

What we think

Autor(en): **F.I.**

Objekttyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **The Swiss observer : the journal of the Federation of Swiss Societies in the UK**

Band (Jahr): **- (1940)**

Heft 969

PDF erstellt am: **27.04.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-692794>

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Anglo-Swiss trade relations earned him the Order of the British Empire (O.B.E.).

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As there is no immediate prospect of the postmen mobilised for active service returning to do their rounds, many of the local postal authorities are training members of the fair sex for this purpose. In Berne and Zurich petty-coated letter carriers with soft felt hat adorned with the post horn and wearing a water-proof cape have already made their appearance.

* * *

Several violations of Swiss territory by German aircraft have been confirmed by the army command. On June 1st German bombers were seen over the Jura, one of them being shot down by a Swiss patrol and came to earth at Tessenberg (Lignières); soon afterwards another one was attacked and descended in flames over French territory. On the following day, Sunday, another German bomber was shot down near Yverdon. On Tuesday afternoon, June 4th, our air forces chased another squadron of German fliers of which two or three are said to have crashed on the French side of the frontier. One of our own pilots, Lieut. Rudolf Rickenbacher, was shot down and killed. In these encounters five German airmen lost their lives; after a military ceremony in Neuchâtel they were transported under a guard of honour to the German frontier. In the early hours of Wednesday morning (June 5th) a number of bombs were dropped on the road from Kreuzlingen to Tegerwilen, causing damage to the surface. An investigation is proceeding, but the occurrence is connected with the allied raid on the near-by Zeppelin base in progress at the same time.

* * *

The following is taken from the English press, no official confirmation from Swiss sources being in our possession.

"The Times," June 10th. Just before noon on Sunday, a Swiss observation aeroplane was attacked by surprise by six German machines and shot down near Alle. Its two occupants, both officers, were killed. The attack took place over Porrentruy, 10 miles inside the Swiss frontier. Shortly afterwards a German squadron was seen over Saignelégier, in the same region, flying southward. To-day also, during a fight above the Chasseral mountain, 10 miles west of Bienne, one of the best Swiss pilots, Lieutenant

Homberger, was hit in the lungs by two bullets, but succeeded in landing on the nearest aerodrome. He is expected to recover.

A German machine which flew over Porrentruy was compelled by Swiss chaser aircraft to land in the Jura mountains, north of Solothurn, and its two occupants have been interned. Another German machine which crossed the frontier was chased into the Solothurn Jura and compelled to land near Triengen, where it burst into flames.

"Daily Telegraph," June 12th. Four persons were killed and 19 injured when unidentified 'planes dropped bombs in Switzerland to-day. An Army communiqué stated:

"Early to-day there were several violations of Swiss territory by foreign 'planes. So far as can be ascertained one bomb dropped near a school at Renens, Lausanne, and several others were dropped near Daillens. Five bombs were dropped near Geneva."

The bombs near Geneva dropped in the working-class suburb of Carouge, near the French frontier. The drone of 'planes aroused the curiosity of residents, who left their beds to find out what was happening. A Swiss soldier and a woman were killed and 18 persons were injured.

WHAT WE THINK.

The entry of Italy into the War has made matters for Switzerland considerably more difficult. As in 1914/1918 she is now surrounded by warring nations, a little oasis amidst a wilderness of desolation and destruction.

No doubt our Federal Government in Berne can be trusted to guide our country firmly and wisely in these troublesome times, and without fear or favour. Whilst we have no misgivings on this score it would be foolish to disguise the fact that there are dangers ahead, both in the economical and political sphere, and that it will require cool heads and steady hands to steer the ship of state through the stormy seas ahead.

There are the vital questions of food, minerals, coal and oil. Up till now supplies have been obtained through mediterranean ports, both French and Italian, but it remains to be seen how long these routes can be kept open, likewise the artery from the Balkans through the Vorarlberg and coal from Germany.

Doubtless, Switzerland has accumulated as much stock as possible of all these things, but unless arrangements can be made for supplies to be maintained regularly the economical position of Switzerland would soon become precarious.

Whilst Switzerland will resist any infringement of her neutrality with all her might and to the utmost limit of her economical and military resources, let us hope and pray that she may be kept free from actual warfare and all the horrors and misery this would entail.

In these difficult times, our thoughts naturally go out to our kith and kin in the dear old Homeland to whom we send fraternal greetings and our most ardent wishes for a safe deliverance from all difficulties

F.I.

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