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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

GENEVA INTERNATIONAL AUTOMOBILE SALON.

M. Schulthess, President of the Swiss Confederation, opened the 10th Geneva International Automobile Salon, on which occasion he made a speech.

M. Schulthess remarked that unfortunately the majority of the population of Switzerland are not aware of the seriousness of the position. "There is," he said, "still a widespread belief, that the actual crisis, is only of short duration, after which, conditions will again take their normal course." "I can see no short cut to regain prosperity," he continued, "we shall have to make arrangements to hold out, and all classes will have to make heavy sacrifices, if we intend to emerge victoriously from this international economic depression.

He concluded his address with the following words:

"Our position is serious, but we shall overcome the adverse conditions if every citizen is doing his duty, putting the interest of the whole community above his personal one. Switzerland has still great material reserves, but still higher I estimate and value the moral reserve, the will, the determination of our people, to maintain and safeguard the inheritance which former generations have handed us down, and I make a fervent appeal to our people to put their back to the wheel, and to do their utmost to fight hard to regain once again, prosperity and economic peace.

CONSUL ALEXANDER BALTIS.

The news of the death of M. Alexander Baltis, Swiss Consul in Abo (Finland), will come as a sad surprise to many, who have come in touch with this charming representative of our country. Consul Baltis was born at Aadorf (Thurgau) and spent his youth at Munich, where he started in business; later he established his own establishment at the University town of Abo. When the Great War broke out, he was entrusted by the Swiss Government to look after the interests of the residing Swiss. During the war and throughout the revolution, he worked untrudgingly in the interest of our country, and thousands of Swiss who were in dire distress received help from him; as a matter of fact he spent almost his whole fortune in mitigating the distress of his countrymen. After the separation of Finland from Russia, he received an offer to represent Switzerland at the Finnish capital Helsingfors, but he could not make up his mind to leave the town of Abo which had been dear to him. Consul Baltis has served his country well, and he will be remembered by many to whom he has rendered great services.

UNE CAUSE CELEBRE.

The case Nicole and consorts has been fixed for the 8th of May; nearly 450 witnesses will be called by the prosecution and the defence, the duration of the case will take over a month. The seat of the tribunal will be the Salle de Réformation at Geneva.

SWISS SKI-ING TRIUMPH.

The Arlberg-Kandahar meeting opened at Mürren last week. There were seventy-seven starters, including many of the most famous skiracers in Europe.

Weather and snow conditions were excellent, but owing to the mild winter the shorter Schiltgrat-Kandahar finish course had to be used instead of the traditional Schiltgrat-Gimmelwald.

The race was a great triumph for the Swiss. Walter Prager, the Swiss champion, was first in 2 minutes 18 seconds. He was followed by Heinz von Allmen and Graf, both of Wengen and Steuri, of Scheidegg.

The fifth man was Lantschner (Austria). Peter Lunn only arrived forty-eight hours before the

race, and was tenth in 2 minutes 40 seconds. It was a fine performance, as he had less than three weeks skiing earlier in the winter.

Tschol, 21st, was the best from Arlberg. MacLaren, 15th, ran well. Munro was 32nd, Mackintosh, 33rd, Lewns, 38th, Mitchell (Austria), 48th; and Tommasi, the best Italian, 53rd.

The Ladies' Race started 400 feet above the Dogger Rock. The winner was Nini Zogg (Switzerland), who beat Miss Mackinnon by half a second, and Miss Kessler by one second. The fifth was Mrs. Butler, and the 6th, Mrs. Boughton Leigh.

SWISS RAYON INDUSTRY.

Swiss rayon manufacturers are petitioning for further State protection, the quota restrictions introduced last October having completely failed in their purpose. The Federal authorities are stated to be now giving their careful consideration to new safeguarding measures.

In spite of certain optimistic forecasts at the beginning of last year no improvement took place in this industry in 1932; production, inland sales, imports and exports all showed a decrease as compared with 1931. Imports diminished by 0.43 per cent. in weight and by 26.83 per cent. in value, the figures being 2,450 tons, as against 2,461 tons, and 15,400,000f., as compared with 21,100,000f. The marked decline in value is indicative of the cuts in price introduced by foreign competitors to the detriment of Swiss trade, the dumping thus achieved having brought down the price of rayon products in Switzerland to the lowest figure quoted on the world market.

Exports were handicapped by a number of difficulties, the chief being high Customs tariffs, foreign exchange restrictions, depreciation in currency, diminished purchasing capacity, and general trade depression. In order to be able to compete on foreign markets Swiss manufacturers were forced to make drastic cuts in their prices. Yet exports sank by about 19 per cent. in weight and 39.6 per cent. in value in comparison with 1931, the figures being respectively 3,652 tons, as against 4,511 tons, and 22,700,000f., as compared with 37,600,000f. The principal purchasing countries were Germany, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and Austria. As a result of the decline in exports production had to be decreased, and three of the remaining Swiss factories — two were closed some time ago — were forced to reduce their output and the number of hands employed by about 20 per cent.

FURTHER SWISS IMPORT RESTRICTIONS.

New import restrictions have been decreed by the Federal authorities which are of considerable importance to Anglo-Swiss trade. In addition to cotton fabrics they also affect heavy woollen tissues, of which Great Britain exports large quantities to Switzerland (e.g., in 1931, Switzerland purchased these goods from the United Kingdom to the value of 6,100,000f. out of a total import valued at 19,300,000f.)

The new restrictive measures, which become operative as from March 1, 1933, affect the following articles:—

Tariff item 197, footwear of felt, without leather soles; 198, rubber footwear; 368, cotton fabrics, woven of dyed yarn, other than plain or twilled; 370, cotton fabrics, figures, striped, checked, &c., other than unbleached; 471, woollen tissues, unbleached, of yarn, of carded wool; 474, woollen tissues, bleached, dyed, printed, woven of dyed yarn, weighing more than 300 grammes per square metre; 914g, tractors without bodywork, not otherwise specified.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

A policeman who assaulted a prisoner in the cell, has been fined 50f. and transferred; he was also warned that should such an offence occur again, instant dismissal would follow.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE

SATURDAY, MARCH 25th

for the

DINNER AND DANCE

at the

MAY FAIR HOTEL, Berkeley Square, W.1.

A credit of 2,133,000f. has been voted for the extension of the Mythenquais and the Alfred Escher avenue.

The sisters Schöllhorn in Winterthur have bequeathed an amount of 10,000f. to a Fund for the unemployed, in remembrance of their late parents.

The 1933 International Zionist Congress will take place in August at Zurich.

BERNE.

The students of the Cantonal Technical School in Burgdorf have gone on strike; they demand an entire re-organisation of the curriculum, and a change in the teaching staff. Negotiations between the Management, the cantonal government and the students have commenced; in the meantime the institution remains closed.

The wellknown Hotel "Savoy" at Interlaken, has been sold for 600,000f. to a limited company. The share capital is 80,000f., and Chairman of the board is M. von Allmen Hotelier at Lauterbrunnen.

LUCERNE.

M. Jean Haefelin, General-Manager of the Cantonal Bank in Lucerne has died at the age of 68. M. Haefelin, who enjoyed a great reputation in Swiss Banking Circles, has been at the head of the Cantonal Bank since 1908.

Dr. J. Zimmerli, Mayor of the town of Lucerne, has celebrated his 70th birthday anniversary, he has held this position since 1919 with great distinction. Dr. Zimmerli entered Parliament (National Council) some fifteen years ago.

GENEVA.

The Non-commission Officers' Association is holding their annual re'union at Geneva from the 14th - 17th of July. The Federal Council has granted a credit of 5,000f. towards the expenses.

BASEL.

Rowdy scenes were witnessed during a sitting of the Grand Council, when the communist member Bidenmann repeatedly interrupted the proceedings, by making insulting remarks concerning a friendly power. After having been repeatedly called to order by the President, he persisted in his attacks, and finally was suspended. As a protest the communist members of the Council left the Hall in a body.

AARGAU.

The Electric Power Station at Laufenburg announces again the distribution of a 10 per cent. dividend as for some years past.

ST. GALLEN.

The cantonal government consisting of seven members (Ruckstuhl, Mäder, Maechler, Baumgartner, Kobelt, Grünenfelder and Keel) have been confirmed for a new term of office. 3 members belong to the conservative party, 3 members to the liberal- and one member to the socialist party.

The serious disaster which took place last October, at St. Margrethen, costing the life of seven people, when the woodwork of the roof of the "Kühlhaus Handels A.G." suddenly collapsed, had its sequel before the District Tribunal Untertenthal. The head of the above mentioned concern, M. B. Elzas was charged with negligence, he was however, acquitted, but will have to bear the costs of the action amounting to 1355f.

FOOTBALL.

12th March, 1933.

INTERNATIONALS.

in Zurich:

Switzerland3 Belgium3

in Stuttgart:

South Germany0 Switzerland B0

FIRST LEAGUE.

Etoile Ch. de F.0 Montreux3

We had met Belgium before on 5 occasions, drawing once and losing the other four. To register the first victory was therefore somewhat overdue, and without being too optimistic, might this time have been expected.

A wonderful crowd of over 21,000 spectators turned up, wonderful as regards numbers, very much less wonderful as regards sportsmanship!

Switzerland played the team which won in Amsterdam: Belgium lined up: Van den Berghe; De Deken, Hoydonckx; Van Ingelghem, Hellemaens, Claessens; Versyp, Voorhoof, Desmedt, Van Beeck, Van den Eynde. Referee: S. F. Rous (England).

In the fifth minute Desmedt scored for Belgium and Nam directly afterwards equalised from a v. Känel centre, 1:1. Belgium undoubtedly were the better side in this half. The Swiss halfbacks were very much at fault, playing so far back as to force Weiler and Minelli often to play in front of them.

After the interval Trello scored in the fifth minute, equalised directly afterwards by Voorhoof, 2:2. Switzerland was now putting more zest into the game and in the 13th minute Trello made the score 3:2. And then Belgium again gained the upper hand. Our halves find no time for their forwards, yet all goes well until in the last minute. Voorhoof, in possession, runs towards goal, is fouled just outside the penalty area, recovers and goes on. Just inside the area he has his legs kicked from under him by Weiler: Penalty! That the crowd stormed is perhaps only human. That one of the linesmen (Swiss of course) should run up to the Referee to tell him, it happened on the line and not inside the area, is — well, just silly. Then, according to the crowd and the clock on the ground, the game should have been just ended. But the referee had added 2 minutes for time lost during stoppages for injuries. Now do you see why the F.A. will not allow such clocks on English football grounds? Anyhow, penalty was given and penalty it was. Voorhoof took the kick, Séchehaye blocked the ball, Voorhoof regained possession and scored. A sensational ending! And would you believe it, the public invaded the field and the referee had to be protected by players and officials from the mob. And Rous at that, who deservedly enjoys the highest reputation all over the Continent. He said afterwards that, for the spectators to take an interest in the game was something beautiful and necessary, but that such a scene would have been impossible in England. I am sure we all agree with him.

Voorhoof, the Belgian inside right was the best man on the field. Trello and v. Känel alone of our forwards lived up to their reputations. The halves disappointed: Weiler and Minelli good and Séchehaye sound.

M.G.

EMPLOI DE LA TROUPE LORS DES EVENEMENTS DU 9 NOVEMBRE 1932 A GENEVE.

Exposé du Département militaire fédéral, sur la base de l'enquête de la justice militaire.

(Continuation).

Civil P. "J'ai parfaitement vu 3 éclairs de coups de feu partant du toit d'une maison."

Plus de vingt autres témoins (soldats et civils) ont déposé dans le même sens.

Le tir de la troupe a été précédé en premier lieu de sommations verbales, les officiers criant à la foule: "Retirez-vous ou nous tirons." Ces sommations ont été entendues des premiers rangs en tout cas des manifestants; elles ont, en effet, été accueillies par un redoublement de luées et de coups de sifflet. Il est certain, par contre, qu'à cause du vacarme qui régnait sur la place, les civils qui n'étaient pas à proximité immédiate de la troupe n'ont pas pu entendre ces sommations. Le danger devenant de plus en plus grave, les officiers firent donner à deux reprises par les deux trompettes le signal de "garde à vous." De l'avis des témoins civils énumérés ci-après, il s'est écoulé entre ces sommations et l'ordre de tirer un temps suffisant pour permettre aux manifestants sinon de quitter la place, en tout cas de marquer un mouvement d'arrêt ou de recul qui aurait rendu le tir inutile:

M. 24, M. 26, H. 69, H. 89, G. 116, V. 118, R. 119, R. 135, P. 136, L. 139, E. blessé 156, B. blessé 158, G. blessé 161, D. blessé 165, S. blessé 167, M. blessé 180, G. 186, B. 189, G. 207, M. 217, H. 219, B. 222, B. 242.

L'ordre de tirer fut donné en ces termes: "Un coup, visez bas, feu!" Cet ordre ne fut entendu que par les soldats qui se trouvaient à proximité immédiate du Cdt. Cp. Ils ouvrirent aussitôt le feu (21 h. 34). Lorsque les autres soldats et un fusilier-mitrailleur entendirent tirer, ils firent feu à leur tour. Les hommes du rang d'arrière forcèrent ceux du premier rang à se mettre à genou, afin de pouvoir tirer aussi. Chacun de ces soldats avait le sentiment de défendre sa peau. Malgré les premiers coups de feu, les soldats continuèrent à être serrés de près par les manifestants. C'est ce qui explique qu'il y eut plus d'un coup par tireur et que le fusilier-mitrailleur tira, d'abord coup par coup, puis en séries, ses 30 cartouches.

Par ailleurs, il convient de dire qu'il n'y avait pas de mitrailleuses lourdes sur la place et que, des cinq fusils-mitrailleurs de la Cp. I, un seul a tiré.

De l'avis de tous les témoins, le feu dura au maximum 10 à 15 secondes. Ce n'es qu'en constatant qu'il y avait des morts et des blessés que la foule, enfin, se retira. L'ordre de "Halte" fut donné dès que les officiers constatèrent le premier mouvement de recul de la foule. Le feu cessa aussitôt.

D'après le premier rapport de munitions, il avait été indiqué que la troupe avait tiré 112 cartouches de fusil, 15 cartouches de pistolet et 30 cartouches de fusil-mitrailleur. Ces deux derniers chiffres sont exacts. Par contre, il a été tiré moins de 112 cartouches de fusil; en effet, le contrôle de munitions effectué immédiatement au retour de la Cp. I en caserne, a été basé sur la différence entre le nombre des cartouches délivrées et celui des cartouches restituées par les hommes au sergent-major. Or, quelques cartouches avaient été prises à des soldats par des manifestants au Bd. du Pont d'Arve. Ce qui est certain, c'est que les recrues, conformément aux ordres reçus sur la place d'exercice, avaient mis dans leurs poches les douilles des cartouches tirées. Il a été rapporté en caserne exactement 102 douilles de cartouches, indépendamment des 30 douilles du FM.

13 personnes furent tuées sur le coup ou décédèrent les jours suivants.

39 personnes blessées furent hospitalisées à l'Hôpital cantonal.

De plus, un certain nombre de personnes civiles se sont fait soigner, soit à la policlinique, soit par des médecins privés; le nombre de ces personnes est inconnu.

* * *

Ce n'est qu'après le tir de la Cp. I que la Cp. III, qui avait été alarmée vers 21 h. 25 pour lui porter secours, arriva sur la Place du Palais des Expositions. Ce retard a été causé par trois faits presque simultanés qui ont troublé le rassemblement de cette Cp., au Quai Charles Page:

a) des coups de feu, environ six, ont été tirés d'une maison voisine sur la troupe, qui n'a pas été atteinte, mais a dû se mettre à l'abri;

b) une automobile est venue, pour des raisons que les enquêtes en cours élucideront, s'arrêter de travers au milieu de la Cp. Cette manœuvre a eu pour effet que les deux dernières sections n'ont pas vu la Cp. partir (il faisait très sombre à cet endroit) et ne se sont pas rendues au secours de la Cp. I;

c) un motocycliste s'est jeté par derrière dans la queue de la colonne, blessant un officier, un caporal et deux recrues; le caporal et une des recrues ont eu chacun une jambe cassée, l'autre recrue une fracture de la cheville.

* * *

On a reproché aux officiers d'avoir fait tirer à balles par leurs hommes, prétendant que la troupe aurait dû se défendre, soit par une charge à la baïonnette, soit par un tir à blanc.

Certains hommes avaient mis la baïonnette au canon (section de tête). Si les officiers n'ont pas donné l'ordre à toute la troupe d'en faire autant et n'ont pas essayé d'une charge à la baïonnette, c'est qu'ils avaient observé que les recrues qui, au Bd. du Pont d'Arve avaient mis leur baïonnette, avaient été plus facilement désarmées que d'autres dans une foule aussi compacte et où la liberté de mouvement n'existait pas.

Quant au tir à blanc, il est formellement interdit à la troupe d'avoir sur elle à la fois des chargeurs à blanc et des chargeurs à balles, ceci pour éviter toute possibilité de confusion et le danger qui en résulte. D'ailleurs, si les recrues avaient eu une double munition, elles n'auraient pas eu le temps, après quelques coups tirés à blanc, de remplacer cette munition par de la munition à balles. En effet, comme cela a été relevé plus haut, les manifestants, croyant qu'on tirait à blanc, ont continué à avancer contre les soldats même après les premiers coups de feu. Il paraît donc certain que si les armes n'avaient pas été chargées à balles, les recrues auraient été massacrées par la foule, excitée par les meneurs.

* * *

Le colonel Lederrey demanda, sitôt après ces événements, au Département militaire fédéral qu'une enquête soit faite sur les conditions dans lesquelles la troupe avait été appelée à intervenir et à tirer. Le major Krafft, auditeur de la Ire division, fut désigné comme juge d'instruction ad hoc.

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