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re-shipped through Basle, which today is Switzerland's second largest city.

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SUNDAY NEWS.  
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PARLIAMENT.

The Federal Parliament in its December Session elected new officials for 1949. The National Council elected as President, Mr. Joseph Escher, a former Conservative and as Vice-President, the Socialist, Jacques Schmid, from Solothurn. In the States Council, Mr. Gustav Wenk, Socialist, from Basel was elected President, and the Liberal, Haefelin from Solothurn as Vice-President. On December 16th both Chambers met in joint session and elected as President of the Confederation, Federal Councillor Ernst Nobs, with 192 votes out of 217. Mr. Nobs is the head of the Department of Finance and Customs. It is the first time he is President, and also, it is the first occasion on which a Socialist has been elected to this high office. As Vice-President, Mr. Max Petitpierre, head of the Federal Political Department, was elected; he obtained 208 votes out of 221. These elections take place every year, and in turn each of the seven members of the Federal Council automatically becomes President.

A SPECIAL FILM.

A special film on the development of the Swiss Confederation during the last hundred years was shown with great success, on the 22nd of December. The first portion deals with rural scenes, then the characteristics of the former conditions illustrating the overwhelming sovereignty of the cantons regarding finance, customs, post, defence, and so on. Then comes the establishment of the Federal Constitution of September 12th, 1848, which gives the central power to the Confederation, and shows how the cantons freely relinquished their authority and rights in many matters. After this comes a brief summary covering the following decades with their new regimes in economic, social, cultural and other matters. This historical record is compiled of carefully selected events which are accompanied by a narration and music. Among the many guests were President Callo and other Federal Councillors, General Guisan, and high officials of the Administration, as well as personalities of Swiss economy, science and the Press, and representatives of the "Auslandschweizer-Werk." A copy of the film will be made in French and Italian, and it will be shown as a "short" in picture theatres. The "Auslandschweizer-Werk" of the N.H.G. will arrange for the distribution of copies to Swiss abroad.

ASSISTANCE TO REFUGEES.

Agreements have been signed in Geneva from representatives of the UNO, the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of the Red Cross Societies and American Benevolent organizations, for assisting 600,000 refugees in Palestine. The sum of Sfr.21,500,000 has been set aside for acquiring foodstuffs, clothing, blankets and medical supplies. The International Committee of the Red Cross will be in charge of operations. The assistance will be given, without racial or religious discrimination to all refugees. The President of the International Red Cross drew attention to the fact that within the limits of its power the Red Cross has already assisted in Palestine since the outbreak of hostilities. Mr. Alfred Escher, Legation Counsellor at the Swiss Legation in London, has been nominated Red Cross Delegate for Palestine.

CONCESSIONS IN AIR TARIFFS FOR STUDENTS.

The "Swissair" has decided to reduce fares on certain routes for Swiss students from 12 to 18 years, who are abroad for educational purposes. The same reduction applies to young foreign students attending schools in Switzerland.

#### TOURISM.

Since early December, large numbers of tourists are entering Switzerland at Basel. Trains from France and Scandinavia are being fully booked. Many of the visitors are from Belgium and Holland and a considerable number from Britain.

#### AUTOMOBILE EXHIBITION.

The 19th International Automobile Exhibition will take place in Geneva from the 17th to the 27th of March, 1949, and it will be on a larger scale than any previous exhibition. It has been announced that there will be a record number of exhibitors from all parts of the world. The most important constructors with world-wide reputations will go to Geneva, accompanied by their engineers and technicians. It is expected that entirely new models both technically and in design will be shown.

#### CHILDREN HOLIDAY IN SWITZERLAND.

A Red Cross train with 500 children from Berlin and the Russian Zone of Germany, has arrived at Basel. The children are invited for a three months holiday in Switzerland.

#### PROTEST AGAINST THE ARREST OF CARDINAL MINDSZENTY.

The Religious and Cultural Central Organization of Catholics in Switzerland, in a solemn demonstration have protested against the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty. The arrest is described as another shameful injustice against the Catholic Church. The Catholics of Geneva on their part have sent a telegram in the following terms to the Hungarian Legation in Bern:

"We are shocked by the arrest of Cardinal Mindszenty, Primate of Hungary, and, with all fervour, we openly protest in front of the whole civilized world against this arbitrary and unqualifiable action, and the vulgar slander with which this great patriot, defender of the rights of the Church and mankind, has been overwhelmed."

#### VISIT OF FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER.

M. Robert Schumann, French Foreign Minister, will pay an official visit to the Swiss Government and express the thanks of France for the assistance and services rendered during and since the war.

#### FRUIT FOR CHILDREN.

The "Pro Juventute" a Swiss Benevolent Organization for children has distributed 420,000 kg. of fresh fruit as a gift from Swiss farmers to Swiss children living in the Alps.

#### NEW PRECISION RECORD OF SWISS WATCH FACTORY.

At the observatory of Kew-Teddington, England, the achievement of the new precision record by a Swiss horological factory, was registered. Out of a possible maximum of 100 points this chronometer obtained 93.8; the daily variation was not more than 0.13 seconds.

#### BOOK ON SWITZERLAND.

In London, a new book by the journalist Hamilton Fyfe, dealing with the most civilized people in Europe, has been published. It is written with the intention to familiarize Englishmen with the customs and characteristics of the Swiss people. Switzerland is described as the country "more democratic than the U.S.A. or any country in Europe."

#### "DON SUISSE" CEASES ACTIVITY.

During its activity the "Don Suisse" has distributed goods to the value of Sfr. 2,000,000 to eighteen countries. The balance of Sfr. 5,000,000 has been handed over to the organization "European Aid" and other similar bodies.

#### M.S. "CARONA."

In West-Hartlepool, England, a new motor ship of 3,000 tons, the "Carona" belonging to a Basel society has been launched.

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS.

At an assembly of the Union of the Foreign Press in Switzerland, its President, Mr. R. A. Langford, expressed satisfaction for the opportunity the journalists enjoy in not just working in "a country" but in Switzerland, where it is easy to write the truth without fear of being conducted to the border by the police, or even being imprisoned when criticising the Government.

SWITZERLAND JOINS UNESCO.

After the Federal Chambers accepted the Federal Council's proposal to join UNESCO, the Swiss Minister in London, Mr. de Torrente, was instructed to sign the Constitution of UNESCO, which is deposited with the British Government.

The revised budget of the Swiss Confederation for 1949, approved by the chambers, estimates expenses at 1423.7 million Sfr. and revenue at 1422.9 million Sfr. with a probable deficit of Sfr.800,000. The original budget of the Federal Council estimated a deficit of Sfr.5,000,000.

GOLD TRANSIT THROUGH SWITZERLAND.

In its session of December 29th, 1948, the Federal Council amended its decision of December 7th, 1942, regarding the control of trade in gold. The regulations of 1942, which are still in force, do not allow dealings in gold within Switzerland without a permit from the authorities. In order to check, more efficiently, international black marketing in gold, the new regulation also places gold transits under the control of the Swiss National Bank.

THE AGREEMENT FOR PAYMENTS BETWEEN SWITZERLAND AND ENGLAND.

The agreement for payments between Switzerland and England expires on March 12th, 1949. A British delegation is now in Bern negotiating for a new agreement dealing with goods and payment traffic as well as tourism.

TRADE AGREEMENT WITH SPAIN.

The Swiss-Spanish Trade Agreement of 1945 has been extended until April, 1949, when negotiations will be opened for a new agreement.

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SWISS EMIGRANTS.

Two intending Swiss Emigrants with their wives and one child wishing to settle in New Zealand, are desirous of finding temporary Private Accommodation, in order to obtain a Permit to enter this country - (Boardinghouse addresses are not accepted by the Emigration Office). Anyone able to accommodate them, please write to the Acting-Secretary - Mr. A. Moosberger, 129 Crummer Road, AUCKLAND. W.2.

Our Secretary has left Auckland for a trip to Switzerland and the Committee appointed Mr. A. Moosberger as Acting-Secretary until the end of our financial year. Please address all correspondence to:

Mr. A. Moosberger,  
129 Crummer Road,  
AUCKLAND. W.2.