

# La Place de la Concorde Suisse

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La Place de la Concorde Suisse is John McPhee's rich, journalistic study of the Swiss Army's role in Swiss society. The Swiss Army is so quietly efficient at the art of war that the Israelis carefully patterned their own military on the Swiss model.

Anyone who has ever traveled in Switzerland cannot help but to have remarked upon the overwhelming tranquility of the country. But this tranquility is illusory. As John McPhee writes in *La Place de la Concorde Suisse*, a rich journalistic study of the Swiss Army's role in Swiss society, "there is scarcely a scene in Switzerland that is not ready to erupt in fire to repel an invasive war." With a population smaller than New Jersey's, Switzerland has a standing army of 650,000 ready to be mobilized in less than 48 hours. The Swiss Army, known in this country chiefly for its little red pocketknives, is so quietly efficient at the arts of war that the Israelis carefully patterned their own military on the Swiss model. You'll understand why after reading this outstanding book.

John McPhee was born in Princeton, New Jersey, and was educated at Princeton University and Cambridge University. His writing career began at *Time* magazine and led to his long association with *The New Yorker*, where he has been a staff writer since 1965. Also in 1965, he published his first book, *A Sense of Where You Are*, with Farrar, Straus and Giroux, and in the years since, he has written nearly 30 books, including *Oranges* (1967), *Coming into the Country* (1977), *The Control of Nature* (1989), *The Founding Fish* (2002), *Uncommon Carriers* (2007), and *Silk Parachute* (2011). *Encounters with the Archdruid* (1972) and *The Curve of Binding Energy* (1974) were nominated for National Book Awards in the category of science. McPhee received the Award in Literature from the Academy of Arts and Letters in 1977. In 1999, he was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for *Annals of the Former World*. He lives in Princeton, New Jersey.

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