

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 10 (1944-1945)
Heft: 10

Rubrik: Sundry news from Switzerland

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 18.08.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

With this measure the financial problems of our soldiers in active service have at least been reduced to a great extent. Nevertheless, the cantonal elections of the past month have brought considerable success to the workers' parties of the extreme left which formerly had been in close contact with the Communists. It is generally thought possible that these parties at least in Geneva, Basle, Zurich and Neuchatel will be able to play the role of an opposition party. The reasons for this change are not only to be sought in Russia's success in this war, but also in the increase of the general cost of living, and in the uncertainty of the future. These motives have made the Swiss Socialists put the security of labour and the creation of work possibilities at the head of their postwar programs. The demobilized soldiers and all those workers who so far have been engaged in our war industries, not only in the manufacture of armaments but also of all the other war products, must not be exposed to the danger of unemployment. On this point all responsible political circles of our country agree. In the field of social reforms, certain groups of workers demand, before anything else, the introduction of a federal old age and survivors insurance. The extremists of the left are demanding immediate payments to aged people, while the Socialists are supporting the insurance plan worked out by the Federal experts which is built on a business basis.

The Swiss workers are hoping for a new and more successful international collaboration. For the time being they are expecting this to be achieved by the trade unions and workers' organizations, rather than by a new kind of political world organization with which most unsatisfactory experiences have been made in the past.

.....

SUNDRY NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The Federal Council accepted the new military service relief plan. Immediately after the end of the hostilities in Europe, the Swiss army high command had decided that all dispensable troops should be dismissed as soon as possible. Only three regiments will have to remain on active service for guarding purposes. The military service relief plan will be renewed every month and adapted to the changing circumstances. The services will last 32 days as a rule, so that every soldier will know exactly when he will be dismissed. If possible, all men who have already done military service in World War I will be excused from the coming services.

The efforts aimed at the opening of the port of Genoa to Swiss imports have so far led to no positive results, as a number of difficulties have still to be overcome in the negotiations with the American military authorities. The Federal Council, however, hopes to receive the permission within the next few weeks to begin with the transport of Swiss goods from Genoa to Switzerland.

Already before the war, a committee of action had been formed for the construction of an international academic sanatorium at Leysin. The Federal Council accepted the honorary patronage of this work and the Federal Assembly granted a subsidy of half a million francs. Under the circumstances, however, it has not been possible to realize this plan during the war. A number of foreign students are to be admitted to the existing clinics at Leysin, for which purpose the Swiss Gift has granted a first credit of 400,000 francs. Already on February 6, the first group of consumptive French students were welcomed at Leysin. The success of their cure has so far been very satisfactory. On April 23, twenty-nine sick Belgian students were received. Further groups are expected.

Eight hundred Russian soldiers who have been sheltered in the buildings of the Swiss Trade Fair at Lausanne have now been transferred to the Canton of Glarus where they will be able to find occupation in different public works.

On May 29, 750 French children from the Normandy and from the Paris region left Switzerland for France. Thanks to the children's aid of the Swiss Red Cross, these little French boys and girls have been able to spend a holiday in Switzerland and to regain their health.

On May 30, 451 Dutch children arrived in Switzerland for a three month stay. This vacation was offered them by the aid to children action of the Swiss Red Cross. The Dutch boys and girls will find accommodations in the Cantons of Aargau, Fribourg, Glarus Graubünden and Zurich.

Another convoy of refugees, 361 Jews, among them 150 orphans left Geneva for Palestine on May 30. They will travel via Cerbere and Barcelona and are expected to arrive in Palestine on June 6 or 7.

The state of active military service will now also come to an end of August 20. The troops which have to do service after this date will fall under new regulations. The military law will undergo certain restrictions and the territorial military courts will be dissolved. Military jurisdiction will be in the hands of divisional courts.

The Federal Council reports that war economy authorities have done everything in their power to increase the production of peat. The weather is the principle factor upon which the quantity of peat produced depends. If the weather is favourable, production will this year go over 500,000 tons. If the weather is unfavourable, not more than 350,000 tons will be extracted.

Mr. Alfred Schaller, director of the office for Navigation on the Rhine spoke on June 5 at Basle about the fate of the Rhine navigation and the prospects for Switzerland in this connection. For the present, the navigation on the Rhine has been completely stalled because the 30 bridges across the Rhine between Basle and the river's mouth are all down. The wreckage of these bridges caused in Germany's Rhine ports as well as the methodical destruction of most all the port installations at Rotterdam are also a big obstacle to be overcome. Under the most favourable conditions, it will take six months to clear the wreckage of the bridges. In addition, the damage caused to the Kembs power plant near Basle makes all navigation impossible. It can hardly be expected therefore that traffic can be resumed on the Rhine before six months. The same delay will be required for traffic on the Rhine-Rhone canal.

On February 16 and April 27, the Federal Council decreed the blocking of German funds in Switzerland. In order to establish the total amount of these funds and to secure their safeguarding the Federal government decided to introduce the registration for all German capital in Switzerland. Everybody who is possessing, administering, safeguarding or keeping capital of any kind belonging to a national or corporation in Germany is obliged to inform the Swiss clearing office in Zurich of these funds. The same duty applies for German citizens in Switzerland.

In a recent meeting, the Grand Council of the Grisons discussed the development of hydraulic power production. The different speakers stressed the need for the people of the Grisons to remain united in the presence of repeated attempts to deprive them of the right to dispose of these resources as they may choose. The Canton of the Grisons which is poor in industries must be allowed, they said, to export the electrical current it can produce.

Swiss Universities go to the Help of Sister Institutions Abroad: The University of Zurich having decided to patronize the reconstruction of the University of Leyden, the University of Fribourg that of Narvegen, the University of Neuchatel those of Oslo and Goninge, the University of Basle has offered to sponsor help for the University of Utrecht in Holland. First of all this sorely tried Dutch institution must be afforded the possibility of providing periods of recuperation in Switzerland for its teachers and students.

On June 13, the National Council continued the discussions it began on June 12 on the Federal Council's full power decree concerning the abolishment of the prohibition of parties. The Social Democratic minority in the commission expressed the wish to see the decree changed inasmuch as the organizations of the extreme right should continue to be prohibited and the legal measures of protection for the constitutional authorities should be abolished. In contrast with this, Federal President de Steiger, head of the Federal Department of Justice and Police declared that the lifting of the ban lying on the parties of the extreme left as well as of the extreme right would be justified. He stated that there are no signs that the groups of the extreme right which had been rejected by the Swiss people are coming to life again. The National Council decided in favor of the particular legal protections for the constitutional authorities and in favour of the abolishment of the prohibition of political parties on the extreme right.

The Radical Democratic group of the Federal chambers considered a motion introduced by National Councillor Maag to increase the number of Federal Councillors from 7 to 9. After a long discussion, the Radical group decided with a large majority not to favour this reform for the present as the proposal has been rejected by the Swiss people just before the war.