

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

The Swiss Federal Assembly, or joint meeting of the two chambers of Parliament have elected Federal Councillor, M. Edouard von Steiger, President of the Confederation for 1951.

M. von Steiger was born on July 2nd, 1881, in Langnau, and belongs to an old Bernese patrician family. He studied juris prudence at the Universities of Geneva, Leipzig and Berne. On the conclusion of his studies he practised as a lawyer firstly in Langnau and afterwards in Berne. In 1914, he entered the Grand Council of the canton of Berne over which he presided in 1939. In the same year, he was elected a member of the government of the canton of Berne, and in the following year (Dec. 10th, 1940) he entered the Federal Government in succession to Federal Councillor R. Minger, as chief of the Federal Department of Justice. He belongs to the Radical Party and was President of the Confederation in 1945.

Federal Councillor Karl Kobelt, has been elected Vice-President of the Swiss Confederation for 1951.

M. Kobelt was born on the 1st of August, 1891, in Marbach (Ct. St. Gall) and was educated in the town of St. Gall. He studied engineering at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) in Zurich where he obtained the diploma as a "Bauingenieur".

From 1919-1933, he was chief of section of the Federal Department for "Wasserwirtschaft" in Berne. In 1933, Mr. Kobelt was elected a member of the Government of the canton of St. Gall, and in 1939, he entered Parliament (National Council).

In the army, he was in command of the Infantry regiment 31, and later, on promotion to the rank of Colonel, he occupied the post of chief-of-staff of the 4th army-corps.

In 1940, he entered the Federal Government, in succession to Federal Councillor Baumann, as chief of the Military Department.

Federal Councillor Kobelt is a member of Liberal-Democratic Party, and was President of the Confederation in 1946.

Dr. Aleardo Pini (Radical) was elected President of the National Council for 1951.

Dr. Pini was born in 1907 in Biasca (Ct. Ticino). He studied law at the Universities of Berne and Lausanne, and has since practised as a lawyer in Biasca. In 1931, Pini was elected a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Ticino, at the early age of 24, over which he presided in 1944. He was elected a Member of Parliament (National Council) in 1942. Since 1948, Dr. Pini has occupied the post of Central President of the Swiss Liberal-Democratic party.

The Swiss Federal Assembly has elected Dr. G. Egli, President of the States Council.

The new "Speaker" of the Federal Chamber was born in 1884 in Lucerne. He studied law at the Universities of Munich, Berlin, Vienna and Berne. From 1913-1935, he practised as a lawyer in Lucerne. In 1935, Dr. Egli was elected a member of the cantonal Government, and a member of the States Council (Ständerat).

Dr. Karl Renold has been elected Vice-President of the National Council. He was born in 1888, in Dättwil, near Baden. After having studied law at the Universities of Zurich, Berne and Leipzig, he practised as a lawyer in Baden. From 1917-1925, he held the appointment as "Staatsschreiber" of the canton of Aargau, and since 1925 he has been in charge of the Insurance Office of his native canton. In 1942, he was elected a member of Parliament (National Council), representing the B-G-B-party. In the army, he holds the rank of Colonel.

Dr. Bixio Bossi, newly elected Vice-President of the States Council, was born in 1896, in Lugano. He studied law at the Universities of Berne and Geneva and is practising as a lawyer in Lugano.

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R.A.C.

Dr. Bossi has been a member of the Grand Council of the Canton of Ticino since 1922, over which he presided in 1928.. In 1931, he was elected a member of Parliament (National Council). Dr. Bossi is President of the Liberal Democratic Party of the canton of Ticino.

Dr. Walter Nägeli, since 1933 a member of the Federal Supreme Court in Lausanne, has been elected President of the Court. He was born in 1881 in Zurich. M. Louis Python (Fribourg), has been elected Vice-President.

The following have been elected members of the Federal Supreme Court: Dr. Paul Corrodi (Zurich), Dr. S. Giovanoli (Chur) and Dr. P. Schwartz (Basle).

The Federal Council has appointed Dr. F. Kappeler, until recently Chargé d'Affaires in Libanon, Syria and Iraq to the post of Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary to the three countries.

The newly appointed Minister was born in 1898 in Frauenfeld, he entered the Diplomatic Service in 1926, and from 1936-1944 was 1st Secretary and later Counsellor of Legation in Berlin.

Members of the Swiss Parliament will receive in future 50.—frs. (instead of 40.—frs.) per day, during the time Parliament is in session.

The Federal Council has appointed Colonel, H. W. Bracher (Berne) to the post of Director of the Federal Military Administration in Berne.

Colonel Jakob Joho (Auenstein), has been appointed Chief welfare officer of the Swiss army in succession to Colonel Ernst von Schmid.

Customs receipts during the month of November, 1950, have reached 55.2 million frs., or 12.9 million frs. more than in November, 1949. The receipts during the eleven months of the current year, reached the sum of 538 million frs., which is 96.6 million frs. more than during the same period in 1949.

The Swiss Federal Railways have carried 17.18 million passengers during the month of October, 1950, or 717,000 passengers less than in October, 1949. The receipts are given as 23.69 million frs. (October, 1949 : 24,648 million frs.).

Goods traffic during October, 1950, has increased by 393,000 tons and is returned as 1.89 million tons. The receipts are given as 31.43 million frs. or 3.74 million frs. more than in October, 1949.

Monsieur Hsuan Feng, the newly appointed Minister of the Chinese Peoples Republic, has presented his credentials to the President of the Swiss Confederation.

The new Minister was formerly a Professor at the University of Yenan.

The Federal Council has appointed, Monsieur Erwin Bernath, to the post of 1st Counsellor of Legation in London, in succession to M. E. von Graffenried.

Dr. Bernath was born in 1911, and hails from Thayngen (Ct. Schaffhausen). He studied law at the Universities of Paris, Berlin, Geneva and Zurich. He entered the diplomatic service in 1936, and three years later (1939) he was transferred to the Swiss Legation in Madrid, and in 1940 to the Legation in Tokio. In

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1946, he returned to the Political Department in Berne and was promoted to the rank of Counsellor of Legation.

Dr. Fernando Bernoulli, until recently Counsellor of Legation at the Swiss Legation in Rio de Janeiro, has been appointed 1st Counsellor of Legation in Washington. He was born in 1905 in Basle, and studied philosophy at the Universities of Basle, Paris and Berne. After having entered the diplomatic service, he was *en poste* in Belgrade, Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. In 1946, he was nominated Counsellor of Legation.

### Cantonal

The Hotel Plattenhof, in Zurich, has been partly destroyed by fire. The damage caused exceeds 100,000.—frs. [A.T.S.]

During the month of November, 1950, 730 (1949 : 530) traffic accidents have occurred in the canton of Zurich. 268 (1949 : 200) persons were injured of whom 15 (1949 : 6) persons succumbed to their injuries. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Gottfried Tanner, proprietor of the "Galerie Tanner" in Zurich, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Joseph Hegglin, has been elected "Staatsanwalt" of the canton of Zug, in succession to Dr. Jten who is retiring. [A.T.S.]

1951 12 718

Dr. Carl Walter Hohl, a lawyer in Berne, is to be the new President of the Swiss Automobile Club, he succeeds Dr. E. Gay who is vacating his post.

[A.T.S.]

Dr. Fritz Rothen has been elected President of the "Schweizerischen Rundsprach Gesellschaft."

[A.T.S.]

The town of Solothurn has acquired the castle of Blumenstein, for the sum of 220,000.—frs., it will be used to accommodate a part of the exhibits of the municipal museum.

[A.T.S.]

The late Theodor Schild, senior partner of the watch manufacturing firm "Eterna", of Grenchen, has left an amount of 20,000.—frs. to the parish of Grenchen.

[A.T.S.]

Dr. August Binz, the well-known botanist and author of the book "Schul- und Exkursionsflora der Schweiz" has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary in Basle.

[A.T.S.]

The late Mme. Mathilde Egli, of Basle, has left an amount of 130,000.—frs. to be divided between and for the benefit of the "Bürgerspital" Basle, the "Bürgerlichen Waisenhaus" and the "Kirchgemeinde St. Peter" in Basle.

[A.T.S.]

Dr. Hans Schmid (born 1900), at present surgeon-in-chief at the "Schaffhauser Kantonsspital", has been appointed Director of this institution, in succession to Dr. A. Billeter, who is vacating his post.

[A.T.S.]

The late Adolf Fisch-Preisig of Bühler, (Ct. Appenzell a. Rh.) has left an amount of 140,000.—frs. to various charitable institutions.

[A.T.S.]

The "Bank in Ragaz" has been taken over by the "St. Gallische Kantonalbank."

[A.T.S.]

Dr. Joseph Clivio, Assistant Manager of the "Verkehrsschule" in St. Gall, has been appointed Director of the "Kantonalen Lehrerseminars Mariaberg" in Rohrschach.

[A.T.S.]

Dr. Paul von Sprecher, from 1905-1938, President of the District Court Plessur (Ct. Grisons), has celebrated his 90th birthday anniversary in Chur. Dr. von Sprecher is a well-known author and historian.

[A.T.S.]

Mr. Eugen Frikart-Heitz, Conservator of the Museum "Schlössli" in Aarau, has been an honorary citizen of the town of Aarau.

[A.T.S.]

Burglars entered a watch factory at Monruz, near Neuchâtel, and absconded with 1,200 watches of considerable value.

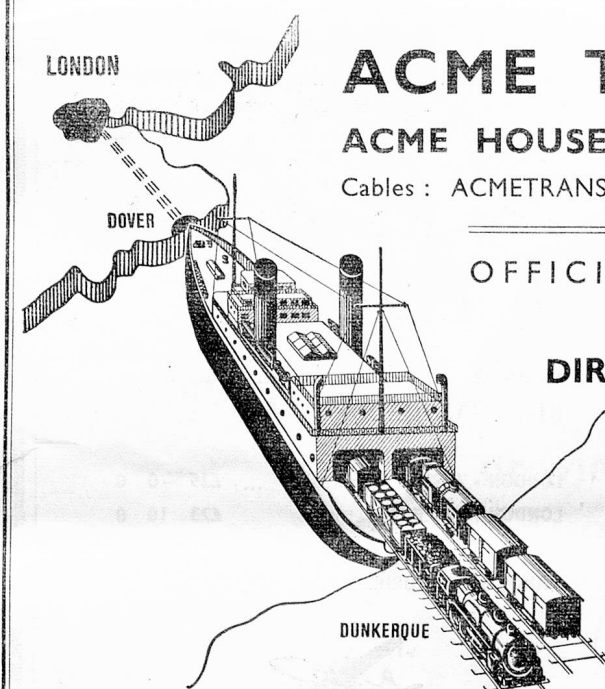
[A.T.S.]

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The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Professor Dr. Fritz Zollinger, surgeon-in-chief of the "Schweizerischen Unfallversicherungsanstalt" in Lucerne, at the age of 66.

Professor Dr. Karl Mayer, a well-known historian, in Kreuzlingen, aged 65. The deceased, a citizen of the



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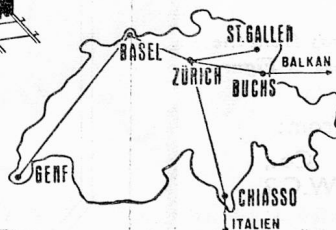
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town of Lucerne, was from 1912-1920, Professor of history at the "Gymnasium" and "Lyzeum" in Lucerne. In 1920, he was appointed Professor of history at the University of Zurich, and eight years later (1928) Professor at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich, a post which he held until 1945. In 1948, he received the degree of *doctor honoris causa* from the University of Zurich.

Dr. Max Holliger, since 1919, Factory Inspector of the canton of Aargau, in Aarau, at the age of 69.

Arthur Prod'hom, from 1907-1917, a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Vaud and from 1918-1937 Mayor of the town of Lausanne, in Lausanne, aged 79.

Paul-William Junod, watch manufacturer in Bienne, at the age of 54.

Karl Krieger, Music teacher at the "Kantonschule" Lucerne and conductor of a number of Male Choirs, in Lucerne, aged 59.

André Bovet, since 1918, Director of the Municipal Library of Neuchâtel, at the age of 60.

Jean Jacottet, Manager of the Martigny-Orsières railway, in Martigny, aged 40.

Fritz Häring-Dill, builder, and for 25 years a member of the "Landrat" of the canton of Basle-County, in Frenkendorf, at the age of 71.

Fritz Steuri, a well-known alpine guide, in Grindelwald, aged 71.

Pierre Berclaz, for many years a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Valais and Manager of the Cantonal Bank at Siders, in Siders, at the age of 92.

Samuel Robert, Publisher and Editor of the paper "Bulletin de St. Blaise" and a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Neuchâtel, in St. Blaise, aged 72.

Dr. Albert Oeri, a former National Councillor and Editor-in-Chief of the "Basler Nachrichten" in Riehen, at the age of 76.

The deceased was born in 1875 in Schaffhausen. He received his schooling in Basle and studied philology and history at the Universities of Basle, Berlin and Göttingen. In 1901, he joined the editorial staff of the "Allgemeinen Schweizerzeitung" which paper was taken over in 1902 by the "Basler Nachrichten." Nine years later (1911) he was put in charge of the Foreign News Department, and in 1925 was appointed Editor-in-Chief, he retired in October, 1950.

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From 1909-1948, Dr. Oeri was a member of the Grand Council of the canton Basle-Town, where he sat as a Liberal, and in 1931 he entered Parliament (National Council). On the occasion of his 70th birthday the Universities of Basle and Berne honoured him with the degree of *doctor honoris causa*. [A.T.S.]

Dr. E. Blattner, a former Director of the Federal Insurance Office is Berne, aged 76.

E. W. Bodenmann-Rehsteiner, formerly head of the firm of the same name, in St. Gall, at the age of 95.

Professor Adolf Attenhofer, formerly a teacher at the "Bündner Kantonsschule" in Chur, aged 72.

Colonel, Charles-Edouard de Meuron, from 1914-1918, Commander of the 2nd Brigade and from 1918-1923 in command of the 1st Division.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

A four-engined Swissair liner, struck a guide light pole whilst landing in a thick fog at a reserve airport near Sidney, Nova Scotia, on December 13th, and skimmed along the ground for half a mile into a bog. One engine was thrown several hundred yards away. Let by the air hostess, all 20 passengers and 11 crew walked unhurt from the wreck, which later on caught fire. The machine has been totally destroyed.

[A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

Commander Ernst Nyffenegger of "Swissair" has flown three million kilometers. He has recently celebrated his 25th Jubilee as a pilot. [A.T.S.]

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According to a recent census the population of the following cantons is as follows: Appenzell a.Rh.: 48,019 (1941: 44,756); St. Gall: 308,462 (1941: 286,201); Basle-Town: 196,658 (1941: 169,958); Zug: 42,336 (1941: 36,643); Thurgau: 149,360 (1941: 138,122); Ticino: 175,486 (1941: 161,882); Aargau: 300,442 (1941: 270,463); Appenzell i. Rh.: 13,448 (1941: 13,383); Fribourg: 160,000; Berne: 797,500 (1941: 728,916). [A.T.S.]

Mr. and Mrs. R. Chavannes, of Vevey, have celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. [A.T.S.]

The Swiss people decided in a referendum that extraordinary war time taxes, levied by the Federal Government since 1940, should become constitutional and continue for the next four years.

Two coaches with pneumatic tyres are now in use on the Swiss State Railways. They will be used for tours at first, and later they will be run in trains of light steel coaches. Both coaches were built in Switzerland; one is of steel construction, has seating for 76 passengers, and weighs only 5.1 tons. The other is a 46-seater whose light alloy coachwork weighs only 3,250 kilograms, a reduction of 68 per cent. on the normal weight of a light steel coach.

The Swiss Government clamped down on all exports likely to aid any country's war machine. Lead, zinc, tin, aluminium, scrap iron, glycerine, bones, skins, cotton, and wool waste are banned. Export licences will be needed for petrol, rubber, wool, and many drugs. These include penicillin and streptomycin, which Russia has been buying in large quantities.

A Swiss banking group has founded the S.I.M.A. (Swiss Immobile-Property-Investment) Trust. Purpose is to acquire properties in Switzerland in order to take advantage of the rising price levels of property in the country.

Switzerland's imports during the first nine months of 1950 amounted to 3,026.7 million francs, an increase

of nearly 220 million francs compared with the same period of 1949. Exports amounted to 2,643.1 million francs, an increase of more than 147 million francs. Switzerland's principal customers during this period were Italy (339.2 million francs), the United States (337 million francs), France (263.3 million francs), Germany (239.4 million francs), Belgium-Luxemburg Union (200.9 million francs) and Great Britain (69.9 million francs). Her principal sources of supply were the United States (425.9 million francs), France (330.8 million francs), Germany (325.4 million francs), Great Britain (261.5 million francs), Italy (235.9 million francs), Belgium-Luxembourg Union (154 million francs), the Netherlands (110.2 million francs), and Argentina (96.1 million francs).

## COMMUNIQUE.

### SWISS INTERESTS IN RUMANIA.

By a notice dated February 16th, 1949, Swiss nationals resident in the United Kingdom were invited to register, as a precautionary measure, any asset (such as Government loans, debentures, cash vouchers, mortgage certificates, land charge notes, participation in nationalized industries, real estate in whatever form, etc., etc.) they might have in Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania and Czechoslovakia.

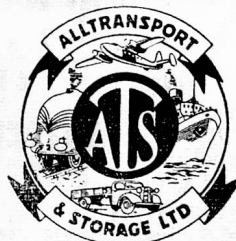
As negotiations will begin between *Switzerland and Rumania* in February, 1951, a last opportunity of registering any claim is given to those Swiss nationals who have not yet notified their claim either to the Swiss Compensation Office in Zurich or the Federal Political Department in Berne or the Swiss Legation in London. Any Swiss national concerned should approach without delay the Swiss Legation in London, 18, Montagu Place, W.1, who will be glad to furnish the necessary forms and to give all information regarding the procedure to be followed.

This communique concerns also nationals of the Principality of Liechtenstein who may be resident in Great Britain.

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