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The Swiss Observer

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NEWS AT RANDOM

Federal

The Federal Council has nominated Monsieur Pierre Micheli, at present Head of the Division for International Organisations at the Federal Political Department (Swiss Foreign Office), to the post of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the Republic of France, in succession to Minister Peter von Salis. The Swiss Government has expressed to the latter its high appreciation for the valuable services he has rendered.

Minister von Salis was born in 1898, and is a citizen of Soglio (Ct. Grisons). He studied law at the University of Berne, where he obtained the degree of doctor of law. In 1929, M. von Salis entered into the Diplomatic Service and a year later, he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in Washington with the rank of Attaché. Four years later (1933) he returned to Berne, having in the meantime been promoted to the rank of 1st. Secretary of Legation.

In 1938, he was sent to Paris, and put in charge of the Commercial Division, after a stay of three years in the French capital he returned once more to Berne, this time as Head of the Finance section of the Federal Political Department. Having meanwhile been promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation, he was sent in 1942, to the Swiss Legation in Rome, where from 1943-1945, he acted as Chargé d'Affaires. The following year (1946), M. von Salis, was transferred to Moscow staying there for a few months, after which he returned to the Political Department in Berne.

In 1947, M. von Salis was appointed Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to Rumania, and two years later (1949) he was appointed in the same capacity to the Republic of France.

* * *

Minister Pierre Micheli was born in 1905, and is a citizen of Geneva and Vicosoprano (Ct. Grisons). He studied *juris prudencia* at the Universities of Geneva,

Oxford and Berlin. From 1930-1933, he occupied the post of Secretary to the Danzig Commission. Entering the Diplomatic Service in 1933, he held successively posts at the Swiss Legations in Paris, The Hague, and Rio de Janeiro. In 1941, M. Micheli was sent to Batavia as Consul, and a year later went to Tokio with the rank of 1st. Secretary of Legation. In 1945, he was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation, and was put in charge of the Swiss Legation in Japan. He returned, in 1946, to Berne.

* * *

Monsieur Hsuan Feng, the newly appointed Chinese Ambassador, has presented his credentials to Monsieur Marcus Feldmann, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Monsieur Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister at the Palais Fédéral in Berne.

* * *

The Swiss Federal Department of Justice and Police announced that in view of reports that a party of Algerians were planning, with the help of Swiss citizens, to make attempts against the French Embassy and consulates in Switzerland, the Attorney-General had ordered an inquiry. It had been found that there was some truth in the rumours. A number of persons have already been arrested or questioned in Zürich.

The popularity of Swiss health resorts reached a peak in 1955 never recorded before in the history of spa statistics. Hotels included in this report, not counting guests spending their vacation in private apartments, rooms, or in popular spa establishments, registered 660,754 overnight stays in 1955, corresponding to a 7.5% increase over the previous year. Popular spa hotels also recorded a surge of holiday seekers last year. Their overnight stays rose from 164,223 in 1954 to 217,457 in 1955.

* * *

Since the inauguration of the restaurant at the Zurich-Kloten airport more than half a million francs have been invested to cope with the immense throng of flight passengers and visitors. It was revealed recently that the construction of an additional restaurant for the sole purpose of accommodating transit passengers and airport personnel has been envisaged at Kloten to relieve the pressure on the existing facilities. The cost of this project is estimated at 1 million Swiss francs. The Swiss airport restaurants have the important task to present themselves as the epitome of Swiss hospitality and gastronomy to air-borne visitors and transients. Thus everyone at Kloten can depend on quick and friendly service and on expertly prepared and presented international menus.

50 Years of Swiss Postal Motor Coach Service.

The Swiss Postal Motor Coach Service commemorates its 150th anniversary this year. A special jubilee postage stamp issued recently recalls the event. A road network of over 5,000 miles is today provided with a bus service by 1,216 motor vehicles, conveying over 22 million passengers yearly. In the year of 1916 the first postal motor coach service was inaugurated between Locarno and Brissago and two years later the Toggenburg line, between Nesslau and Wildhaus, followed. In 1919 the bus services Reichenau-Waldhaus-Flims in the Grisons and Brig-Gondo in the Valais were opened, constituting the first proper alpine motor-coach communication, which expanded in the ensuing years from one pass to another, from the San Bernardino (1920) to the Susten (1946).

"Musical September" in Montreux and Vevey — 7th-25th September, 1956.

Eight symphony concerts featuring such famous conductors as Otto Klemperer and Igor Stravinsky will highlight the programme of this year's "11th Musical September" to be held in Montreux, the well-known resort on Lake Geneva. At nearby Vevey three chamber music concerts with the participation of Clara Haskil and Arthur Grumiaux will follow from September 28th to October 5th. The first four symphony concerts at Montreux are to be performed by the Cologne Symphony Orchestra, the last four by the "Orchestre National" of Paris. Among the soloists of world-wide renown are the pianists Nikita Magaloff and Wilhelm Kempff, as well as the violinists Nathan Milstein and Isaac Stern.

Electric Railway Connections to the "Turntable of Europe".

Switzerland has granted to the State Railways of France, Italy and Germany considerable subsidies for the electrification and modernization of their most important rail links to the Swiss borders. The French National Railways (S.N.C.F.) are adapting the last stretch of the Paris-Simplon-Italy trunk line, still operated with steam locomotive (Dijon-Vallorbe) to the full-scale electric service. The link between Frasné and Les Verriers, farther to the North, is also being converted to the electric system. The rail links which are now in process of electrification, converge, in the Swiss Alps, into the Simplon Tunnel, a masterpiece of engineering completed exactly 50 years ago.

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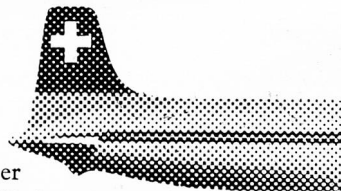
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The northern thoroughfare to the Simplon leads from the Swiss frontier station of Les Verrieres via Neuchâtel, Berne, and the Loetschberg Tunnel, the southern one from Vallorbe to Lausanne and the Rhone Valley.

From the Engadine to the Adriatic.

Travellers, eager to wander off-the-beaten track, will again be able to take advantage of a swift one-day connection between St. Moritz and Venice, from July 11th to September 1st. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday the combined rail and bus service is scheduled to leave St. Moritz for Venice, and each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday in the opposite direction.

The first portion of the journey leads by Rhaetian Railway through the magnificent landscape of the Bernina Pass, Alp Grüm, the valley of Poschiavo to Tirano, where modern motor coaches of the "Impresa Automobilistica Perego" convey the tourists to the shores of the Adriatic Sea, via Padova. The trip begins in St. Moritz at 7.40 a.m. and ends in Venice at 7.50 p.m. In the opposite direction the journey lasts from 8.30 p.m. to 9.59 p.m. Tickets and prepaid vouchers (coach section) are obtainable from the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458, Strand, London, W.C.2.

Swiss Cooks for Melbourne.

The excellent reputation Swiss chefs have enjoyed abroad for many decades was recently confirmed when forty exponents of Swiss gastronomy were chosen in Geneva by an Australian Olympiad representative for the task of preparing the favourite dishes of athletes

from all over the world at the forthcoming Olympic Games in Melbourne. The forty cooks were selected from a group of 150 candidates from all over Switzerland. In addition forty other distinguished culinary experts were found of suitable standing, bringing the total of Swiss "Olympic" champions in the gastro-nomic field, up to eighty.

International Festival of Music — Lucerne.

The programme for this famous festival which will take place from 15th August to 6th September, 1956, is now available at the Swiss National Tourist Office, 458, Strand, London, W.C.2. Admission tickets are obtainable from all the principal travel agents in London.

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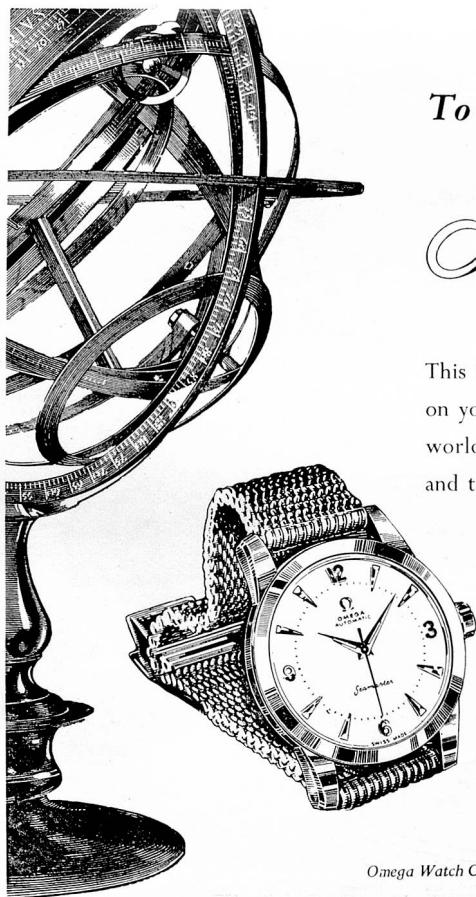
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