

News at random

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Federal

The Swiss federal railways are carrying so many passengers and goods these days that they have not enough locomotives at their disposal. A temporary solution has been found by the borrowing of four German electric locomotives.

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Rejection of a proposal to ban atomic weapons in Switzerland is recommended by the Federal Council. The proposal was put forward in the form of an initiative, signed by 72,793 people, by the Swiss movement against atomic rearmament. It suggested insertion in the Constitution of an Article prohibiting the manufacture, import, transit, storage and use of atomic weapons of any kind on Swiss territory.

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The Bristol Aircraft Company of Great Britain announced recently that Switzerland has placed a 300-million-fr. order with their company for ground-to-air guided missiles. The Bristol-Ferranti Mark 2 Bloodhound will be used to strengthen the Swiss ground defence against attacking aircraft.

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The Federal Council has appointed Mr. Agostino Soldati to succeed Mr. Micheli as Swiss Ambassador to France.

* * *

A Spanish work-contingent of 270 farm hands arrived in Basle to help bring in the Swiss harvest. The seasonal workers, from farms in the central provinces of Spain, were sent on to farms in the cantons of Aargau, Solothurn, St. Gall, Thurgau and Zurich.

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Cantonal

Sempach has celebrated the 575th anniversary of the battle which has earned it the highest honours in our military history. Several thousand spectators, including representatives of the Lucerne, Schwyz, Uri, Nidwalden and Obwalden cantonal governments, watched a historical pageant pass through the town — the biggest celebration of this event in 25 years.

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Mrs. G. Binggeli-Lejeune, who lives in Mont-Pèlerin, has made a donation of 12,000 fr. to Vevey's Hôpital de la Providence.

* * *

A salesgirl has been arrested in Geneva for the embezzlement of 105,000 francs, which she alleged to have stolen over a period of six years. Her employer, owner of a souvenir shop on the rue de la Croix-d'Or,

NEWS AT

announced a few days ago that the discovery was made after an investigation of the accounts.

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The Montana Film Company of Zurich has just started production of a film called "Mental Cruelty", which is a study of the problems of divorce.

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Lightning killed 17 sheep on the Hinterschlatt Alp in the Klontal region of canton Glarus recently.

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Mr. Ernest Hess, manager of Interlaken's tourist office, will soon leave for Kabul, where he is to study the development of the tourist trade in Afghanistan.

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A reward of 5,000 francs is being offered for information leading to the recovery of 50,000 francs in notes which disappeared from the Postal Customs Department at Basle. The money was being sent through the post by a large bank. The parcel was handed in at a Basle post office in the evening. Next morning it went to the customs office, where it was registered. Later in the day, when it should have been dispatched by airmail, the parcel was missing.

* * *

Total record number of flats in the city of Zurich is 145,458, of which only eleven are vacant.

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A former world champion wrestler, John Lemm, died in Davos, his birthplace, at the age of 77. Mr. Lemm won the Swiss Federal wrestling championship at the age of 19. Just before World War I he twice won the world free-style wrestling championship. After a number of important matches in the U.S.A., he returned to Zurich to manage a race-track. Later he became guardian of the mountaineers' hut on the summit of the Weissfluh.

* * *

A bank cashier of 50, living in Zurich, was arrested in Basle while allegedly stealing books. Later police discovered at his home a huge collection of books, worth several thousand francs, which he is alleged to have stolen over the years.

* * *

Star Swiss ski-jumper Peter Wenger was one of five people taken to hospital with serious injuries when two cars collided on a bridge near Bollingen, in the canton of

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Bern. Others injured were Wenger's passenger in the sports car he was driving, and the three occupants of the other car. Both vehicles were completely wrecked and had to be prised apart with crowbars.

In Saint-Aubin (Neuchâtel), Mr. and Mrs. Charles Burgat, respectively 96 and 97 years of age, have just celebrated their 73rd wedding anniversary.

At Marthalen, in the canton of Zurich, archaeological experts have uncovered a Celtic settlement which reportedly dates from the fifth century B.C. This village, which survived for more than 500 years, was well advanced in the use of metals, as witness the objects found at the site.

Recently published statistics indicate that there are only three people out of work in the whole city of Lausanne — two men and a woman.

Fully-equipped mountaineers from Zurich made an unusual and rather tricky ascent last week by moonlight — in the middle of the city. They marked their ascent by placing an upturned wine bottle on the summit, the spire of the Federal Technical. It is there that the mountaineers — two mathematicians — study during the day. Their descent was uneventful — until University proctors presented them with a bill for disturbing the peace.

A lunatic caused quite a stir in the Neuwiese district of Winterthur the other day by threatening passers-by with a long knife. Fortunately, the police were alerted before he was able to hurt anyone.

Zurich Zoo has been presented with five young African ostriches, the world's largest birds. They are the gift of a fashion house. The birds are already as tall as a man, but they will grow to a height of nearly eight feet.

(Most of the above items have been received from the A.T.S. News Service.)

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LETTER FROM GENEVA

A very surprised man is sitting in Geneva's St. Antoine jail on a four-year-old murder charge: Rudolf Arndt, of West Berlin.

The Swiss authorities requested the German police way back in 1960 to arrest Arndt on suspicion of the murder in Geneva of an arms dealer named Marcel Léopold.

The German police refused to make an arrest. At the time of the murder, 19th September 1957, they said Arndt's passport showed he was in Berlin. Therefore, he was innocent.

There was nothing more the Swiss authorities could do. Then Arndt slipped badly. He travelled on business across the border to Holland. There the Dutch police, alerted by Geneva, pounced.

Pending extradition procedures, Arndt went on a hunger strike. He was nevertheless sent under strong guard to Geneva last week-end. Now he is being questioned by Judge William Dunand, the magistrate in charge of the case.

The Marcel Léopold murder has been given Dunand a bad headache for a long time. The middle-aged Swiss arms dealer was killed within seconds between leaving the lift in front of his third floor flat at the Cours de Rive, and pressing the bell. He fell dying into the arms of his White-Russian wife.

The crime weapon was a hand-made metal tube that could be concealed in a sleeve, capable of ejecting a dart and killing with no more sound than a sigh.

A partner of Léopold's, Georg Puchert, was later killed in Germany. In this case a queer hand-made bomb was fitted under the victim's car, triggered to go off when the starter was pressed.

"I have no statement to make yet. The questioning of the accused is far from over," said Judge Dunand.



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