

# News at random

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# The Swiss Observer

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## NEWS AT RANDOM

### Federal

Switzerland's male electorate voted on 24th May, with 380,345 votes against 230,616, to add a new Article to the Swiss Constitution concerning Civil Defence.

Here are the particulars of the poll:

	Yes	No
ZURICH ... ..	95,718	61,671
BERNE ... ..	68,079	34,555
LUCERNE ... ..	16,545	7,493
URI ... ..	2,696	1,708
SCHWYZ ... ..	3,925	3,268
OBWALDEN ... ..	2,059	713
NIDWALDEN ... ..	1,896	928
GLARUS ... ..	3,718	2,035
ZUG ... ..	2,592	1,616
FRIBOURG ... ..	6,544	2,704
SOLOTHURN ... ..	11,376	9,501
BASEL-STADT ... ..	9,859	5,371
BASEL-LAND ... ..	9,884	6,654
SCHAFFHAUSEN ... ..	7,463	5,673
APPENZEL A. RHODEN ... ..	5,286	3,241
APPENZEL I. RHODEN ... ..	900	438
ST. GALLEN ... ..	27,389	23,251
GRAUBUENDEN ... ..	12,418	4,019
AARGAU ... ..	39,437	27,624
THURGAU ... ..	15,894	10,220
TICINO ... ..	5,202	1,893
VAUD ... ..	14,753	8,488
VALAIS ... ..	5,511	2,467
NEUCHÂTEL ... ..	5,139	2,926
GENEVA ... ..	6,062	2,159
	380,345	230,616

41.2 per cent of the electors went to the poll.

\* \* \*

Monsieur P. Chaudet, President of the Swiss Confederation, has sent a telegram of condolence to President Eisenhower on the occasion of the death of State Secretary John Foster Dulles. M. Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, has sent a message of

sympathy to the widow of the deceased, and to State Secretary Herter.

\* \* \*

The Federal Council has accepted the resignation of Mr. Friedrich Kaestli, Swiss Consul-General at Montreal, on his reaching retiring age.

M. J. Piffaretti, at present Consul-General in Bombay, has been appointed as his successor. He was born in 1899, at Porrentruy, and is a citizen of Arzo (Ct. Ticino). M. Piffaretti entered the Consular Service in 1923, and has occupied successively posts at Milan, Torino, Livorno, Singapore, Shanghai and Genoa. From 1946 to 1949 he was attached to the Swiss Legation at Peking with the rank of Counsellor of Legation. He was appointed Consul-General in Bombay in 1956.

\* \* \*

The British, American, French and Russian Foreign Ministers, at present in Geneva, were the guests of the Swiss Government on 11th May at Geneva.

Monsieur M. Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, took the Chair. Apart from the four Foreign Ministers there were present the Ambassadors of the four countries, M. Hammarskjöld, Secretary-General of the United Nations, the Director and Vice-Director of UNO (Geneva), M. Robert Kohli, Secretary-General of the Federal Political Department, M. Richard Aman, Chef du Protocol, M. Dupont, President of the Government of the canton of Geneva, M. Dussoix, Mayor of Geneva, and National Councillor Olivier Reverdin.

## Nouvelle Société Helvétique

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### OPEN MEETING

**Tuesday, 23rd June 1959, at 7.00 p.m.**  
**at the Swiss Hostel for Girls,**  
**9, Belsize Grove, N.W.3.**

Under the title of: A HUNDRED YEARS TOMORROW, Monsieur Ansermoz, of the Swiss Embassy, will recall (in English) how Henry Dunant's vision on the battlefield of Solferino led to the birth of the Red Cross.

### Buffet Service

with coffee or tea, 3/6d. inclusive, from 6.15 p.m. onwards.

Those intending to be present should inform the Warden of the Hostel on Tuesday, June 23rd, between 11 a.m. and noon. (Tel.: PRIMrose 6856).

Please note that there will **not** be a meeting of the N.S.H. on **June 16th**, as advertised in the "Swiss Observer".

The menu served was as follows: Oxtail en tasse, Suprême de truite au Champagne, Filet de charolais en croûte, Pointes d'asperges, Fromages, Fraises Trianon. Vins: Dézaley, Ville de Lausanne, Clos des Moines 1955, Chambertin, Clos de Bèze 1952, Magnum de Mumm, Cordon rosé 1952.

The Foreign Minister of Thailand, Monsieur Thanat Khoman, has paid a courtesy visit to M. Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, and Dr. Th. Hohenstein, Head of the Federal Economic Department, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne. The Federal Council entertained the distinguished visitor to dinner at the Wattenwylhaus.

The following foreign diplomats have presented their credentials to M. P. Chaudet, President of the Swiss Confederation, and M. Max Petitpierre, Swiss Foreign Minister, at the Palais Fédéral in Berne: Monsieur Julio Fernandez Davila, Ambassador of the Republic of Peru, Monsieur Guillermo Salazar Sandez, Ambassador of the Republic of Cuba, and Monsieur Grigore Geamanu, Minister Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Rumania.

The Diplomatic Corps in Berne gave a dinner in honour of the members of the Federal Council and their ladies. Besides members of the Government, there were present the Presidents of the two Federal Chambers, the President of the Supreme Federal Court, the Federal Chancellor, the Presidents of the cantonal governments of Berne and Fribourg, the Mayor of the town of Berne, the Chief of the General Staff, the General Director of the Swiss Federal Railways, as well as a number of high ranking civil servants and army officers.

#### Cantonal

A monument to the eminent Swiss composer, Othmar Schoeck, was unveiled at Brunnen, his birthplace, in the presence of Federal Councillor Dr. Ph. Etter. The monument is the work of the sculptor, Josef Bisa (Brunnen).

On the occasion of the elections for the renewal of the Government of the canton of Lucerne, the following have been elected: Dr. Werner Buehlmann (Cons.) 56,089 votes, Dr. Isenschmid (Cons.) 58,830 votes, Dr. Franz Xaver Leu (Cons.) 55,486 votes, Adolf Kaesch (Lib.) 52,875 votes, Dr. Hans Rogger (Christ. Soc.) 53,743 votes, Werner Kurzmeyer (Lib.) 53,438 votes, and Dr. Anton Muheim (Soc.) 54,206 votes.

The election for the Grand Council shows the following result: Conservatives & Christian Socialist

Party, 90 seats (2 gains); Liberal Party, 62 seats (1 loss); Socialists, 13 seats (1 loss); "Landesring" Duttweiler Party, 3 seats (no change). [A.T.S.]

The railway station (SFR) of the town of Lucerne has just celebrated its 100th jubilee. [A.T.S.]

Whilst ascending the "Stanserhorn", Albert Ineichen (23), of Hochdorf, a pupil at the "Missionsseminar" Schoeneck in Emmetten, lost his way and fell into a ravine; he was killed. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Othmar Fries (Lucerne-Meggen) has been elected Director of the "Verkehrsverein" Lucerne, in succession to the late Dr. Eduard Schütz. [A.T.S.]

A fire which broke out at the "Spinnerei Langnau a. Albis" has caused damage amounting to over 50,000.—francs. [A.T.S.]

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The oldest inhabitant of Bassersdorf (Ct. Zurich), Frau Anna Fürst-Ochsner, has entered her 100th year. [A.T.S.]

The District Court Thal-Gäu has sentenced a motorist, who, whilst driving under the influence of alcohol, caused an accident in which three persons were injured, to three months' imprisonment and a fine of 200.— francs. [A.T.S.]

Mrs. Frieda Röthlisberger (42), of Langnau — mother of seven children — fell over a rocky projection whilst picking alpine flowers, and was killed. [A.T.S.]

The BEA exhibition (Bernische Ausstellung für Gewerbe, Landwirtschaft, Industrie & Handel), which was held in Berne from 1st to 12th May, was visited by 110,000 persons, or 20,000 more than in the previous year. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Arthur Baur has been elected chief editor of the paper "Neuen Berner Zeitung", in succession to the late Dr. Willy Schweizer. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Eugen Wyler, of Berne, writer, and founder of the "Internationalen Bürgermeisterein", has been made a Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur by the French President. [A.T.S.]

The commune of Gretzenbach (Ct. Solothurn) has bestowed honorary citizenship upon Dr. phil. Johannes Hürzeler, custodian at the Natural History Museum in Berne. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Fritz Grossenbacher (48), a merchant, of Langenthal, lost his life on the Col Raimeux. [A.T.S.]

A deficit of 1.76 million francs is reported in the accounts of the canton of St. Gall for 1958. [A.T.S.]

Dr. Rudolf Siegrist (Aarau) and Mr. Adolf Aeschbach (Burg near Menziken), both socialist members of the National Council since 1943, will not stand as candidates at the approaching parliamentary elections. [A.T.S.]

The firm of "Benninger A.G.", engineering works, in Uzwil, has celebrated its centenary. The firm employs 600 workhands. [A.T.S.]

The idyllic little town of Bremgarten (Ct. Aargau) can this year look back on 750 years of its history. This event will be celebrated on Sunday, 6th September 1959. [A.T.S.]

The accounts of the canton of Schaffhausen for 1958 close with a deficit of 2,402,866.— francs. [A.T.S.]

The Commercial University of St. Gall has

recently celebrated the 60th anniversary of its foundation. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Ugo Sadis (Lugano), civil engineer, has been appointed Director of the cantonal electricity works in Bellinzona. [A.T.S.]

A deficit of 689,000.— francs is reported in the accounts of the canton of Thurgau. [A.T.S.]

Damage estimated to be 200,000.— francs was caused by a fire which broke out at the warehouse of the "Société industrielle du caoutchouc" Fleurier. [A.T.S.]

Mr. Alfred Langenberger, Vice-Director of the Federal Post-Telegraph and Telephone Administration, has been elected President of the "Union Internationale de Télécommunications". Ninety-five countries belong to this Union, which is administered by a Board representing eighteen countries. The seat of the Union is in Geneva. [A.T.S.]

M. Bernard Béguin, foreign news editor of the "Journal de Genève", has been appointed chief editor of the paper, in succession to Mr. Olivier Reverdin, who wished to be released in order to spend more time teaching at the University of Geneva. Mr. Béguin is at present President of the Swiss Press Association. [A.T.S.]

#### DEATHS.

The following deaths are reported from Switzerland:

Professor Dr. Valentin Wagner, *ordinarius* for National Economy at the University of Basle, in Basle, at the age of 64.

Willy Leiser, noted sculptor and painter, in Sala (Ct. Ticino), aged 44.

Paul Altherr-Rubly, in Zurich, at the age of 72.

### CITY SWISS CLUB

A Card Meeting will be held on **Tuesday, June 16th, 1959**. As no circulars will be sent out for this meeting will members kindly note the date and advise the Dorchester Hotel of their intention to be present by the day previous to the Meeting. (This can be done by telephoning Miss Martin at the Dorchester Hotel. Telephone: MAYfair 8888).

R. E. GUT,  
Hon. Secretary.

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The deceased was a prolific writer of plays, poetry and novels, the best-known among the novels being "Verdrehten Gedichte" and "Demokratie im Frack". Altheer was at one time editor of the "Zürcher Volkszeitung", and the "Zürcher Post", and a collaborator of the "Nebelspalter".

Ludwig Walker, former States Councillor, in Schattdorf, aged 80. He was from 1912 to 1930 a member of the "Urner Landrat", and from 1930 to 1948 a member of the Government of the canton of Uri. During the years 1936/38 and 1940/42 he held the office of "Landammann". Walker sat in the States Council from 1927 to 1945.

Dr. med. Luigi Conti, specialist in children's ailments, in Lugano, aged 63.

Dr. med. Ernst Rieben, for 30 years chief surgeon at the Interlaken District Hospital, in Interlaken, at the age of 79.

Professor Jonas Holzmänn-Grubin, Director and co-founder of the "Juventus Institut" Zurich, in Zurich, aged 81.

Henri Detraz, formerly Director and member of the Board of the "Aluminium A.G., Neuhausen", in Vevey, at the age of 81. The deceased was honoured in 1937 with the degree of *doctor honoris causa* of the University of Lausanne.

Paul Werzinger-Burkhard, a former Director and member of the Board of "Danzas & Cie., A.G." Basle, in Basle, aged 84.

Emil Frei-Scherz, founder of "Frei's Handelsschule" Lucerne, in Meggen, at the age of 83.

Franco Gallino, advocate and notary in Lugano. The deceased was a member of the Grand Council of the canton of Ticino, and President of the commune of Melide.

Carl Albert Loosli, author, in Bümpliz near Berne, at the age of 82. Amongst his best-known works are: "Bümpliz und die Welt", "Ewige Gestalten" and "Die Schachmatt Bauern". He also wrote a number of biographies, amongst them those of F. Hodler and Carl Spitteler.

S. Weiland, Director of the "Institut Juventus" Zurich, in Zurich, aged 80. [A.T.S.]

\* \* \*

## ANNIVERSARIES.

Hans Gisler (70), of Zurich, noted sculptor, and teacher at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich.

Dr. Paul Haefelin (70), of Solothurn, President of the Solothurn-Lebern Court from 1916 to 1918, from 1933 to 1953 "Stadtammann" of Solothurn, and from 1925 to 1945 a member of the "Kantonsrat" Solothurn. He has been a member of the States Council since 1939.

Arnold Tschopp (80), of Weggis, a former teacher at the "Realgymnasium" Basle, and a well-known alpinist.

Dr. René Baschy (70), of Glarus, founder and member of the Board of the "Privatbank & Verwaltungsgesellschaft" Zurich.

Otto Baumberger (70), of Zurich, noted painter and etcher. The "Jubilar" was from 1921 to 1933 a teacher at the "Kunstgewerbeschule" Zurich, and since 1932 has been "Dozent" at the Federal Institute of Technology (ETH) Zurich.

Siegfried Bittel (65), of Blitzingen, General Manager of the Swiss National Tourist Office. As the doyen of Swiss Tourism he has been a major influence and creative force in international travel. [A.T.S.]

#### LEGACIES AND DONATIONS.

The recently deceased Mr. Hans Stapfer, of Aarau, a former Justice of the Peace, has left 100,000.—francs to various public utility and church institutions.

Mr. Oskar Wagner, formerly Director of the "Zementfabrik" Holderbank, has donated to the community of Holderbank the amount of 40,000.—francs to be used for children's holidays and school excursions. [A.T.S.]

#### DIAMOND WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES.

Mr. and Mrs. J. Houriet-Vuille, of La Sagne; Mr. and Mrs. A. Bertschinger-Hess, of Riedt-Wald; Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Faessler-Doerig, of Herisau; Mrs. and Mrs. H. Kluser-Weder, of Oberriet (St. Gall); Mr. and Mrs. Ackermann-Rutishauser, of Olmishausen; Mr. and Mrs. Müller-Fitz, of Wollerau; Mr. and Mrs. S. Stoller, of Konolfingen; Mr. and Mrs. Hans Keel-Forster, of Altstätten.

Mr. and Mrs. E. Fankhauser-Gyger, of Bienne, Mr. and Mrs. E. Brandt, of La Chaux-de-Fonds, and Mr. and Mrs. K. Rusterholz-Hoehn, of Wädenswil, have celebrated their iron wedding anniversary (65 years). [A.T.S.]

#### TRAFFIC ACCIDENTS.

A serious accident occurred in Lyss, costing the lives of four persons, when a lorry collided with a military jeep. All four occupants of the jeep were killed; they were: Lieutenant Etienne Imesch (30), of Geneva, Quartermaster-Sergeant Jean-Pierre Frossard (27), of Münchenstein, Sergeant-Major François Volery (33), of Geneva, and Quartermaster-Sergeant Claude Martin (25), of Lausanne.

Owing to a skid, a motor-car left the road near St. Julien (Geneva) and overturned. The driver was injured, and his wife, Mme. Simone Minner (51), was killed.

A motor-car driven by a Mr. August Vock (32), of Zurich, collided with another car near the village of Baar (Ct. Zug). Mr. Vock was thrown out of his car and killed. Four persons in the other car received injuries and were taken to hospital. Both cars were totally destroyed.

Between Engelberg and Stans a motor-car carrying four persons crashed into a tree. The driver, Christian Hartmann (45), of Zurich, was killed. His wife, daughter and father-in-law were injured and were taken to hospital.

Mr. Alexander Jeannet (47), of Geneva, whilst on his motor-cycle, collided with a car in the Plainpalais district of Geneva, and received fatal injuries. [A.T.S.]

#### VARIOUS.

Pending the coming into force on 1st January 1960 of a new road traffic law, the Swiss Government has ordered from 1st June a speed limit of 60 kilometres

(about 37 miles) an hour in built-up areas. Motorists and lorry drivers in the open country will be limited to 80 km. (50 miles) an hour.

The Veillon Literature prizes for 1958, for the best novels in the German, French and Italian languages have been awarded to the following: Otto Friedrich Walter, of Olten, for his novel "Der Stumme", 5,000.—francs; Mlle. Elizabeth Petit (French) for her novel "Mademoiselle Simon Professeur adjoint", 5,000.—francs; and Mr. Nino Palumbo (Italian) for his novel "Il Giornale", 5,000.—francs. [A.T.S.]

The Swiss Schiller Foundation has awarded prizes of 5,000.—francs each to Walter Muschg, Basle, and Jaques Chenevière, Geneva.

It has awarded 2,000.—francs each to Albert Baechtold, Zurich, Olga Meyer, Zurich, Pierre Courthion, Paris, Pierre Bianconi, Minusio, and Guglielm Cadola, Chur; and 1,000.—francs each to Mrs. Obertin, Zurich, and Manfred Gsteiger, Berne.

According to statistics published by the Swiss Federal Railways, the receipts at the following railway stations for 1958 were: Zurich, 45 million francs; Basle, 19 million francs; Berne, 19 million francs; Geneva-Cornavin, 16 million francs; Lausanne, 14 million francs; Lucerne, 10 million francs; Winterthur, 7 million francs; Bienne, 6 million francs; St. Gall, 5 million francs; Olten, 4 million francs; Lugano, 4 million francs.

The Federal Singing Competition (Eidg. Sängerfest) will take place in Geneva in 1960.

[A.T.S.]

Though alpine snows were less abundant than normally, the quantity remaining in autumn was much greater than usual, because the summer was not warm enough to melt them. That explains why on several glaciers the level of the higher snowfields showed a rise of about 3in. over last year.

Among the retreating glaciers the Great Aletsch, Findelen, and Zmutt glaciers receded by about 72ft., the Gorner by nearly 108ft., the Oberaar by 132ft., the Lower Grindelwald by 42ft., the Morteratsch by 93ft., the Tschierwa by 351ft. (in two years), and the Roseg by 231ft. (in two years). Those at a standstill were the Mont Fort, Lenta and Paradisino glaciers. On the other hand, the Allalin glacier moved forward by 51ft., the Bella Tola by 63ft. (in two years), the Vertsankle by 129ft. (in two years), the Lischana by 42ft., the L'En Darrey by 81ft., and the Tälliboden glacier by 51ft.

There is therefore no immediate danger of seeing the Rhône glacier extending its ice flow down to Avignon — as it did in prehistoric times. On the other hand, a certain American tourist showed an unjustified fear when, last July, after reading that the melting of the alpine snows and glaciers was in full swing, he rushed into a car sales room in Berne and asked for the fastest car available so as to be able to reach the glaciers before they had completely melted.

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