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"Berner Tagwacht" - "The right of granting sanctuary is our own affair. We decide who is worthy and who is not. However, we have refused sanctuary to many worthy people during the war, and before that. Let us hope that no one in Switzerland will be in favour of sanctuary being granted to those having to answer for war crimes. They had courage enough to commit the crime; we hope they will also have the courage to answer for themselves. They should not bring any neutral country which they have often mocked, into difficulties by seeking protection here. This war itself is a crime, the greatest for over a century, and many cruelties and crimes have been committed, largely in the name of a new morality and a new justice, which cynically despised former conceptions."

FINANCIAL REORGANISATION OF THE SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAYS.

Mr. Celio, President of the Swiss Confederation and Head of the Post Office and Swiss Federal Railways Department, has announced that a detailed scheme for the financial reorganisation of the Swiss Federal Railways is now under study.

The financial reorganisation of the Swiss Federal Railways has become vitally necessary. The scheme will involve both the taking over of part of the liabilities incurred by the national railways and an increase in transport rates. The State will thereby increase its own debts by 2.3 to 2.4 milliard francs, a sum which includes 1.7 to 1.8 milliard francs taken over from the debit balance of the Swiss Federal Railways and a 600 million francs deficit from the Pension Fund.

On the other hand, as a result of the enormous and constantly increasing rise in the price of rolling stock and running costs - 233% for coal, 588% for lubricating oils, 116% for rails, 74% for uniform cloth, 665% for tin, etc. - an increase in transport rates is anticipated. It is estimated that this would yield a further revenue of 25 million francs, namely, 10 millions on passenger tickets, 14 millions on goods transport and frs. 900,000.- on cattle transport.

Receipts and expenditure of the Swiss Federal Railways. A comparison of receipts and expenditure of the Swiss Federal Railways during the last few years is shown in the following table:

| Year | Receipts | | Expenditure | |
|------|----------|----------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1937 | 336 | million francs | 224.6 | million francs |
| 1938 | 320 | " " | 229.5 | " " |
| 1939 | 361.2 | " " | 223.9 | " " |
| 1940 | 397.8 | " " | 238.8 | " " |
| 1941 | 455 | " " | 260.6 | " " |
| 1942 | 468.3 | " " | 288.4 | " " |

As compared with 1936, the worst financial year for the Swiss Federal Railways since the last Great War, 1942 receipts show an increase of roughly 178 million francs. On the other hand, running costs reached a peak in 1930 when they amounted to 291.4 million francs; since the outbreak of the present war, they have again increased considerably, and will doubtless soon exceed the 1930 level.

THE SIXTH STAGE OF THE SWISS AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PLAN.

The goal set for the first five stages of this plan was the increase of arable land in Switzerland, so that, should the necessity arise, the country could be entirely self-supporting as regards food supplies and dispense with importations. Although the increase in the surface of land under wheat has not yet reached the acreage required, vegetable and potato plantations are sufficient and need not be augmented for the time being.

In the programme set for the sixth stage of the agricultural extension plan during the 1943/44 period, these results have been taken into account; they are, above all, to be consolidated and the deficiency noted in the fulfilment of certain parts of the plan is to be made good. This is particularly the case as regards disafforestation which, in certain parts of Switzerland, has not yet reached one-tenth of the surface specified in the plan, whereas in other districts, the acreage of disafforested land exceeds the plan by one-fifth. Taking the country as a whole, however, disafforestation is behind the minimum set by the plan by more than one-third.

The cultivation of sugar-beet will have to be increased, and that of cole-seed tripled to provide the population with a reasonable oil ration. Besides intensified cultivation, the fodder production of each small-holding is to be increased during the sixth stage of the plan, so that the Swiss national herd may, as far as possible, be maintained at its present size. This aim will be achieved by producing more synthetic fodders and by cultivating fodder as a main produce. A programme for the construction of silos has just been drawn up and incorporated in the agricultural extension plan.

COAL RATIONING IN SWITZERLAND DURING THE 1943/44 WINTER SEASON.

As the results of the negotiations now being carried on with coal supplying countries are still uncertain, Government authorities in Switzerland have decided to prepare already now a severe system of rationing based on existing stocks and national resources, but which will, nevertheless, be complex enough to take into account all legitimate needs of the population as far as possible.

Industrial unemployment must, at all costs, be avoided; the greater part of Switzerland's stocks of foreign coal will therefore be reserved for industry. Here again, gas-works and the manufacture of the sub-products of coal will have precedence over other industries. No coal from which gas, benzol or substitute products can be extracted, is to be used for heating purposes. Although hospitals, clinics, factories and workshops, public administration offices, schools, private offices and shops, hotels, boarding houses and restaurants, will receive coal rations equivalent to last year's, part of their supply will be substituted for wood. Private households will only be granted wood rations. Swiss coal is only to be delivered by special permit.

THE SWISS LABOUR MARKET DURING MAY, 1943: The demand for labour for the execution of agricultural and public works schemes is still very heavy, and whole-time unemployment in Switzerland has consequently dropped still further; during May last, the number of unemployed fell by 480. At the end of that month, 3,728 unemployed were registered throughout the country, as against 5,894 a year ago. Unemployed labour is, for the time being, almost entirely absorbed, but it is probable that the lowest level has now been reached.

WAGE ADJUSTMENTS IN SWITZERLAND.

Normal rates of wage adjustment in Switzerland, calculated on the basis of the state of supplies and the cost of living index, are as follows:

For a pre-war income up to: The present income should now be increased by:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| frs. 3,000.- | 38% |
| " 4,000.- | 32% |
| " 5,000.- | 27% |
| " 6,000.- | 26% |
| " 6,000.- and over | 24% |

The rates of increase in the cost of living are 82% for incomes up to frs. 3,000.- and 52% for incomes over frs. 6,000.-.

RECORD SALES FOR ELECTRIC APPARATUS.

The sale of electric apparatus in Switzerland during 1942 was considerably influenced by the fuel shortage. No less than 227,000 electric household heating apparatus were sold last year, as against roughly 113,000 during the last few years. The sale of electric chafing-dishes and kitcheners registered 50,000 and beat all records. The capacity of all these apparatus is 343,000 kilowatts and their annual power consumption is 75 - 80 millions of kilowatt-hours, which represents the output of a great power station. This means a tremendous additional demand for electric power, for it must be remembered that the requirements of these household apparatus only represent a small part of the total supplementary consumption of electric energy in Switzerland just now.