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NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND.

The results of the investigations on German capital in Switzerland were published on November 26. About 250,000 cases, many of them extremely complicated, have been examined and verified by the Swiss Office of Compensation in Zurich. According to official reports, 752 million Swiss francs have been found to belong to persons living in Switzerland, Germany, Austria or other regions formerly part of Greater Germany. Four thousand cases representing an additional 245 million francs have not been clarified as yet. Taking them into account German funds of about 1000 million Swiss francs, are deposited in Switzerland.

National Councillor Ilg submitted to the Federal Council a question in writing concerning military construction still in progress in Switzerland. According to the Federal Council's reply, fortifications along our Eastern frontier are insufficient. In 1945, the General Staff requested and obtained from the Federal Council a credit for new constructions. The greater part of this work has already been finished.

The Federal Council revoked a number of laws concerning the extraordinary full powers it exercised during the war, as their existence is now no longer justified.

The International Time Table Conference at Lugano has improved considerably Switzerland's communications with foreign countries, especially as far as the Simplon route, the Paris-Berne line, connections with Belgium, Holland and England and resumption of direct communications with Prague are concerned. The conference decided to introduce on January 7th direct Simplon-Orient express trains, and direct train tickets between Switzerland and Italy will be issued again. Arrangements, of course, require the consent of Allied military authorities.

Traffic on the Rhine between Holland and Switzerland has been reopened after five years of interruption.

In the name of the Swiss Government and the Swiss people, the President of the Confederation congratulated King Haakon of Norway on the 40th anniversary of his accession to the throne.

On Tuesday morning, November 28, the Swiss film, "The Last Chance" was shown for the first time at the Loew's Criterion Theatre, at Broadway and 45th Street in New York City. The Loew's Criterion is one of New York City's foremost movie theatres. At 8.45 a.m., a large crowd was standing in line already expecting its opening at 10.00 a.m. The film is well worth seeing. Critics in New York City are very enthusiastic about this splendid motion picture. The New York "Times" describes this film as one of the best of World War II.

Having completed smaller aid actions for southern Germany's border regions, the Swiss Gift for War Victims is now carrying out in Germany large scale actions for children in need and in the fight against epidemics.

Five hundred sixty Austrian children and sixty-seven Swiss children from Vienna safely reached Switzerland aboard a Swiss hospital train. Fifteen persons representing the first Swiss contingent from the Russian zone of occupation in Austria arrived on the same train. Four hundred sixty of the children have been able to come through the help of the Czechoslovak section of the Swiss Red Cross. They travelled with difficulty from Vienna to Lodz, where the Swiss train was awaiting them, and are now looking forward to staying for a while with families in the cantons of Aargau, Berne, Solothurn and Zurich. More Austrian children are expected soon.

Sixty-four prefabricated barracks were shipped from Switzerland to Denmark and Holland by a train of the Swiss Gift. Sixty-two of those barracks will shelter war-stricken families in Denmark, whereas two barracks will serve as dental clinics in Arnhem, Holland.

During the next few days, the repatriation of 20,000 German and Austrian war prisoners, captured by the Allies in the course of the invasion, will begin. The trains will pass through Basle and the first convoys of several hundred returning war prisoners have been announced already.

As a token of gratitude for the help Switzerland has extended and is extending still to Holland towards her reconstruction, the Dutch Society for Reconstruction has presented Federal President von Steiger with a beautiful bowl of Delft pottery bearing the following inscription in Dutch: "Year of Liberation 1945".

Die gefundenen 5 Milliarden.

Bundesrat Nobs hat kürzlich das vorläufig ermittelte Ergebnis der Steueramnestie für die gesamte Schweiz bekanntgegeben. Es stellt sich auf viereinhalb Milliarden Franken, und man glaubt, dass die endgültige Ziffer etwa bei fünf Milliarden Fr. liegen wird.

Fünf Milliarden sind ein schönes Stück Geld, und vorab die Kantone als Hauptnutznießer -- für den Bund fallen nur einige wenige Millionen als Steuerertrag ab -- werden mit Schmunzeln feststellen, dass ihnen da mühelos ein fetter Brocken zugefallen ist, der ihnen die Erfüllung bevorstehender sozialer Aufgaben wesentlich erleichtern wird. In welchem Verhältnis sich das neu zutage gekommene Steuerkapital auf die verschiedenen Kategorien verteilt, darüber liegen zur Zeit noch keine genauen Ermittlungen vor. Man darf jedoch annehmen, dass die Verteilung ungefähr dieselbe ist wie beim Wehropfer, d.h. dass etwa je ein Fünftel bei den Aktien- und Obligationsgeldern und rund ein Drittel bei den Sparguthaben hinterzogen war. Von der Steueramnestie haben also zweifellos auch die kleinen und kleinsten Sparer, die Inhaber der über 4 Millionen Sparbuchlein, Gebrauch gemacht. Und damit dürfte auch die Annahme widerlegt sein, dass nur bei den grossen Vermögen Steuerhinterziehungen gang und gäbe gewesen seien.

The Federal Council approved the budgets on the ordinary and extraordinary account of the Confederation for 1946 to be submitted to the Federal Chambers. A deficit of some 1220 million francs is calculated, as against 1688 million francs in the 1945 budget.

The administrative account for 1945 will probably close with a deficit of 100 million francs more than foreseen in the budget owing to the very small customs revenue.

The Federal Council's comment on the budget contains a certain amount of interesting information. Concerning the creation of opportunities for employment, for example, it declares that the budget for 1946 only allows a sum of 30 million francs should a state of unemployment set in owing to the end of the war. It has not yet been decided to which of the numerous plans established for this eventuality the money will be devoted. If against all expectation unemployment should become so grave as to need the creation of several schemes of work absorption, special credits will have to be voted. The Federal Council declaration also throws an interesting light on the financial position of the Confederation. The deficit from previous years is estimated at 8528 million francs to which must now be added the expected deficit for 1946, thus the total deficit at the end of 1946 will be some 9000 million francs.

A delegation from the Australian government has been staying in Berne during the past few days. Two conferences were arranged with representatives from the Federal Office for Industry, Trade and Labor. The delegation has revealed that Australia is showing a strong interest for Swiss emigrants.

Swiss food rations in December will amount to about the same quantities as in October and November. The total fat and oil rations will be 1450 grams. In consideration of the Christmas holidays, the chocolate ration will be increased from 50 to 150 points and the candy ration from 100 to 200 points. The ration of macaroni products will be 750 grams and the meat ration will also

be higher than in the previous month. Furthermore, each citizen will receive four meal coupons as a special Christmas gift. According to the general supply situation further improvements are still possible.

Shoe rationing in Switzerland will be abolished on Monday, November 12. The competent authorities declare, however, that the country's supply of leather is still far from sufficient and that factories and shoe shops will continue to be controlled.

At the same time various other commodities are being freed from restrictions. The sale of dried vegetables is being taken off the ration list.

Concerning hotels and restaurants, certain restrictions on the combination of menus and the serving of certain dishes are being lifted. Restaurants and hotels still continue to have three meatless days per week, however, and the authorities remark on the continued necessity of using all foodstuffs with the greatest care and without waste.

The first plane inaugurating a new airway between London and Geneva arrived on November 5 at 4.10 p.m. at Cointrin (near Geneva). It made the flight in 3.09 hours. The plane took off again on November 6 loaded with passengers for the return trip to London. From now on, there will be a regular service of two planes a week between London and Geneva, on Mondays and Thursdays from London to Geneva and on Tuesdays and Fridays in the opposite direction.

At the International Transport Conference which recently took place in London, it has been decided that in the course of November a rail communication between Basle and Rome via St. Gotthard and Milan and with connection to the Arlberg Orient Express will be established. Thus direct rail communication between Switzerland and Rome will be resumed after an interruption of more than two years.

At the present moment, the Swiss Railways have a particularly difficult task on hand. Out of the 18,000 freight cars which they possess, 5,000 are being used outside the country for the transport of goods between sea ports and the Swiss frontier. To this must be added that transport abroad takes much longer than usual owing to the great shortage of cars. And inside Switzerland there is the same shortage. The Swiss Railways would much prefer to be able to use all their freight cars inside the country. Abroad where all the cars move much more slowly they only receive much smaller sums from the lease of the rolling stock. Despite this, the Swiss railways have decided to release the greatest number of freight cars possible for the intensification of the traffic between Switzerland and the sea in order to insure a more regular supply of provisions. To this end the railways proposed to use road trucks for the transportation of goods inside Switzerland, particularly for the urgent transportation of certain categories of goods and of mail in the industrial centre of the country. Trials on a large scale are now taking place in Berne. In this way almost 400 additional freight cars will be set free for the transportation of imports.

In the election in the Canton of Geneva last Sunday 55 of the 100 seats in the cantonal parliament were gained by the Bourgeois parties while the parties of the Left were only able to win 45 seats. The repartition is thus exactly the same as after the elections in 1933. Of the 45 representatives of the Left, 36 are from the Labor Party and 9 are members of the official Social Democratic Party of Switzerland.

The Noble Peace Prize for 1944 is to be awarded to the International Committee of the Red Cross for its activity in connection with prisoners of war. This news has been received with great satisfaction in Switzerland. It is a testimony of esteem and comprehension for this organization and the honor is in some degree shared by the whole of Switzerland.

Dr. Karl Kobelt, head of the Federal Military Department, has been elected President of the Federal Council for 1946. Dr. Philipp Etter, head of the Federal Department of the Interior, has been elected Vice-President.

The National Council elected Mr. Robert Grimm of Berne, social democrat, president for 1946.

The Council of State elected Dr. Joseph Piller of Fribourg president for 1946. Dr. Piller belongs to the conservative party. Mr. Walter Ackermann of Appenzell, a member of the radical party, was elected vice president.

The Federal Council authorized the Swiss Office for Compensation in charge of investigations on German capital in Switzerland to open safes and locked deposit boxes, if necessary.

Federal Councillor Kobelt, head of the Federal Military Department, reveals that Switzerland's military expenditures from 1939 to 1945 amount to 723 million Swiss francs.

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Your fee to the S.B.S. became due on October 1st and we request you to remit either to the Secretary; to the Treasurer, Mr. W. Ungemuth, Clarence Road, Northcote, Auckland; or to the district collection agents, Mr. A. Poyer, 48 Moa Road, Auckland; Mr. John Steiner, Eastport Road, Waihou; Mr. C. Gebert, P.O., Opotiki. Please make our task easier in remitting PROMPTLY.

We also wish to encourage those members in more fortunate positions, to remit whatever sum they care to donate, apart from the fee of 10/-, so that our Society can continue on a prosperous basis.

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NEW MEMBER.

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Mr. Joseph Boucher,
34 Ngata Street, PALMERSTON NORTH.

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