The Tyranny of Minorities

Democracy is, by definition, government of the majority. It is the protection of the minority (and its rights) by the majority, the control of the state (and its administration, its jurisdiction) by the majority—or by the “people,” however one wishes to define that term. But today, as our century approaches its end, such definitions have a ring of mockery. It is not the majority that governs. Minorities of all kinds have become the decision-makers; they dominate, tyrannize, or terrorize the majority, which appears principally as a conglomerate of constantly changing minorities.

In the nations of the old continent, minorities have become increasingly vehement in their protests. We have only to consider the Basques and Catalonians of Spain, population groups whose aspirations for autonomy the Franco regime resisted for too long and who are now exploding; or the Corsicans, Bretons, and others in France, whose special character and aims are repeatedly denied and stifled by the persistent centralism of Paris. In Great Britain, in addition to the Welsh minority, we have the Scots whose strivings for independence are in no sense new but who have become increasingly active since the discovery of oil in the North Sea indicated that extraordinary economic opportunities beckoned. In Switzerland, the inhabitants of the Jura mountains, infected by the catchphrase “ethnic solidarity,” found even federal Switzerland too confining and began to demand their autonomy.¹

In Western Europe, ecology-minded minorities acting under the popular cloak of environmental protection are making themselves heard. In France, the ecologistes give increasing concern even to presidents and presidential candidates, not so much because of their declared aims, but because they serve to make an unstable political structure seem even more precarious. In the Federal Republic of Germany, where many minorities have become vocal, the political Establishment finds the Grünen (“greens”) difficult to comprehend and faintly sinister. They appear to be a conglomerate of “mini-minorities” held together by a tenuous bond of dubious fighting slogans. Some are openly idealistic, concerned chiefly with the quality of life; their critics generally characterize them as “garden-plot philosophers in middle-class clothes.” But their ranks include also what the German politician and philosopher Carlo Schmid has called “sectarians by temperament,”² men and women who “turn half-truths into absolutes,” who know, for example, how to exploit the doctrine of zero economic growth.
There are also political tacticians in this company, like the East German political critic Rudolf Bahro whose aim is to proceed “from green to red” by making the so-called environmental movement serve as the vehicle that will bring the society to a neosocialist system. Small subversive groups also use the “green” cover to carry on their hitherto fruitless efforts to undermine all governmental authority with the aim of destroying the credibility of democracy in the process.

Minority movements of all kinds spring up to fight for (or against) the emancipation of women (or, of late, the emancipation of men), male or female homosexuals, religious sectarians, important or abstruse political causes, local or regional interests. In the economic sphere there are small and vocal interest groups whose purpose is principally to steer the economy in a direction calculated to give them an advantage. Employers’ lobbies, by dint of their capital and financial and personal connections, manage to keep whole sectors of industry and agriculture under their close control. Among employees, especially in Great Britain but in other countries as well, unions or splinter groups tyrannize society because they are too numerous and too scattered to constitute a single negotiating partner.

Among intellectuals, the scene is dominated by minorities of the “committed” (who are often equipped with blinders), whose primary purpose is to fight the “establishment”; these men and women frequently and quickly fall prey to what the French political scientist Alfred Grosser has called the “conformism of anti-conformism.” Among the young, the usually ultraleftist student minority often sets the tone, and its views are frequently attributed to youth in general. In the British labor movement, a minority of Trotskyites and other ultraleftists push to the top, and by virtue of their visibility are thought, though wrongly and unjustly, to be representative of a movement that the far more moderate and sensible Labour Party properly represents.

They key word is “pushy”; all minorities speak frenziedly and generally are zealous in their behind-the-scenes agitation. Because they are so “committed” and so obviously an active part of society, a great deal of attention is directed toward them; indeed, they are often given an undue amount of consideration. Because these minorities are elusive, because they do not fit into the scheme of the traditional political and economic structures of their societies, and because their members often belong to or are sympathetic to several quite dissimilar groups, their power to influence decisions or to sabotage them is considerable. The “greens” of the Federal Republic of Germany, for instance, come from both the Right and the Left; their desires shape or block decisions by both the government and the opposition in the field of nuclear energy. The Corsicans in France enjoy a comparable influence; the policies both of the government parties and of the Left are positively and negatively affected. And in almost all Western European countries the student-intellectual minority (whose purposes are even more difficult to grasp, it being a mini-minority permeating other minorities) intimidates economic and political powers of every provenance. This, incidentally, happens not only in very large communities and states but also in smaller units, not only in countries like France, the United Kingdom, and West Germany, but to an equal extent in Switzerland, Scandinavia, and the Benelux nations.

Flight into the minority (or the minorities) has become the hallmark of our decade. Even in villages (assuming that the genuine European “village” still
exists in some form alongside the increasingly rapacious cities and suburbs), matters have become too complex. In seeking to cope with the problems that he knows he must resolve, the individual worries that he has lost the "red thread," his overview of things. Commonplace phrases like "Ich verstehe die Welt nicht mehr" (I no longer understand the world) or "Qu'est-ce qui va se passer" (What is going to happen?) are not simply inconsequential comments for bridging gaps in a conversation; rather, they express a real fear of inadequacy, of not being able to cope with the present or the future or to make the transition between them. They are expressions of genuine concern about being confronted by a host of problems whose interrelatedness is no longer perceived. This only exacerbates the mistrust of a world in which many suspect that decisions are made apart from the people, in remote, inaccessible, uncontrolled, and anonymous places.

 Cause and effect intermingle here. Minorities grow stronger and more numerous because individuals feel insecure; the individual feels insecure because minorities cloud the horizon. For an individual, flight into a minority is often a move into the surveyable—into a small community that concerns itself exclusively with a small number of clearly defined vital questions. It may be flight into a religious or political "sect" that concentrates on a single dogma or flight into an interest group that fights for single causes like abortion, family planning, or sexual freedom. Such groups seek to cope with individual symptoms; in that way they protect themselves from the excessive complexity of a world whose connections they do not know or do not want to know. In most cases the committed individual today is locked up in the ivory tower of a specific cause. Those who oppose nuclear power plants are seldom interested in the problems of energy supply in general; those fighting for Basque autonomy, insisting on the rights of that minority, are blind to the more general needs of the Spanish state. The person who speaks for Scotland generally ignores Great Britain; the person who clamors about Corsica is frequently deaf to Paris. Those who attack the multinational are not much interested in the requirements of a supranational economic order; those who would eliminate night flights because of noise are not likely to wait to hear the arguments of those who champion free international air traffic as an economic necessity. Anyone belonging to one of the innumerable cliques that champion the more popular Third World causes is unlikely to be moved by arguments that do not accept the very particular version of social and political justice that the group espouses.

 Thus the age of the minorities has also become the age of intolerance. Though Western society in general and European society in particular have become more liberal, accepting sexual freedom and eliminating many social taboos, abandoning a thousand conventional rules that governed until the day before yesterday, there is a growing disinclination to respect the viewpoint of the "other side" in political, social, and economic discourse; in fact, one sees an increasing unwillingness to even let the other side speak. The oft-quoted statement attributed to Voltaire, "I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it," has limited validity today. It is as if Europe has become obsessed by the fear that in a truly open discussion one will lose the sense of the problem and be forced to recognize connections that raise problems he is not capable of resolving.

 Fear of the future does not rest primarily on a material concern, at least not in the more developed countries of Western Europe, though many young
people are increasingly worried about their vocational prospects. Those who feel disgust at the meritocracy of their fathers say that they have no desire to climb the "career ladder." Their concern is with the "quality of life," with a daily routine that seems to lead mostly to boredom. It is this disenchantment that makes them ready to leave well-trodden paths, to break away and join minority groups of every kind. Environmentalism, sexual and social "liberation," and the like are simply shorthand expressions for a search for new guidelines.

It is important to try to understand the deeper reasons for the prevailing insecurity of the West, for its inability to recognize and master connections, for its tendency to retreat to the small and the surveyable. We must begin by acknowledging that religions have become as dubious as substitute religions, that political ideals and doctrines have turned out to be evanescent, and that, in political and social life, the achievements of the nineteenth and early twentieth century have a limited interest and utility.

With respect to religion, we have a Catholicism that no longer meets the demands of the modern age, that seems to be incapable of coping with the problems of birth control, the marriage of priests, and the ordination of women. A religion that in all seriousness puzzles over the dogma concerning the Virgin Mary as theologians once worried over the sex of angels is suspect to many. When in addition some suggest that the Pope is frozen in his East European piety, with only a limited understanding of the pressing social needs of the West and of the problems of the Third World, such a Catholicism is bound to be disorienting to those who look for responses of another kind. Some are driven into the arms of "minorities" that incorporate Protestant reform elements, such as the adherents of the Swiss theologian Hans Küng. Or, at the opposite extreme, there is a call for a return to some sort of fundamentalism; the group around Bishop Marcel Lefebvre is absolutely persuaded of the truth of its vision. Both groups, obviously, remain minorities; it would be an error to assume that behind the movement of Hans Küng or of the others who rebel is a mass flight from the official church. Still, the minorities are vocal; they are listened to.

Protestantism is in no better condition. Its churches have become increasingly empty; its services offer no more than conventional stammering largely removed from daily reality; many of its pastors and ministers cannot decide whether they are in fact social workers or preachers and cannot serve as guides any more than their Catholic counterparts do. The consequence is a flight into minority churches, into "sects," into semichurchy youth organizations, into "communes," into other groups that replace the community experience of the earlier churches with new forms of "confession" and with "group therapies" of every kind.

Substitute religions, at least in the Old World, are equally devoid of meaning for contemporary society. What, for example, does the concept "nation" or "fatherland" mean in the West today? The inhabitants of the West European heartland, the Germans, have neither a nation nor a fatherland; Germany is split, stamped a "nation" too late in its history to become one or to remain one. "Fatherland—what will this word give us," asks Carlo Schmid, "if it denotes only the traditional dwelling place of people with the same language, customs,
and traditions? If it is not understood as home soil and home air in which greatness can grow? Nation . . . If this word is understood only as the afterglow of spectacular past events, it will not offer us a great deal."

Still, in certain other European countries the trend toward nationalism seems to be reasserting itself. "The nation, it exists. . . . These are not entities that can simply disappear; to amalgamate them is out of the question." These words of General Charles de Gaulle, started (or followed) a trend that was to characterize both his era and the era that has come after him. Still, one must ask whether such "nationalism" is not largely a reaction to two phenomena that are all too rarely discussed. One is the threat to "nations" and nationalities posed by the waves of foreign workers that flood most of the highly developed countries of Western Europe. A Switzerland of six million inhabitants, a million of whom are of Italian, Spanish, or Greek origin, is a new kind of Switzerland; a Federal Republic in whose industrial cities whole neighborhoods are transformed into separate, closed communities (Berlin has become one of the largest "Turkish" cities in the world!) is bound to arouse patriotic or national emotions. The second possible explanation for the reassertion of nationalism is the deep frustration left by disappointment with supranationalism. As late as the fifties the concept of "Europe" was an ideal capable of arousing great enthusiasm; in that period many Europeans believed that a new life and community was in the making. Since then, however, "Europe" has become a machine tended by soulless technicians who more or less bear out de Gaulle's mordant characterization of them as les apatrides (the stateless ones); it is an organism more preoccupied with calculating the quantities of pork to be produced and with setting the standards for holes in cheese than with supplying a stimulus to the political imagination of a people. The election of the European Parliament in 1979 did little to enhance confidence in Europe's future. That institution, like so many others, has accomplished little beyond an extension of the internal national and political conflicts of the member states.

The consequence of these sobering supranational experiments and worn-out national ideals has been a retreat to the smaller community, to the folklore of local or regional pride, with its specific peculiarities, dialects, and traditions. It is scarcely an accident that local idioms (Schwyzerdütsch or Romansh in Switzerland, Breton in Brittany) are today fostered and promoted, that a rustic lifestyle is increasingly asserting itself in certain European cities and suburbs, and that architectural and sociological attempts to construct artificial village communities even in large cities where they do not work well is increasingly common. The human need to move in surveyable circles, to meet others and orient oneself there in such circumstances, remains very conspicuous.

If the nation and the fatherland have had their day as guiding principles, other substitute religions have not fared much better. The only ones who refuse to acknowledge that communism is one of the great practical failures of this century are those who, in their despair over the lack of other ideals and in their disgust at the abuses of a capitalistic society, cling to Marxist ideology. In August 1968 the "communism with a human face" attempted during the Prague Spring was quite literally crushed in plain sight by Soviet tanks; but it was in fact stillborn from the beginning, based as it was on a fundamental contradiction. The great hope of the leftist idealists of the seventies, the so-called
Eurocommunism that was intended to be a synthesis between Marxist doctrine and the practical constraints of Western European capitalism, died at an equally early age. Laid low by the return of the Cold War in Europe, it was finished off by the cowardice of those Communists who lacked the courage to be independent, to think for themselves, who lived in almost mortal fear of Moscow and were paralyzed by the worry that they would be labelled "revisionist" and passed on the "left" by competitors from their own ranks. Eurocommunism could always exist as an ideal but never as an actuality spanning a whole continent. At most, "national communisms" of Western—that is, Italian, French, Spanish, or Portuguese—stamp were possible, more or less independent of Moscow's dictate, but all different in nature and sufficiently splintered that they were not available to offer any general uplifting substitute religion.

Is it possible, then, to identify any political ideals and ideologies that might provide some modest comfort to disoriented West Europeans? Socialism in its "Social Democratic" form has long since succumbed to pragmatism, compromising with an enlightened liberalism to such an extent that it cannot possibly serve as an inspiring new ideology. As for liberalism, it exists in its pure form only in musty textbooks. In everyday life, both necessary and proper concessions to a planned economy have turned liberalism, like socialism, into a hybrid not likely to entice very many. Though "liberal" parties hold political power in many Western European states, they are best seen as communities of interest rather than bearers of ideas; they are conglomerates in which minorities of every kind are joined together. To make matters worse, not even in these "communities of interest" do Western Europeans find themselves adequately represented. The very structure of a national party seems far too intricate today, particularly in those countries that conduct their parliamentary elections under a proportional representation system or in a mixed form. The voter is not likely to know the candidates, and confronted with a meaningless list, he is at sea. The desperate attempts of leading politicians to gain greater "visibility" through the electronic mass media do not change this situation very much. The electorate and their representatives are remote from one another, and mutual confidence in such a situation is uncommon.

This offers another incentive for flight into a minority—specifically, into small groups that focus on particular interests. For example, the "citizens' initiatives" (Bürgerinitiativen) of the Federal Republic of Germany are small extra-parliamentary formations—more or less spontaneously formed—which resort to self-help, seeking to take the fate of their immediate environment into their own hands, but hoping in the process to influence and possibly control the policies of the country as a whole. In Northern Europe particularly, opponents of nuclear power stations have formed local or regional groups that aspire to reorient the energy policies of their societies. Such minorities have imposed their will on the nation outside the "majority," the parliamentary majority elected by the people, solely by dint of their stubborn, persistent concentration on a single cause. They do so in vital matters of social organization, sexual freedom, birth control, equal rights for women, and much else. Whether this is good or bad is not at issue here; what is relevant to our argument is the new and growing influence of such organized minorities.

In Southern Europe, particularly in Spain and France, powerful regional minorities attempt to achieve their objectives largely through intimidation,
blackmail, and terrorism. In Spain, the bloody Basque terror is pushing Madrid into authoritarian reactions that threaten to produce grave relapses in a state that is only beginning to recover from its recent Fascist past. The violent mini-rebellion of the Corsicans both on their home island and in metropolitan France poses certain dangers to the stability of that society. One has only to think also of the terrorism conducted by the Baader-Meinhof gang and its successors in Germany and of what has happened in Italy in recent years to appreciate how damaging all this has been to traditional confidence in democratic procedures and prospects.

The lack of inspiring political ideologies universally accepted by the masses is paralleled by a palpable decline in political leadership. In contemporary Western Europe, General de Gaulle was almost certainly the last leader possessed of genuine charisma; statesmen since his day are of a different breed. The animal politique does not seem to exist in its original form; those who attract a large number of adherents for a time are generally representatives of material interests or pragmatists, individuals who master politics on a day-to-day basis and are accepted for that reason only. "Governing may become an uncharismatic, low-morale profession," write Herman Kahn, William Brown, and Leon Martel in their study The Next 200 Years.5 This judgment may give a partial answer to why people appear to have lost confidence in political leaders and why they are so ready to retreat to surveyable parish-pump politics that they can better understand.

Many existing political institutions and structures leave the individual feeling confused and helpless, because—so it seems to the ordinary person—no one of them has turned out to be wholly practicable or worthy of continuing confidence. Centralism or federalism, parliamentary, presidential, or direct democracy—Europe has experienced all of them and has emerged substantially discouraged by the experience. None of these systems frees the individual from the fear of being dominated by anonymous, unsurveyable forces. Total centralism—which France embraced and failed with—was powerless to arrest the decline of that country's sense of grandeur or to diminish the unrest that stirred within its ethnic minorities. As for total federalism, Switzerland, its classic standard-bearer, may presently be failing one of its more severe tests. It is becoming increasingly apparent that the autonomy of the small communities and cantons—in theory the ideal of every freedom-loving person—is breaking down in the face of modern economic realities that call for national or even supranational regulation. Federalism is failing in a society that is increasingly mobile, many of whose members no longer feel rooted in their village, canton, or district.

Parliamentary democracy demonstrated its instability in the third and fourth republics of France, and seems at present to be showing similar weaknesses in Great Britain and elsewhere for many of the same reasons. The system of parliamentary representation is credible for only a small part of the electorate; major decisions appear to be made outside Parliament—in committees and commissions—and behind the scenes, in labor unions and in other bodies that are said to have become powerful, and also in pressure groups and in local and regional governmental agencies. Factions in parliamentary assemblies are known to be manipulated by interest groups and lobbyists of all kinds, minorities that join together in ever-changing, intricate coalitions. This is where the
obscure, anonymous forces are thought to be at work, giving validity to the argument that ordinary individuals are in effect disenfranchised. Such sentiment leads many to withdraw into surveyable communities where they can turn to concrete and specific problems and see the fruits of their political labors.

Presidential democracy, as practiced in France since de Gaulle, is equally suspect; there the real centers of power are thought to be even more opaque for the ordinary citizen than elsewhere. Alongside a powerless parliament there are two governments: the gouvernement officially designated as such, and the shadow government formed by the president’s cabinet that reserves to itself certain domaines réservés as its sole preserve; what these are depends on the situation of the moment and the predilections of the incumbent president.

Finally, direct democracy, also called referendum democracy, is increasingly showing its limitations. Overtaxed by countless complex modern problems on which he is asked to register his yes or no several times a year, the voter either turns his back on politics altogether or, being ignorant of the issues, makes emotional decisions that border on the absurd. The Swiss, for example, voted to make Switzerland the only European country not to institute daylight saving time in 1980. Switzerland has thus become an “island” with an hour’s time difference from an entire continent, the result of agitation by an agricultural minority that believes it cannot accustom its cows to new milking schedules.

The contradiction seems complete: in a direct democracy, with its devices of popular initiative and referendum, an individual ought to feel secure, knowing that he is being treated as a mature citizen; the will of the majority ought to be respected, and the tyranny of the minorities ought to be least perceptible. Experience has shown, however, that even (and in fact especially) here, active, influential, and demagogic minorities are able to play a dominant role and exert a decisive influence on the sound instincts of the people. This occurs, in part, because the average voter is more receptive to “simple” arguments than to complicated and differentiated explanations. Then, also, the average citizen generally feels a certain guilt about the disadvantaged, and this makes him susceptible to the arguments of minorities. Also, direct, or referendum, democracy, with its many elections, gives the active minority frequent opportunities to mobilize its adherents; the indifferent, resigned, or tired “majority” generally stays at home on election day.

The feeling of powerlessness that often drives the citizen in modern society into the arms of minorities will not be eliminated or alleviated by the popularization of politics through the electronic mass media. This popularization provides an illusory rather than a genuine gain. Television and, to a lesser extent, radio distort reality: it is the “interesting” outsider and the excited minority that are effective on the screen and whose views are consequently given inordinate weight. Problems that preoccupy only a few thus capture the spotlight while problems that people wrestle with everywhere—painful, disagreeable, tedious problems—tend to be disregarded. “Emancipated” people—those who shock and wish to shock—dominate the show business aspect of television despite their insignificant numbers; the real crises of society are generally difficult to articulate and are rarely seen on prime time. Ultraleftist or ultrarightist splinter groups, which make a great noise with their words and bullets, dominate the
picture-hungry electronic information media while the monotonous political everyday life of the majority is largely ignored. It is especially with the modern mass media that the extraordinary and the minority triumph.

The contemporary intellectual bears a great part of the blame for this development. As Herman Kahn and his colleagues correctly observe, the intellectual today belongs to the mass movement and presents himself as a representative of the “knowledge industry.” As standards decline, and as secondhand knowledge and superficial education replace personal experience, he increasingly proves himself by becoming an intellectual snob who prizes oddities and spurns the ordinary almost as a matter of principle. He glorifies every trivial sneeze of the minority while refusing to take cognizance of the chronic catarrh of the majority. While certainly one of the noblest tasks of the intelligentsia is to encourage the avant-garde—in fact, to be avant-garde, and thus a minority—if, as happens all too frequently in present-day Europe, such an ambition develops into “art for art’s sake,” originality for the sake of originality, and if oddities are extolled only because they are “way-out,” then we are in grave danger. If theater, literary, or film critics praise unconventional works only because they are different, if intellectuals admire them principally because they are anxious to prove themselves and are afraid of being ridiculed as Philistines by a few hundred of their colleagues—if intellectuals, then, disregard the true problems of life—their intellectual domination becomes the unbearable, unjustified tyranny of an unauthorized minority and is no longer what it ought to be: the standard of a select and informed body of critical individuals. A considerable part of European cultural life seems to be dominated today by such preoccupations. The trend that the intelligentsia declares to be decisive is seldom meaningful for today’s average citizen. It appears, at times, to be the sum total of the self-satisfied judgments of very small minorities, habituated to living in countless hothouses of intellectual arrogance.

Here, too, there are no general guidelines or universally valid standards. We are witnessing once again the helplessness of those who can no longer find or grasp connections, the retreat to the concrete and the surveyable, and the refusal to recognize, in addition to one’s own viewpoint, the opinions of others as worthy of discussion. These phenomena are as clearly recognizable (and indeed perhaps more glaring) in the milieu of the intellectual as they are in the environment of the average citizen. If the few remaining creative figures of European culture can scarcely muster more than point-by-point essays; if the modern French cultural scene gapes with emptiness; if a good portion of the young intelligentsia, an entire generation, laps up the banal commonplaces of a Mao Tse-tung as profound insights—then this is not so much a matter of decadence as a loss of general orientation, a retreat to individual and minority dogmas.

The smaller the minorities, the more narrowly defined their aims, the more power-hungry they become. Tyranny of the minorities? The general danger here is that political and social life will disintegrate into anarchy (and at a time that actually boasts the possession of perfect national, supranational, party-political, or nonpartisan steering mechanisms); that small groups will terrorize a helpless majority; that emotional opinions will overwhelm reason; that intolerance will dominate and liberal forbearance disappear; that social, cultural, and
political life will slip out of the orderly control of individuals and of the community; and that democracy will turn undemocratic precisely because it will be uncontrollable and uncontrolled.

Tyranny of the minority? May this not also have a positive side, even an important one? In the absence of accepted guidelines and ideologies, where neither parties nor large groups nor individuals nor collectives of any kind distinguish themselves by their leadership, may not the responsibility and initiative of the individual soon carry greater weight again? Minorities have already produced salutary reactions. Movements of individuals are beginning to resist not only the patronizing treatment of the citizen by the state and the economy, but also the tyranny exerted by small groups, the “prohibitions” that minorities seek to impose for the protection of their special interests. It is characteristic of minorities that they offer relatively little creative guidance but agitate to decorate the landscape of our lives principally with garden fences and protective ramparts.

Retreating to individual problems and special interests is one thing; remembering the responsibility of the individual is quite another. Taking one’s fate in one’s own hands may indeed express the selfish tyranny of the minority, but it may also mean the reawakening of individual potency, of the creative and imaginative powers that we associate with man. Because of the narrowness and apparent “unreasonableness” of its aims, a citizens’ initiative effort to preserve a few old trees in the concrete desert of a West German town, in opposition to the “reasonableness” of city planners and financial managers, may well give rise to certain apprehensions but also has many encouraging features. The seemingly desperate efforts of a handful of inhabitants in the Bronx to save their dwellings and neighborhood from utter destruction by the elements, by arson and malevolence, and by the foot-dragging of the government also raise certain hopes. There is always a danger that groups insisting on the safeguard of freedom, on the quality of life, and on the responsibility of the individual will themselves turn into tyrannical, egotistic minorities. But there is an equal chance that something else may also be attained.

Translated by Harry Zohn

References

1Amidst a great deal of commotion that at times assumed the form of a miniature civil war, the bilingual Swiss canton Berne recently split in two. Part of the Francophone population of the largely German-speaking canton desired to preserve its autonomy in a canton of its own, and this came into being a few months ago under the name Jura. The unrest still persists, however, and the problem has not been definitively solved.
4Schmid, letter to Chancellor Helmut Schmidt.