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# The Swiss Observer

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## HOME NEWS

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### FEDERAL.

#### RESIGNATION OF TWO MILITARY CHIEFS.

Colonel of division, von Salis, since 1927 commander of the Gotthard Fortress, has informed the Federal Council that he wishes to retire from his post at the end of this year.

Colonel von Salis, was born at Jenins, and is 61 years of age, he entered the administration of fortresses in 1896 and later on was a member of the Federal Instruction Corps. Previous to his nomination as commander of the St. Gotthard Fortress he was for many years chief of Staff of Fortress units.—

Colonel of division G. Bridel has also tendered his resignation to the Federal Council to take effect at the end of the current year.

Colonel G. Bridel was born in 1872 and in 1919 he was promoted to "Waffenchef" of the artillery, his advancement to colonel of division occurred in 1924; he was for many years a member of the Instruction Corps, he was in turn commander of the Artillery regiment 1, the Artillery Brigade 1, Infantry brigade 4 and chief of staff of the 1st division.

Both these officers have rendered great services to our army, their resignations are due to the fact that they wish to make room for younger men.

#### COLONEL A SCHÜE.

The death is reported of Colonel of division A. Schüe, "Waffenchef" of the cavalry since 1926. Colonel Schüe was born in 1874 in Disentis and entered the Instruction Corps in 1904. He commanded in turn the cavalry regiment 4 and the cavalry brigade 2. He also held the post of chief of staff of the 5th division. He was promoted to colonel of division in 1930.

#### PROFESSOR BARTH SUSPENDED.

Professor Karl Barth has been suspended from his office of Professor of Evangelical Theology at the University of Bonn, and disciplinary proceedings are being taken against him. The suspension is stated to have been ordered by Dr. Rust, the Minister of Education, because Professor Barth has refused to take the oath to the Führer and Chancellor prescribed for all State officials by the law of August 20th. The Chair of Theology which he has occupied is a State post.

Professor Barth, who was born in Switzerland and spent many years there as a pastor in the Reformed Church, is the leading theologian in Germany and has a world-wide influence. He became Professor of Theology at Göttingen in 1921 and at Münster in 1925. Last year he took up a line in opposition to the "German Christian" movement in a pamphlet, "Theologische Existenz Heute." He became associated with the Oppositon Pastors' Emergency League and the Confessional Community which developed out of it. He made an influential contribution to the drafting of the Theological Declaration of the Reich Confessional Synod at Barmen.

Professor Barth first learned of the steps ordered against him when the official announcement was issued. He says he did not refuse to take the official oath. But when requested to do so some three weeks ago he asked, as a personal matter of conscience, whether he might use a slight variation of his own. The prescribed officials' oath runs:—"I swear to be loyal and obedient to the Leader of the German Reich and people, to observe the laws, and to fulfil the duties of my office conscientiously, so help me God." The Professor wished to insert the reservation, "in so far as I can take responsibility as an Evangelical Christian." Dr. Rust refused the request.

Professor Barth, after assuming his academic post in Germany, became a naturalized German, but at the same time retained his Swiss citizenship.

#### NAZI ARMS SMUGGLING.

Six terrorists are on trial at St. Gall charged with smuggling explosives through Swiss territory for the supply of Austrian Nazis.

Three of the men were caught in the act, but the whereabouts of the other three is unknown.

The charge against them recounts that Austrian Nazis who had taken refuge in Germany undertook, under the direction of the Austrian section of the German National Socialist Party at Munich to bring about revolution in Austria.

In July last, shortly before the assassination of Dr. Dollfuss, their representative with the Austrian Legion at Lindau, was ordered to pass explosives through Switzerland to be used for terrorist acts in Austria.

On July 20th they took a consignment of explosives across Lake Constance, but were surprised by the police.

The accused are liable to imprisonment up to five years and expulsion from Swiss territory.

#### SWISS EXPORT PLANS.

A number of leading Swiss manufacturers in the machinery and electrical industries have now formed an export organisation to foster trade in the Near East. The necessary capital is being collected, and before long offices and showrooms will be opened in Palestine for the sale of Swiss products. The head of this organisation in Palestine will receive a fixed salary, and, in addition, a commission on the sales.

In Syria, a firm of importers has been formed to handle goods from Switzerland. It is understood that the "Swiss Society for the Promotion of Trade" is behind these schemes.

#### SKIING IN TOWN.

Thames House, already unique in having a cricket school, a golf school, and the biggest rackets club in the world within its walls, has now gone one better. For the next six weeks there will be in its sub-basement a skiing school under the direction of M. Bordini, the Swiss skiing school director from Château d'Œx.

The school is primarily intended for those who are going to Switzerland, and within little more than a stone's throw of the Houses of Parliament, on an artificial snow-clad mountain made of matting and a mixture that looks uncommonly like sugar, would-be winter sportsmen can learn the art of mastering the awkward-looking foot-wear which skiing demands.

#### 1 MILLION POUNDS FOR SWISS WARPLANES.

Plans for the entire reorganisation of the Swiss Air Force are now under consideration by the Federal military authorities.

The amount to be devoted to air armaments in the near future has not yet been revealed, but is believed to be about £1,000,000. The expenditure of so large a sum by such a small country shows the importance attached by the authorities to this question.

#### FRENCH UNIVERSITY HONOURS SWISS PROFESSOR.

The University of Strasbourg has conferred the degree of *doctor honoris causa* upon Professor Fritz Fleiner of the University of Zurich.

#### FINANCIAL TROUBLES OF THE CANTON OF GENEVA.

The coffers of the canton of Geneva are so low that the Socialist local government has not been able to pay its 2,680 officials their salaries this month.

Six members, out of seven of the Geneva States Council were received in Berne by M. Pilet-Golaz, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillors Minger and Meyer in order to discuss the financial position.

The Federal Council has put before the delegation the conditions under which they would be willing to come to the aid of the canton of Geneva, these conditions will be discussed by the Geneva Government and a reply will be given shortly.

#### FEDERAL COUNCILLOR BAUMANN 60 YEARS OLD.

Federal Councillor, Dr. Baumann has celebrated his 60th birthday anniversary on Tuesday last. Federal Councillor Baumann entered the government on the 22nd of March this year, in succession to Dr. Häberlin.

#### SWISS BANK IN DIFFICULTY.

The withdrawals of money by customers of the Bank Guyerzeller A. G., in Zurich, (share capital 3 million francs) amount to about three million francs, or 30% above the deposits of clients on 31st December 1933. The management has therefore decided, in order to safeguard the interest of their creditors, to suspend payment for the next four months, it is hoped that in the meantime a way out of the difficulties can be found.

#### LOCAL.

##### ZURICH.

Dr. Ch. Beyel, for 50 years a lecturer at the Federal Technical University at Zurich has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

##### BERNE.

Colonel Ed. Muller, who was for many years head of "Kriegstechnischen Abteilung" of the Federal Military Dept., has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

\* \* \*

M. Werner Krebs, who was Secretary of the "Schweizerischen Gewerbeverbandes" from 1885-1924 has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary.

\* \* \*

A man, brandishing a revolver, forced the Station Master of Zäziwil to hand him over the days takings, amounting to some 130 frs., after his departure the police was put on his track and he was later on arrested at Basle. The gangster, Eugen Burkart from Fraubrunnen was only recently discharged from prison, where he had spent 4 years for a similar offence.

\* \* \*

A fire which broke out at the Arsenal in Berne, caused damages amounting to half a million francs.

\* \* \*

M. Alois Muri, head of the Telephone and Telegraph Dept. of the Federal Post Office has received the degree of *doctor honoris causa* of the Technical University at Zurich.

\* \* \*

National Councillor, Dr. Pfister has met with an accident; on crossing the road he was run over by a motor car, and had to be taken to a nursing home.

\* \* \*

##### LUCERNE.

The "Kur and Sporthotel" Rigi-First will be opened on the 15th of December for the Winter season. M. R. Keller, proprietor of the "Vitznauerhof" in Vitznau has been appointed Manager.

##### BASLE.

Professor, Dr. Paul Häberlin has been elected rector of the University of Basle for the year 1935.

##### GENEVA.

The States Council has appointed Dr. Pierre Besson, head surgeon of the cantonal hospital, Professor of the University of Geneva.

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The population of the canton of Geneva numbers at present 177,497 inhabitants or 434 less than at the same period in 1933. The town of Geneva has 147,107 inhabitants.

##### THURGAU.

On the occasion of a meeting of the Grand Council, the thanks of the people of the canton of Thurgau, were expressed to the late Federal Councillor Dr. Häberlin for the services he had rendered to the country as a member of the Federal Government.

##### SCHAFFHAUSEN.

M. C. Waldvogel, who was for 54 years a school teacher at Neuhausen, has died at the age of 81. The deceased was for many years a conductor of the two Choral Societies in Neuhausen.

##### NIDWALDEN.

The death is reported from Buochs of M. Theodor Fuchs, late President of the cantonal Tribunal. M. Fuchs reached the rank of lieutenant-colonel in the army.

##### GRISON.

M. Beners, Manager of the Rhätische Railway, has intimated that he wishes to retire from his post after the termination of his agreement in 1936.