

tial and incidentally difficult task to assess situations, interpret events and forecast developments than in a Western country. The press, being state-controlled and inspired, assumes an importance peculiar to Transcurtainia. It's as though our editorial pages were issued by Cabinet. Every comma must be noted, and the process becomes a form of textual criticism more closely related to the labours of Shakespearean or Biblical scholars than to those of press observers in the West. Small omissions from or additions to statements made to U.N. or the Marxist-Stalinist classics assume disproportionate significance. Nothing seems obvious any more, so that conclusions must be held in the tentative stage longer than normal while the problem is probed and discussed till far into the night with one's Western colleagues. On top of this there is a constant flood of rumours, many inspired, most of them fantastic, but still not to be ignored for they occasionally provide the shaft of light for which one has long sought in vain to illuminate a dark corner of a problem.

All this drudgery must be completed before a serious analytical despatch can be put into final form and sent to the hungry Department, which even then may be disconcerted by the number of "ifs", "buts" and "mights".

In short, without wishing to abuse the word, reporting in this area becomes a form of intelligence work. This applies especially to economic reporting: official secrecy obscures the whole economic scene, but by careful collation and interpolation of painstakingly collected newspaper and periodical clippings, vague official statistics and miscellaneous information, pieces can gradually be fitted into a jigsaw puzzle until in many cases the outlines of a picture emerge.

J.A. M[CCORDICK]

SECTION E

SUISSE  
SWITZERLAND

8. DEA/3358-R-40

*Note du chef de la Direction du protocole  
pour le sous-secrétaire d'État aux Affaires extérieures*

*Memorandum from Head, Protocol Division,  
to Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs*

CONFIDENTIAL

Ottawa, February 11, 1950

SWISS DECLINE PROPOSAL FOR RAISING CANADIAN LEGATION TO EMBASSY

A reply has come this morning from the Swiss to the question which, on your instructions, I raised with Mr. Nef<sup>7</sup> some weeks ago.

<sup>7</sup> Le ministre Victor Nef de la légation de Suisse.  
Dr. Victor Nef, Minister, Legation of Switzerland.