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national importance just now, as by reason of the present intensification of agriculture about 122 kilos (approximately 240 lbs.) of vegetables are produced per capita in Switzerland as compared with 70 kilos (about 137 lbs.) before the war.

SWISS REJECT SYSTEM CHANGE.

(Berne..) - By 519,000 votes to 250,000 the Swiss people rejected today a Socialist proposal for direct election of the Federal Council, which is the equivalent of a Cabinet in most other countries. The vote also rejected an increase of the Federal Council from seven to nine members.

That the Swiss people, the most democratic in Europe, should reject this proposal is regarded as of more than passing interest. On the face of it, direct election of the government would seem to be the very essence of democracy.

The main argument used against the Socialist proposition was that most European democracies have disappeared in recent years but the Swiss form of government has subsisted chiefly because it was unlike them. Thus the Swiss Government will continue to be elected by the National Council (Parliament).

SWISS CUT ELECTRICITY.

(Berne. Jan. 25) - Beginning today further restrictions are to be applied in Switzerland on the use of electric power for lighting and heating. The measure is explained by the continued drought, which is reducing the output of hydro-electric plants.

The last restrictions were applied in November, 1941, since when the situation is described as having steadily grown worse.

Public lighting was then reduced 30 per cent; henceforth it will be reduced 50 per cent. The lighting of show windows may not continue after 7 P.M. The use of luminous signs is entirely prohibited.

In homes, schools, offices and cafes the electric light must be reduced by at least one-third compared with the corresponding period last year. No electric power may be used for heating.

SWISS ACT FOR 20 NATIONS.

Special Division set up to care for Belligerents' Interests.

Berne, Jan. 22. - Since Switzerland has undertaken to represent the interests of some twenty belligerent nations, including the United States, it has been necessary to recruit a special personnel and set up special offices. It was announced recently that this organization was now complete.

The Division of Foreign Interests is divided into five sections, with fifty-five officials holding executive ranks. Its head is M. de Fury, formerly Swiss Minister to the Netherlands. The subordinate personnel is large and is likely to increase. Moreover, additions to permanent staffs have been made at the legations in London, Berlin and Rome.

The Swiss point with pride to the fact that all countries concerned have expressed satisfaction with the work of the division. In addition to its other duties, it negotiates the exchange of wounded prisoners.

SWISS PATRIOTISM.

Helvetia's reports on the many happy gatherings of our compatriots on the occasion of the 650th anniversary of the founding of the Swiss Confederation, I have read with great pleasure. As one who enjoyed the celebration in Auckland, in its humble and sober form, with the opportunity it gave to make new acquaintances among our compatriots, all singing those old patriotic songs, I too want to support the suggestion of some members of the Swiss Benevolent Society for more frequent gatherings in different localities.

To what has already been written, I should like to add this thought: Though we

have to marvel at the fact that Switzerland has been able to preserve peace and freedom within her frontiers, as the protecting hand of God still honours the vow of our forefathers on that solemn night on the "Ruetli", yet, let us not take too much for granted. Rather let us by prayer, backed by a life that is acceptable in God's sight, prove our loyalty to our dear Homeland, as well as to the country in which we have found a "home away from home".

A Member whose heart's desire is Universal Peace.

Acknowledgment of gifts of woollen wear from New Zealand for the Swiss Soldiers' Relief Fund: "I have received the parcel of children's clothing and thank you very sincerely for it. The children were very pleased with it, and they, too, thank you very much for the warm clothing. They will pray for their benefactors.

I particularly welcomed the package because my wife has been in a Sanatorium since the 8th of August, and this, of course, means heavy expense. We are, therefore, most grateful for everything received from kind benefactors making it possible for us to clothe our children during the cold winter. Again many thanks for the nice parcel." - Fues Raphael E.g.g.s., Geb.Gz.Fues.Bat. Stab 21c, Kreisspital Brig.

INVITATION FROM THE SWISS BENEVOLENT SOCIETY, AUCKLAND.

The Social Committee of the Swiss Benevolent Society issues to all Compatriots a hearty invitation to be present at a Social gathering to be held in the Overseas League Rooms, Queens Arcade, Auckland, at 8 p.m., 2nd May, 1942, when presentations will be made to our late President and Secretary, Messrs. Merz and Ungemuth. Ladies are requested to bring a Plate. A full attendance of all interested would be appreciated.

E N G A G E M E N T.

HOSPENTHAL - ENGELBERGER.

The engagement is announced of Freda Emilia, third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Engelberger, Kapuni, to Joseph Zeno, second son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Hospenthal, Arth, Switzerland.

W E D D I N G B E L L S.

With great pleasure, we announce that Mr. Ben Schumacher of Ngarua and Miss Hannely Dahinden of New Plymouth have been joined in Holy Matrimony. Both are very well known to a great number of our members, and we all wish them everything of the best for their future.

O B I T U A R Y.

We regret to announce the death of Mr. John Hagenbuch of Herriesville, Te Aroha, wellknown in the Te Aroha district as well as Taranaki.

Mr. Hagenbuch, who had reached the age of 70 years, arrived in New Zealand in 1904 and first settled in Inglewood, Taranaki. Later he went farming at Stratford for a few years. He then moved to Te Aroha, where he was farming for well over 30 years. The writer will never forget this genial compatriot who always met a joke with his hearty laugh. I consider myself very fortunate that opportunity allowed me to see him at the Hamilton Hospital where he died on 31st March, 1942. His wife, Mrs. Mary Hagenbuch, his daughter, Mrs. Mary Mulgrew of Te Awamutu and two grandchildren mourn their heavy loss. We are sure that many of our Swiss Community in New Zealand will join us in our expressions of deepest sympathies and regrets.

SERVICE OF SWISS CITIZENS IN EMERGENCY PRECAUTION ORGANISATIONS.

The Swiss Consulate at Wellington advises that the activities of civil