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Ladies and gentlemen,

To this evening inaugurate the "News of the Day" series, which I ^{will} have the pleasure of giving you and in which ~~we~~ we will treat, just as the case may be, the latest news, international questions, or questions of Swiss policy, from the point of view of general interest, I would ~~of~~ like to ~~give~~ say a few words on the situation ⁱⁿ which my country, ~~has to face at this~~ finds itself at the present moment in face of the general political unrest in Europe and the world in general.

It has often happened to me, during the last few days, that ~~foreigners have~~ foreign friends who otherwise sympathise fully with us, are astonished because of ~~our~~ ~~apparently~~ the ~~seemingly~~ nonchalance with which we seemingly face international events.

They remark, for example, "You are the oldest democracy of the world, you have given ^{it} an example how a constitution could be formed, ~~like yours~~,

And yet, when the great ^{western} democracies united their efforts to maintain peace, you kept yourself away, in a suspicious isolation, comfortably sheltered by your mountains."

Then again, when Great Britain and France recently declared their interest in your independence, and even guaranteed it, you didn't even react.

You seem to be completely satisfied to just register that declaration as if it were a ~~matter~~ matter of course.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would like to assume that any reaction at all would be in disagreement with our international

status, the part we perform must play in international politics, and ~~the~~ our idea of neutrality.

As a matter of fact, and this is ~~unfortunately~~ ^{not generally} ~~known~~ ^{known} enough, our neutrality was not forced upon us, we have decided to ~~if we decide~~ to be neutral, ~~it is~~ because we believe in the mission which ~~has~~ ^{circumstances} ~~been~~ ^{have} given us, namely to guard the alpine passes, and to keep open - in spite of all surrounding conflicts - the essential communications between the neighbouring peoples, to carry ~~undertake~~ out a task worthy of civilisation, in short to preserve ~~under all circumstances~~ ^{what} whatever may happen, in the centre of Europe a territory protected from the ravages of war.

This neutrality is not therefore purely an advantage or a pledge of peace, it is something which we ^{have} ~~are~~ pledged ^{ourselves} to defend under all circumstances and against all comers, - with all our might.

In the course of the last ten years, we have spent two milliards of Swiss francs, about half a milliard of dollars for national armament, this ^{you will admit} is for a country with 4 million inhabitants, a very great sacrifice.

Without doubt, ~~we~~ we are not strong enough to resist with our own ~~means~~, the attack of an enormous foreign army.

But our ~~arms~~ ~~are~~ ~~so~~ modern arms, combined with the bravery of ^{our} troops, ^{will} enable us to repel the first attack and to await the help which those, ~~will not refuse us~~ ^{will not} against whom the attack is ^{finally} ~~directed~~ ^{directed}, ~~will not refuse us~~.

Switzerland is ready prepared to defend herself and to carry all risks which might thereby result therefrom her resistance:

Our neighbours are aware of this, and in 1815, they solemnly ^{confirmed} ~~reaffirmed~~ our Neutrality ^{and recognized it} ~~as being in the general interests of Europe~~ and its value in the general interests of Europe.

Were the alpine passes not neutral territory, they would, without doubt, be a source of constant trouble.

Should our people stand with their ^{weapons} ~~arms~~ at rest, or "stand easy" as they say in the army, these passes would resemble a heap of inflammable material, which, would be ~~in~~ ~~endangered by every constant danger~~ ~~and~~ imperiled by every stray match.

This is a main reason why our Neighbours ^{do not} ~~do not~~ respect our Neutrality, but and do not cherish running any risks in a vain attempt to violate it.

The interests of Europe in general are thus so evident, that ~~we have no~~ there is no necessity for any further guarantee, or pacts of non-aggression. In addition, our idea of Neutrality forbids us to enter any ~~system of~~ ~~it~~ into any collective agreements, ^{which} ~~we~~ might be forced to ~~do~~ ^{not} do things contrary to ~~our~~ ^{our ideas or to the} ~~our~~ Coalition. My reasoning ~~that is why~~ ~~we~~ ~~thus~~ ~~better~~

~~That is why we serve~~ ~~we~~ ~~thus~~ ~~serve~~ Europe and peace better. Moreover, as our Minister for foreign affairs recently remarked, ~~we~~ "one must not abuse the new ideologies and ^{the} life so infinitely complex of human society, which obeys in so small a measure the theoretical postulates"

I think it is now quite clear, that we do not ~~wish~~ ^{wish} to have taken from us certain matters privileges, and that we distrust certain formulas which fill the world with unrest.

We do not pretend that this our attitude is wise, because it is realistic, or because it forces us to look things in the face, but it enables us to work for, and to maintain peace according to our capability, and in the ~~form~~ ^{form} task which we have set ourselves.