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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has appointed Monsieur August Ochsenbein, at present Counsellor of Legation in Madrid, to the post of Consul General in Barcelona.

M. Ochsenbein, was born in 1901 in Solothurn and received the degree of doctor of political science at the University of Berne. He entered the Diplomatic service in 1925, and has held various posts in Manchester, Danzig, Breslau and Berlin. He was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation in 1941. In the year 1946, he held the post of Chargé d'Affaires in Vienna. Since 1948, he has been 1st Counsellor of Legation at the Swiss Legation in Madrid.

Monsieur William Warnock, Minister of the Republic of Eire, has presented his credentials to Monsieur Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation. He formerly represented his country in Stockholm.

Minister Warnock is the first Minister of Eire in Switzerland, as this country was hitherto represented by a Chargé d'Affaires.

General Mohammed Omar Khan, the newly appointed Minister of Afghanistan, has presented his credentials to M. Max Petitpierre, President of the Swiss Confederation. He was until recently Minister of War in Kabul.

Devadas Ghandi, son of the late Mahatma Ghandi was received in Berne by the President of the Swiss Confederation, and entertained at an official reception. Mr. Ghandi, is the Editor-in-Chief of the "Hindustan Times" and President of the Association of Indian Editors.

Professor Erhard, Minister of Economy for Western Germany, at present in Switzerland, has paid a courtesy visit to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

Customs receipts during the month of January, 1950, totalled 33.6 million francs, or 0.9 million francs less than in January, 1949.

In a referendum, the Swiss electorate rejected by 386,172 votes to 333,223 a law which had been accepted by Parliament granting subsidies to firms for housing programmes.

Cantonal

The Government of the canton of Uri has officially received the recently appointed Army-Corps Commander Nager of Realp. [A.T.S.]

During the year 1949, 418 traffic accidents have occurred in the canton of Schwyz; 227 persons were injured, 13 of whom succumbed to their injuries. In 23 cases, the accidents happened through drivers being under the influence of alcohol. [A.T.S.]

The proprietress of a tobacco and cigar shop at the "Franziskanerplatz", in Lucerne, was attacked by an Italian, who entered the establishment to make a purchase. Whilst going to serve him, the man suddenly hit her on the head with a truncheon and knocked her down.

The woman was fortunately able to reach the door, where she cried for help. The attacker then took to his heels, but was hotly pursued by a policeman and arrested, an accomplice who had been on the watch was arrested later on. Fortunately the attacked woman received only slight injuries. [A.T.S.]

Emil Schill a well-known landscape painter, has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary in Lucerne. He is a citizen of Basle. [A.T.S.]

The Senate of the University of Zurich has elected Dr. Paul Karrer, Professor of Philosophy, rector of the University for the years 1950-1952. [A.T.S.]

René Thiessing, formerly head of the Publicity Service of the Swiss Federal Railways, and later on

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Director of the "Schweizerischen Zentrale für Verkehrsförderung", has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary in Zurich. [A.T.S.]

The Church Council of the canton of Zurich has received a legacy amounting to 50,000.—frs. from the late Rudolf Schnorf, of Uetikon. [A.T.S.]

Leo Bodmer, President of the Board of the "Neuen Zürcher Zeitung" has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary; Bodmer was for many years Manager, and afterwards Vice-President of the Board of Brown Boveri & Co., of Baden. [A.T.S.]

During the year 1949, 6,394 road accidents occurred in the canton of Zurich (1948: 6,212); 2,805 persons were injured of whom 82 proved fatal (1948: 87). [A.T.S.]

Professor, Dr. Paul Scherrer, Director of the "Physikalischen Institut" of the Federal Technical University (ETH) in Zurich, is 60 years old. In 1944 he was honoured with the Marcel Benoist Prize. [A.T.S.]

Mme. Anna Barbara Steinmann-Gerber has celebrated her 100th birthday in Muri, near Berne. [A.T.S.]

Mr. A. W. Glogg, Editor-in-Chief of the "Schweizerischen Rundspruchgesellschaft" is retiring from his post on the 1st of April. [A.T.S.]

Dr. W. Berchtold, Director of the District III (Zurich) of the Swiss Federal Railways, has tendered his resignation to the Federal Council in Berne. On accepting same, the government has expressed their thanks for the services he has rendered in the past. [A.T.S.]

Colonel R. Walter (Spiez), Chief of the Swiss Engineering Corps, during the last war, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

M. Bernard de Weck, has tendered his resignation from the States-Council, owing to ill-health. He had been a member of the Council since 1925, over which he presided in 1937/38. [A.T.S.]

M. Joseph Piller, has been elected a member of the States Council in succession to M. de Weck. M. Piller had sat previously in the States Council for ten years. [A.T.S.]

M. Jean Pillamet, has celebrated his 100th birthday in Grandvillard (Ct. Fribourg). The cantonal government has presented him with a case of wine on this auspicious occasion. [A.T.S.]

On the 4th of this month, States-Councillor Paul Brodbeck, since 1924 Mayor of the town of Liestal (Basle-County) celebrated his 60th birthday. He entered Parliament in 1947. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the very successful OLMA exhibition which took place in St. Gall in the autumn of last year show a small profit. [A.T.S.]

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The late Jakob Geisser, teacher and J.P. of Unterwasser, has left an amount of 60,380.—frs. to various charitable institutions of the "Obertoggenburg."

[A.T.S.]

Dr. Felix Simmen (Berne) has been elected head of the cantonal police force (Aargau), in succession to Colonel Zumbrunn, who recently vacated his post.

[A.T.S.]

The late Mme. Luise Debrunner, of Mettendorf (Ct. Thurgau), has left an amount of 57,000.— to various charitable institutions. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Plinio Bolla, a member of the Supreme Court of the Swiss Confederation in Lausanne has tendered his resignation to take effect on the 1st of May, 1950.

Dr. Bolla was elected a Federal Judge in 1925, as successor to Mr. Garbani-Nerini. Previous to his appointment to the Federal Tribunal, Dr. Bolla practised as a lawyer in the canton of Ticino, and at one time he occupied the post of Professor of law at the University of Pavia. [A.T.S.]

The government of the canton of Vaud has passed a law prohibiting the entrance of children under seven years of age to the cinemas whether they are accompanied by their parents or not. [A.T.S.]

Burglars entered the premises of a Watch Manufacturing firm in Neuchâtel and got away with 1,500 watches representing a value of 20,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

Army

Switzerland is to bring about 30 high Army officers and civilian contractors before a military tribunal shortly. The decision follows an inquiry which is alleged to have revealed grave defects in several Alpine gun positions.

Col. Jakob Eugster, Chief of the Army Legal Department, said at a Press conference that one-third of the pill-boxes examined in a certain defence area were found to be defective.

Col. Eugster said some of those concerned in constructing the sites had made considerable profits. As a result of the defects Switzerland's whole fortification system was checked, he added.

Economics

The following Swiss Banks have declared their dividends for the year 1949: Schweizerischer Bankverein: 6 per cent. (1948: 6%); Swiss National Bank, Berne: 6 per cent; Schweizerische Kredit-Anstalt, Zurich: 6 per cent. (1948: 6%); Aktiengesellschaft Leu & Co., Zurich: 5 per cent. (1948: 5%); Hypothekar Kasse des Kanton Fribourg; 5 per cent. 1948: 5%); Schweizerische Volksbank, Berne: $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. (1948: $4\frac{1}{2}$ %). [A.T.S.]

* * *

The South African Minister of Finance said the recently announced Swiss loan to the Union was repayable two years after the date of signing the agreement or three years after that date, at the option of the

Government, by delivery of 7,500 kilogrammes of fine gold to the lending banks.

* * *

From April 1st next, Switzerland will be recognised by Canada as a non-scheduled country, and from July 1st. Canada will lift the import prohibition on a number of Swiss goods. This will benefit, in particular, the Swiss textile industry.

Swiss imports from Canada last year amounted to Frs.154m., while exports were valued at only Frs.47m.

A previous arrangement provided for the increase of annual travel allowances from \$150 to \$2,500 per head.

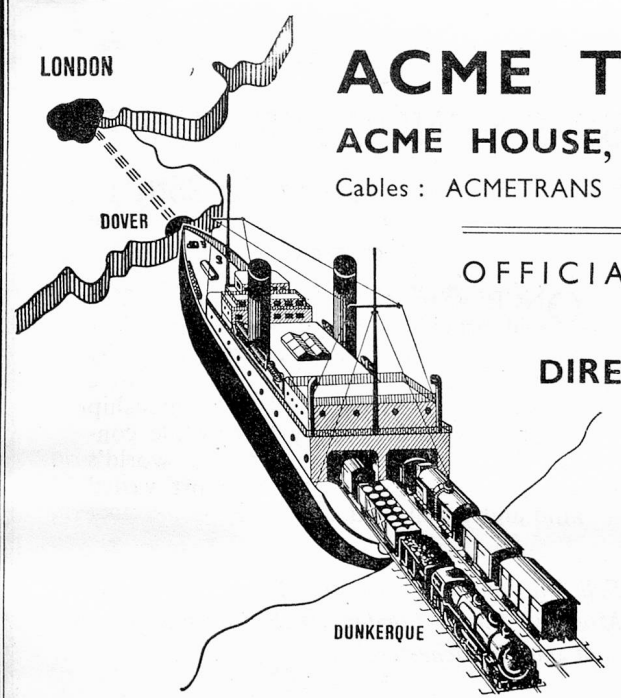
* * *

Gold stocks of the Swiss National Bank during the first week of February dropped by Frs.9.7m. to Frs. 6,245m. A decline of Frs.3.2m. had been recorded for the previous week. Foreign exchange holdings on February 7th were Frs. 1.8m. lower at Frs.268m.

From the National Bank's report for the past year it can be seen that out of a total gold reserve of Frs. 6,240m. at end-December as much as Frs. 4,334m. was deposited abroad.

The effects of the National Bank's attitude in curtailing gold dealings in recent years are clearly reflected by the profit and loss account, which shows revenue from gold and foreign exchange dealings in 1949 at Frs.7.7m., against Frs.16.7m. in 1946. Gold sales to individuals are still suspended.

Notes in circulation at end-December, 1949, were covered by gold to the extent of 136 per cent. This is usually high, seeing that the gold cover prescribed by law is only 40 per cent.



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The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Herrmann, Friedrich Ruprecht, lawyer of Berne, in Berne, at the age of 75.

Dr. Charlot Strasser, a medical practitioner and writer, in Zurich, aged 65.

Charles von Bonstetten, Sub-Manager of the "Allgemeinen Versicherungs A.G." of Berne, and one of the pillars of the Swiss Boy Scout movement in Switzerland, in Berne, at the age of 49.

Franco Cattabeni, Music teacher and composer, in Zurich, aged 80.

Fridolin Müller, formerly Editor of the "Wiler Bote" and "Wächter" in Frauenfeld, at the age of 80.

Léon Boyv, architect and formerly a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Geneva, in Geneva, aged 87.

Henry Spahr, Hotelier and Wine Merchant, in Arolla at the age of 71. The deceased was for many years Manager of the "Walliser Volksbank" and sat in Parliament (National Council) for a number of years.

Carl Joseph Bucher, Publisher of the "Luzerner Neuesten Nachrichten", "Familienfreund", "Heimat und Leben", "Abeille", etc., in Lucerne, at the age of 77. From small beginnings, the deceased had built up a large business employing a staff of over 500. Bucher was, for several years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Lucerne, and for 19 years was President of the section Lucerne of the Swiss Automobil Club.

Orlando Spreng, the well-known Ticinese author, in Lugano, at the early age of 41. Amongst his best known novels are "La recluta Senzapace"; and "Il Reduce," both books have been translated into French and German.

Hans Stoffel, co-founder of the "Plombenfabrik, Stoffel & Sohn" of Horn, in Arbon at the age of 76.

Dr. Paul Murisier, formerly Professor of Zoology at the University of Lausanne and Conservator of the Zoological museum of the University, in Vevey at the age of 71.

Dr. Robert von Ernst, well-known gynecologist, and President of the Medical Association of the canton of Geneva, at the age of 67.

[A.T.S.]

* * *

The following couples have celebrated their Diamond Wedding anniversary (60) in Switzerland: Mr. and Mrs. H. Waldvogel-Goetz, of Thayngen (Ct. Schaffhausen); Mr. and Mrs. Bourquin-Welti, of La-Schaffhausen; Mr. and Mrs. Bourquin-Welti, of La Chaux-de-Fonds; Mr. and Mrs. J.P. Cabalzar-Veragut, of Chur. [A.T.S.]

* * *

Werner Wegmann, wireless operator of "Swiss-air", has recently accomplished 3 million kilometres of Flying. He is 45 years old, and has been since 1929 in the service of the company. [A.T.S.]

* * *

More than 500,000 foreign motor-cars entered Switzerland in 1949.

* * *

From Switzerland comes the story of potted news on tap to telephone subscribers by simple dialling as we do for TIM. In Berne and Basle it is now possible to so receive a three-minute summary of news in either

German or French. Later Italian is to be added and the service extended to other areas. The bulletins are prepared by the Swiss Telegraph Agency and are independent of radio bulletins. They are kept up to date by six revisions between 6 a.m. and 9.30 p.m. This development was inevitable, some place, some time. It cuts out the waste of time waiting for regular bulletins. It won't hurt newspapers. It will help them. Anybody so news conscious as all that will want all the background information several good newspapers can give them.

* * *

The first gas-turbine locomotive to travel on British Railways, the 2,500 h.p., 90 m.p.h. model which arrived from Switzerland a week ago, left the Swindon sheds for its first main-line trial and reached a speed of 70 m.p.h. between Swindon and Badmington. Reports indicate that it behaved satisfactorily. The engine is going out on another trial.

PETITES CHOSES QUI FONT PLAISIR.

"Semaine Suisse" (Service de Presse).

Le "New-York Times" qualifie d'excessivement forte la situation économique de la Suisse après la guerre. Bien que pour elle aussi, le temps de la haute conjoncture soit passé, elle a pu compenser largement les suites de la dévaluation par une extension de ses rapports commerciaux. Notre pays semble avoir été créé pour servir au repos et au tourisme. Il respire la prospérité et le visiteur n'y rencontre pas de problèmes sociaux désagréables.

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Full information from the Swiss Legation, 18, Montagu Place, London, W.1, Consulates Liverpool and Manchester.

Details of travel arrangements and currency allowance (business only) from any leading Travel Agency or the Swiss State Travel Bureau, 458 9, Strand, Trafalgar Square, London, W.C.2.

Une centrale d'informations de l'industrie horlogère suisse vient d'être créée aux U.S.A. Dans les deux premiers mois de son existence, elle a dû répondre à 20,000 demandes. 4,300 horlogers américains ont demandé des catalogues suisses. La propagande par films a atteint jusqu'ici 25 millions de personnes.

La maison Sulzer à Winterthour a été chargée de livrer une installation d'aération pour le nouveau bâtiment du service des chèques postaux de Bruxelles.

Le Grilon est un nouveau fil artificiel qui vient d'être mis sur le marché. Il s'agit d'un produit suisse capable de soutenir la comparaison, au point de vue qualité et prix, avec tous les produits de même nature.

Le "Reflector" est une nouvelle invention suisse. Cette lentille est visible à plus de 200 m. et réfléchit la lumière jusqu'à un angle d'incidence de 80 degrés.

Le gouvernement turc vient de confier l'organisation d'un recensement de la population au Dr. Ulrich Stampa, précédemment fonctionnaire de l'administration fédérale.

La Société géologique de France, à Paris, a appelé à sa vice-présidence M. Eugène Wegmann, directeur de l'Institut de géologie de l'Université de Neuchâtel.

Le journal l'Avvisatore marittimo, de Gênes, annonce le lancement, à Viareggio, d'un nouveau cargo de 1,200 tonnes, le Misox, construit pour le compte de la Société des armateurs suisses de Bâle.

CITY SWISS CLUB

The Committee begs to inform Members and Friends, that the next Monthly Meeting will be held at the

DORCHESTER HOTEL, PARK LANE, W.1,

on

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8th, 1950,

and will be combined with a **Farewell Dinner**

to

Monsieur E. de Graffenried,

1st Counsellor of Legation,

prior to his departure for Berne. The Swiss Minister, Monsieur Henry de Torrenté, will be present.

A cordial invitation is also extended to all Members of the Colony (Gentlemen only), who wish to attend. Dinner, exclusive wine and gratuities 12/6.

Reception: 6.30 p.m.

Dinner: 7 p.m.

Will those members and friends wishing to attend, please send their application in writing to Mr. P. A. Moehr, c/o Acme House, Whitecross Street, London, E.C.1, to reach him not later than *Monday March 6th, 1950.*

THE COMMITTEE.

DER "SWISS OBSERVER".

Von unserm Londoner O Korrespondenten.

Erschienen in "Basler Nachrichten".

Es gehört wohl nicht zum Alltäglichen, dass ein Zeitungsmann einem andern ein Kränzchen windet. Nichtsdestoweniger ist es vielleicht in der Heimat zu wenig bekannt, dass in London unter dem Titel "The Swiss Observer" alle vierzehn Tage ein Kolonieorgan herauskommt, das von einem *Basler*, Paul F. Boehringer, gegründet worden ist. Sein Sohn führt seit dem Ableben seines Vaters den Betrieb, der gleichzeitig eine Druckerie umfasst, weiter, während ein gemütlicher Berner, A. Stauffer, für die Redaktion des S.O. — so wird die Zeitung in der Kolonie genannt — verantwortlich zeichnet.

Der Zweck eines solchen Kolonieorgans ist ein mehrfacher. Einmal verbindet es seine Leser dadurch mit der Heimat und den dortigen Vorkommnissen, dass die ersten paar Seiten einem eigentlichen Nachrichtendienst aus der Schweiz gewidmet sind. Unter den Rubriken "Eidgenössisches", "Kantonales", "Wirtschaftliches", "Verkehr", "Armee" wird den in England ansässigen Schweizern — und andern, die den S.O. lesen mögen — alle vierzehn Tage eine Auslese der am meisten interessierenden Nachrichten aus der Schweiz geboten. Wer sich eine schweizerische Tageszeitung hält, wird diesen Nachrichtendienst rascher überfliegen, als derjenige, der aus irgendwelchen Gründen, vielleicht auch finanziellen, darauf verzichten muss. Bis vor etwa zwei oder drei Jahren war der Redaktor des Swiss Observer für die Zusammenstellung seines Nachrichtendienstes aus der Heimat auf zwei oder drei schweizerische Tageszeitungen angewiesen, die sich seiner erbarmten und ihm ein tägliches Gratis-exemplar zustellten. Seit einiger Zeit aber erhält er den ganzen schweizerischen Nachrichtendienst der Schweizerischen Depeschagentur zugestellt, was ihm selbstverständlich seine Arbeit wesentlich erleichtert.

Sodann verbindet der S.O. die Schweizer in London mit denjenigen in den Provinzen, endlich die Englandschweizer mit der Heimat — nicht nur die Heimat



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