

*Documents Diplomatiques Suisses*. Vol. 23; 1.1.1964–31.12.1966, ed. Sacha Zala et al. (Zurich: Chronos Verlag, 2009; pp. lxxviii + 499. SFr. 78).

The aims of the editors of this twenty-third volume of the *Documents Diplomatiques Suisses* are ambitious. The mere 184 documents selected from the extensive holdings of the Swiss Federal Archives are supposed to cover the entire spectrum, and the most important issues, of Swiss foreign policy in the years from 1964 to 1966. Thereby, the volume aims to provide a tool not only for historians, but also for policy-makers, analysts, and journalists, and to advance the understanding of Switzerland's foreign relations in general and in the mid-1960s in particular. During this period, the conservative but internationally experienced Federal Councillor Friedrich Traugott Wahlen was succeeded by Willy Spühler, who became the first social democrat at the helm of the Federal Political Department. In their respective years as Foreign Ministers, they benefited from the easing of East–West tensions in Europe, but were confronted with the escalation of the Cold War in the Third World, namely in Vietnam, and an international system in which the newly independent African states were increasingly making their voices heard. They could work, however, from a position of strength. Switzerland's western-oriented neutrality was—in contrast to the immediate post-war period—respected on both sides of the Iron Curtain, and its economic wealth provided a disproportionate bargaining power for a country of such a small size.

Yet neutrality was not without its difficulties, and every now and again required diplomatic acrobatics. The handling of the divided states was a particular challenge. In opposition to its neutrality-policy maxim of universality, i.e. to enter into diplomatic relations with all states regardless of their regime, Switzerland had opted—with the exception of China—for recognition of the West. It therefore remained immune to the diplomatic advances of the Communist world. Berne was aware of this problem, but justified this one-sided diplomacy with Switzerland's national, mostly economic, interests (p. 178). The tensions between neutrality and national interests, and sometimes their mutual benefits, also come to the fore in the seven themes the editors have identified, and remind us of Switzerland's current foreign-policy issues.

Even though the question of European integration had lost its urgency because of the crisis in the European Economic Community (EEC), it remained a matter of concern. Berne feared the prospect of Britain joining the

EEC, and the consequential weakening of the European Free Trade Association (EFTA). Therefore, all the options were briefly put on the table, including Swiss EEC-membership. On account of neutrality this option was, however, rapidly discarded, and Switzerland attempted to strengthen EFTA vis-à-vis the EEC (p. 398). But within the former, Britain (which was confronted with yet another pound crisis) was an unreliable partner for trade liberalisation. The British were harshly criticised by their former neutral protégés, whom they had to beg to help save the pound (p. 122).

Switzerland's economic success and interests also figure prominently in three other themes. Development aid was in line with the maxim of solidarity, which was intended to burnish the reputation of neutrality. But it was often tied to Swiss trade interests, and restricted to western-oriented and capitalist states such as South Korea (p. 302). In their economic and financial relations, the Swiss focused, at the multilateral level, on trade liberalisation within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (which they joined in 1966) and on double taxation agreements at the bilateral level. Moreover, already by this time the Federal authorities had to be wary of American accusations against the Swiss banking system (p. 147). The Swiss economy did not only attract capital, but also large quantities of foreign workers. While this development led to fears and xenophobic reactions within the indigenous population, it also raised the question whether the foreign workers could be joined by their families (p. 86).

In the realm of security, the debate was dominated by Switzerland's armament policy. The cost explosion of the Mirage aircraft programme led to the resignation of the Defence Minister, and the re-evaluation of Swiss defence policy, including over the issue of atomic weapons. Switzerland's quest for an at least partly self-reliant armaments policy also served as a rationale for arms exports, which were deemed essential for a healthy armaments industry. As a result, Berne only hesitantly followed the arms embargo against apartheid South Africa, and, despite a policy that forbade arms sales to belligerents, the United States continued to receive Swiss weapons notwithstanding their heavy military involvement in Vietnam (p. 412). This corresponded perfectly with Switzerland's western-oriented security relations. Aware of this problem, not least because of Soviet criticism, the Federal authorities attempted to establish working security relationships with the other two continental neutrals, especially Sweden (pp. 367–9). Understandably, the Swiss seized the opportunity when they were approached by non-western states for their good offices (p. 167)—another theme of the volume. But, finally, Switzerland's one-sided neutrality, and especially its limited support for United Nations sanctions against Rhodesia, attracted criticism from newly independent states, and illustrated its ambivalent position towards the international organisation (p. 271).

The seven themes and the related documents provide an excellent and comprehensive insight into Switzerland's foreign policy of the mid-1960s, and are more often than not of contemporary relevance. If the volume attracts a readership beyond academic historians, and is used in combination with the great many related documents on the freely accessible database (<http://www.dodis.ch>), then the editors will have achieved their aims.

MARCO WYSS

*University of Chichester*

doi:10.1093/ehr/ceu124