supporters were now in the minority, it was alleged. Moltke, the Prussian minister in Stuttgart, took part in the negotiations. He insisted that since these were important negotiations between two foreign states, the Landeshauptmann of Vorarlberg, Dr. Ender, must come to Stuttgart personally to talk with the President of Württemberg. Also, Vorarlberg should offer Germany something in exchange for the potatoes, perhaps fruit or cattle or the use of some of Vorarlberg's waterpower. Padel was dissatisfied with the course of events. He thought that the Vorarlberg delegates were simply buyers with nothing to offer and should have been sent straight away. Moltke disagreed. The two delegates were members of the Landesrat and had a letter signed by Dr. Ender granting them full powers to negotiate. Germany would use the negotiations to put pressure on the Vorarlbergers. Moltke
reported to Berlin that Baumann, Minister of Food in the Württemberg Government, had told the Vorarlberg Delegation that:

...Württemberg should send foodstuffs purely as a humane and neighbourly gesture without demanding or expecting Vorarlberg to draw closer to Württemberg politically. But the way in which the [Vorarlberger] Werbeausschuss for union to Switzerland was continuing to act and especially because the Werbeausschuss had identified itself with the traitors to the people Pirker and Neubner, the already difficult negotiations would be still further complicated. He [Baumann] was sorry to have only just learnt of the latest move of the Werbeausschuss, otherwise he would not have agreed to meet Mr. Natter [of the Vorarlberg delegation]. Natter was obviously affected by this declaration and tried to portray the activities of the Werbeausschuss as of completely private character, which had nothing to do with the Government. Baumann replied that because of the way the whole affair had developed, in Germany it was customary to identify the Vorarlberg Government with the Werbeausschuss. If this were an error, it would be helpful, or perhaps indispensable, for Dr. Ender to make an official declaration to this effect. Otherwise he [Baumann] did not know how it would be possible to convince the Government in Berlin and the general population to agree to the extensive demands of Vorarlberg. Natter promised to do what was necessary....

Moltke suggested that Dr. Ender could go to speak with Padel or come personally to Stuttgart. As Moltke wrote to Berlin:

...What will come of this remains to be seen. It is scarcely to be expected that Ender will go to Canossa without further ado. But on the other hand, he would be in a bad situation if the very important negotiations for food fail because of his obstinacy. In any case, we must use the opportunity given to us by the present negotiations to discredit the movement for union to Switzerland as much as possible....16

Moltke wanted to make it easier for Ender to change his position. Moltke did not think that a public declaration on Ender's part was what was wanted, since that might prove to be a short-term victory. The potato negotiations should be used subtly for propaganda purposes. It should be emphasised that Germany was offering brotherly help and expected nothing from Vorarlberg in return. But Vorarlberg should be

"brotherly", too. It was not to be expected that the whole question of Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland would be dropped immediately, but the potato negotiations could prove a way of putting a check on the activities of the Werbeausschuss in Vorarlberg. Vorarlberg was too important to be lost, and any means possible should be used to keep it from Switzerland. In a letter to Padel, Moltke emphasised these points and wrote that he, too, intended to obtain political advantages from the potato deal. Moltke believed that Ender would soon come to Stuttgart to take part in the potato negotiations, since the Württemberg Government would not negotiate without him. When Ender arrived in Stuttgart, the Germans intended to demand that he place checks on the activities of the Werbeausschuss and that he give a binding declaration that the Vorarlberg Government was not supporting the Werbeausschuss. Moltke believed that that was all that could be achieved at first. But at least the Werbeausschuss would be less active for a time and official contact through the Württemberg Government would be established with Dr. Ender. Once in contact with him, the Württemberg Government would try to gain whatever advantages it could. Padel was not convinced. He wrote that once the Vorarlbergers had the potatoes, the movement for union to Switzerland would begin again in


full force. Padel wrote bitterly that the Vorarlbergers were interested in material benefits and did not care about their "German brothers". He advised his Government not to trust Dr. Ender or the Vorarlberg Government. 19

When Dr. Ender did finally arrive in Stuttgart in October 1919, he had talks with Moltke. Dr. Ender explained that originally the Vorarlberg Government had considered holding talks with the Württemberg and Bavarian Governments, but because of Spartacist terror in Stuttgart and Munich, it was not possible then. Thus the possibility of union to Switzerland came to the fore. With the plebiscite of 11 May, the Vorarlberg people had shown that they wanted negotiations to begin with the Swiss Government. The Vorarlberg Government simply complied with their wishes, and postponed talks with Stuttgart, since it was impossible to negotiate with two countries at once. Moltke reported that Dr. Ender never spoke of his personal views. He said that he was simply following the will of the people. Dr. Ender denied that the Vorarlberg Government had anything to do with the Werbeausschuss or that the Werbeausschuss was directing the whole movement for union to Switzerland. Dr. Ender repeated that the movement reflected the views of many Vorarlbergers. Moltke asked Dr. Ender to try to restrain the Werbeausschuss, so that negotiations with Germany for food would not be hindered. Dr. Ender then asked what the possibilities for joining Germany were. First Moltke suggested the union of Vorarlberg to Bavaria, since they shared a long common border; but Dr. Ender replied that union to Bavaria was out of the question. The Vorarlbergers did not like the Bavarians. Moltke then mentioned the possibility of union to Württemberg. Here there was the problem of the lack of a

FOL Kl075/K276373 (AAAA C1989/A27386).
Letter from Padel, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin, 6 November 1919.
FOL Kl075/K276455 (AAAA C1989/A29413)
(seen also FOL Kl170/K300838).
connection over land. But Dr. Ender was not enthusiastic about union to Württemberg or a Greater Swabia either. He explained to Moltke:

...You must not forget that the Vorarlbergers are very attached to the individuality of their state. They would only merge with another state unhappily. Do not think that this question is insignificant to the Vorarlbergers, they read a lot, they think about it a lot and they are attached to their individuality. If we were to join Switzerland, we would be a relatively large canton. But against 60 million Germans, our 150,000 people is nothing. Couldn't we join Germany and still preserve the individuality of our state?

Moltke records that he replied cautiously that he could not give a definite answer, but such a solution might be possible. Previously each federal state in Germany had had its own military, railway, post, et cetera which would have made the creation of a dwarf state of some 150,000 impossible. But under the new German constitution the individual German states had lost a lot of their powers and remained little more than self-governing cultural corporations; therefore it was possible that Vorarlberg could remain an independent state within Germany. Dr. Ender was interested in this and Moltke said that he would learn further about the possibilities for an independent Vorarlberg within the German federation. In his report, Moltke emphasised the importance of securing for Vorarlberg as much independence as possible within Germany. If Vorarlberg could be promised independent status within Germany, that would be the best way of bringing Dr. Ender away from his Swiss ideas, and it was necessary to win Dr. Ender over in order to block the projected union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. 20

FOL K1075/K276411 (AAAA C1989/A28197).

In a later meeting between Moltke and Dr. Ender, the possibility of Vorarlberg's being an independent state was discussed once again. The Vorarlbergers did not want to remain under Vienna. Neither did they want to join Bavaria. Nor were they enthusiastic about union to Württemberg. Tirol was out of the question. Therefore the possibility of being an independent canton within Switzerland had Contd. on p. 222.
Then Dr. Ender spoke with the Württemberg Minister of Food, Baumann, but Württemberg could not promise to ship enough food at the right price to Vorarlberg. The Vorarlbergers decided to send a delegation to Berlin at the end of October to negotiate there on the food question. Moltke advised that Germany could take over the complete provisioning of Vorarlberg since the Land was so small, and Germany should do so in order to protect its interests. Nothing had come of the negotiations in Stuttgart, and if the Vorarlbergers returned empty-handed from Berlin, the successes made in the fight against the Swiss propaganda would be jeopardized. If Germany helped Vorarlberg now, that might finally finish the project for union to Switzerland. Already Germany was having success. The activities of the Werbeausschuss had been restrained. Because of the negotiations in Stuttgart they had not been able to hold a meeting that week in Vorarlberg. If Germany promised to help Vorarlberg, it could continue to apply more and more pressure. Vorarlberg was desperate now for flour and potatoes. But in the end Switzerland would not let the Vorarlbergers starve. If the situation deteriorated, and Switzerland saved Vorarlberg a second time, Vorarlberg would probably be lost for good, which,

20. Contd.

great appeal. Moltke noted that Dr. Ender no longer counted on union to Switzerland, but his antipathy to Vienna was stronger than ever. Now Dr. Ender seemed very interested in the possibility of autonomy for Land Vorarlberg within Germany. Although Dr. Ender still preferred union to Switzerland, if Vorarlberg could be autonomous within Germany, Dr. Ender would probably follow the wishes of the Vorarlberg people. There was less enthusiasm for union to Switzerland in Vorarlberg now. Dr. Ender was interested in negotiating on the use of Vorarlberg's water-power to supply Württemberg with hydroelectric power. This was a good sign, Moltke noted.

Letter from Moltke, Stuttgart to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 16 November 1919.
FOL K1075/K276470 (AAAA C1989/A30228).
because of Vorarlberg's importance as a transit centre and as a source of energy (waterpower), would cause irreparable damage to German interests. 21

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Although they were forbidden by the Treaties of Versailles and St. Germain to do anything which might alienate Austria's independence, the German and the Austrian Governments worked together to block the possible union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Such activities were, of course, hidden from public view. To an appeal from the City Council of Kaufbeuren in the Allgäu that the German Government should act to save Vorarlberg, the Wilhelmstrasse replied that through the Treaty of Versailles, Germany had recognized Austria's frontiers, which could only be changed with the consent of the League of Nations. Therefore Germany could do nothing to encourage the Austrian Länder to join Germany, nor could it take action to stop the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. 22

Meanwhile the potato negotiations were going on. The German Government was conducting propaganda in Vorarlberg. It supplied money to those opposed to the union of Switzerland. It tried to link the Vorarlberg question with the question of possible compensation for

   FOL K1075/K276411 (AAAA C1989/A28197).
   FOL K1075/K276422 (AAAA C1989/A28239).
Telegram in cypher from Moltke, Stuttgart, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 27 October 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276409 (AAAA C1989/A28176).
Letter from Moltke, Stuttgart, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 16 November 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276470 (AAAA C1989/A30228).

22. Letter from the German Foreign Office to the Stadtrat of Kaufbeuren im Allgäu October 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276267 (AAAA C1989/A22811).
Italy in Ticino in case the union took place. It tried to use the Jesuit question to upset the Swiss. The Wilhelmstrasse tried to contact the Jesuits through an intermediary to see if they could not campaign in Vorarlberg against their possible expulsion which might follow if Vorarlberg were to become a part of Switzerland. Such a campaign would be of value because the Vorarlbergers were very religious. The Austrians were working along similar lines. The Austrian Government also paid subsidies to the Schwabenkapitel.\(^{23}\)

One little difficulty to this intergovernmental cooperation was the question of how Vorarlberg would join Germany. Austria wanted to keep Vorarlberg and expected that the Land would come to Germany as a part of Austria, when that republic joined the German republic as a federal state. This was certainly the view of the Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Renner. The Germans did not want Vorarlberg to be lost to Switzerland. They did not care to which German state Vorarlberg belonged, thus they were willing to consider the union in whatever form was most convenient. But the German minister at Vienna, Carl Alexander v. Riepenhausen, assured the Austrian Chancellor that it was the sincere hope of the German Government that Austria should keep its present

\(^{23}\) Letter from Werner v. Grünau, German Foreign Office, to Moltke, Stuttgart 11 November 1919. FOL K1075/K2764460 (AAAA C1989/A29421).


Letter from Riepenhausen, German minister at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 21 October 1919. FOL K1075/K276387 (AAAA C1989/A27831).

(see also FOL K1170/K300750).
In the Berlin Protocol of 2 March 1919, signed by the German Foreign Minister Count Ulrich Brockdorff-Rantzau and by the German-Austrian Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Dr. Otto Bauer, the two states agreed that German-Austria should join Germany as one autonomous state. If the parts of German-Austria wished to join Germany independently from German-Austria, the approval of both the German and the German-Austrian governments must be obtained. - Berlin Protocol of 2 March 1919 on the Anschluss question.

HHSA Präsidium Faszikal 261 961/PräS/1919.

Telegram in cypher from Wedel, German Ambassador at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 10 July 1919.
FOL K1075/K276207 (AAAA C1989/A19765).

Very secret telegram in cypher from the German Foreign Office, Berlin, to the German Embassy at Vienna 15 October 1919.
FOL K1075/K276359 (AAAA C1989/A26726).

...Da wir wie ohne weiteres verständlich, wichtiges politisches Interesse daran haben, Anschluß an Schweiz zu sabotieren, so bitte ich, in geeignet scheinender Form bei, gelegentlicher Besprechung mit Staatskanzler Renner die Gefahren, die von Vorarlberg dem Zusammenhalt Deutschösterreichs drohen, auch ihrerseits zu unterstreichen, und dabei den Nachdruck auf unseren Wunsch zu legen, Deutschösterreich zu erhalten. Selbstverständlich darf nicht der Eindruck erweckt werden, als ob wir Vorarlberg zum Deutschen Reich evtl. heruberziehen wollen. Bericht über Stellungnahme dortiger Regierung hierzu erbeten.

Letter from Riepenhausen, German minister at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 21 October 1919.
FOL K1075/K276387 (AAAA C1989/A27831).
(see also FOL K1170/K300750).

...Zum Schlusse wies der Herr Staatskanzler darauf hin, daß eine enge Fühlungnahme in den Angelegenheiten Vorarlbergs zwischen ihm und der Reichsregierung erwünscht sei und fügte hinzu, die Agitation des Schwabenkapitels, die wie er etwas vertraulich erwähnte, von ihm im Geheimen mit Geldmittel unterstützt werde, deshalb nicht unerwünscht sei, weil sie die Gedanken des Voralberger Volkes von der Schweiz ablenkten.

Von meiner Bemerkung, daß er der aufrichtige Wunsch der Reichsregierung sei, Deutschösterreich in seinem jetzigen Zustande zu erhalten, nahm er mit Befriedigung Kenntnis.

Da der Herr Staatskanzler die Vorarlberger Politik des hiesigen Staatsamtes für Äußeres anscheinend persönlich bearbeitet und durch die heutige Aussprache eine nähere Fühlungnahme in der Frage eingelegt ist, möchte ich gehorsam zur Erwägung stellen, mir die laufende Berichterstattung aus Bern, betreffend Vorarlberg, zu übermitteln und mit Rücksicht auf die zwischen den Reisen der einzelnen Kuriere entstehenden Pausen, das Wichtigste telegraphisch mitteilen zu wollen, damit ich in der Lage bin, hier den Faden mit Herrn Dr. Renner weiterzuspinnen. Herr Dr. Renner selbst hat mir aus eigenem Antrieb ein geheimes Memorandum in Aussicht gestellt, das ihm kürzlich über die Angelegenheit übermittelt worden ist.
With each crisis, there was an upswing in activity. In October 1919 the Germans feared that Vorarlberg might suddenly declare independence from Austria. The German Embassy in Vienna was instructed to discuss with Chancellor Renner the dangers such a move would have for the integrity of Austria and how much Germany hoped that Austria would remain intact. The Embassy was instructed to avoid giving the impression that Germany might wish Vorarlberg for itself. Dr. Renner told the German minister that he would simply throw out of his office any Vorarlberg delegation seeking independence for the Land. If Vorarlberg appealed to the League of Nations, Dr. Renner said, he could count on the support of Italy for the Austrian cause. He had already spoken secretly about it with the Italians at St. Germain. Dr. Renner also said that Federal Councillor Gustave Ador had been warned privately from Italy that Italy would bring up the question of Ticino in connection with the Vorarlberg question. Dr. Renner told the German minister that this move had been very successful and had caused the Vorarlberg question to be left unmentioned in the Swiss press for several weeks. Dr. Renner hoped to continue this line of action and hoped that some German newspapers would also discuss the two questions together. Dr. Renner and Riepenhausen, the German minister, agreed to work closely together on the Vorarlberg question.

At the end of November 1919, encouraged by Calonder's speech, it seemed that the Vorarlbergers might declare complete independence from Austria. The Landtag was to meet at the beginning of December to discuss Vorarlberg's future. Both the Germans and the Austrians were

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Letter from Riepenhausen, German minister at Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 21 October 1919. FOL K1075/K276387 (AAAA C1989/A27831).
very worried. Moltke suggested to the Wilhelmstrasse that Jodok Fink, the Austrian Vice-Chancellor and a Vorarlberger, go to Bregenz before the Landtag met. Fink was a Christian Social, but he was known to support union to Germany. In a private conversation with Riepenhausen, Fink had emphasised the importance of food shipments to Vorarlberg from Germany and expressed the hope that Vorarlberg could be supplied from Germany alone through the whole winter. Moltke's suggestion was repeated to Riepenhausen in Vienna and Fink did go to Vorarlberg. Fink was disturbed by Calonder's speech and Dr. Ender's remark that he hoped the Landtag would not remain inactive in view of the Bundesrat's declaration. The Austrian Government hoped to block Vorarlberg's declaration of independence by noting that Austria's borders were fixed by the Treaty of St. Germain. It hoped that food shipments from Germany to Vorarlberg would be delivered regularly to remind the Vorarlbergers of the source of their food. Renner told Riepenhausen that he was going to appeal to the Entente for help. Renner was even ready to ask Italy to occupy Vorarlberg militarily. Renner said that it was difficult to get news from Vorarlberg, since the telephone connections had been almost completely blocked for the past week. Renner was very bitter about the activities of Dr. Ender and his associates and hoped to be able to arrest them all if Italy occupied the Land for Austria. Fink had arrived in Vorarlberg on 30 November and would try to block a hasty decision by the Vorarlberg Government. But despite Fink's influence amongst the rural population, Renner feared that he was too old to have the necessary strength to fight successfully against the movement for independence. Dr. Renner emphasised the disadvantages a loss of Vorarlberg would mean for a later union of Austria to Germany and feared that other Austrian Länder might also leave Austria if Vorarlberg declared itself independent. If Germany did not offer Vorarlberg economic advantages similar to those assured to it by
Switzerland in Calonder's speech, Dr. Renner feared that Vorarlberg would certainly be lost to Austria and Greater Germany. Even if negotiations between Vorarlberg and Switzerland could only be delayed until after 1 January 1920, that would still be helpful, since Calonder would no longer be head of the Political Department. Moltke, who had come to Vienna to consult directly with Riepenhausen, Renner and Fink, was sent on to Bregenz to tell Fink that the Vienna Government would arrange for food shipments to be sent to Vorarlberg.

   FOL K1075/K276406 (AAAA C1989/A28036).
Letter from Padel, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 6 November 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276455 (AAAA C1989/A29413).
   (seen also K1170/K300838).
Telegram in cypher from Moltke, Stuttgart, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 27 November 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276498 (AAAA C1989/A30693).
Very secret telegram from Dr. Ludo Hartmann, Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, to the Austrian Department of State for Foreign Affairs 29 November 1919.
   HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7159/2.
Dr. Hartmann repeated the contents of Moltke's telegram of 27 November 1919 to his Government and wrote that the German Foreign Office was sending Moltke to Vienna to work with Riepen­hausen to convince Fink to act energetically to try to stop Vorarlberg from declaring itself independent.
Telegram from the German Foreign office, Berlin, to Riepenhausen, Vienna 28 November 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276499 (AAAA C1989/A30693).
Telegram in cypher from Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German For­eign Office, Berlin 28 November 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276500 (AAAA C1989/A30754).
Telegram in cypher from the German Foreign Office, Berlin, to Müller, German Ambassador at Bern 1 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276538 (AAAA C1989/A30693).
Telegram from Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 1 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276541 (AAAA C1989/A30954).
Telegram in cypher from Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German For­eign Office, Berlin 2 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276549 (AAAA C1989/A30977).
Telegram in cypher from Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German For­eign Office, Berlin 2 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276553 (AAAA C1989/A31008).
Telegram in cypher from Moltke and Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German Foreign Office 1 December 1919.
   FOL K1075/K276555 (AAAA C1989/A31009).
Fink returned to Vienna and reported to Riepenhausen on his visit in Vorarlberg. He said that in the four weeks from his previous visit, the situation in the Land had changed. Even his own relatives now supported independence and union to Switzerland. The causes of the changed situation were Calonder's speech and the dilatory way in which food was being shipped from Germany to Vorarlberg. The Christian Social members of the Landtag had held a meeting on 2 December 1919 at which Fink was present. Some members said that their constituents were discontented with Dr. Ender's hesitancy to declare independence and demanded immediate action. Switzerland had promised help as soon as Vorarlberg was independent. Fink reported that he had remarked that their feelings were understandable, but warned that the Landtag should not decide in haste to declare independence, which once done could not be easily undone. Such a declaration might cause other Austrian Länder to declare themselves independent. That would lead to the break-up of Austria, which would be contrary to the wishes of the Entente. The Entente would then stop Vorarlberg's attempts to become independent. Fink also warned that Austria or Italy might occupy Vorarlberg militarily. Therefore, the Vorarlbergers would achieve the opposite of what they desired. Fink advised the Christian Socials in Vorarlberg that they should drop the idea of declaring independence and appeal instead through the Austrian Government to the Supreme Council to allow them to negotiate with Switzerland. This would be the legal way and Fink believed that the Austrian Government would be prepared to forward any decision of the Landtag's to the Supreme Council, including, of course, its own opinion as well. Some of the Christian Socials thought this would take too long and wanted to set a time limit of fourteen days for the appeal through Vienna, but Fink argued that the Austrian Parliament might have to be consulted, which would take more time. After further discussion
it was decided to follow Fink's suggestion and appeal to the Supreme Council through the Austrian Government. Vorarlberg would not attempt to negotiate immediately with Switzerland, but reserved the right to take other steps if the Austrian Government delayed forwarding Vorarlberg's appeal without reason. Fink reported that Dr. Ender had told him privately that he was not dissatisfied with this solution, since he had some misgivings about the idea of declaring independence unilaterally.27

When Fink returned to Vienna to inform Dr. Renner of the decision, Dr. Renner summoned the Cabinet to inform Dr. Ender formally that the Austrian Government was agreed to forward an appeal from Vorarlberg to the Supreme Council. Fink thought the Landtag would meet that week and would agree to his plan. He told Riepenhausen that had he not journeyed to Vorarlberg to talk with the Christian Socials personally, they probably would have declared independence immediately. Fink asked that the German Government act immediately to send previously promised food to Vorarlberg. The time won by Fink must not be wasted; otherwise public opinion in Vorarlberg would turn further against Germany. But the food shipments should not be mentioned too much in the press, since the opposition to Germany in Vorarlberg would say the sudden food deliveries were a political move on Germany's part. Also, Switzerland might be encouraged to make further offers of help. The best propaganda would be the arrival from Germany of the food itself. To Moltke, Fink complained that Germany had not helped

27. Telegram in cypher from Riepenhausen, Vienna, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 3 December 1919. FOL K1075/K276572 (AAAA C1989/A31156).
Vorarlberg enough with food. Fink told Moltke that he was glad that Renner had turned to Germany again for help in provisioning Vorarlberg. Fink was sure the results would be favourable, since he believed the key to the whole Vorarlberg question was the problem of provisioning the Land. The German Foreign Office agreed that with substantial shipments of foodstuffs from Germany, the movement in Vorarlberg for union to Switzerland could be retarded and a hasty decision could be avoided. The Wilhelmstrasse believed that the movement for union to Switzerland was based largely on the difficulties of obtaining food and on general discontent in Vorarlberg with conditions in Austria. Even some of those Vorarlbergers who opposed union to Switzerland supported the idea of Vorarlberg's declaring itself independent simply to escape from Austria. But Germany must send food to Vorarlberg quickly to prevent it from turning to Switzerland for help. The individual deliveries of food (flour and potatoes) must be made on schedule, but in such a way that they could be stopped at any time if the political situation should turn suddenly against Germany.


Telegram in cypher from Moltke, Innsbruck, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 3 December 1919. FOL K1075/K276579 (AAAA C1989/A31191).

Memorandum from the German Foreign Office to the German Ministry of the Economy (Reichswirtschaftsministerium), Berlin December 1919. FOL K1075/K276585 (AAAA C1989/A31957).
CHAPTER 8

VORARLBERG AND THE SUPREME COUNCIL: DECEMBER, 1919

Vice-Chancellor Jodok Fink reported that he had convinced the Vorarlbergers not to take decisive action. But rumours continued to circulate that Vorarlberg would unilaterally declare itself independent.1 F. O. Lindley reported to the Foreign Office (2 December) that such a declaration would be a preliminary to voting for union with Switzerland. If that were allowed by the Allies, the other provinces would decide for union to Germany. In another telegram two days later, Lindley reported that the retention of Vorarlberg was very important to Austria for political, economic and transit reasons. Vorarlberg was rich in cattle and other agricultural resources; it had an independent textile industry and much waterpower. Its location on the Bodensee assured Austria an outlet to the Rhine. A. W. A. Leeper commented in the minutes (5 December) that:

It is hard to see how the Supreme Council can prevent this separatist movement in Vorarlberg unless perhaps by a formal statement that the treaty frontiers must be maintained & all who attempt to transgress them will be severely dealt with. The Vorarlberg people might be induced to stick to Austria if they saw some hope of Allied financial & economic aid to Austria. Ought this to be brought up before the Supreme Council?

Sir Eyre Crowe thought that Britain need not do anything. Mr. Leeper then agreed that it would perhaps be better to wait for Dr. Renner's

1. Telegram from Dr. Ludo Hartmann, Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, to the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs, Vienna 29 November 1919.
HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7159/2.
arrival in Paris before acting. But in London some still saw no objection to Vorarlberg's joining Switzerland. It could hardly be prevented; and the Treaty of Versailles prohibited union of any Austrian territory with Germany, therefore obviating that danger.

2. Dr. Renner was to go to Paris later in the month to discuss with the Allies Austria's economic difficulties and to try to obtain credits from them for Austria. (see below)

3. Telegram in cypher from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, 2 December 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21008, (seen also PRO FO 371 W/157694/58017/43 and seen also PRO FO 608 70/2/3/20970).
   Telegram in cypher from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, 4 December 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21008, (seen also PRO FO 371 W/158539/58017/43).
   Minute by A. W. A. Leeper 5 December 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21008.
   Minute by Sir Eyre Crowe December 1919.
   PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21008.
   Minutes by A. W. A. Leeper 4 December 1919, 6 December 1919.
   PRO FO 608 70/2/3/20970.
   Minute by R. Astell 3 December 1919.
   PRO FO 371 W43/157694/58017.
   Art. 80 of the German Peace Treaty provides against the Union of any Austrian territory with Germany and seems to obviate any such danger. [of a possible union of the rest of Austria to Germany if Vorarlberg should be allowed to join Switzerland.]
   Minute by F. F. Adams 3 December 1919.
   PRO FO 371 W43/157694/58017.
   I see no objection in the circumstances to the Vorarlberg joining Switzerland. We can hardly prevent it.
   Minute by F. F. Adams 4 December 1919.
   PRO FO 371 W43/158029/58017.
   The Swiss are an upstanding people & have always resisted German aggression. I see no reason why we should resist the movement in the Vorarlberg for joining the Swiss Confederation. I think no action should be taken here & that it is improbable that Sir E. Crowe will wish to act in Paris.
   Z.Y. Inform Sir E. Crowe that H. M. Govt. have no strong views on this subject, & say that Lord Curzon presumes that he will keep Mr. Lindley informed of the views of the Supreme Council, if the matter is brought to their notice.
   Minute by C. (?Lord Curzon) 4 [?] December 1919.
   PRO FO 371 W/158029/58017/43.
   I do not think any action necessary.
When the Landtag met on 6 December, the Christian Social majority presented their case for separation from Austria. Dr. Ender, speaking for them, repeated that Vorarlberg's union to Austria was provisional. No definite union was possible until the future constitution of Austria was known. Vorarlberg had the right to determine its own future. The Austrian Government had originally recognised the plebiscite of 11 May. It had taken a delegation (Dr. Ender himself) from Vorarlberg with it to the Peace Conference. That the delegate could not speak there was because Dr. Renner had said that the question should be settled later, so as not to complicate the Peace settlement.

A proposal to add a clause to the Peace Treaty, in which Austria would recognise Vorarlberg's separation if Vorarlberg and Switzerland were agreed on union, had been made by the Central Territorial Committee, but it had not been accepted. It had been suggested at the end of the Peace deliberations. The question could still be placed before the League of Nations. Dr. Ender continued, Vorarlberg was not satisfied in Austria. Austria did not offer what Vorarlberg wanted. The Vorarlbergers hated centralism; they wanted to govern themselves.

Whether the future Austrian constitution would allow for this was still not known. Vorarlberg wanted tranquility and order. Whether Austria, which was threatened by revolution, would be able to provide such tranquility and order was questionable. Austria was not able to

4. There is some confusion about the date of the Landtag meeting. The stenographic report gives the date as 5 December 1919. Dr. Ender uses this date in his memoir. However, all other reports cite the date as having been 6 December 1919. This it was. The confusion seems to have arisen because the meeting was postponed at short notice from Friday 5 December to Saturday 6 December.

5. Dr. Ender maintained that the Vorarlberg Landesrat had asked the Austrian Government for permission to hold the plebiscite. The Austrian Government had preferred not to respond officially, but had given its permission orally, via Vice-Chancellor Jodok Fink. Notes of conversations between Calonder and Dr. Ender and between Lardy and Dr. Ender 10 June 1919.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 154.
offer its population a sure and steady livelihood. It could not supply its people with food or clothing. It was bankrupt, the rate of inflation was very high, the little man was being robbed by profiteers and by foreign capitalists.

Then Dr. Ender spoke of possible help from outside. Germany had sold flour and potatoes to Vorarlberg. That showed Germany's good will towards Vorarlberg, but good will was not enough. Germany had to import flour and potatoes itself, therefore it could not help Vorarlberg.

There was also Switzerland. The Vorarlberg people wanted union with Switzerland, to which they belonged geographically. The Vorarlberg and Swiss people were of the same Stamm. Switzerland offered order, peaceful democracy and economic progress. Within Switzerland Vorarlberg would be free from the threat of war. Switzerland was not annexationist. The Vorarlberg people were the ones who had pushed for the union, while Switzerland had remained cool to the idea. Finally the Swiss people had become willing to consider the question.

The question must be considered, Ender continued. In Vienna, it was realised that the Vorarlberg question was acute. Vice-Chancellor Fink, who was a Vorarlberger and a Christian Social, had said so. In a telegram, the Vienna Government stated its readiness to pass on to the League of Nations any legitimate request from Vorarlberg. At the same time it reserved the right to present Austria's case. The Vienna Government warned that it must oppose any action directed against the Peace Treaty or existing laws. It recommended the use of legal channels only. Dr. Ender commented that it was not necessary to remind Vorarlberg of this. The Vorarlberg Government operated in a legal manner only. It had done so for a year. It was Vienna which did not respect legality. One
must not expect support for Vorarlberg's position from Vienna. The Landesrat was asking the Landtag to agree that the Landesrat could decide Vorarlberg's future on its own, without Austria, if necessary. This could happen by Vorarlberg's obtaining its right to self-determination or by having to help itself. (Dr. Ender was deliberately vague.) The Landesrat was not asking for a declaration of independence, but for necessary powers in case Vorarlberg had to act independently. The Landesrat was also asking the Landtag to agree that a request be made to the Vienna Government to put before the Supreme Council or the League of Nations Vorarlberg's request for self-determination.

Dr. Ender and the Land Government, the Landesrat, wanted to obtain the fullest support for their demand for self-determination for Vorarlberg. They also wanted the authorisation to act independently in case Austria collapsed, a not unlikely possibility. Austria was in the throes of another economic crisis, and collapse seemed imminent. Other Austrian Länder were threatening to break away, leaving Vorarlberg stranded. Vienna itself was continually threatened by upheavals. One had to be prepared for a total collapse; one even greater than that of November 1918. Dr. Ender, an astute politician, also hoped to obtain the support of the opposition Social Democratic and Deutschfreiktische (German Nationalist) parties for the demand for self-determination. He had got their support for the resolution Assembly of 15 March, in which the Land resolved that the declaration that Vorarlberg was independent within the area of German-Austria was provisional as was the Land Assembly itself. Now he hoped that they could be persuaded to support a general declaration authorising the Government to take any necessary steps in view of an impending collapse of Austria. In this he was not successful.

The Social Democrats would not agree. They were loyal to the
socialist government in Vienna and wanted union with a socialist Germany. They were committed German nationalists, partly for nationalistic and partly for political reasons. They hoped to be the strongest party in a new united Germany. The Social Democratic Party in the old Monarchy had been bitterly split along national lines in the previous decade. The Social Democratic leader in the Landtag, Preiss, denounced the movement for union to Switzerland as a party (Christian Social) affair. The movement for self-determination was evil. It was treasonous to the rest of German-Austria. It divided the Vorarlberg people. The Social Democrats would take no responsibility for it. Vorarlberg was only a part of a nation. Therefore it did not have any right to self-determination. The people were for union to Switzerland only for materialistic reasons. They wanted food and were ignoring their future interests. Switzerland was interested in the union not because of any love for Vorarlberg or the Vorarlberg people, but because of the desire for a better border and because of economic, political, military and communications advantages. Preiss charged that the union was in the interests of Swiss capitalism. Vorarlberg had waterpower and other raw materials of interest to Switzerland. Switzerland had become rich through the war. He said that it was obvious from Calonder's speech, which was in the name of the Bundesrat, that Switzerland wanted annexation. This was especially surprising, in view of Switzerland's history of neutrality. The French Swiss were for the union because of their hatred for all things German. Switzerland was militaristic and capitalistic. Workers in Switzerland were being exploited more and more. Workers were not allowed full freedom of expression or union. The Vorarlbergers were simply trying to flee from Vienna. Their disloyalty was fed by the Bourgeois, Christian Social press. But the people of
all of German-Austria were one. They were Germans with the same language, the same customs, the same culture and the same religion. The Vorarlbergers should be loyal to Vienna, a city they once admired. The Social Democrats would remain true to the Austrian Republic. Through this loyalty they felt united to the workers both of Austria and of Switzerland.

Dr. Zumtobel, for the Deutschfreiheitliche Party attacked the leaders of the Werbeausschuss group for union with Switzerland. One leader was from Bohemia anyway, he said. He alleged that only sixty-seven per cent of the people had voted for negotiations for union with Switzerland in the plebiscite of 11 May. The only reason for the support the movement enjoyed was the people's desire for a secure supply of food. Only the Christian Social majority in the Landtag wanted independence, and that was in order to be first in a small circle rather than second in a larger one. Switzerland was only interested in Vorarlberg for its forests, embroidery industry, waterpower, and transit routes. Dr. Zumtobel mocked the movement for union with Switzerland. If Vorarlberg joined Switzerland, he said, it would simply give the Pan-Germans a better platform from which they could win over the Swiss Germans for Germany. The Vorarlberg people should be left alone to enjoy peace and quiet. Dr. Zumbobel opposed any appeal to the Supreme Council, which was an anti-German group, or to the League of Nations, whose future development was unknown.

After further discussion the following proposals were accepted by the Landtag, where the Christian Social party enjoyed a majority:

1. The Landesrat is authorised to demand from the Austrian Government the recognition of our right to self-determination and to request that the Austrian Government bring before the Supreme Council and the League of Nations our demand.
2. The Landesrat is empowered to put forward our demand itself.
3. The offer of the Vienna Government to put before the League of Nations a motion allowing negotiations on union between Vorarlberg and Switzerland is accepted; however it is to be
urgently requested to place this proposal before the Supreme Council now, and not to postpone any action for an unspecified time.

4. The Landesrat is authorised to take all necessary measures in case our Land is compelled, as a consequence of the dissolution of Austria, to negotiate independently.

5. The Landesrat is authorised to take all necessary measures in case our Land should come into the position in which it could make use of its right of self-determination.

6. The Landesrat must make sure that the electoral rolls in the communities are kept up, in order to allow for an immediate plebiscite at any time.  

6. Stenographische Sitzungsberichte des Vorarlberger Landtages

The six proposals put to the Landtag were approved by the following majorities:

Number 1  20-7
Number 2  19-8
Number 3  20-2
Number 4  22-0
Number 5  20-2
Number 6  20-2

The Social Democrats left the Chamber after the vote on the second proposal. That left only the two German nationalists (the Deutschfreierlische) to oppose motions tending towards union to Switzerland. They voted against the remaining proposals, except proposal number 4, which had been proposed by Zumtobel, one of the two German nationalists.

Ender - pp. 44-46.

Telegram from Dr. Renner, Vienna, to the Vorarlberg Landesrat
3 December 1919.
HHSA/VA St. K. 909/21 (seen also HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7175/2).

Telegram from Dr. Ender, Bregenz, to Dr. Renner in Paris
9 December 1919.
HHSA/VA St. K. 909/22.

Telegram en clair from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the Foreign Office,
London 7 December 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21008 (seen also PRO FO 371 W/159385/58017/43).

VT 10 December 1919 Nr. 281 1-7.
VW 10 December 1919 Nr. 281 1.
VW 12 December 1919 Nr. 283 1.
VW 13 December 1919 Nr. 284 1.
B  8 December 1919 Nr. 520 1a.
B 14 December 1919 Nr. 529 3b.
NZZ 8 December 1919 2 Morgenblatt Nr. 1911 1a.
TZ  8 December 1919 1. Blatt Nr. 288 1a.
SGT 8 December 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 288 1a.
SGT 8 December 1919 Abendblatt Nr. 288.
OS  9 December 1919 Morgenblatt Nr. 284 1a.
JG  8 December 1919 1-2me édition No. 338 3b.
JG  9 December 1919 2me édition No. 339 3a, 8a.

Contd. on p. 240
The Austrian delegate in Paris, Franz v. Eichoff, appealed to the Peace Conference for support (2 December 1919):

By order of his Government, the undersigned plenipotentiary of the Austrian Republic has the honour to draw Your Excellency's attention to a double danger which threatens the western and eastern frontier of the new state within the modest extent assigned to it by the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye. After the enormous territorial and economic sacrifices imposed on the Republic of Austria, which gravely affect its survival, one would have to expect universal respect for the indispensable minimum of territory and resources attributed to it by the Peace Conference, in order to make possible and to guarantee the internal coherence and the external security of the new Austria... 

...Despite the grave worries caused to the Government and the people of Austria by the lack of fuel and by the food and monetary crises, the Austrian Government cannot close its eyes to this double danger resulting from the agitation in the west [Vorarlberg] and the east [Burgenland], threatening the territorial integrity of the Republic. The giving over of Vorarlberg to another country would not only increase the distance and shackle the important direct line of communication between Austria and the great centres in the West, but it would also place in danger the internal cohesion of the new state, because if this agitation results in the separation of Vorarlberg from Austria, it is greatly to be feared that this fatal example would lead sooner or later to the complete disintegration of Austria and to its dissolution into a series of miniscule republics incapable of supporting the burdens imposed by the Treaty of St. Germain, a result certainly contrary to the wishes of the Great Powers....7

6. Contd.

GL 7/8 December 1919 No. 335 4d.
NFP 6 December 1919 Abendblatt 2.
NFP 7 December 1919 Morgenblatt 1, 5-6.
NFP 9 December 1919 Morgenblatt 5.
NFP 9 December 1919 Abendblatt 2.
LT 8 December 1919 1.
T 11 December 1919 13f.

PRO FO 608 41/1/6/20904. (seen also PRO FO 608 70/2/3/20970, seen also HHSA N.P.A. Faszikal 350 St. A. I-7048/2).
Dr. Renner, in a conversation with representatives of the Great Powers in Vienna, had already warned them that it would be impossible to keep Austria together much longer if the food and fuel crisis continued. He said that it was his policy to loyally carry out the conditions of the Peace Treaty, but the desire to join Germany was continually growing and Tirol, Upper Austria and Styria would break away if the situation did not change. The Swiss Government was encouraging the movement in Vorarlberg in favour of union with Switzerland. His Government had in vain done all it could to discourage the movement. Unless the Powers forbade the union without delay Tirol, Styria and other provinces would declare their independence from Vienna, leaving it completely isolated. An outbreak of despair would be inevitable. Austria would not be able to carry out its obligations under the Treaty of St. Germain. Dr. Renner asked permission for an Austrian Delegation to go to Paris in December to present its case directly to the Supreme Council. 8

8. Telegram from F. O. Lindley, Vienna 26 November 1919.  
PRO FO 608 41/1/10/20872.  
Telegram from F. O. Lindley, Vienna 3 December 1919.  
PRO FO 608 70/2/3/20970, (seen also PRO FO 371 W/158029/58017/43).  
Despatch of Albert Halstead, Vienna, to the Secretary of State 3 December 1919.  
Paris Peace Conference 184.011102/671.  
Albert Halstead, the United States representative in Vienna, reported to the State Department (12 December 1919) that the general situation in Vienna had worsened. The Government lacked support. Dr. Renner, though the most fit candidate to lead Austria, lacked courage. He dared not take a strong stand against the provincial separatists, but discussed and bargained with them. Therefore, the separatist trend was growing, especially in Vorarlberg, Tirol and Salzburg. Vorarlberg wanted to join Switzerland and Tirol and Salzburg wished for union to Germany. The latter country was carrying on propaganda in these two Länder. Halstead continued, Italy was said to be encouraging demonstrations in Tirol. He thought that there might be a secret Italian-German treaty in existence, perhaps with Tirol a party to it. Perhaps a separatist movement was beginning in Carinthia as well. There were further unsettling rumours of a Czech build-up of forces at Bratislava (Pressburg), near their border with Austria.9

These reports served to illustrate the uncertain state of affairs in Austria. Its continued existence, indeed its continued ability to exist, was constantly under question. Besides the crises of food and fuel shortages, there were more general economic and monetary crises. Politically there was the threat of revolution in Vienna, and the continuing attempts of the Länder (Tirol, Salzburg and Upper Austria, especially, but also Styria and Carinthia) to join Germany. Agents were active in Burgenland, the western-most, German-speaking counties of Hungary, which had been assigned to Austria by the Treaties of Peace, to retain them for Hungary. Against this background, Vorarlberg's activities did not appear to be unique. However, Vorarlberg was more constant and consistent in its demands.

9. Despatch from Albert Halstead, Vienna, to the Secretary of State 12 December 1919.
Paris Peace Conference 184.011102/693.
It could justify them, because Vorarlberg had declared its independence when the Monarchy collapsed in November 1918 and the Land considered its union to Austria to be provisional. Its appeal was based on the right of self-determination. There could be no denial of the stämmlich difference between Vorarlberg and the rest of Austria. Whether this gave the Vorarlbergers the right to claim self-determination as a separate people or not was a question for debate.

The Vorarlbergers said it did. Because of ethnic and historical differences, geographical factors and the independence of the Land, they maintained that they had the right to determine their own future. But the Austrian Government vehemently denied this. Their view was that Vorarlberg was merely a part of the Austrian nation, and therefore of the German nation. Parts of nations could not claim the right to self-determination, the Austrian Government said. To allow them that right would be wrong and unfair, since a part of the nation might make a decision harmful to the whole. In answer to an interpellation in the Austrian National Assembly, Dr. Renner made these points. He said that the right to self-determination applied to nations, but not to parts of a nation, even if a part of a nation should be different from the main body of it because of geography, history or economy. Vorarlberg was doing well in Austria. If it joined Switzerland, it would be a backwater in that country. Its industry and agriculture would suffer in face of Swiss competition. Because of the Treaty of St. Germain, Austria had a right and a duty to see that Vorarlberg remained a part of the new Republic of Austria, Dr. Renner said.¹⁰

¹⁰ Dr. Renner's reply to an interpellation by Dr. Waber in the Austrian National Assembly 25 November 1919. HHSVA/VA St. K. 909/20 (Seen also HHSVA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-7161/2).

Letter from Dr. Renner to Rappaport, in the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs 7 October 1919. HHSVA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-6547/2.

Dr. Renner wanted to travel to Paris in December 1919 to meet with the Supreme Council in order to discuss economic aid for Austria. He also intended to obtain the support of the Allies for the Austrian Government's stand against separatist movements in Austria—specifically those of Vorarlberg and Burgenland. (The movements for union to Germany did not disturb him, since he and his Government wished for that in the long run.) Because of the weakness of the Government in Vienna, it could not hold the country together without the support of the Allies. Austria could rely on France to support any move to help to sustain it. France was most worried of a collapse of the new state, which would allow its independent parts to join Germany. Even before Renner arrived in Paris, the French delegates had circulated a note on the subject to the other delegates. It commented:

...The question cannot be left as immaterial by the Allied and Associated Powers. It is certain, as the Austrian Delegation has stated in its letter of 2 December, that the separation of Vorarlberg from Austria "would lead sooner or later to the complete disintegration of Austria." The acts of the Landtag and of the people of Vorarlberg have encouraged movements of dissolution in all parts of the Republic. One may point to the province of Salzburg which demands union to Bavaria and to a similar movement developing in North Tirol. Agents of the Government of Budapest travel through the counties of western Hungary assigned to Austria and organise agitation with the aim of obtaining a plebiscite....

...The reasons of European interest which have determined the decisions of the Conference on the borders of Austria and which make desirable the facilitating by every means the existence of this state, must therefore cause the Conference to decide to give to the Austrian Government public support in the Vorarlberg question.

The Supreme Council would wish to use the occasion of the presence of Chancellor Renner in Paris to give him a declaration in which the Allied and Associated Powers abide and will abide by the frontiers fixed by the Treaty of St. Germain in questions which concern the territory of the Republic of Austria.

Chancellor Renner could be authorised to publish the declaration of the Supreme Council. This act would reaffirm the authority of the Austrian Government in all of the regions which show a tendency towards separation. Concerning Vorarlberg especially, it would contribute to checking the movement amongst certain Swiss circles for the union of Vorarlberg to the Confederation. The partisans of this union invoke in effect the danger which would be presented to Switzerland by the union of Vorarlberg to Germany. This hypothesis would be obviously excluded if the
Allied and Associated Powers show their firm desire to see the integrity of the Republic maintained. The French Government also submitted a note on the "Danger of the Disintegration of Austria":

The lamentable economic state of Austria favours the tendencies of disintegration in the country, instigated by Pan-Germans, who wish to annex the new state piece by piece, bending the conditions of the Treaty of St. Germain and the Treaty of Versailles, which have forbidden the union of Austria to Germany. The Landtag of Vorarlberg has decided, on 6 December, to demand that the Government in Vienna recognize this province's right of self-determination, and to refer this question to the Supreme Council in Paris and to the League of Nations. The preparatory measures for an eventual plebiscite have been taken, as well as the necessary arrangements with regard to separating from Austria.

In Switzerland, opinion is deeply concerned, but it is divided.

Whereas certain circles, notably in the German cantons, are making propaganda for the annexation of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, another current of opinion is hostile, due to the fear of upsetting the linguistic and religious proportions in the Confederation.

In any case, the Swiss Government has taken the position of refraining from favouring the annexation of Vorarlberg to Switzerland as long as the integrity of Austria is maintained. Only in the case where Austria would dissolve and where the annexation of Vorarlberg to Germany would be possible would Switzerland, to stop this last eventuality, give its support to the independence of Vorarlberg and perhaps consider its annexation.

One is equally in agreement in Switzerland to place the question before the League of Nations in such a case.

Also, an annexationist movement is manifesting itself in the Limburg region in favour of Bavaria, and a similar movement is becoming apparent in Tirol, where it has taken the form of a demand for economic annexation to Germany.

Finally, the Hungarians announce that they demand a plebiscite for the districts of western Hungary given to Austria by the Treaty of St. Germain.

The Government of Vienna, very disquieted, calls on the Powers for the solemn assurance that they will not permit the destruction of the work of the Treaty of St. Germain.

11. Note from the French Delegation on the Vorarlberg Question
12 Dec. 1919.
PRO FO 608 71/1/1/21175.
seen also in Almond & Lutz - pp. 331-332.
Article 88 of this treaty is precise. It states:
"The independence of Austria is inalienable, except with
the consent of the Council of the League of Nations. Therefore,
Austria engages to abstain, except with the consent of the
said Council, from all acts of a nature compromising its
independence, directly or indirectly and by any means, notably,
and until its admission as a member of the League of Nations,
by way of participation in the affairs of another power."

This was done for reasons of European interest which are
still important and which make desirable the favouring by all
means of the existence of the Austrian state.

It is therefore proposed to give to the Austrian Government
public support in the form of a declaration which will be given
to Chancellor Renner and which could be drafted thus:

"The Allied and Associated Powers, desirous to assure the
existence of Austria in the frontiers assigned to it, and
resolute to have the terms of the Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye
respected, declare that they will oppose all attempts of a nature
damaging to the territorial integrity of Austria, or which,
contrary to the stipulations of Article 88 of the said Treaty,
could have the effect of compromising in any way, either directly
or indirectly, the political or economic independence of Austria."

In order to give full effect to this public declaration,
the Supreme Council should at the same time offer sureties to
Austria with regard to its provisioning and should take appropri­
ate measures to assure its economic life.12

* * *

At the meeting of the Supreme Council on 16 December 1919 the ques-
tion of Austria's survival was discussed. The Council had before it
the two notes from the French delegation, one on the Vorarlberg
question, and the other on the danger of the disintegration of
Austria. Clemenceau began the discussion by reporting that the

12. Note from the French Delegation on the Danger of the Disintegra-
tion of Austria 15 [?] December 1919.
PRO FO 608 41/1/10/21221.
seen also in Woodward, E. L. & Butler, Rohan (eds.) - Docu-
seen also in Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the
United States: the Paris Peace Conference 1919, Vol. 9,
pp. 572-574.
seen also in Almond & Lutz - pp. 332-334.
Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Renner, had called on him. Dr. Renner was very conciliatory and had emphasised Austria's good will with regard to the execution of the Treaty of St. Germain. Dr. Renner seemed to him to be a simple and well meaning man. His Government was confronted with very serious difficulties, and it would be compromised if Dr. Renner, while in Paris, did not obtain satisfactory promises for the provisioning of Vienna. Clemenceau said that the had assured Dr. Renner that the Council was considering the Austrian question in a spirit of good will. Berthelot read out the notes of his Government. He said that separatist activities could not be tolerated without the consent of the League of Nations. Article 88 of the Treaty of St. Germain made that quite clear. Under these circumstances, it might be well to give Dr. Renner a declaration to that effect. De Martino of Italy said that from a geographical point of view, Vorarlberg occupied an eccentric position in Austria and from that point of view the union could be a subject of discussion. But the Council had before it a political question of the greatest importance. If a separatist movement made headway in Vorarlberg, it would undoubtedly encourage similar movements in Styria, Carinthia and Tirol. Therefore, it would be wise to stop immediately any separatist movement. That was the reason why he approved entirely the declaration proposed by the French. Sir Eyre Crowe said that he also approved it. Matsui of Japan said that he agreed. The declaration drafted by the French was approved. The United States representative said that he would refer the text of the declaration to his Government. The following day, a note was given to Dr. Renner in which he was assured that:

The attention of the Allied and Associated Powers has been drawn to certain disturbances which threaten, on various sides, the cohesion, and even the territorial integrity of the Republic of Austria, viz. the steps taken by the Landtag of Vorarlberg to have its right of self-determination recognized
coincident with movements in Salzburg and Tirol for economic union with neighbouring states and coincident with the campaign being conducted in the former counties of western Hungary for a plebiscite not foreseen by the Treaty, which has attributed this region to Austria.

The Allied and Associated Powers consider that if the forces of disintegration be triumphant in any of these cases, a single separation risks carrying with it the complete disintegration of the Austrian state and of ruining the equilibrium of central Europe. Therefore they do not desire to allow any doubt to remain about their will to see maintained the integrity in all its clauses, territorial and otherwise, of the Treaty of St. Germain and to proceed with their strict application.

It is in this spirit that the Supreme Council has today adopted the following resolution which it wishes to see executed...

"The Allied and Associated Powers, desirous to assure the existence of Austria in the frontiers assigned to it, and resolute to have the terms of the Treaty of St. German-en-Laye respected, declare that they will oppose all attempts of a nature damaging to the territorial integrity of Austria, or which, contrary to the stipulations of Article 88 of the said treaty, could have the effect of compromising in any way, either directly or indirectly, the political or economic independence of Austria."13


Notes of a Meeting of the Heads of Delegations of the Five Great Powers, held at M. Clemenceau's Residence, Paris, on Tuesday, December 16, 1919 at 10.30 a.m.


From Paris, Dr. Renner telegraphed the Vorarlberg Land Government that the Supreme Council had handed him a note bearing on the Vorarlberg question. Dr. Renner wrote that the note had been spontaneous and had been sent to him even before he had appeared before the Supreme Council. Renner reported that he told Clemenceau in an interview later that he would forward to the Supreme Council a memorial from the Vorarlberg Landesrat on the question, so that all views would be presented.¹⁴

Renner had lied. He had already informed Allied ministers in Vienna that the secession of Vorarlberg could cause the complete dissolution of Austria. The Austrian envoy in Paris, Eichoff, had warned the Allied Powers in Paris of that danger. Before the journey to Paris, Renner had told a German Embassy official in Vienna that he would try to convince the Allied statesmen, especially Clemenceau, that to allow Vorarlberg to break away from Austria would encourage the other Länder to try to break away too. The Treaty of St. Germain would then be unenforceable. Dr. Renner believed that Vorarlberg's desire to secede would therefore be rejected out of hand.¹⁵

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¹⁴. Stenographische Sitzungsberichte des Vorarlberger Landtages  
Ender – p. 47.

Telegram from Dr. Renner to the Vorarlberg Land Government:  
Landesregierung Bregenz. Oberster Rat stellte heute Note zu, welche Landesfrage betrifft. Beschuß war spontan und ohne mein Zutun erfolgt, bevor ich Gelegenheit hatte, vor Oberstem Rate zu erscheinen. Hatte nachher Unterredung mit Clemenceau und ihm in Aussicht gestellt, daß ich ausführliche Denkschrift des Landesrates Vorarlbergs vorlegen werde, damit jeder Teil gehört wird, was Clemenceau zur Kenntnis nahm. Renner.

¹⁵. Telegram in cypher from Stolberg, Vienna, to the German Foreign Office 6 December 1919.  
FOL K1075/K276600 (AAAA C1989/A31338).
Throughout, the Austrian Government had opposed the movement in Vorarlberg for separation. Austria did not want to lose any more territory. The Austrian Government had originally said that the Vorarlberg question should be settled after the Treaty of Peace was signed so as not to further complicate the negotiations and delay the signing of the Treaty. The Vorarlberg question could be settled later. However, this was merely a way to stall for time. After the Treaty was signed, the Austrian Government would call on it to defend its sovereignty over Vorarlberg. After the Treaty was signed, the Austrian Government could openly and comfortably deny that Vorarlberg had a right to self-determination. The Austrian Government's tactic to "save" Vorarlberg for itself had been to stall and to lie, in order to maintain the status quo.

*   *   *

In view of the renewed demands for self-determination by Vorarlberg in December 1919 the Foreign Office had reviewed the question. Of a possible union of Vorarlberg with Switzerland, A. W. G. Randall noted as advantages to Europe the rounding off of Swiss and Austrian borders, the addition to Switzerland of a conservative element to counterbalance the growing "radical" tendencies of the Swiss Socialist Party, and the placing of the main railway line east over the Arlberg under neutral Swiss control. The Foreign Office continued to believe that the long narrow shape of the new Republic of Austria was inconvenient, and would be unstable. As disadvantages of the union for Europe, Randall noted the more thorough Germanisation of Switzerland, the possibility of arousing religious strife both in Vorarlberg and in Switzerland and the fact that allowing Vorarlberg the right of self-determination might encourage the other Austrian Länder to secede, thus driving Austria, perhaps unnecessarily, to Germany. He continued:
... The Swiss Confederation, which has been weighing both advantages and disadvantages in a spirit of exceptional detachment, would be inclined to show a considerable majority in favour of admitting Vorarlberg, if the union of German-Austria with Germany looked like becoming an accomplished fact. If German-Austria, however, appears likely to maintain its independence, and if the Central Government at Vienna strongly opposed the wish of the Vorarlberg to leave the State, the Swiss Government would not be by any means so eager to take action. Should Austria fail, for economic or other reasons, to maintain her independence as laid down in the Peace Treaty, it would seem to be desirable for the British representative in the League of Nations Council to support the claim of Vorarlberg to enter Switzerland, but premature action would appear to be most undesirable, since, if the withdrawal of Vorarlberg were approved, there could be no logical objection to the withdrawal of Tirol, and this latter would certainly go to Germany. We should, in a word, adopt a waiting attitude, at least until such times as the Austrian treaty is ratified and the League of Nations Council meets.

J. W. Headlam Morley commented:

...The definition of the frontiers of Austria is an essential part of the Treaty and any change in this would involve, if not a new Treaty, at any rate changes which would have to be approved by all the Signatory Powers. I should suggest that it was most desirable that some clear statement to this effect should be issued by the Supreme Council; this might be so worded as to show that they would not necessarily present an unreasoning resistance to future proposals for modification, but that any such proposals would have to be carefully considered by the League of Nations.

Article 88 is unfortunately so worded that the reference to the League of Nations seems to apply merely to the "independence" of Austria and not to its territorial integrity. There is therefore in the Treaty with Austria nothing specifically providing for the hypothesis that certain districts might wish to separate themselves; the matter is really quite fundamental for the future of Europe; no League of Nations will be any use for avoiding war unless we can get the general recognition to apply to all States which are members of the League, that every rectification of frontier must be arranged through the League of Nations; it seems to me a serious defect in the drafting of the League and of the Treaties that though this is probably implied, it is not definitely laid down as a cardinal doctrine. We want this principle for dealing with this very difficult Austrian problem, but it is for many reasons undesirable that it should be put forward merely as a limitation with regard to Austria specifically....

CHAPTER 9

VORARLBERG APPEALS TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS: DECEMBER 1920,
THE QUESTION ABATES: 1921-1922

After the declaration of the Supreme Council in December 1919, the Vorarlberg question remained dormant for a while. All of the interested governments - the Austrian, the German, the Swiss, the Allied - kept an eye open, but no one did anything. In March 1920 the German Foreign Office was informed by v. Schmidthals, of the Prussian Legation in Stuttgart, that the Vorarlbergers were now not so enthusiastic for union to Switzerland. Food deliveries from Switzerland had not been as great as the Vorarlbergers had expected. Also many Swiss had come to Vorarlberg and bought things very cheaply, because of the poor rate of exchange for the Krone. Their haughty attitude had made them much less popular. V. Schmidthals continued:

...As far as our interest in Vorarlberg is concerned, in my opinion, our interest is more negative than positive, that is to say that we do not want the Land with its German population, its railways and its waterpower to fall to Switzerland. The less we appear in view, and the longer we are able to keep all decisions open, so much the better. Practically that would mean holding back as much as possible, being attentive, and keeping the existing strings in our hands to be ready to work immediately and unobtrusively against any movement which would be unacceptable to us.¹

From their embassy in Bern, the Wilhelmstrasse received a report that the Vorarlberg question had come to a complete standstill there once Calonder, the only supporter of the union in the Bundesrat, had resigned. In Vorarlberg also, people were more realistic. The Swiss

Government, the German Embassy in Bern reported, was completely opposed to Vorarlberg's union and would continue to be so long as there was no shift in the relative strengths of the parties. Therefore there was no need to worry about Vorarlberg's possible union to Switzerland. The question was finished and Germany could relax and be a cool and uninterested observer in any future discussions on Vorarlberg in the press or amongst the general public.  

The Austrian Government was worried about a collapse of the Austrian Republic. Dr. Renner, the Austrian Chancellor, feared that various of the Länder might try to secede, thus encouraging the others to break away from Vienna as well. Dr. Renner told F. O. Lindley, the British High Commissioner in Vienna, that the French and the Vatican were now for the dissolution of Austria and its union to Germany. They hoped that this would lead to the establishment of a separate Roman Catholic South German state, thus splitting Germany.

The Swiss Political Department did not regard the Vorarlberg question as finished. It thought that the question could still blow up at any time. It wanted to make sure that studies on Vorarlberg were continued, to allow Switzerland to act immediately on the question if necessary. For instance, if the United States concluded separate peace treaties with Germany and Austria, the Vorarlberg question might be brought up again. Crises in Vienna made the Austrian Government seem unstable. Its collapse could not be excluded, nor could a possible

2. Despatch from the German Embassy, Bern, to the German Foreign Office 15 April 1919. FOL K1170/K300923.

Communist coup d'etat. 4

In an interview with Dr. Ender, Motta, now head of the Political Department, emphasised once more the position of the Swiss Bundesrat. Switzerland would do nothing which might encourage Vorarlberg to separate from Austria, but would try to stop Vorarlberg from joining Germany, if Austria should dissolve or try to join Germany itself. Motta asked Dr. Ender not to raise the question of union to Switzerland again, since it seemed extremely improbable that the Vienna Government would approve of Vorarlberg's attempts at union to Switzerland. 5

Both the pro-Swiss and the Pan-Germans continued their campaigns in Vorarlberg, the pro-Swiss, still organised in the Werbeausschuss, and much assisted by a Swiss organisation called the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg". This Committee published a newsheet and collected clothing.

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4. Letter from the Political Department to the Justice and Police Department, Bern 23 March 1920. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 653.

Extracts from letters on political affairs from the Political Department to Swiss Legations abroad:
18 February 1920, 26 February 1920, 5 March 1920, 7 April 1920, 14 April 1920, 20 April 1920, 6 May 1920, 9 June 1920, 23 June 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 647, 664, 669, 675.

Further comments on the instability of Austria in:
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 27 June 1920, enclosing a Note Verbale from the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs 19 June 1920.
PRO FO 371 C/416/416/3.
Despatch from Theo Russell, Bern, to the British Foreign Office, 31 July 1920.
PRO FO 371 C/3633/416/3.

and money to help the Vorarlbergers. It sent a large Swiss flag to Vorarlberg and a text to be read in the schools on the occasion of the Swiss National Holiday, 1 August. Also sent were maps of Switzerland and books on Switzerland. Swiss leaders of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" went to Vorarlberg to discuss preparations for the 1st of August. With the editor of the Vorarlberger Volksblatt, the Christian Social newspaper, they discussed the inclusion in that newspaper of descriptive, historical and political articles on Switzerland to maintain in Vorarlberg interest in Switzerland. The 1st of August 1920 was an occasion for celebrations, raising of the Swiss flag and bonfires in Vorarlberg. The Swiss Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" was a private organisation. Its president was Ferdinand Rothpletz, a member of the Nationalrat. Its Vice-President was Dr. Ulrich Vetsch from St. Gallen. Members of the Press Committee included Gonzague de Reynold and Paul de Vallière. Amongst those who worked with the Committee were Ernst Schürch, the editor of the Bund in Bern and William Martin of the Journal de Genève. The Committee was in contact with Dr. Ender in Vorarlberg and with Neubner and Pirker. It also had contacts in the Political Department, certainly with Charles Lardy. Copies of private Political Department papers found their way into the files of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg". The Committee had been founded after the Vorarlberg movement had reached its peak of activity. It was not an agent or a catalyst for Swiss interest in the movement, but it did help to keep Swiss interest in the question alive in the years from 1920 to 1922. The Pan-Germans in Vorarlberg also organised cultural activities and evenings. The new German consul in Vorarlberg, Friedrich v. Gebsattel, worked actively for Vorarlberg's union to Germany, and gave financial support to groups working for this union. This did not
remain unnoticed by the Swiss.

6. Bulletins of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg"
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 645, 651, 655, 656, 663, 667, 682, 683.
   Extract from a letter on political affairs from the Political
   Department to Swiss Legations abroad 1 September 1920.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 684.
   Letter from the Press Commission of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg"
   to the Swiss President 13 September 1920.
   SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 685.
   Letter from Schläfli, General Secretary of the Committee "Pro
   Vorarlberg" to Dr. Ender 13 November 1920.
   Memoranda of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg", Schweiz. Geschäftsstelle
   für die Hilfsaktion 4 June 1920, 7 June 1920.
   Letter from the Press Commission of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg"
   to the branch committee at Le Locle, Neuchâtel 10 July 1920.
   SBA. F.II.6. Bd. 5.
   Confidential report from the Press Commission of the Committee
   "Pro Vorarlberg" about a visit in Vorarlberg of 1-5 June 1920,
   19 June 1920.
   SBA F.II.6. Bd. 11.

...Conclusions: Excellente impression; it ne faut pas laisser ce gens
se décourager parce que l'idée et les possibilités de réunion à la
Suisse ne font que lentement du chemin, il faut les encourager par
tous les moyens en notre pouvoir et les maintenir dans le bon
esprit où ils se trouvent.

Copies of Political Department papers in the files of the Committee "Pro
Vorarlberg" include, amongst other files, nos. SBA 2001 (H) 3
B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 4, 238, 239, 410, 689.

Letters from Charles Lardy to Dr. Ulrich Vetsch 10 September 1919,
7 November 1919.

Letters from Ernst Schürch to Dr. Ulrich Vetsch 5 November 1919,
7 November 1919.

Despatch from the British Embassy, Bern, to the British Foreign
Office, 31 July 1920.
PRO FO 371 C/3633/416/3.

Letter from Weber-Déteindre of the Swiss Passport Bureau for Tirol,
Vorarlberg and Liechtenstein, Feldkirch 15 September 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 688.

Notes of conversations and observations on the occasion of the
presence in Bern of a delegation from Vorarlberg, the Political
Department 23 September 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 695.
The Swiss Government continued to study the Vorarlberg question. It hoped that Vorarlberg, formerly in the Diocese of Brixen in South Tirol, would become an independent diocese. If Vorarlberg remained under Brixen, a Pan-German might be appointed to be the apostolic administrator resident in Vorarlberg. Even better than creating an independent diocese out of Vorarlberg would be the inclusion of the Land in the Diocese of Chur. The greatest danger would be the inclusion of Vorarlberg in a possible new Diocese of Innsbruck. The Political Department noted that perhaps Switzerland should be doing more for Vorarlberg to counteract the activities of the German consul v. Gebsattel. Perhaps Switzerland should establish a consulate in Vorarlberg too. The economic situation was considered, and it was suggested that Switzerland should give Vorarlberg greater help. The question of railway routes continued to be a matter of concern to Switzerland. 7

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7. Notes of conversations and observations on the occasion of the presence in Bern of a delegation from Vorarlberg, the Political Department 23 September 1920, SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 695.
Letter from the Political Department, Bern, to the Swiss Embassy in Vienna 25 September 1920, SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 694.
Letter from Bourcart, the Swiss Minister in Vienna, to the Political Department 6 October 1920, SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 704.
Confidential Letter from the Political Department to the Department of Railways, Bern 4 November 1920, SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 715.
Extract from a Report of the Committee for Foreign Affairs of the Senate of the Kingdom of Italy, on a railway route from Venice to the Bodensee, in the files of the Swiss Political Department, SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 716.
In a conversation with Schneider, one of Vorarlberg's four representatives in the Austrian National Assembly, the Swiss Political Department was told that he and the two other representatives from Vorarlberg, who supported union to Switzerland, planned to protest at the forthcoming meeting of the Austrian National Assembly. They would protest against the denial of the right of self-determination for Vorarlberg and the ignoring of the Sovereign Landtag of Vorarlberg's declaration of independence. They would reserve Vorarlberg's right to freedom of action. Schneider wanted to know what the Political Department thought of this plan. The Swiss minister replied that Switzerland, of course, could not express an opinion, since the question was one involving the internal affairs of Austria. However, he thought personally that such action would be purposeful. The protest was made soon thereafter.

8. The Vorarlberg Land Assembly had originally declared Land Vorarlberg selbständig. This word can mean either autonomous or independent. The Vorarlberg representatives chose to interpret it to mean independent.

9. Notes of conversations and observations on the occasion of the presence in Bern of a delegation from Vorarlberg, the Political Department 23 September 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 695.

Political Department Memorandum for the Swiss Delegation at Geneva 24 November 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 721.

Annex to the Memorial from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the League of Nations: Declaration of Vorarlberg representatives in the Austrian National Assembly in September 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 723.

Letter from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 1 December 1920.
PRO FO 371 C/13026/8437/3.
The Political Department was interested to learn that there was sympathy in London to Vorarlberg and its movement for union to Switzerland. It wrote to the Swiss Embassy in London, asking for a report on British attitudes towards Vorarlberg and repeated that the Bundesrat would not interfere in any way in the inner relationship between Vorarlberg and Austria. However, Switzerland would oppose Vorarlberg's union to Germany, since a German encirclement of the East of Switzerland would be dangerous. The Swiss Ambassador, Paravicinni, replied that he had spoken with Sir Eyre Crowe at the Foreign Office, who had said that Vorarlberg was a part of the Republic of Austria and there was no reason to expect a change in this situation. Sir Eyre Crowe records that he had said that such a change could only be made in pursuance of a decision of the League of Nations, but he did not believe that the League wanted such a change. Paravicinni let the subject drop by remarking that Switzerland was naturally interested in events involving its neighbours.10

10. Notes of conversations and observations on the occasion of the presence in Bern of a delegation from Vorarlberg, the Political Department 23 September 1920. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 695.
Confidential Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Embassy in London 27 September 1920. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 696.
Letter from Paravicinni, Swiss Ambassador in London, to the Political Department 6 November 1920. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 717.
The Austrian Constitution was ratified by the Austrian National Assembly on 30 October 1920. The Christian Social Party and the Government of Vorarlberg agreed that they would recognise the Austrian Constitution and obey it as long as Vorarlberg remained a part of the federal Republic of Austria. The Vorarlberg Government would strive for changes by legal means only. The Vorarlberg Landtag had to elect representatives to the Austrian Bundesrat, or Federal Council, the Upper House of the new Austrian Parliament, which was to represent the Länder. The Christian Social Party used the occasion to emphasise that they still believed that Vorarlberg had regained its independence after the collapse of the old Monarchy and had the right to decide its own future. The Government believed that Vorarlberg should elect the representatives because it was necessary to be realistic about the situation. Vorarlberg was in a union with the other Austrian Länder and had obligations to them. Vorarlberg had taken part in the writing of the Federal Constitution without prejudicing its right to determine its own future. The Vorarlberg Landesrat wanted the Landtag to elect the representatives with the stipulation that Vorarlberg's right to self-determination would be affected in no way. The Social Democrats and the German Nationalists (Deutschfreisinnige) opposed the Landesrat's proposal, the Social Democratic Landtag member Anton Linder going so far as to assert that the Länder never had traditional rights, but had been merely Habsburg provinces. The Christian Social member Johann Josef Mittelberger reminded Linder that all three parties had originally and unanimously declared in the provisional Land Assembly that the Vorarlbergers had the right to determine their own future. In view of the majority the Christian Socials enjoyed in the Landtag, the Landesrat's proposal reserving Vorarlberg's rights was approved.

In his speech at the next Landtag meeting, Dr. Ender reaffirmed that Vorarlberg would observe fully the Constitution and laws of Austria and would be loyal to that state. However, Vorarlberg reserved the right to decide its own future at a later time when circumstances had changed. In the meantime, Vorarlberg would act as a full member of the federal Republic of Austria. Vorarlberg officials would take oaths to the state of Austria and its institutions. This affected in no way the decisions of the Landtag. When, at a later time, circumstances changed, the relationship between the federal state and its individual members would dissolve and the oaths, including those of the representatives in the Austrian Federal Council and of the Landeshauptleute to Austria, would also dissolve.¹²

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In March 1920, the Vorarlberg Landesrat decided that a Memorial, in which Vorarlberg's case would be presented to the League of Nations, should be prepared. The Memorial was written in German in Vorarlberg by Dr. Ender, Dr. Pirker and Barnabas Fink, a Christian Social member of the Landtag. It consisted of three parts, an introduction and discussion of the movement for self-determination, written by Dr. Ender, a historical account of Vorarlberg's rights and relations with the rest of Austria and an economic analysis of Vorarlberg's relationship with Austria. It was translated into French and English in Switzerland. The Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" arranged for the translating and printing of the French and English copies to be done in Switzerland. The Committee checked the texts and changed the final section of Pirker's essay, which it felt was too strong and which, therefore,

might have a negative effect on those people the Memorial was trying to impress. The Political Department received copies of the texts before their official publication. In November 1920, Dr. Ender sent copies of the Memorial to the Political Department, noting that a delegation from Vorarlberg was to go to Geneva to present it to the League of Nations. Dr. Ender asked that the Political Department give as much support as it could to the appeal from Vorarlberg.

SBA F.II.6. Bd. 5.

Letter from Charles Urech of the Verkehrsverein des Berner Oberlandes in Interlaken to Gonzague de Reynold of the Press Commission of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" saying that he has completed the English translations of Parts 1 and 2 of the Vorarlberg Memorial to the League of Nations 10 July 1920.  
SBA F.II.6. Bd. 5.

Letter from Paul de Vallière of the Press Commission of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" to Charles Urech 23 July 1920; Part 3 sent for translation into English on 21 August 1920.  
SBA F.II.6. Bd. 5.

Note from de Vallière that the printing of the French and English editions of the Memorial are to be done in Bern 12 October 1920.  
SBA F.II.6. Bd. 5.

Letter from the Press Commission of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" to Pirker about the part written by him 30 October 1920.  
SBA F.II.6. Bd. 5.

Extract from a letter on political affairs from the Political Department to Swiss Legations abroad, 1 September 1920.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 684.

Copy of Part 1 of the Vorarlberg Memorial to the League of Nations - in French, dated June 1920 - obtained confidentially on 22 September 1920.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 692.

Copy of Part 3 (the economic part) of the Vorarlberg Memorial to the League of Nations - in French.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 714.

Copy of the Conclusion of the Vorarlberg Memorial to the League of Nations - in French.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 712.

Letter from Dr. Ender, Bregenz, to the Political Department 20 November 1920.  
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 718.
The Memorial which Vorarlberg had prepared to present to the League of Nations was that communication which the Vienna Government had promised to forward in December of 1919. When news reached Vorarlberg that Austria had applied for admission to the League of Nations, it was decided to present the Memorial to the League directly. The Vorarlbergers feared that if they waited and gave the Memorial to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Vienna to present, the League might accept Austria before even considering Vorarlberg’s case. Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations might be interpreted to mean that the League of Nations would guarantee the integrity of Austria’s territory with the admission of that Republic to the League. The Vorarlberg Landesrat sent two representatives, Landeshauptmannstellvertreter Barnabas Fink and Mathias Wachter, both Christian Socials, to Geneva to present the Memorial to the League of Nations and to try to have reserved for Vorarlberg the right to self-determination. The Landesrat, in order to give greater legality to its move, informed the Austrian Department of Foreign Affairs of its action. Dr. Neubner went as well, in a private capacity, since he knew Geneva and important people there. The delegates did succeed in making known the contents of the Memorial, which began:

Ender - pp. 60-61.
Letter from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the Austrian Government, enclosing ten copies of the Memorial from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the League of Nations 20 November 1920.
HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-4824/2 (seen also St. A. I-4887/2).
Telegram from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the Austrian Government, 21 November 1920, and Reply of the Austrian Government.
HHSA NPA Faszikal 754 Schweiz St. A. I-4773/2.
...By order of the people of Vorarlberg, the Landesrat of Vorarlberg turns to the League of Nations to put before it the question for which Vorarlberg has taken all possible steps to solve since the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy. The people of Vorarlberg are convinced that their unbending will and their confidence in their rights will receive a favourable reception at the forum of the League of Nations....

With the collapse of the Monarchy, the Pragmatic Sanction was dissolved, and Vorarlberg became independent. Its union to the new Republic of Austria was provisional. The Austrian Government had stated that the settling of the Vorarlberg question should be postponed so as not to delay the ratification of the Peace Treaty. But later the question could be brought up for discussion and solution. Because of the note of 17 December 1919 of the Supreme Council on the integrity of Austria, the Vorarlberg Government had decided to let the question rest for a while. However the Vorarlberg people remained true to their ideal. The Memorial continued:

...After examination of the events which have come to pass since the November revolution, the Council of the League of Nations will not fail to note that Vorarlberg has used all legal means to strive for its independence and rejects all ties to the Austrian Republic. Since the Republic [of Austria] by its silence at first recognized our rights on the basis of the right of self-determination, which was the basis of its own claims at St. Germain, Chancellor Dr. Renner could not simply alter this point of view after the Treaty of St. Germain without causing suspicion that he only advanced the principle of the right of self-determination when it would be advantageous to him, but denied this right to those Länder which strove for a position not wished by him. Therefore the Austrian Government took flight into economic matters and tried to assert that Vorarlberg was essential to Austria economically and as a transit centre. The Vienna Government must nevertheless admit that Vorarlberg, even if it recovers despite its lack of grain and the threat to its industry, will never contribute much to the prosperity of the Republic [of Austria] to compensate for the damage done to Austria's moral constitution by compelling Vorarlberg to remain with it.

In the accompanying economic section it can be seen that Vorarlberg is of no importance to the continued economic existence of Austria.

The justice of Vorarlberg's point of view in the whole question seems so clear that the Chancellor [Dr. Renner] did not know what to do other than to appeal to the Treaty of St. Germain, which the [Austrian] Government had to obey. (for example at the sixth conference of the Länder in Vienna.)
However the Peace Conference of St. Germain wanted to leave the Vorarlberg question open to be decided later by the League of Nations. The Vorarlberg Landesrat considers that the time has come at which the League of Nations should come to a solution of the question. It is to be assumed that the Great Powers which belong to the League of Nations no longer hold the opinion which was expressed in the note of the Supreme Council of 17 December 1919 and that the League of Nations is now ready to decide the questions left undecided at St. Germain.

Land Vorarlberg therefore requests that its right of self-determination be recognized through a change in the border stipulations of the Treaty of St. Germain.

Bregenz, 1 August 1920
For the Landesrat:
The Landeshauptmann:
Dr. Otto Ender

Dr. Ender proclaimed Vorarlberg's right to self-determination, emphasising that Vorarlberg's union to Austria was provisional right from the start. Vorarlberg had declared itself independent on 3 November 1918, but because of the terrible economic situation and the difficulties involved in establishing a completely independent administration, the provisional Land Assembly had decided to remain in a provisional union with the Austrian Republic while awaiting the decisions of the Western Allied Powers. This decision was taken because it was believed that the principles championed by the Allied Powers would protect Vorarlberg's freedom, which would be realized under the League of Nations. Dr. Ender went on to emphasise that Vorarlberg had continuously stressed that its union with Austria was provisional. Austria never rejected this view. In fact, the Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Renner, had assured Dr. Ender that the question of Vorarlberg's future could be decided after the Treaty of St. Germain had been signed, in order not to further complicate the negotiations beforehand. Later, the Territorial Committee of the Peace Conference discussed the Vorarlberg question, but the negotiations had proceeded so far that the question was not decided, wrote Dr. Ender. But he had heard that the Supreme Council did not believe that this should prejudice a later decision on the question.
Dr. Ender kept emphasising that Vorarlberg's right to self-determination had never been denied, just that the decision on Vorarlberg's future had been postponed. The possibility of union with Switzerland was barely mentioned in the Memorial. Instead, the Memorial concentrated on the question of self-determination and independence for Vorarlberg.

The next section, on the historical reasons for the movement, portrayed the movement away from Austria as a natural and understandable one, based on Vorarlberg's special position and traditional love of freedom.

...Not flight from the sad circumstances of the present nor fear of the consequences of a lost war are the reasons for the present movement, but old privileges and rights, for which our forefathers fought a long, unequal battle, and which had their origins in that the obstinate acquisition of Vorarlberg by the Habsburgs was not for the Land itself, but only to establish a bridge to their [the Habsburgs] continuously threatened Vorlande in Switzerland and southern Germany. This transitory, but at one time great, importance of the Land for Austria, makes it understandable that the people of Vorarlberg were granted extraordinary (compared to Inner Austria) freedoms, while with the loss of the western possessions (1648) and the Vorlande (1805) Vorarlberg became unimportant to Austria. This hindered Vorarlberg's development and because of the strongly democratic nature of the people [of Vorarlberg], which was so contrary to the old constitution [of Austria], there has in a way been a Vorarlberg question for Austria since the time of Maria Theresia....

The historical section emphasised Vorarlberg's independent existence and its ties to Switzerland, while playing down ties to Austria.

Vorarlberg was not important to Austria, it alleged.

...In summary, the lessons of history show that Vorarlberg has always led its own existence in Austria, conditioned by its geographic situation and encouraged and recognized by the Austrian rulers for as long as it served their higher interests. Once final defeat in Switzerland and the growth in strength of France had made an expansion to the west impossible, and with the acquisition of Hungary, Austrian interests turned eastwards. Vorarlberg was no longer an interest of the Monarchy's. Herewith began the struggle over the rights which had made possible the state-consciousness of the Land. This struggle has continued into modern times and although Vorarlberg belonged to Austria for 400 years, it was never assimilated with Inner Austria.
The long-favoured status and the political maturity which developed [in Vorarlberg] were the original causes of the estrangement from Inner Austria. However, the obstinacy with which these rights were defended, the love of freedom and the democratic sentiment, which were never very strong east of the Arlberg, are based on the fact that we are of a different Stamm. Not only does the Arlberg form a natural boundary, but it is also the boundary of Stamm and mentality and the circumstance that our Land was settled largely from Switzerland clearly explains our spiritual disposition, our customs and our character, which are different from those of the east and north. While all of the other crownlands came to Austria solely by acts between rulers, and while a mighty nobility ruled in Austria and in Bavaria, Vorarlberg came in pieces and with conditions, protected by many charters of freedom, to the House of Habsburg.

The Austrian solution to the Vorarlberg question was the product of states of emergency and circumstances which could not last forever. It is noteworthy that in various international crises (1798 and 1809) leading statesmen of various powers regarded Austria's possession of Vorarlberg as an anomaly, which demanded a solution. And this solution must be found now, when the right of free self-determination has been adjudged to have an important - we hope the decisive - roll in the life of peoples.

Hindered in our moral and political development by foreign bonds, the constant struggles for our rights caused an ability and a feeling of responsibility to develop, which is encompassed in the spirit and the will for independence.

The section on the economic grounds for the movement for separation from Austria aimed to show that Vorarlberg had nothing to offer Austria or vice versa. Further, to satisfy the fears of the Allies, it was clearly stated that the Vorarlbergers did not hope to escape their share of the Austrian debt; they were ready to accept it.

In distant circles there is the opinion that Vorarlberg wants to secede from the Austrian Republic to avoid sharing the burdens of this state. To the honour of the Vorarlbergers it must be confirmed, however, that such motives are not to be found in the Land itself. Right since the beginning of the movement for self-determination, the authorities and the people themselves have reckoned that the Land will have to assume the burdens which proportionally fall to it until the day of separation. Any other procedure would be unfair to the Länder with which Vorarlberg had previously been united.

The economic reasons for the movement for separation can be summarized in the following sentence:

"Vorarlberg and the Austrian Republic are two economic bodies which cannot offer to the other that which the other needs most and which go together so poorly that one will merely be a burden to the other."

The Republic of Austria above all needs foodstuffs, coal and raw materials for its industry and small tradesmen.
Vorarlberg needs exactly the same things, only in much greater quantities, since it is an industrialised Land with important cattle farming, but with few crops.

Vorarlberg imported grain in even greater quantities than the other Austrian Länder, with the exception of Vienna. The separation of Vorarlberg from the rest of Austria would make easier the provisioning of Austria. Vorarlberg's imports of grain, beetroot, flax, et cetera, came largely from outside Austria. Proportionately Vorarlberg had a smaller forest area than the other Länder of Austria. Because of this and because of transport difficulties, Vorarlberg did not supply the large cities of Austria with wood. Vorarlberg's waterpower was denigrated. The Memorial stated that the waterpower in Vorarlberg was not first class and would be difficult to harness. Tirol and the other Alpine Länder had better sources of waterpower. Vorarlberg had textile industries. But so did the rest of Austria; thus Vorarlberg's textile products were not needed by the Republic, nor were its embroidery products. As a small independent state, Vorarlberg would be able to export its products, the Memorial asserted, pointing to the examples of Belgium and Switzerland. The Memorial then went on to challenge the assertion that Vorarlberg would be an important transit centre. It alleged that traffic on the sea route from the North Sea to the Mediterranean would be built up and the rail routes would be neglected. Besides, there were shorter routes across the Alps which avoided Vorarlberg. Before the war there had been plans to make the Rhine navigable to the Bodensee. The Memorial asserted that these plans were less likely to be realised now. With the return of Alsace and

15. The British were particularly interested in this project.
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Lorraine to France, Germany no longer enjoyed full sovereignty over the Rhine from Mannheim to Basel. Therefore Germany would improve other river routes instead (Main-Danube and Neckar-Danube), thus opening shorter and cheaper transit routes from the North Sea to Inner Austria.

With regard to east-west transit on the Arlberg Line, Vorarlberg's separation from Austria would not be harmful. For international traffic it did not matter where the border was. The railway system would be as well-run and secure in orderly Vorarlberg as in contemporary Austria. The Memorial tried to play down the importance of Vorarlberg's railways while assuring the Allied Powers that the railways would be as well maintained in an independent Vorarlberg as they would be in Austria.

...Finally it must be pointed out that with a separation of Vorarlberg an exact establishment and settlement of the liabilities between Vorarlberg and the Austrian Republic must ensue. The claims of the Republic will be much larger than those of Vorarlberg, particularly since, as has been said before, this Land would not refuse to accept that share of the debt which would fall to it by a just division. It is not unlikely that Vorarlberg, especially in the case of a possible closer association with Switzerland, would be in the position to pay its share partly in gold, which would make it easier for Austria to pay its debts to foreign creditors.

Those are the narrow economic reasons for the movement for independence in Vorarlberg. More powerful still are the reasons of a higher order. The Vorarlberg people want a true and lasting democracy. They want order; through honesty, industry and thrift they want to work themselves up again; they are deeply distressed that the Government of the Republic is not capable of protecting these values sufficiently. The Vorarlberg people want to live and not be ruined.16

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The Swiss Government gave tentative support to the Vorarlberg appeal. The Political Department noted that the Vorarlbergers had continually stressed that their union to Austria was provisional. Under these circumstances, Vorarlberg could have reserved its right to self-determination, in case Austria fell apart or was dismembered or in case Austria joined Germany or another power or power block, such as a proposed Danubian Confederation. At the meeting of Sub-Committee B of the Fifth Committee of the Assembly of the League of Nations, whose function it was to study Austria's request for admission to the League, Giuseppe Motta, the Head of the Political Department, the President of Switzerland for 1920 and the Swiss delegate to the Assembly of the League of Nations, brought up the Vorarlberg question. Motta said that it was Switzerland's sincere wish that Austria should be admitted to the League. It would truly be a disaster if it were not. But a disquieting doubt hung over Austria: was the new state capable of surviving? Article 88 of the Treaty of St. Germain forbade the union of Austria to Germany. Vorarlberg wished to join the Swiss Confederation. A plebiscite had resulted in eighty per cent of the voters declaring that they wanted such a union. It was possible that Switzerland would refuse to admit Vorarlberg, but Vorarlberg was perfectly right to want to decide its future. Motta said that he hoped that the question would not be prejudiced, whether the Sub-Committee decided to recommend that Austria be accepted by the League of Nations as a member or not.

By Article 10 of the Covenant of the League, the League guaranteed

17. Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations states:

The members of the League undertake to respect and preserve as against external aggression the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all members of the League. In case of any such aggression or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression the Council shall advise upon means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled.
the territorial integrity of all its members. That could be used as a reason to block completely the independence of Vorarlberg, which could prove unfortunate. Motta hoped that a clear declaration on the question would be made to the effect that it was understood that Vorarlberg would have the absolute right to determine its own future in case the state of Austria should undergo any fundamental change.

The president of the Sub-Committee, Lord Robert Cecil, responded that Article 10 did not pretend to guarantee the territorial integrity of the member states. It merely protected the territorial integrity of these states from external aggression. It did not forbid political changes. The Sub-Committee decided that it would be dangerous to accept Motta's proposal, since that might be thought to imply a sanction for Vorarlberg's wish to separate from Austria and to join Switzerland. The Sub-Committee could not accept the responsibility for that, but it did wish to make known unofficially the opinion of its members that the entry of Austria into the League of Nations would not prejudge or affect the question in any way. Such doubts on the question resulted from an incorrect interpretation of Article 10 of the Covenant of the League. 18 At the meeting of the full Assembly

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 721.
Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Delegation at the League of Nations Assembly 24 November 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 724.
Annex to the Memorial from the Vorarlberg Landesrat to the League of Nations: Declaration of Representatives of Vorarlberg in the Austrian National Assembly in September 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 723.
Extract from the minutes of a meeting of the 5th Committee, Sub-Committee B, of the Assembly of the League of Nations on the admission of Austria to the League and the petition from Vorarlberg, 26 November 1920.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 725.
JG 28 November 1920 2me edition No. 328 2c.
NZZ 27 November 1920 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 1953 1c.
VLZ 29 November 1920 Nr. 272 3.
VT 30 November 1920 Nr. 273 Folge 1.
T 29 November 1920 13c.

Contd. on p. 272
of the League of Nations on 15 December 1920, Motta repeated the unofficial opinion of the Sub-Committee. He said:

...I come now to Article 10. The question about this article concerns Vorarlberg. Vorarlberg has a population of approximately 150,000 inhabitants, who claim the right of self-determination. I have had the honour of presenting to the Fifth Committee a proposal which would reserve [for Vorarlberg] the right of self-determination if Austria were to undergo any fundamental change.

The Committee did not believe it necessary to adhere to my proposal in the form in which I presented it. I yielded. I yield again today. But I wish to publicly emphasize here the reasons which permit me to accept this attitude. The Committee declared right away that the admission of Austria to the League of Nations would leave the Vorarlberg question completely intact. This question is in no way prejudged. The Committee then added that the proposal which I have had the honour to formulate in the name of the Swiss Delegation was the result of a probably erroneous interpretation of Article 10 of the Covenant. This Article is familiar to us. It is one of the most important and one of the most controversial.

You know that the Canadian delegation has already demanded that this article be eliminated from the Covenant. As to the future of this article, I would like to associate myself with the Committee's interpretation that it protects states only from extraordinary aggression from the outside. This article can not mean anything else. It is not a straitjacket. It is not an instrument of reaction. The League of Nations must be a force for liberty, a force for peaceful evolution. 19

18. Contd.

NFP 27 November 1920 Abendblatt 1.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 726.

Extract from a letter on political affairs from the Political Department to Swiss Legations abroad 8 December 1920
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 728.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 734.
JG 17 December 1920 2me edition No. 347 2c.
NZZ 16 December 1920 1. Morgenblatt Nr. 2077 1c.
NZZ 16 December 1920 1. Mittagblatt Nr. 2079 1c.

PRO FO 371 C/13904/785/3.

Contd. on p. 273
In its report to the Bundesrat, the Swiss Delegation to the League of Nations explained that the request for admission to the League by Austria offered the occasion for the Swiss Delegation to make known the views of the Swiss Government on the Vorarlberg question. That should not be interpreted as an act hostile to Austria. The Swiss Delegation knew that a delegation would be coming from Vorarlberg to present directly the Memorial of the Vorarlberger Landesrat to the League of Nations. The Vorarlberg Delegation was only able to catch a glimpse of the director of the Political Section of the Secretariat General and of some members of the various delegations. The Vorarlberg Delegation had come to Geneva to demand the right to determine immediately its own future. The Swiss Delegation had to make clear the point of view of the Swiss Government which was that it did not wish to encourage the dissolution of Austria, but only wanted to preserve for Vorarlberg the right to determine its own future in case Austria should join Germany or should suffer some drastic change. The report continued, that Motta had presented to the Committee the formula approved by the Bundesrat at its meeting of 28 November in Geneva which was that:

It is understood that Vorarlberg would have the right to determine its own future if the new state of Austria should undergo fundamental changes.

This formula referred to any possible future changes in Austria's status. The report stated that the French delegate had said that he approved of the formula, but the Committee decided not to include it in the resolution for Austria's admission to the League. To make


JG 12 December 1920 2me edition No. 342 2c.
NZZ 12 December 1920 I. Sonntagausgabe 1. Blatt Nr. 2047 1c.
B 12 December 1920 Nr. 532 2d.
SGT 11 December 1920 Morgenblatt Nr. 292 2b.
VLZ 13 December 1920 Nr. 283 2.
VT 21 December 1920 Nr. 290 Folge 1.
clear Vorarlberg's right without prejudice for the future, the Swiss Delegation succeeded in having included in the reports of the Subcommittee and of the Committee, Motta's declaration and the Committee's statement on the Vorarlberg question. The report concluded that by expressly declaring that Article 10 of the Covenant did not block territorial modifications initiated from inside countries and did not guarantee the territorial integrity of member states, the Committee had confirmed the point of view of the Swiss Delegation. The Swiss looked upon the outcome as a success, and so did the Vorarlbergers, who could hardly have expected more from the League of Nations. They could not start to negotiate with Switzerland about union, but if Austria fell apart, as it seemed likely it would in the near future, then Vorarlberg would have its freedom. A. M. G. Cadogan, of the British Foreign Office, thought Motta's suggestion on Vorarlberg worthy of note.

The Vorarlberg Government considered the mission to have been successful. The League of Nations agreed that Article 10 of its Covenant only forbade boundary changes as a result of war. Vorarlberg still retained the possibility to belong to a state other than Austria. The League of Nations would not oppose Vorarlberg's right to self-determination if conditions changed to allow Vorarlberg to exercise that right. The Vorarlberg Government defended the mission at a

20. Extract from the report presented to the Bundesrat on 13 December 1920 by the Swiss Delegation at the League of Nations. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 722.

Landtag meeting, where it was under attack by the Social Democrats and the German Nationalists (the Deutschfreiheitliche). Zumtobel, one of the two Deutschfreiheitliche representatives in the Landtag, said that the Memorial to the League of Nations was a "stain on Vorarlberg's honour". Linder, a Social Democrat, declared that the money spent on the mission to Geneva had been wasted. Barnabas Fink, one of the two Vorarlbergers on the official mission to Geneva, denied this and said that the mission had gone to establish an important point, that Article 10 would not affect the right of self-determination, Vorarlberg's or anyone else's. Therefore the mission had been a success.

* * *

The feeling that Austria would collapse soon (in 1921) was not peculiar to Vorarlberg. The Swiss, the Germans and the Allies all continued to consider the collapse a distinct possibility. Emil Sonderegger, the Chief of the Swiss General Staff, wrote a memorandum for the head of the Swiss Military Department in which he asserted that Austria might collapse in the immediate future, in which case the Vorarlberg question would become urgent. If Austria collapsed, Vorarlberg would probably declare its independence immediately and ask for an association with Switzerland whereby Switzerland would include Vorarlberg in its customs area, run its posts and telegraph system and represent the Land abroad. Sonderegger wrote that as long as this occurred peacefully, Switzerland need do nothing. But there was the possibility that the socialists or the Pan-Germans or both together with or without the help of irregular troops from

Bavaria or Tirol, might try to stage a coup d'etat in order to establish a Pan-German government in Vorarlberg or to join Vorarlberg immediately to Germany. Such a coup could lead to a civil war, and Sonderegger believed that Switzerland would then have to intervene. A civil war in Vorarlberg would block Swiss trade and communications to the east, would force a continuing defence of the Swiss border and might cause individual Swiss to join in the fray. Sonderegger asserted that Switzerland had the right to demand peace and order in Vorarlberg. In order to settle finally the question of Vorarlberg's future, a definitive plebiscite should be held in the Land. The League of Nations could not be the competent authority to keep order in Vorarlberg during the plebiscite, since Germany would regard it as partial. Therefore Vorarlberg's neighbours - Germany, Italy and Switzerland - would have to be the competent authorities to keep order. But it would take too long for them to come to an agreement on this. Sonderegger concluded that Switzerland would have to do it alone, since no one could expect impartiality from Germany, and Italy would be most unwelcome in Vorarlberg. Sonderegger was pleased to note that Switzerland was entitled to this role, since the earlier "unofficial" plebiscite in Vorarlberg had resulted in a vote of eighty per cent for Switzerland. German and Italian representatives could participate to act as witnesses of Switzerland's impartiality. The General Staff had prepared plans to occupy Vorarlberg in order to ensure order. But Switzerland must be ready to decide if it were willing to grant an autonomous Vorarlberg an association, which Vorarlberg would want at first and which it would need to exist. Switzerland would have to act quickly to occupy Vorarlberg in order to avoid the disadvantages and dangers which the collapse of Austria might bring.  

23. Memorandum from the Chief of the General Staff, Sonderegger, to the Head of the Swiss Military Department, 25 January 1921. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 746.
the Swiss Government that the situation in Tirol, where the Landtag was discussing union to Germany, was encouraging Pan-Germans in Vorarlberg to organise further secretly. This might provoke Vorarlberg to declare its independence. Steps in that direction were already being taken. The Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" reported to the Swiss Government that the Vorarlberg Government would follow a declaration of independence with a plebiscite on Vorarlberg's future and would request the temporary occupation of the Land by Swiss troops. If Vorarlberg declared independence, bands of Pan-Germans might try to invade the Land from Bavaria and Tirol. Such action would force Switzerland to intervene or at least to guard its border and to adopt a position on the Vorarlberg question. The Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" had arranged for a meeting with some Vorarlbergers to take place in Bern on 27 January 1921. The meeting, organised by the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg", between the Vorarlbergers and some members of the Swiss Parliament took place in Bern as planned. It was expected that Tirol would vote in a plebiscite on union to Germany on 27 February 1921. A great majority would be for the union. What the Entente would do was unclear, but even if they tried to block Tirol's union to Germany, the question of the whole of Austria's union to Germany was only a matter of time, since Austria's collapse was unavoidable. The plebiscite in Tirol would affect Vorarlberg and could force it to declare its independence immediately or later, when Austria finally collapsed. Vorarlberg would probably want a credit from Switzerland of some five million francs to be used not immediately, but when the unavoidable crisis of Austria's collapse came. The Swiss Government was ready to consider such a credit. The

24. Memorandum from the Swiss Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" to the Bundesrat 27 January 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 747.
The Federal Councillors Motta, Musy and Scheurer discussed the proposed credit, which was to be used mainly to supply Vorarlberg with food, with the Vorarlberg Landeshauptmannstellvertreter Barnabas Fink. Other problems were also discussed in view of Austria's probable collapse.25

Those circles in the Swiss Government who supported the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland worked with the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" to lobby in Switzerland for the possible union. The Committee also acted as a liaison with supporters of the union in Vorarlberg, and through them with Dr. Ender and the Christian Social faction in the Vorarlberg Government. In March 1921, the supporters of the union in Vorarlberg in consultation with the Vorarlberg Government organised themselves into a corporation with legal status called the Schweizer Bund to replace the Werbeausschuss. The new association was organised along lines similar to those of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg". A central organisation for the whole of Vorarlberg oversaw local groups in the villages and towns. It published articles favourable to Switzerland and organised lectures and other meetings. The Schweizer Bund published the bulletins of the Committee "Pro Vorarlberg" in German only (in Switzerland they were printed in German and French) for

25. Memorandum on the meeting in Bern between four delegates from Vorarlberg (Pirker, Riedmann, Krüsi and Deuring) and members of the Swiss Parliament 28 January 1921. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 748.
Extract from a letter on political affairs from the Political Department to Swiss Legations abroad 4 February 1921. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 749.
distribution in Vorarlberg. It received financial support from its Swiss sister organisation.26

The Polish minister in Berlin spoke with the Swiss minister there, v. Planta, and expressed his astonishment and regret that Switzerland was doing so little to encourage Vorarlberg to join it. V. Planta remarked that the Entente did not support the union, but the Polish minister answered that attitudes had changed, since the Allies recognised that Austria's union to Germany could not be blocked forever; therefore the Allies would prefer Vorarlberg to be united to Switzerland in order to reduce the territory which would accrue to Germany. The envoy from the United States confirmed the opinion that Austria's union to Germany could not be blocked forever; therefore the Allies would no longer try to stop Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland. V. Planta did not know if the Polish and American ministers were expressing their own opinions only. He agreed that the Allies would prefer that Vorarlberg go to Switzerland rather than to Germany. But it was questionable if the Allies really were beginning to think that the union of Austria to Germany could not be stopped in the long run. The Political Department considered that the continuing disintegration of Austria would accelerate its union to Germany. The Political Department thought that Italy and Britain

might no longer oppose a union of Austria to Germany. Because of the
desperateness of Austria's position, events could force the union,
even if this were contrary to the official position of the Allies.
Therefore the Vorarlberg question could wax acute again at any time. 27

Austria's economic position was untenable. Without help, it
would be impossible for the state to continue to exist. For a while
it seemed unlikely that the Allies would step in to save Austria.
Britain at first refused to help, and France was too weak to give
sufficient economic aid alone. 28 The desperate economic situation
caused the individual Länder to prepare to save themselves when the
expected collapse came. On 24 April 1921 the Tirolean Government
held a plebiscite on whether the people of Tirol wished to join Germany
at some unspecified time in the future. Over ninety-eight per cent
of the voters supported the proposed union. The Austrian Government
informed the Allies that it did not approve of the plebiscite and
had used all constitutional means to try to stop it. But the result
of the plebiscite should be a warning that the Allies must aid
Austria to help it to recover. In April 1921, the Landtag in
Salzburg decided to hold a plebiscite on the same question that May.

27. Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Embassies in
and Brussels 4 February 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 750.
Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Military
Department, Bern 7 March 1921.
SB 20001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 759.
Letter from the Swiss Military Department to the Political
Department 9 March 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 760.

28. Letter from the Political Department to the Swiss Military
Department 7 March 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 759.
Memorandum on the meeting in Bern between four delegates from
Vorarlberg and members of the Swiss Parliament 28 January 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 748.
In May 1921 the Landtag in Styria decided to hold a plebiscite on the question in July. The plebiscite in Salzburg took place on 29 May and over ninety-nine per cent of those voting supported the union of the Land to Germany. The Allies threatened that they would not help Austria if these moves continued, and the Austrian Government managed to dissuade Styria from holding a plebiscite. Austria's chances for survival seemed to improve.

Dr. Ender opposed these plebiscites. He told the Vorarlberg Landtag that the individual Länder must observe the Austrian

29. Note from the Austrian Minister in London to the British Foreign Office 28 April 1921. PRO FO 371 C/8850/1383/3.
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 28 April 1921. PRO FO 371 C/8964/1383/3.
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 9 June 1921. PRO FO 371 C/12270/192/3.
Memorandum from the Secret Intelligence Service, Central European Department, British Foreign Office 5 May 1921. PRO FO 371 C/8486/1383/3.
Despatch from Theo Russell, Bern, to the British Foreign Office 4 May 1921. PRO FO 371 C/10087/1383/3.
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 12 May 1921. PRO FO 371 C/10273/1383/3.
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 18 May 1921. PRO FO 371 C/10985/1383/3.
Despatch from F. O. Lindley, Vienna, to the British Foreign Office 31 May 1921. PRO FO 371 C/11318/1383/3.

The vote in Tirol was 144,342 for union to Germany and 1,794 against with 86% of those eligible voting.
The vote in Salzburg was approximately 103,000 for union to Germany and 800 against with 83% of those eligible voting.
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Constitution and laws until there came a change in Austria's status which would allow the Länder to be responsible only to themselves. Vorarlberg had held its plebiscite before the Peace Treaty had been signed and the Austrian Constitution ratified. The Vorarlberg Government still believed in Vorarlberg's basic right to determine its own future, but it would obey the Austrian Constitution for as long as Vorarlberg were a part of Austria. This was Dr. Ender's position in public, although at various times in 1921 and 1922, when it seemed that Austria was about to collapse, he prepared plans for the collapse and for the exercise of Vorarlberg's right of self-determination. 30

In answer to an interpellation in the Ständerat in June 1921 Federal Councillor Motta announced that one could not speak of Swiss policy on Vorarlberg. Switzerland hoped that Austria would live and flourish. The Vorarlberg question could only arise for Switzerland if Austria should fall apart, which would be contrary to Swiss wishes and expectations. But if that happened, Switzerland would wish that the Vorarlberg people would have the right to decide their future themselves. Motta concluded that there was nothing further to be said. 31

Letter from Dr. Ender to the editor of the "Schweizer-Bund" 16 May 1922.
"Schweizer-Bund" 2. Jg. Nr. 8 22 May 1922.

31. Extract from the Protocol of the Eighth Session of the Swiss Ständerat 14 June 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 771.
Letter from the Political Department to Nationalrat R. Forrer of St. Gallen 26 October 1921.
SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 779.
Letter from Theo Russell, Bern, to the British Foreign Office 18 June 1921.
PRO FO 371 C/12656/12656/3.
Motta repeated this formula in a speech to the Nationalrat in October 1921.
PRO FO 371 W/10789/10789/43.
The Swiss Government held to this formula. On 18 November 1921, Bourcart, the Swiss Minister in Vienna, wrote to Motta, the head of the Political Department, to ask what he should present as the official Swiss view on the question of Austria's union to Germany.

He commented:

...Austria's strength to exist, which is becoming continually weaker, and the evidently negative position of the Entente powers towards effective help for Austria in the form of credits, makes the Anschluss [of Austria to Germany] appear to be the only way of saving Austria and it would be more and more illusory to ignore this possibility [of the Anschluss].

On the other hand, it remains my conviction that the Anschluss would contain great dangers for our political and economic independence. I can only repeat in general what has always been at the basis of my political reports on this subject: any enlargement of the German Reich as a result of Pan-German goals based on "völkisch" propaganda contradicts in a certain sense the principles of our State and if such an enlargement should occur along our borders, it could have extremely unwelcome results. The surrounding of our border by German territory from Basel to the Stilfersjoch would not only be a military danger, it would not only have important repercussions on our economy, especially on our trade with the east, but the end of Austria would be a great cultural loss for us. The existence of a second independent small Germanophone state is a decided advantage.

It would be paradoxical if the friends of Vorarlberg's union to Switzerland were to wish for Austria's Anschluss [to Germany] with the expectation that their goal would be achieved...32

Motta replied that Switzerland's position had always been that a union of Austria to Germany would be contrary to Swiss interests:

...A German Austria, or even a German Vorarlberg only, would encircle Switzerland along its eastern border in a way which would be very dangerous for Switzerland's political and economic existence. It would cut off free communications over the Arlberg to Eastern Europe and the Balkans and would make us dependent in this direction on our greatest competitor. Already on 22 November 1919 Federal Councillor Calonder pointed out in the Ständerat that Switzerland must endeavour by all means to block this encirclement, since interests vital to us were involved. The undersigned [Motta] has similarly let no opportunity pass to advocate firmly this point of view.

Concerning the Vorarlberg question, about which you asked, the Bundesrat still sincerely wishes that Austria, as established by the Peace Treaty, should live and develop. This will continue to be our policy. Should Austria dissolve against...

32. Letter from Bourcart, Swiss Minister in Vienna, to Federal Councillor Motta, Head of the Political Department 18 November 1921.

SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 780.
the expectations, wishes and interests of Switzerland, then Switzerland would have to demand for Vorarlberg the right to determine its own future. That was and is the point of view of the Bundesrat, which the Swiss Delegation also advocated at the first assembly of the League of Nations in Geneva. The Bundesrat will maintain this policy of reserve and sympathy, in agreement with the great majority of the Swiss people, in the future... ³³

The Germans were biding their time. V. Kuelmer, in charge of the German Passport Bureau in Bregenz, advised that Germany do nothing overt in the question. Time was working for the Pan-German group. He did recommend some economic measures that could be taken. For instance, there was much unemployment in the embroidery industry. If Germany imported even a small amount of embroidered materials from Vorarlberg, it would be noticed in the Land. Adolf Müller, the German Ambassador in Bern, recommended that Germany not encourage propaganda activities in its favour in Vorarlberg. The movement for union to Switzerland had become dormant, but greater Pan-German activity would encourage those for union to Switzerland to become active again, which would destroy what careful activity had achieved. ³⁴

³³. Letter from Federal Councillor Motta, Head of the Political Department, to Bourcart, Swiss Minister in Vienna 28 November 1921. SBA 2001 (B) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 781.

Letter from v. Kuelmer, German Passport Bureau, Bregenz, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 4 June 1921. FOL K1170/K301101.
Despatch from Adolf Müller, German Ambassador at Bern, to the German Foreign Office, Berlin 21 June 1921. FOL K1170/K301107.

...Zu befürchten ist, dass durch Duldung oder gar Unterstützung dieser zum Teil provokatorisch anmutenden Propaganda die glücklich eingeschlafene schweizer Anschlussbewegung von neuem geweckt wird. Ich wäre daher dankbar, wenn die zuständigen Stellen bei Gelegenheit mit Nachdruck hierauf aufmerksam gemacht werden, damit nicht eine fortgesetzte und sorgfältige Arbeit zu nichts gemacht wird.
The situation continued to be uncertain through 1922. Austria's continued existence was still under question. The Swiss Government was concerned about Vorarlberg. It reviewed the advantages and disadvantages a union of Vorarlberg would mean for Switzerland. The Swiss Railways Department was asked to review once again the importance of Vorarlberg's transport routes for Switzerland. Advantages of the union would be the elimination of Austrian administration of the railway from St. Margrethen to Lindau. Switzerland would control the railway right to Lindau. It would strengthen Switzerland's control over railways in the Alpine region. Switzerland's influence in questions of tariffs and schedules on east-west European routes would be increased by Swiss control of the junction of Feldkirch and one side of the Arlberg Tunnel and the elimination of Austria's position on the Bodensee. However, the Railways Department concluded that these economic advantages would not outweigh the economic disadvantages that Vorarlberg's union would have for Switzerland (Vorarlberg's share of the Austrian debt). The Railways Department was not in a position to comment on other, non-economic, advantages of the union. But the Swiss Military Department was. The Bundesrat had asked the Military Department for a study of Austria's and Vorarlberg's present situations. The study began with the pre-war situation, which the Military Department considered to have been favourable. The Swiss transport network was very close to the border, but since the Habsburg Monarchy's political interests lay to the east, its military

35. Telegram from the Political Department to the Swiss Legation in Vienna 17 June 1922. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 783.
Telegram in cypher from the Swiss Legation in Vienna to the Political Department 19 June 1922. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/P21/2 Nr. 784.

36. Letter from the Swiss Posts and Railways Department to the Political Department 3 July 1922. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 786.
strength was limited in Vorarlberg, which was fairly well cut off from the rest of the Monarchy anyway. The Rhine and the mountains had formed a satisfactory border, but with newer technology this frontier was less easily defensible. The old Monarchy had not endangered Switzerland militarily, nor would the new Republic of Austria, which was so weak that it could not even defend itself. But that allowed for the danger of the occupation of Austria by one of the powers. Vorarlberg as a part of an independent Austria was no danger to Switzerland from a military point of view. But Vorarlberg would not be capable of surviving alone, since it lacked the political, economic and military power. It would be used by its stronger neighbours to their advantage. It could be occupied in wartime by one of the warring factions and become a battleground, since it could not defend itself. If Switzerland were invited to occupy it during wartime, Switzerland would be risking its own neutrality. Therefore, Switzerland, from a military point of view, could not wish for Vorarlberg to be independent. If Vorarlberg were to fall to Germany, the Swiss border with Germany would be lengthened from 150 kilometres to 250 kilometres. It would be about 250 kilometres long even if Vorarlberg belonged to Switzerland, but then the border would be much more easily defensible, since Vorarlberg's mountainous perimeter would give Switzerland room to manoeuvre. The Rhine valley, with its good network of railways and roads and other resources, provided necessary space for manoeuvres and provisioning. But with Germany there instead, it would be practically impossible to defend northeastern Switzerland. With the loss of that part of the country, Switzerland would lose much of its fighting potential. Therefore, the union of Vorarlberg to Germany would have the most serious consequences for the defence of Switzerland. If Vorarlberg
were occupied by Italy, Italy would gain a foothold on the northern side of the Alpine chain, which would prevent the adequate defence of Switzerland against that country. In case of war with Italy, Switzerland would have to give up Graubünden and Ticino. Since Vorarlberg was easily defended from Switzerland and its occupation by another country would be very dangerous to Switzerland, the Military Department concluded that from a military standpoint, the union or association of Vorarlberg to Switzerland would have decisive advantages for Switzerland.37

The Bundesrat discussed the Vorarlberg question once more on 1 September 1922. Motta said that Dr. Ender believed that Seipel, the Chancellor of Austria, was ready to subjugate Austria to Italy. The Vorarlbergers were preparing to launch a new attempt to join Switzerland. Therefore Switzerland must once again examine the question. Italian control of Austria, and with it of Vorarlberg, would be dangerous for Switzerland for political, strategic and transit reasons. Switzerland should strive for the maintenance of the status quo in Austria. Motta said that Switzerland should dissuade the Vorarlberg authorities from taking any steps along the lines that they were considering, and which would lead to nothing. The Bundesrat approved Motta's view. Switzerland continued to wish that Vorarlberg would remain a part of Austria, and only in case that state disintegrated would Switzerland wish that Vorarlberg would have the right to determine its own future. Federal Councillor Musy remarked that in the demoralised and weak state Austria was in, the

37. Letter from the Swiss Military Department to the Bundesrat 31 August 1922. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 788.
question could become acute suddenly. Switzerland should be ready to make its position known quickly, if necessary, and should study all sides of the problem. Therefore, Switzerland should not issue a declaration blocking all hope of union to Switzerland for the Vorarlberg authorities. Federal Councillor Schulthess flatly opposed the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland. Federal Councillor Scheurer believed that however undesirable the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland might be for various reasons, it would be preferable to a union of Vorarlberg to Germany or Italy. Federal Councillor Chuard approved of Motta's proposal and agreed that Switzerland should try to avoid territorial modifications along its borders which could furnish a pretext for other neighbouring states to demand changes to their benefit. He supported the idea of giving further financial help to Austria, if necessary, to keep it going. The Bundesrat decided to inform Dr. Ender and the other Vorarlberg authorities that the Bundesrat wished that the status quo be maintained in Austria, and that the Bundesrat hoped that the Vorarlberg Government would avoid any moves towards union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland.38

Shortly thereafter, in October 1922, under the auspices of the League of Nations, the Geneva Protocols were signed. The Protocols reaffirmed Austria's independence and territorial integrity and provided for a loan to be guaranteed mainly by Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia. Switzerland, with an interest in Austria's continued existence, helped too. Austria was to balance its budget within two years. The loan was intended to help Austria to become

38. Extract from the Procès-Verbal of a meeting of the Bundesrat 1 September 1922. SBA 2001 (H) 3 B14/211 P21/2 Nr. 787.
solvent again, which it did. The Austrian state was given a chance to exist. This ability on Austria's part to exist ended the Vorarlberg question. The Land settled down to become a loyal, albeit particularistic, member of the federal Republic of Austria.

In 1939 it was rumoured that there was particular opposition in Vorarlberg to the Germans. The Daily Herold reported that the people of Vorarlberg were united and were demanding union with Switzerland. The British Consul-General in Vienna, D. St. Clair Gainer, wrote that these reports were much exaggerated. And so they were. Gainer reported that it was mainly amongst those Vorarlbergers who had both Swiss and German citizenship that the movement away from Germany flourished. The Swiss had strengthened their border control, but more because they were worried that some of the Vorarlbergers of dual citizenship might be acting as German agents than because of any movement for union to Switzerland. Gainer reported later about disillusionment in Austria caused by German interference with the Roman Catholic Church, and by the way in which the Germans treated the Austrians as second class citizens. While this disillusionment

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was not an important factor at first, it did grow with the war, and especially with the shortages and suffering caused by it. Through German attitudes to the Austrians, and the war and Germany's defeat, an Austrian state consciousness finally matured. The Vorarlbergers today are good Austrians, although they still cling to their own identity. In the government offices in Bregenz, the capital, the first few articles of the Vorarlberg Constitution are displayed, proclaiming Vorarlberg's individuality, its Selbständigkeit.
CHAPTER 10

CONCLUSION

Looking back to the post-war period, one can see many reasons why the Vorarlbergers wished to join Switzerland. Undoubtedly a large majority supported the union of their Land to the Swiss Confederation. That this was so can clearly be seen by the result of the plebiscite of 11 May 1919 in which eighty per cent of the voters expressed their wish that the Vorarlberg Landesrat would enter into negotiations on unification with the Swiss Government. Clearly the Vorarlbergers were influenced by their geographic position. Vorarlberg is cut off from the rest of Austria by the high Arlberg, but communications over the Rhine with neighbouring Switzerland are easy. Ethnic similarities drew the Vorarlbergers towards Switzerland. Economic advantages were important. Switzerland was a richer country, food was readily available, taxes were lower, the country was not burdened with a war debt. Switzerland was neutral, a haven of peace in a world which had seen too much of war. The attraction was a natural one. Vorarlberg was poor. It had just lost a war. Right across a narrow river there was a rich neighbour. The movement is understandable on economic grounds. Yet it must not be seen as one based purely on material interests. Switzerland was democratic in a particular way. So were the Vorarlbergers. Their ideal was not a liberal, permissive state, but an old-fashioned conservative self-governing one. They wanted to establish a small autonomous state for themselves, where they would be their own masters. Hence the movement for union to Switzerland. Each Swiss canton enjoys real power, each rules itself. In 1919, the federal
government interfered very little in local affairs. Within Switzerland, Vorarlberg could have formed an autonomous state, ruled by Vorarlbergers in the interests of Vorarlbergers. Outside influences could have been kept out. The revolution could have been kept away. The movement for union to Switzerland was a type of popularist outburst. The majority of Vorarlbergers were small farmers and artisans. Economic and social changes threatened their positions. They believed that these could be kept away within Switzerland. In Switzerland, citizenship is based on citizenship of a local community, which entitles one to citizenship of a canton and therefore citizenship of the Confederation. This would have suited the Vorarlbergers, with their emphasis on community and Land rights, very well. Vorarlberg has its own bank, Swiss cantons have their own banks; Vorarlberg had an established church (the Roman Catholic Church), Swiss cantons are entitled to have established churches; Vorarlberg has its own school system, Swiss cantons have their own school systems; Vorarlberg has its own government and administration; so do Swiss cantons. The historic parallels between Vorarlberg and some of the Inner Swiss agricultural cantons cannot be overlooked. Both had early systems of democracy established in Alpine areas. In both power rested in the country areas. In neither was serfdom common. In neither were there local lords. In the Late Middle Ages, the Vorarlbergers had fought on the side of the Confederates.

An important factor in the movement for union to Switzerland was the movement against union with Austria. The Vorarlbergers had been willing partners in the old Austria; although they disliked ties to Tirol. They strove for a completely independent administration from Tirol under the Emperor and the Imperial Government. But no one seriously questioned allegiance to the Emperor or the Imperial state.
However, even then loyalty to their own Land was strong. Even then ties with neighbouring Switzerland were close. Many had relatives or land on the other side of the border, in the St. Galler Rheintal and in Appenzell. Many worked for industries across the border or went to market there or had loans from banks there. In the salons of pre-war Vienna, Vorarlberg was jokingly called the Twenty-third Canton because of its Ländligeist (its provincial particularism), its ethnic composition and its liberalism (within the context of old Austria). But as long as the old system survived, Vorarlberg's allegiance of state was not questioned. Tried by war and in view of the example of the nationalities which had broken away from Vienna, the idea of separation from Vienna no longer seemed absurd. Latent hostility to Innsbruck and Vienna grew. The first move of the new Land Government was to sever the last administrative links with Tirol. Soon the administrative links with Vienna were under question. Vienna was a great cosmopolitan city, far away. What did the farmers and the provincial bourgeoisie want with this distant cosmopolitan, Godless centre? How much nicer it was in the homeland, where one knew one's surroundings, one's neighbours! Vienna was a city of capitalists and socialists; it represented the new economic order, the new order which even before the war threatened to change traditional values. It was a city of the supposedly privileged - the nobles and the Jews, two groups often linked in the propaganda of those for union to Switzerland. Vienna was the city which decreed high taxes, and the city which produced no food or other necessary products. It was a city of consumers at a time when even the producers were struggling for enough to subsist. Hence the flight away from Austria is understandable. Besides, the new state was bankrupt. It had huge debts. It could do nothing to help Vorarlberg.
Union to Germany was considered, but it was not popular. The Vorarlbergers were first and foremost Vorarlbergers. Although they shared the German language, they did not wish to be assimilated into a Greater Germany, since they feared for their autonomy and individuality. Besides, Germany was socialistic. For the socialist minority this was a major part of the appeal of union with Austria and Germany. At first, the Vorarlberg socialists were attracted to Switzerland, which had sheltered many leading socialists before the war. But with the defeat of the General Strike in November 1918 in Switzerland, and the establishment of socialist governments in Austria and Germany, the socialist minority in Vorarlberg began to look to them for their future. For the German nationalist minority, mainly industrialists and intellectuals, Germany appealed. They believed in a great future for the German nation. They believed that the defeat of 1918 was merely a temporary setback. Germany would wax strong again, and Vorarlberg, a German Land, must be a part of this future. For the Christian Social majority, a union with other Alemannic peoples in Germany (Swabs) in a Greater Swabia or a Greater Württemberg might have been acceptable; it would have been preferable to subjugation to Vienna. Union to Bavaria was out of the question. The Bavarians were almost as unpopular as the Tiroleans. They were of the wrong Stamm. But union to the Swiss Confederation would allow for much greater autonomy than union to Germany.

Thought was given to the idea of complete independence. Vorarlberg could be a member of the international community of states. Although sometimes suggested, this idea was never considered to be a serious alternative. It was true that a band of successor states was to replace the great Monarchies in Central Europe, but none were so small as Vorarlberg. Danzig was perhaps comparable in
size, but it was a great port whose economic future seemed assured. That Vorarlberg could not exist on its own was recognised by most contemporaries. The days of the small self-sufficient mountain republics were over in Europe. The small states which survived in Europe (Liechtenstein, San Marino, Monaco, Luxembourg and Andorra) were dependent on the good will of their neighbours. For their nominally independent existences, they had continual historical bases. Vorarlberg did not. Vorarlberg was not self-sufficient. It had to import most of its food. It had to import raw materials for its industries (largely textile and embroidery). With 140,000 people, it was too small to manage the demands and responsibilities which a modern state must. It was too small to be able to defend itself. Its position and size (not being a mere speck as Liechtenstein, Monaco or San Marino are) made it clear that it would be an object of interest to warring parties. It did not have the necessary expertise to direct its own economy, trade and money supply. It would have needed help in administering the railways, posts, telegraph and telephones. It did not have the necessary capital to develop its water-power or to continue the work of regulating the Rhine. The Vorarlbergers were aware of these problems. Hence independence was never considered a viable alternative.

A possible compromise was the suggestion that Vorarlberg be a Zugewandter Ort of the Swiss Confederation, that it be de jure independent, but form an association with Switzerland. Switzerland could run its railways, posts, telegraph, telephone, electricity works. The Swiss franc could be the unit of currency in the Land. Switzerland would be responsible for the representation of Vorarlberg's interests with other states, and Switzerland would enter into some sort of defensive arrangement with Vorarlberg. None of these ideas
were well thought through. To those Vorarlbergers who supported union with Switzerland, this programme was a possible oblique way to achieve their aim. It was a compromise formula for those Swiss who wanted Vorarlberg to be accepted into the Confederation, but who recognised the difficulties involved. In this way, Vorarlberg would not be "lost", nor would Switzerland be risking too much. This solution called back to the days before Napoleon, when several of the cantons had gone through this stage of association. It did offer a practical approach to the problem of union. It was, in fact, the solution adopted for Liechtenstein. But the problems of Liechtenstein's incorporation were fewer. Liechtenstein was recognised as a sovereign state. Clearly it had the right to make such agreements as it wanted. Also, it was much smaller in size and in population than Vorarlberg. It had a population of some 10,000 at the time. It was too small and too unimportant to cause any of its neighbours to covet it. The process by which Liechtenstein joined the Swiss currency and customs union was a slow one, and one which could not have been adopted to Vorarlberg's needs. Vorarlberg was too important to Austria and to Germany to be "lost" without a fight. It was not recognised as independent. It was too large to be able to exist in a state of economic limbo for a time.

In its struggle for self-determination, Vorarlberg made the mistake of being too hesitant, too timorous. It made the mistake of not declaring complete independence outside of the area of German-Austria immediately. It made the mistake of not breaking all ties to German-Austria immediately. It made the mistake of not stamping the Kronen-notes in circulation in Vorarlberg and of not taking control of the railways, posts, telegraph, telephones and other services immediately. The movement lacked the cohesion and organisation
necessary to act forcefully. The Vorarlberg Government was afraid to act, it shied away from all revolutionary steps; it would only follow legal paths. Force often prevailing, had the Government organised the supporters of Vorarlberg's right to self-determination into a home guard, it could have had the necessary strength to keep out the other German-Austrians, who had problems also in their own Länder. The Vorarlberg Government could thus have won for itself the necessary independence to exercise its right of self-determination. But the Government lacked the necessary organisation, determination and even the will to act swiftly and decisively. It did have reasonable grounds for such action. The successor states had broken away from the old Austria on the basis of the right of self-determination. The Vorarlbergers could have defended their independence on the same right.

What makes a people? Is a nation defined as the community of all the people speaking one language? Clearly not! A nation or a people is a group of individuals who see themselves as one and who are generally recognised to be one. Language is often a guide, but it is surely not the final arbiter. The Vorarlbergers could claim, with justice, that they were a people, settled in one region, distinct from all other German-Austrians and Germans. They also had a legal basis on which they could justify the movement. The individual Länder of Austria were united constitutionally only by their common allegiance to the Emperor. Once the Emperor no longer stood as the Head of State, the Länder could claim with justice that they reverted to a state of full independence.

The Austrians could claim, and did so with success, that the Vorarlbergers were not a nation and had no right to self-determination. The Austrians maintained that the Vorarlbergers were merely a part of the German nation. They also maintained that the Länder were bound together by something more than personal allegiance to the Emperor.
However, the controversy was not resolved by the subtleties of legal argument. It was resolved by the Treaty of St. Germain, by what the Allies decided.

Although the Allies, by including Vorarlberg in the new Republic of Austria, blocked the possible union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland, neither the British nor the Americans were opposed to the project. On the contrary, members of both the Foreign Office and the State Department thought the union would have several advantages. The number of German-Austrians would be reduced, important if Austria were to join Germany later. Switzerland would be better protected from encirclement by Germany. Vorarlberg was more closely tied economically and geographically to Switzerland than to Austria. It would be beneficial to introduce a conservative element into Swiss politics, where socialist agitators were said to be actively carrying on propaganda. Besides, the British and the Americans wanted to use the principle of self-determination to help in the establishment of the new frontiers in Europe. But they did not push the question since the Swiss did not make known their wish for the union. The French were completely opposed to the proposed union, both because they thought if Vorarlberg left Austria, the other Länder would be encouraged to secede and join Germany, and because they did not wish to see strengthened the German element in Switzerland. Because of their policy of weakening Germany as much as possible, the French had become the protectors of the new Austria. The French were suspicious of the Swiss and did not trust Switzerland. They feared that the Confederation had too much in common with Germany. Italy also opposed the proposed union. Italy also did not wish to see strengthened the German element in Switzerland. But Italy's position on an Austro-German union was at best equivocal. Italy might actually
have favoured such a union at the time, since it wanted a common border with Germany. Italy might have been motivated to oppose the union of Vorarlberg to Switzerland in order to "save" it for Germany.

The Swiss did not act because they could not act. The Swiss Government was paralysed by the divisions within the country. In reality, the Swiss Government adopted no policy on the question. It was impossibly split. Early in 1919, most of the Federal Councillors had no clear views on the matter. Even Calonder, the only strong supporter of the union in the Bundesrat, hesitated at first to recommend action. By the middle of the year, it was clear that five of the seven Federal Councillors looked with disfavour on the union, with Schulthess being a strong opponent of it. That the Bundesrat did not announce its opposition to the union is understandable in view of its internal divisions, and by the desire of those Federal Councillors opposed to the union not to declare themselves unalterably against it, in case Austria should fall apart or join Germany, which might make the union appear to be an absolute necessity. There was much support for the union in the local Freisinnig (radical) parties in the cantons, therefore the predominantly Freisinnig Bundesrat could not simply declare its opposition to the union for internal political reasons either. Powerful groups within the country supported it. Other groups were opposed. It was most convenient for the Bundesrat to do nothing, to sit on the fence. It preferred that Vorarlberg remain with Austria, but in the case that Austria or its parts join another state, then the Bundesrat would want the right of self-determination to be reserved for Vorarlberg. It preferred that the question be reserved for the Vorarlbergers and the Swiss or for the League of Nations to decide some other time. It wanted any final decision to be postponed. In its divisions, the
Bundesrat simply mirrored the divisions in the country. The City of St. Gallen and the Rheintal, which would have profited from the union, supported it, but the two important frontier crossing points - St. Margrethen and Buchs/SG - were largely opposed. Graubünden probably would have benefited by new rail and other communications links, and tended to support the union. Reasons of security also played a role here, as in St. Gallen. Thurgau, on the Bodensee, probably would have lost trade; and opposed the union. Confessional reasons also played a part in Thurgau. Catholic Appenzell/Innerrhoden was more favourably disposed to the union than Protestant Appenzell/Ausserrhoden. In Zürich, opinion was divided. Those who dreamed of a Greater Switzerland supported the union, but in specifically Protestant and mercantile circles there was some opposition. The central Swiss Catholic cantons were sympathetic. So were the German-speaking Walliser, in view of the Walliser (Walser) ties with Vorarlberg. The Ticinese, most of whom feared Italian irredentist claims on their canton, opposed the union. Only a few Ticinese leaders, interested in an increase in the Catholic vote within the Confederation, took a broader view of the question. The French cantons were generally opposed. Opposition was strongest in Vaud, where an increase in Germans within the Confederation was feared the most. The Genevois, who were very conscious of the border, showed the most sympathy in French Switzerland for the union. They best understood the wishes of the St. Gallers for a bigger hinterland.

Those for the union most often cited the danger of German encirclement on the east if Vorarlberg should fall to Germany. But economic and idealistic factors were not ignored. Was the movement not one for self-determination? Could Switzerland morally refuse to accept a similar neighbouring people? Would it not be selfish to
close off the Confederation to newcomers? (The opponents of the union, of course, answered no to these questions.) The "lost opportunities" of the Nineteenth Century (Savoy, the Veltlin, Chiavenna and Bormio) were not forgotten. Vorarlberg is sometimes viewed, even today in Switzerland, as a "lost opportunity". But was it? Clearly it was not. Vorarlberg would have been a costly addition, for which the Swiss people simply were not prepared to pay. Switzerland had suffered from deep divisions during the First World War. Vorarlberg would have been an additional source of disagreement between Romance and German Swiss. It would have been a source of argument between Protestant and Catholic Switzerland, between which there is occasional friction even today. It would have further alienated the Swiss socialists, who were mostly opposed to the union. (This was because Vorarlberg would have added an additional bloc of conservative voters, which the Allies and the Swiss Government itself considered to be a good reason for supporting it. It was a source of bitter feuding within the Bundesrat, feuding which was so bitter that the collegiate nature of that body was disrupted. It is extraordinary to see to what extent Federal Councillor Schulthess informed the German Ambassador in Bern, Adolf Müller, of the latest developments in the Vorarlberg, and other, questions. One internal Swiss problem which could have been settled would have been that of the Berner Jura, then a fairly recent question. A number of people suggested that the Francophone areas of Canton Bern could be established as a new Francophone canton to balance the new Germanophone canton of Vorarlberg. This solution reminds one of the compromises in the early years of the United States when one free and one slave state were admitted almost simultaneously.
Switzerland would have faced various external dangers had Vorarlberg been admitted into the Confederation. Despite continual denials by the Italian Government, Italy might have demanded Ticino as "compensation". The union certainly would have had harmful effects on Switzerland's relations with all of its neighbours -- Italy, France, Germany and Austria. Italy and France objected to any increase in the German element within Switzerland. They viewed with suspicion the proposed union. In Germany and Austria the union would have been regarded as a hostile act on Switzerland's part, and a treasonous one on Vorarlberg's. The Pan-German minority would have been an unwelcome addition in Switzerland, and a dangerous one once the Nazis came to power in Germany. Vorarlberg does have long democratic traditions. It was the most progressive of all of the Crownlands of the old Monarchy. But there is no reason to believe that it was any less susceptible to Nazi propaganda than the other Austrian Länder. Had Vorarlberg joined Switzerland, the majority of the Vorarlbergers, under the protection of the Confederation, presumably would have resisted Nazi appeals. But the Pan-German minority would have been strong enough to cause much difficulty. It must remain a matter of complete speculation whether Hitler would have demanded Vorarlberg "back" or whether Germany would have used Vorarlberg as a pretext for attacking Switzerland. Clearly the Nazis did not need any such pretext. Had they wanted to, and when it eventually suited their interests to attack, they would have done so, whether Vorarlberg had become a part of the Confederation or not. Nevertheless, Vorarlberg was a foreign adventure which Switzerland did not need. What effect would the union have had on Swiss neutrality? Clearly it was a danger to that still all-important neutrality. Are neutral states not supposed to avoid the desire for the expansion of
their territory? It was generally agreed that neutral states should not actively desire expansion. Those who dreamed of a Greater Switzerland regarded this view as effete. They believed that Switzerland must strive to expand. At the time their numbers were not few. They denied that annexation based on the exercise of the right of self-determination by a neighbouring people would injure Swiss neutrality. An unanswered question remains whether the neutrality of Swiss territory would have been extended to include Vorarlberg. Certainly this was a difficulty not to be ignored. Neutrality is only of value for as long as it is in the interests of the powers concerned. This was true for Switzerland with or without Vorarlberg. But the union of Vorarlberg would have given some power (Germany) an additional pretext for ignoring or denying Swiss neutrality, if it so chose, a pretext which it was better not to give.

For Vorarlberg the union would have been beneficial. Switzerland is a rich country. Switzerland has enjoyed a more peaceful and democratic history than Austria has since 1919. Of course, it is questionable whether Switzerland would still have done had it accepted Vorarlberg.

The Vorarlberg question had an important bearing on the more general question of territorial change in Europe. Vorarlberg's movement for union to Switzerland represented one of the early attempts to change one of the post-war peace treaties. Now one can see how Germany and Austria ignored the provisions of Article 80 of the Treaty of Versailles and Article 88 of the Treaty of St. Germain, guaranteeing the independence of Austria. Their cooperation in trying to win over Vorarlberg for Germany was in clear violation of these articles. J. W. Headlam Morley, in a memorandum, recognised that the Vorarlberg movement, which involved a change in Austria's frontier, would cause a modification of the Treaty of St. Germain.
Such a modification would have to be approved by all of the powers who had signed the Treaty. This the League of Nations could arrange.

...Article 88 is unfortunately so worded that the reference to the League of Nations seems to apply merely to the "independence" of Austria and not to its territorial integrity. There is therefore in the Treaty with Austria nothing specifically providing for the hypothesis that certain districts might wish to separate themselves; the matter is really quite fundamental for the future of Europe; no League of Nations will be any use for avoiding war unless we can get the general recognition to apply to all States which are members of the League, that every rectification of frontier must be arranged through the League of Nations; it seems to me a serious defect in the drafting of the League and of the Treaties that though this is probably implied, it is not definitely laid down as a cardinal doctrine. We want this principle for dealing with this very difficult Austrian problem, but it is for many reasons undesirable that it should be put forward merely as a limitation with regard to Austria specifically....

One year later, when Austria was admitted to the League, the Vorarlberg question served to illuminate the point that Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations did not guarantee the territorial integrity of member states of the League. Its purpose was to protect them from outside aggression, not to block internal movements for change of statehood. This made it clear that the League did not have the authority to block movements for self-determination in Europe, movements which would prove to be sources of trouble, movements which would be used as pretexts for attacks on neighbouring states. But whatever interpretation of Article 10 had been offered, the movements for self-determination in Europe would not have gone away - not in German Bohemia, not in German Moravia, nor in German South Tirol, nor in Danzig, nor in the Saarland, nor in Austria. Vorarlberg was simply another area in which the right to self-determination had been ignored because it

1. Minute by J. W. Headlam Morley 16 December 1919.
PRO FO 371 P. I. D. 706.
see Chapter 8.
seen more convenient to do so. Though the Vorarlberg case itself did not become a source of strife later, this convenience proved to be temporary. Had Europe been more justly pieced back together in 1919, the new structure would have held better. As it was, Vorarlberg remained (or became) a member of the Republic of Austria, a state not wanted by its inhabitants.

After World War II, Vorarlberg was included in the Second Republic of Austria. This time the union was not questioned. In the war, the Austrians, including the Vorarlbergers, had finally found their Austrian identity. In his essay Vorarlbergs Schweizer-Anschluß-Bewegung, completed after World War II, Dr. Ender reflected:

...The year 1945 saw the re-establishment of the Republic of Austria and the Vorarlbergers sincerely welcomed it.

Now the question: What can Austria do to maintain, to increase and to ensure the sympathy of the Vorarlbergers for Austria? That is easily answered: Re-establish a true autonomy for the communities and the Länder, based on extensive self-government. Only thus can a true and genuine democracy, which is so close to the hearts of the Vorarlbergers, develop.... The prevalence of centralist ideas, the agglomeration of authority and power in Vienna, could cause the Vorarlbergers to think once again: how nice it would be to be a free canton in free Switzerland.

If one would only really wish to believe in the blessings of federalism and a healthy democracy! Why has Germany gone to the ground? Because of the abolition of federalism and the creation of a centralised state ruled by Prussia, because of its undemocratic rule of power. And what has made Switzerland healthy and strong? The respect of the rights of freedom of the citizens, the maintenance of a true autonomy for community and canton, the genuine democratic self-government in community and canton. In the Swiss Ständerat the equality of the cantons has found its most visible expression. Each canton has two representatives in it. Our Federal Council, which, besides having no authority, is of no importance since it, by its composition, is not an assembly of representatives of equal Länder, but merely a poor imitation of the National Council, because real representatives of the Länder do not sit in it, but only representatives of the same political parties as in the National Council....

We [Austrians] could be so similar to Switzerland and have a similar duty as a small Alpine state as Switzerland does: to represent western civilisation. Switzerland fulfills this duty, and we could more easily fulfill it, if we learned from Switzerland how one must build a commonwealth so that it can develop its own culture, which would be an enrichment for the surrounding states of Middle and Western Europe, in a word, for
the West... We [Vorarlbergers] still belong to Austria, not to the old great Monarchy, but to the Republic of Austria with its seven million inhabitants, which is still today an occupied land struggling to secure its future.

And what is it for which all, Swiss, Liechtensteiners and Austrians, hope? The United States of Europe. If we attain this union, a great economic sphere would open the way for new development and a greater stability, and hopefully a time of peace would dawn for which we, after the experiences of two world wars, most sincerely long.2


The Austrian Federal Council is the upper house of the Austrian Parliament. The National Council is the lower house.
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