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NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE OF M. MAX PETITPIERRE PRESIDENT OF SWISS CONFEDERATION.

There is no interruption between the end and the beginning of a year and still it seems as if time is stopping between the past which is over and the future which is to come. New Year's Day, therefore, is a day for good wishes and congratulations - a day which points to the future.

Many of you are united in your family circle, others are on their own, ill, or far away from their people. Still further away are the Swiss abroad sitting by their radios listening to the voice of the Homeland. In my thoughts I am with you all, whether known to me personally or not. I am one of you to whom, for a limited period, a certain task has been given in the interests of the community.

It is usual that as my predecessors have done, I send a message to you - I am hesitant - Throughout the year you hear of politics, you read papers full of news and political opinions. This day should be a day of recollection. I do not like to speak of past, of possible or likely difficulties. There will be time tomorrow to consider them.

Before my eyes I have the whole of Switzerland with its horizons closed by mountains, bordered by the water of their lakes and their rivers, the country to which nature has given such a beautiful face, the country which is small enough that one is able to know it entirely, in all its regions, with all its people and inhabitants who make the ensemble of the nation.

It is not through coincidence that this Country is what it is today. It is the fruit of the long and steady will which formed itself through centuries around the idea - freedom. It did not develop by itself, there were struggles and opposition which could have been deadly because some people were from the town, others from the country, and because not all honoured God in the same way. However, through all the risks freedom finally emerged victoriously and when it was assured for all alike peace resulted.

Today the problem of peace fills our minds with concern. It is everywhere and in every domain. We have learnt that real peace is not just the absence of warfare but that it demands a certain order which is not based on force or power, but on the acceptance of it by all for which it should stand.

Internally there is peace in our country. Favourable conditions have permitted it to develop during the past few years. Independence of the country, guarded by a unanimous effort, a respect for diversities, a fundamental of our unity, the will to reduce opposition by arrangement a form which appeases resentments, finally the eagerness to work and a productive activity throughout assured to everyone, all this has maintained our internal peace, to which we owe that we can look with confidence to the future and prepare for the difficult tasks which we may encounter in the days to come.

There is, however, one condition - it is that we should not consider this internal peace as impregnable for all time, like a

slumber or semi-slumber which would permit us to close our eyes to ourselves and to outside events thus leading us to indolence. So that the friendship uniting us should not be destroyed or compromised we will remain brotherlike and vigilant.

There is also another peace which exists. Although it is outside our influence and does not depend upon our goodwill or our decisions, still we cannot remain indifferent to it. We know that all peoples aspire to it and we also know the obstacles that separate them from it. They are territorial ambitions, abuse of force in their service, the will of the powers of those who dispose of this force and above all, perhaps, fanaticism in all its forms, always dangerous, be it based on race, religion or a political doctrine, fanaticism - the blind power which refuses to see and respect diversities and differences. The common will to establish this peace between nations not forming we can ask ourselves if the future of the world is not being given up to those who are strongest and the most skilled. Such thinking would be fatal, it would mean abdication. A little country like ours, as slight as our actions and influence might be must contribute to the establishment of this peace according to its strength and means. To renounce this would mean the loss of the belief in the future of humanity, to resign ourselves to the idea that man is necessarily the enemy of man because of its difficulties, because the conceptions of collective life are not the same and because social relations are also different. Therefore, in the face of the obscure time before us we should remain animated with the will to continue peaceful collaboration with all independents in judgement, without after-thought and without prejudice, to create the conditions which will permit this peace to be achieved one day.

In the beginning of this year, in its peaceful ground which is the earth of Switzerland, it is towards peace, in which we want all the other peoples to share, that we must offer our hope and our ardent wishes.

THE SWISS INDUSTRIES FAIR IN 1950

The Swiss Industries Fair in Basle announces that large number numbers of applications for exhibition space have been received, in connection with the forthcoming Fair.

The Industries Fair was a great success in 1949, and the 1950 manifestation will certainly not be any less successful, in spite of the distinct change which has taken place in the situation. In face of the present trend of business Swiss industry has been able to acquire an enviable position on foreign markets, and it will make an even greater effort to maintain the high level of its reputation. The forthcoming Industries Fair in Basle, from the 15th to the 25th April next, promises to be of the greatest interest from every point of view.

Representatives of the Fair in foreign countries : Swiss Legations, Consulates and Chambers of Commerce will be very pleased to supply all the information desired on the subject.

ARRIVAL OF SWISS CONSUL AND CHANCELLOR

The Swiss Consul to New Zealand, Mr Henri Blanchard, will arrive in Wellington with Mrs Blanchard and their small daughter, on the Wanganella on February 13th.

Mr Blanchard is accompanied by Mr Oscar Oesch, Chancellor, who is travelling with his wife and their two children, Bernard and Ruth Oesch.