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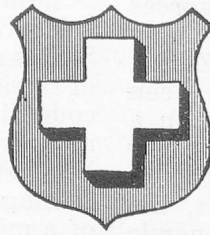
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# HELVETIA

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OF THE



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17th YEAR.

FEBRUARY, 1953.

AUCKLAND.

## NEWS FROM SWITZERLAND

### Swiss Machine Tools in India.

The Government of India has recently opened a new engineering plant near Bombay which was designed and constructed by a well-known Swiss machine tool manufacturer. In this connection about a hundred Swiss factories have been ordered supplies reaching a total value of 22 million Swiss francs. Annexed to the new plant is a technical schooling centre. Some fifty Swiss technicians have been hired already, and a similar number is expected to join the staff in the near future.

### Swissair Adopting Tourist Class in Inter-European Air Travel

From April 1, Switzerland's national airline, Swissair, will supply tourist class travel accommodation on European flights. This will mean a cut in rates of between 12 and 30 per cent., which is compensated for by the fact that the number of seats available is higher, while the types of airplanes used will be the same as those used on first-class trips. Rates for tourist class night flights will be even lower than those for day-time flights. In the future, round trip tickets from Switzerland to London will be valid for a whole year.

### New Developments in Cement Transport

In Switzerland, as in other countries, cement is usually delivered in paper bags. Large orders are carried out in sturdy tin containers placed on special railway cars. For less important orders a new way of transporting cement with minimum loss has now been adopted. The cement is filled into 5½-ton containers, three of which can be loaded on a normal freight car of the Swiss National Railways. From the point of destination, the containers are carried by tractor to the final location. There, they are emptied into tin containers with a crane and then the cement is driven by air pressure into the silos. The process takes only 5 to 8 minutes, the moving of the cement is generally simplified, and almost no losses are sustained.

### Volume of Traffic for the Swiss National Railways, 1952

While freight traffic with the Swiss National Railways has been declining in 1952, passenger traffic, on the contrary, has increased. Two hundred and thirteen million persons have been transported in 1952 as compared with 201 million in 1951. Freight has reached a total of 19 million tons, i.e., two million tons less than in the previous year.

### Traffic at Switzerland's Inter-continental Airports

Arrivals at the Inter-continental Airports of Zurich-Kloten and Geneva-Cointrin were considerably higher in 1952 than in 1951. In Geneva 13,000 regular flights were registered in 1952, 5.6 per cent. more than in the previous year, and the number of passengers carried was 12 per cent. higher.

### Exhibition of Rubber Products in Zurich

An exhibition of Swiss-made rubber products, organised by the International Rubber Office, will be held in Zurich from April 24 until May 6. This exhibition will allow the visitor an opportunity of seeing the most recent developments in the Swiss rubber industry which has made remarkable progress in the past few years. Swiss-made rubber products offer quality and variety, and compare not unfavourably with those of other rubber manufacturers.

### Industrial Relations in Switzerland

Switzerland is now enjoying a period not only of full employment, but of peaceful industrial relations as well. In 1952, there were only eight strikes and lock-outs affecting 47 plants. In 1950, the total number of working days lost because of strikes was 5500 and in 1951 8500, while in 1946 not less than 200,000 days were lost. These statistics show that in recent years employer-employee relationships have greatly improved. By the ordinary procedures of conciliation and arbitration production losses through strikes have been cut down to a minimum.

### A Swiss Law on Economic Defence

The possibility of world-wide conflicts forces all nations to prepare for events which may disrupt normal international relations. Mr. Zipfel, Swiss delegate for works projects, has been asked by the Federal Government to work on a new law for Economic Defence. Whereas the law actually in operation is concerned only with the stockpiling of raw materials and foodstuffs, the new draft covers the whole field of economic defence, including questions of wartime finance, transportation, price control, and farm production. Once in force this law would give the Government extensive additional powers. Of its 26 articles, 19 assign new responsibilities to the Federal Government and 4 extend the authority of the Federal Legislature. These proposed measures are partly of a preparatory character; partly they consist of stand-by powers for national emergencies.

### Tax-free Reserves in Swiss Industry

Tax-free capital reserves set aside by Swiss industry in accordance with existing legal regulations, now amount to 83 million francs. These funds are earmarked for investment during times of depression and 543 companies are participating in the plan. During the last quarter of 1952 20 million francs have been newly registered. The popularity of the scheme is partly due to the fact that a number of individual States, following the example set by the Federal Government, have recently passed corresponding laws providing for the fiscal exoneration of similar works projects reserves. The success of the plan during the first year after going into operation is considered highly encouraging.

### Passenger Traffic in Swiss Internal Navigation, 1952

Over 7.6 million passengers have been transported on the Swiss lakes navigation system in 1952. The Vierwaldstatter Lake, with over 2 million visitors, drew most of the traffic, while the Lake of Geneva and the Lake of Lugano had each over one million passengers. Next in line were the Lake of Zurich, the Lake of Thun, the Rhine River between Constance and Schaffhausen, the Lakes of Brienz, Neuchatel and Morat, the Lakes of Bienne, Constance and Zug, and, finally, the Greifensee Lake and the Lake of Hallwyl. Compared with 1950, the total number of passengers was approximately 400,000 higher. In fact it has been exceeded only three times during the past fifty years, notably in 1947 and 1949, when passenger traffic reached a level of more than eight million people.

### 1952 a Good Year for the Swiss Tourist Trade.

In 1952 total guest nights passed in Swiss hotels were 21,700,000. In this total, foreign guests participate with 9.7 million nights.

### The Re-export of Strategic Supplies to Eastern Countries

There has been some talk recently, in the United States and in other countries, about Swiss exports of strategic materials and supplies to eastern countries. It will be recalled that for more than a year an agreement has existed and still exists between Switzerland and the United States affecting the re-export of American-made goods of a military character. As the Swiss see it, this gentlemen's agreement has worked successfully in the past. A system of controls, autonomously adopted and applied by the Swiss authorities, effectually checks all tentatives to circumvent existing regulations, which, incidentally, are fully compatible with the traditional Swiss policy of neutrality. The products directly involved are those of American origin only, the normal Swiss trade with the eastern countries is in no way affected by these regulations.

## THE LANGUAGES OF SWITZERLAND

By G. THURER.

Human speech means communication, yet foolish men have turned language into a cause of, or pretext for strife. This aberration began when the nation became a god. In a number of countries, language was regarded as the outstanding characteristic of the nation and its strongest bond of union. It was at that time that this political doctrine was formulated: "All human beings speaking the same language belong to the same vital community and must be united in one country." It was followed by a second: "Anyone not speaking that language must leave the country or change his native tongue." Since the power State as a rule aims at keeping its people in the country, it favoured the change of language on the part of those not speaking the national tongue. With that, a tension was set up between the unified language of the country and the linguistic minorities, who were loath to abandon the language of their fathers. At times this tension grew into a conflict which might have led to civil wars. Those in power therefore declared that the existence of other languages was a threat to the safety of the State; they must be suppressed at whatever cost. It was in particular the totalitarian State, in which the individual was a mere atom, which used force in standardising the national language. The more uniform each State became with regard to its language, the more that language was idolised by order of the State, while the languages of neighbouring countries, often themselves those of the suppressed minorities, were treated as heresies. Thus the tension spread to foreign policy. Languages led to wars, and the struggle for bilingual regions broke out. Such, in brief outline, is the history of Europe in the age of nationalism. The word "nation," however, points, not to