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The Swiss Observer

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HOME NEWS

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FEDERAL.

SWISS GOVERNMENT AND SANCTIONS.

The Federal Council has held a meeting to discuss the position should Switzerland have to participate in sanctions; M. Motta, Foreign Minister, who is head of the Swiss Delegation in Geneva has acquainted his colleagues of the *démarches* of the League Council, he also mentioned that he has discussed the legal aspect of the sanction question as far as Switzerland was concerned with Professors Max Huber and Walter Burkhardt, both authorities in International law, in the presence of Minister de Stontz, M. Bonna and Dr. Gorgé from the Political Dept; no decision was taken.

M. SCHUPBACH VERSUS M. DUTTWILER.

M. Schupbach, President of the National Council has asked the Federal Council, to instruct the State Attorney to prosecute M. Duttweiler, Director of the "Migros" and the "Hotel Plan" for defamation. The latter had addressed a letter to M. Schupbach making certain allegations about the way he was carrying out the duties of his high office.

DIPLOMATIC CHANGES.

Monsieur Giovanni Marchi, late Italian Minister in Berne has paid his farewell visit at the Federal Palais, he has been transferred to Chile. His successor is expected to take up his post in a few days.

NEW LEGATION BUILDING IN ANGORA.

The Swiss Government has acquired a plot of land in Angora in order to erect a new Legation building in which the Minister as well as the Chancery will be housed.

M. MUSY TO ENTER PARLIAMENT.

M. Musy, late Federal Councillor will be a candidate at the forthcoming Parliamentary elections.

HEAVY SNOW FALLS IN SWITZERLAND.

Snow has fallen in abundance down to 5,000 ft. level in Switzerland, and nearly all the Alpine passes are blocked by snow.

A NEW BILL.

A Bill has been passed by the Swiss National Council obliging limited companies with a capital of more than 500,000 Swiss francs or permanently employing twenty or more persons to create a crisis fund with the object, during periods of curtailed operations, of preventing dismissals of employees as far as possible or of attenuating the consequences of such dismissals. The constitution of this crisis fund is obligatory when a dividend of at least 5% is distributed after reserves have been set aside, and in these cases a tenth of the net profit remaining after such allocations must be paid into the crisis fund.

ZURICH LOAN.

The City of Zurich recently offered for public subscription a Four and a Half per Cent. Six-year Loan of Sw. Frs. 10,000,000 (equals £666,000 at the current rate) at 98½ per cent. In the announcement of the closing of the lists, it is stated that only about half of the amount has been subscribed for.

The public has apparently not regarded the loan as sufficiently attractive, in spite of the high rate of interest offered. There are indications that the poor success of the issue is due to the fact that the Left wing majority of the present City Council does not inspire confidence among Swiss investors.

SWISS FEDERAL RAILWAY FACTS AND FIGURES.

In connection with the meeting of the Central European Railway Association held at Lugano on September 11th and 12th, some interesting facts concerning the Swiss Federal Railways were given in the official journal of that body. For example, for every 100 km. of line

there are 5.64 km. in tunnels or covered ways, 25.4 km. on the level, 51.4 km. on gradients up to 1.0 per cent., 25 km. on gradients from 1.0 to 2.5 per cent., and 3.1 km. above that figure. There are 162.5 km. of tunnels on the system, although the German State Railway, 18.7 times as large, has only 0.42 per cent. of its routes in tunnel. Some 72.6 per cent. of the Swiss Federal lines are electrified and their initial cost is now taken as about 1,068,000 francs per km., including power stations. Switzerland has 14.6 km. of route to every 100 sq. km. of country and 14.7 km. per 10,000 inhabitants. In every 100 train km. 71.8 are passenger, 28.2 goods. For every km. of route in 1933 there were 26 passenger and 12 goods trains run daily. 39,200 persons and 4,900 tonnes of freight were conveyed per kilometre in that year, a high level of efficiency. Last year 3,013 km. were being worked by the Federal administration. Nearly 588 million kilowatt-hours of electric energy were supplied to it, from its own or outside power stations, of which 71.2 million, or 12.1 per cent., were absorbed by transmission and other losses.

SLOW PROGRESS WITH NEW LEAGUE BUILDING.

The difficulties which stand in the way of the immediate completion of the new League of Nations building at Geneva were revealed in a meeting of the Fourth Committee of the League Assembly last week. The Dutch delegate remarked that the library looked like "the day after an earthquake," and it was explained that by the depreciation on exchange in the value of the Rockefeller gift of \$2,000,000 (£400,000) for the building and equipment of the library on the east wing, it had been decided to leave the large rooms on the first floor incomplete for the present. An additional 100,000 Swiss francs (£4,000 at par) would be necessary to complete the library, and as the League was proceeding with prudence this would not be attempted during the next year.

The great Assembly Hall, which will probably be the biggest hall in the world devoted to political procedure, is also behind schedule.

The Secretary-General, M. Avenol, said that the differences of opinion between the panel of five architects which was set up three or four years ago had recently been intensified by the death of the president of the panel and by the fact that the work was in the hands of a number of different enterprises. To artistic differences of opinion, said M. Avenol, had been added acute personal difficulties, and it was hard to say which concerned them most — the question of their own rights or the work they were supposed to be carrying out. Although seven years had elapsed since the work began he had not yet been furnished with a feasible scheme for the internal arrangements and the fittings of the Assembly Hall.

CITY SWISS CLUB.

PLEASE RESERVE

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd

for the

ANNUAL BANQUET AND BALL

at the

Grosvenor House, Park Lane, W.1.

Admission by ticket only, obtainable from

Members of the Committee.

The Swiss Legation wish to notify all Swiss citizens resident within this Consular district that since January 1st, 1934, a new form of passport has been in use. Consequently all the old passports (green covers) will cease to be valid after December 31st, 1935.

Such old passports (green covers) as are still valid for three months or more on December 31st, 1935, will however be exchanged free of charge for a new passport.

For the issue of a new passport it is necessary to remit to the Legation two recent full-face photographs (without a hat and NOT Photomaton), as well as the old passport and the Swiss Registration Card.

Passports can be issued for periods of 1, 3 or 5 years.

Holders of old passports (green covers) are advised to apply for their passports before December 31st, 1935.

BANK FOR INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENTS.

The situation of the Bank for International Settlements as at September 30th, 1935, shows an increase in the total balance of 6,100,000 to 660,873,456 Swiss francs.

On the liability side sight deposits in gold increased by 2,900,000f. to 21,700,000f. and short term and sight deposits (in various currencies) by 1,400,000f. to 153,500,000f. In the item long term commitments the annuity trust account deposits increased by 400,000f. to 154,811,250f.

On the asset side all items show a corresponding increase with the exception of cash, which decreased by 400,000f. to 2,600,000f. Gold in bars increased by 1,000,000f. to 25,400,000f. Sight-funds at interest by 1,400,000f. to 17,000,000f. Rediscountable bills and acceptances by 500,000f. to 342,100,000f. Time funds at interest by 200,000f. to 42,600,000f. Sundry bills and investments by 3,300,000f. to 220,200,000f. Other assets by 200,000f. to 10,800,000f.

PROHIBITION OF SWISS PAPER.

The Catholic "Neuste Nachrichten" of Zurich has been banned in Germany for a period which has not been specified. No reason for this action has been given by the authorities. The "Neuste Nachrichten," however, which has a considerable circulation in Zurich, has always protested energetically against the persecution of the German Catholics. It was omitted, apparently in error, from the list of prohibited journals, but it now joins the company of nearly all the Swiss papers.

SWISS NATIONAL BANK.

The return of the Swiss National Bank shows that on October 7 the gold reserves stood at 1,375,000,000f. an increase of 3,000,000f. over the previous week, while the bank-note circulation was reduced by 20,000,000f. to 1,296,000,000f. On October 7th the gold reserve represented 85.71 per cent. of all the engagements of the bank.

GERMANY EXPELS PROF. BARTH.

Prof. Karl Barth, the well-known Swiss theologian, was arrested at Barmen on Tuesday and on Wednesday was expelled from Germany.

Prof. Barth was removed from his post at Bonn University because he refused to take the oath of allegiance to Hitler. He then accepted a chair at a Swiss University.

He came to Barmen to deliver lectures at the invitation of the Confessional Movement.

LOCAL.

ZURICH.

M. G. Meyer, Senior partner in the well-known Publishing firm G. Meyer (Zurich and Geneva) has celebrated his 80th birthday anniversary. M. Meyer is the publisher of the "Schweizer Familien-Wochenblatt;" the "Schweizer Frauen und Modeblatt;" the "La Patrie Suisse;" the "La Femme d'aujourd'hui" and many other periodicals.

BASLE.

M. Alfred Soudet, French Vice-Consul in Basle since 1931 has died at the age of 48. M. Soudet was previously at the French Legation in Basle.

* * *

M. Max Imhof-Bodmer, Manager of the "Rumpfschen Kreppweberei" in Basle has died at the age of 54.

* * *

The death has occurred in Basle of M. F. A. Lichtensteiger at the age of 73. The deceased occupied for over 22 years the post of "Kreispostdirektor," and was connected with the Postal Service in Basle for over 50 years, during which time he has rendered great services.

LUCERNE.

Noisy demonstrations took place last Sunday outside the premises of the "Deutsche Heim," where a German Society was celebrating their harvest festival. A crowd numbering over 400 gathered and hissed the Swastika flag demanding that the flag should be taken down, a police detachment was unable to cope with the unruly demonstrators. After some lengthy arguments the flag was removed and the crowd dispersed.

NEUCHATEL.

M. Robert-Tissot, a notary at La Chaux-de-Fonds, has given himself up to the police. Investigations have proved that he has used an amount of 33,000frs. which was entrusted to him by various clients.

SCHWYZ.

The new electric power station in Birsisthal has been inaugurated on Sunday last in the presence of M. Obrecht, Federal Councillor; and various officials of the canton of Schwyz.